

**SPECIAL JOINT VILLAGE/PARK DISTRICT  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING  
VILLAGE OF VERNON HILLS  
August 31, 2010**

IN ATTENDANCE: Village President Byrne called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. The following Village Board members were present: President Byrne, Trustees Hebda, Koch, Marquardt, Schultz, and Schwartz. Trustee Williams was absent.

Also present were Village Manager Allison, Assistant Village Manager Kalmar, Public Works Director/Village Engineer Brown, and Recording Secretary DeAnda

The following members of the Park District Board of Commissioners were present: President Ballowe, Commissioners Doerhoefer, Meline, Robbins, and Kessler. Also present was Executive Director Fougerousse

### **1. YOUTH SPORTS IN VERNON HILLS**

President Byrne stated the reason for the meeting was concern about children being excluded from the VHCYAA programs.

Elise Hauptman, 38 Sterling Heights Road, stated the VHCYAA had been a great asset to the Village's sports community, but expressed concerns about divisiveness in regard to questions of exclusion and lack of transparency. She asked the following questions:

- (1) Are there, in fact, any current or future restrictions, official or unofficial planned on the number of non-District 128 Vernon Hills' resident children on travel sports teams?
- (2) If so, what are the restrictions and what sports and what teams would be impacted?
- (3) Why would there be restrictions? Is it something that has been requested formally or informally by the Vernon Hills High School?

Mark Peterson, President of VHCYAA, 425 W. Camargo Court, stated the Executive Board and Commissioners of the individual sports would answer questions for the organization.

Rocco Pesola, 220 Knightsbridge, Mundelein, Girls Basketball Commissioner, Lady Cougars Feeder Basketball Program, stated the program was started in 2000, one year after Vernon Hills High School opened, to help prepare the girls that would attend Vernon Hills High School to play high school basketball. Since 2000, they have been members of the Northern Illinois Girls Feeder Basketball Association. The Northern Illinois Girls Feeder Basketball Association's rules require that each player must live in the high school district that they play for. The only two exceptions to the rule are Carmel and St. Viator. The VHCYAA must submit a roster to the League confirming that the players live in District 128. He stated this was not a policy of VHCYAA, but a policy of the league they participate in.

Trustee Schultz asked if they had or could petition the League for an exemption as such was given Carmel and St. Viator. Mr. Pesola responded they had and could not because Carmel and St. Viator were Catholic High Schools without districts or boundaries. Trustee Schultz asked what were the other League options available to their program. Mr. Pesola responded there were AAU and club programs available, but was not familiar with the make up of their teams. Commissioner Doerhoefer explained the feeder programs were bounded by the high

school district the player would attend. He stated there was no exclusionary process on the feeder program and every high school in this area had their own feeder program set up.

Marc Epner, 210 Noble Circle, VHCYAA Boys Basketball Commissioner, stated the Greater Suburban Basketball Association's rules clearly stipulate that players must live in an area eligible to attend Vernon Hills High School. A 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> grade program developed with the North Suburban Basketball League in Highland Park requires players must live in the community without regard to high school district and allows players from adjoining communities without programs.

Mike Dutler, 63 Royal Oak, presented a screen shot from the 2009/2010 Cougar website that indicated "We are an organization committed to the development of both team and individual basketball skills for 4th/5th/6th/7th/8th grade boys planning to attend Vernon Hills High School." He stated he felt the lack of transparency was driving the breakdown of public trust with the Cougar organization.

There was acknowledgement of the basketball feeder program for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades.

Marc Epner stated he as a volunteer created the website, it was incorrect, and will be corrected.

Dan Cantanzaro, 324 Danbury Drive, VHCYAA Football Commissioner, stated the VHCYAA Football program participates in The Chicagoland Youth Football League (TCYFL) and is open to all Vernon Hills' players and players from other communities that do not have a team in TCYFL. TCYFL allows for a waiver of a player, if the player desires to play for another program.

Trustee Schultz asked if VHCYAA website could clearly state that the program was open to all Vernon Hills' players. Mr. Peterson stated this was a competitive league and other communities would think the VHCYAA was trying to recruit their players, but would they would work with the other communities to develop language.

Trustee Schwartz asked that the emails that Mrs. Hauptman received be addressed. Mrs. Hauptman stated her concerns were with possible proposed changes to the rules in regard to districting with travel baseball. She stated written proof would put rumors to rest.

Mike Hull, 333 E. LaSalle Street, VHCYAA Travel Baseball Commissioner, stated he was appointed Commissioner six months ago and in the past six months, there had been no conversation, discussion, meeting or action taken to move the travel baseball program to a feeder program. They held tryouts with team selections on Sunday. He stated high school district information was not a criterion nor tracked. In preparation for tonight's meeting, they did poll this year's baseball registrations with 158 player tryouts for six different age groups – 9–14 yoa. 128 players made a travel baseball program allowing for two teams at 9–13 yoa levels and one team at 14 yoa level. Of the 128 players that made a team – 20 players were Vernon Hills' residents not within District 128 (just under 16%). There were 30 players that did not make a team, of the 30 players 2 were Vernon Hills' residents not within District 128. Of the 22 non-District 128 player tryouts, 20 players made a team. He stated, based on the recent tryouts and team selections, the numbers do not support discrimination for non-District 128 children.

Trustee Schwartz stated from what she had heard from VHCYAA tonight was not what was represented in emails sent to Mrs. Hauptman. The response was affirmative.

President Byrne asked how miscommunication would be prevented in the future. Dan Cantanzaro stated he recommended to the VHCYAA Board, to be discussed at their next meeting, to have emails through their website directed to the specific sport Commissioner.

Brian Gurin, 68 S. Sinclair, asked when will VHCYAA be open to other board members and commissioners from outside District 128.

VHCYAA by laws were produced.

Trustee Schultz suggested scheduling regular Board meetings.

Mark Peterson stated the VHCYAA bylaws address the Operational Boards and each individual sport had their own. He stated the Executive Board holds regular closed meetings, as allowed by 501c3 regulations. He stated floor nominations are accepted within the Operational Boards, but the Executive Board was made up of the commissioners of the individual sports. He stated if a person wanted to be on the Executive Board, they would need to be involved in the sport and become the Commissioner to be on the Executive Board. He stated VHCYAA staff had and will continue to improve communication.

Park District Commissioner Bruce Robbins asked about VHCYAA financials, the unsigned affiliation agreement, and lack of cooperation.

Mark Newburger, 248 LaSalle Street, responded that there were 29 issues in the affiliation agreement that VHCYAA could not agree to.

President Byrne asked, other than the affiliation agreement, what was the Park District's concern with the VHCYAA.

Park District President Jim Ballowe stated the major issue, which was discussed at a recent meeting with VHCYAA, was when the affiliation agreement was originally set up, there were specific sports and travel leagues that VHCYAA would take on and the Park District would continue to run. The Park District would continue to run youth basketball and youth lacrosse. Recently, the Park District had heard, but had not seen for sure, that VHCYAA would start their own youth basketball and youth lacrosse programs, which would be a duplication Park District programs. The Park District would like to continue to run the youth basketball and youth lacrosse programs.

Marc Rosenstock, 253 Nobel Circle, VHCYAA New Programming and Facility, stated the only program VHCYAA was considering was youth basketball – grades 1-3 at a competitive level. The Park District does not currently offer a competitive level program. VHCYAA believes they can offer the program at a lower cost than any other third party private provider.

Park District President Jim Ballowe stated the Park District runs an instructional recreational youth basketball program.

Mr. Rosenstock stated the competitive (defined as keeping score, winner/losers, enough participants, playoffs) level program would be offered at a different timeframe than the Park District's to allow a players to play in both programs. He suggested this could be a step to higher level competitive programming with no residency requirement.

Trustee Marquardt asked for any other resident concerns.

Mr. Gurin stated he was frustrated that VHCYAA did not answer questions directly, such as cash position, unsigned affiliation agreement, competition with the Park District, and being against having non-District 128 people on their board. A discussion ensued.

Commissioner Doerhoefer explained the VHAC fields are maintained by VHCYAA; the Park District maintains Park District fields. The affiliation agreement allows the VHCYAA to reimburse the Park District for materials used on Park District fields used by VHCYAA.

John Marchese, 83 Royal Oak Drive, stated he had been involved with the VHCYAA for seven years and found the organization to be one of integrity and he was proud of the positive impact on the young people of Vernon Hills who participated in their programs. He stated the leadership had the best interest of all the residents of Vernon Hills in mind.

Patricio Meneses, 201 Autumn Lane, VHCYAA Soccer Commissioner, stated the soccer program, house and travel, was open to all Vernon Hills' residents. He stated there were three leagues: boys travel participates in the Young Sportsman Soccer League (YSSL); young women participate in the Illinois Women's Soccer League (IWSL); and Vernon Hills Community Soccer League participates under the umbrella of Illinois Youth Soccer Association (IYSA). There are players from other communities in the program.

Keith Schoenfeld, 1310 Brandywine Road, Libertyville, VHCYAA Travel Softball, stated their girl travel softball program was open to all surrounding communities and was not a feeder program for the high school. Their goal was to prepare the girls for high school softball and provide an opportunity for summer games and potentially prepare the girls for college softball. In August, there were 140 tryouts, 106 players were provided roster spots, 8 community teams, 34 girls were cut from the program. Of the girls rostered, there were girls from 15 communities outside of Vernon Hills. There is a community recreational softball program.

The Commissioner of Community Baseball and Softball, stated the programs were open to all residents with no difference in charges and no cutting of players.

Park District Commissioner Meline wanted to clarify the Park District turned over the house baseball and soccer programs to the VHCYAA because they were capable of handling them and their relationship was good. Mr. Peterson stated the VHCYAA concurs.

Executive Director Fougrousse stated there needs to be a meeting scheduled regarding youth basketball. He offered to be a liaison for the Park District at the VHCYAA Executive Board meetings.

Mr. Peterson stated the VHCYAA was considering shortening their name.

President Byrne suggested scheduling a Village/Park District Liaison Committee meeting in September.

## **2. ADJOURN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

Motion by Trustee Schultz, second by Trustee Schwartz to adjourn the Special Joint Village/Park District Committee of the Whole meeting Roll call vote:

AYES: 5 - Hebda, Koch, Marquardt, Schultz, Schwartz

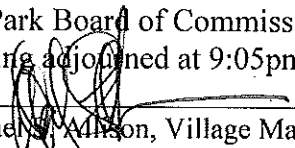
NAYS: 0 - None

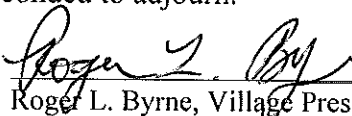
ABSENT AND NOT VOTING: 1 - Williams

Motion carried.

The Park Board of Commissioners motioned and seconded to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05pm.

  
Michael S. Wilson, Village Manager/Clerk  
MSA/ld

  
Roger L. Byrne, Village President