

Egg Harbor Township Board of Recreation Commissioners
Egg Harbor Township, NJ

SPECIAL MEETING
Tuesday, September 17, 2019 5:30pm

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

Recreation Commission Secretary Christine Gras called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Opening Statement Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act

Director of Parks and Recreation Rick Audet read the opening statement.

IV. Roll Call:

Toni Rispoli, Chair - Excused	
William Warrell, Vice Chair - Excused	Amy Smith - Present
Charles Gallagher - Present	Paul Trinkle – Excused
Paul Weldon – Present	Christine Gras (Alt. 1) – Present
Kevin Stetser – Excused	Jonathan Parker (Alt. 2) – Present

V. Public Comment

Monica Brunetti, 75 Marsh Road, stated that she and the Youth Organization board have not seen a copy of the complaint.

Public Comment closed.

VI. New Business

Grievance Hearing - EHT Youth Organization

Director of Parks and Recreation Rick Audet summarized the purpose of the meeting and the complaint/grievance process as written in the sponsored youth groups policies and procedures manual.

A complaint was received by Parks and Recreation and the Commission from a former parent (Hunt) of a YO cheerleader alleging that Cape Cheer Coordinator and Coach Jen Shaw called her daughter's cell phone while she was at her birthday party and made her cry.

Christine Gras stated that she is the Recreation Commission liaison to the Youth Organization. This meeting is not intended to pass any judgement on anyone but rather to have a conversation and try to determine what happened in this matter. Christine asked Ms. Shaw if she called the cheerleader, the daughter of the parent who filed the complaint. Jen Shaw stated that she did not call her.

Jen Shaw stated that the cheerleader had a poor attendance record, she keeps records of attendance at cheer practices, and that she spoke to Mrs. Hunt about the issue. The cheerleader made three practices out of nine according to Jen Shaw.

At the practice, Coach Shaw asked the girls if they knew where the cheerleader (Hunt) was. She stated that a cheerleader on the squad called the girl (Hunt).

Christine Gras stated that she has the girl's cell phone calls received screen shot provided by her mom. The cell phone displays an incoming call from Jen Shaw's cell phone number.

Jen Shaw stated that she did not dial the phone. She was out on the fields for practice. She stated that a cheerleader on the team called the girl (Hunt) from Jen's phone. Jen Shaw stated that she could not have made the call, the registration forms are in her car and she does not know the number.

Jen Shaw stated that she leaves her cell phone on the team bench area during practice and the girls on the team are aware of this. She reiterated that she did not have her number and would not have made the call. She stated that a cheerleader on the team, Irisa, called the girl using Jen Shaw's phone and handed the phone to Jen. Jen further stated that she got on the phone, asked who she was speaking to, the girl was not crying, she spoke to her for just a second or two and then spoke to the mom.

Rick Audet stated that the cell phone calls screen shot shows three phone calls coming from Jen Shaw's phone number. Rick Audet asked Jen if her phone is locked normally. Jen Shaw stated no her phone is not locked. Amy Smith asked how the calls came in, how much time was there in between the calls. The answer could not be determined by the screen shot.

Rick Audet asked Jen Shaw about the demerits system as outlined in YO bylaws and how that works.

Christine Gras addressed the YO board members in attendance about an incident that occurred two years ago and how it was resolved as a private meeting among board members rather than at a public meeting in accordance with their bylaws. Christine Gras stated her concerns on how the YO board has met and made decisions in past circumstances using a process that are not in accordance with their bylaws.

Jen Shaw discussed one of the past incidents in which a cheerleader was crying and stated that she always talks in a calm and quiet tone at the fields and when speaking to her cheerleaders and parents. Jen stated that she has a character letter with her tonight for the Commission and that she never yells at her girls.

Amy Smith stated that her job as a Commissioner is to do right by the kids and protect their interests at all times. She asked if the girl (Hunt) is still on the team and were any charges pressed against Jen Shaw as the intention to do so was stated in the complaint letter by the mom. Amy Smith continued that the coach can say one thing and the board can say another, however speaking to the child by allegedly calling the child's cell phone directly needs to be addressed. She stated her opinion to Jen Shaw that maybe she should not leave her cell phone laying around.

Jen Shaw stated that she would not have had the child's phone number on her at the field.

Jonathan Parker asked if the girl who picked up Jen Shaw's cell phone off the bench area was the team captain by chance or if there was any dialogue at the practice that would have led to the cheerleader (Irisa) picking up Jen's phone and calling the cheerleader during practice.

Jen explained how practice is run in that the girls can get water or use bathroom on own as long as the team is not stunting at the time. Amy Smith asked if the girl (Irisa) is friends with the girl (Hunt). Jen Shaw answered that the girl (Irisa) is a regular cheerleader on the team and maybe she wanted a more prominent role.

Jen Shaw stated that the mom who made the complaint pulled her daughter off the team, left voluntarily, and received a refund. She further stated she has always spoke to the parent, she could have removed the child from the team based on her attendance but had not. Jonathan Parker asked if the mom wanted a refund or would have preferred to go to another team. Tony Savastano, 311 Gravel Bend Road, stated that he recalled from the YO board meeting that the mom attended with her complaint that she had sent Jen Shaw an email.

Christine Gras asked Jen Shaw if she could look at her phone log. Jen Shaw said yes she has nothing to hide and showed her phone to Christine.

Christine Gras reviewed with the YO board members the meeting in which the complaint was lodged.

VIII. Public Comment

Monica Brunetti stated that this is a he said/ she said scenario and this reflected on how the meeting was conducted. The YO board did not have a copy of any emails or any documentation or records on this matter, just a complaint verbally at their board meeting. The board could not have taken any further action on this complaint.

Christine Gras asked the YO members present if they could move their meetings here to the Community Center, she does not feel that the meeting room at the field house is conducive to having public meetings.

Public Comment closed.

Jen Shaw handed to Parks and Recreation Director and all Commissioners in attendance a letter from Jessica Canizzaro dated 9/16/19. A copy of letter will be placed in the YO file in Parks and Recreation office.

IX. Adjournment

Motion	To adjourn the September 17, 2019 special meeting of the Recreation Commission meeting at 6:15 p.m. Motion made by Amy Smith Seconded by Charlie Gallagher
Vote	All voted in favor. Motion carried 5-0.

(Minutes as heard by Rick Audet, Director of Parks and Recreation)

Christine Gras, Secretary

Rick Audet, Director of Parks and Recreation

These minutes were approved at the October 9, 2019 Recreation Commission Meeting.
