

Skatium Ice Rink Advisory Board Minutes – January 19, 2016

The next Meeting is scheduled for: February 16, 2016 at the Skatium @ 7:30 p.m.

Attendees: Joe Noone, Barbara Latsios, Drew Simcox, Karen Samulenas, Adam Terranova, Peter Dugery, Rich Caesar and Rick Turnbull.

Absence Excused: Commissioner Steve D’Emilio, Larry Yates and Charles McGarvey.

Joe Noone started the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

1. The November 17, 2015 minutes were approved. There was no meeting in December 2015.
2. Public comments: There were no public comments.
3. Joe introduced the two new members of the Advisory Board: Rich Caesar, 4th Ward and Peter Dugery, 5th Ward. Both Rich and Peter have skated and enjoy the Skatium and have done so for a number of years. They are encouraged by the many positive changes they have seen and they are looking forward to volunteering their time on the Ice Rink Advisory Board. The members welcome Peter and Rich and look forward to working with them.
4. Joe went over the Skatium Mission statement and the roles and responsibilities of the Ice Rink Advisory Board. He asked for volunteers to fill the following positions: Chairman/President; Vice Chairman/Vice President; and Secretary. Joe agreed to stay on as President; Drew Simcox volunteered as Vice President. There were no volunteers to take over the Secretarial position. Barbara reluctantly agreed to continue although Peter agreed to rotate it with her. The duties will be split between both members.
5. Joe also mentioned that Commissioner Chris Connell is the President of the Commissioners and Steve D’Emilio will be over seeing the Ice Rink Advisory Board, replacing Chris. The Board thanks Commissioner Connell for his dedication to the Skatium and looks forward to welcoming Commissioner D’Emilio to the Ice Rink Advisory Board.
6. Rick reviewed the Skatium numbers to date. The numbers continue to look strong although the warm fall and early winter season did negatively affect attendance. Winterfest was well attended and they have had an increase in private schools/groups using the rink. These include: Baldwin; Haverford High Physical Ed; Upper Darby Recreational Department; Chatham Park; Pink the Rink, Broom Ball, etc. Morning and afternoon ice continue to be strong and group lessons and Hockey clinics are sold out for the winter season. Additional games are being solicited for available ice which is very limited from the Haverford High; Haverford Middle; Marple Middle; etc. The Skatium held a “Township Employee Day” which was lightly attended. Skatium management is looking at ways to increase attendance/interest in this event.

Drew added that the Haverford Township schools have a requirement for students to participate in “community services.” They are looking at several charity events for St. Christopher’s; the Special Olympics, etc.

The party lights were a big hit and Joe observed a lot of texting and excitement from the kids regarding the rink. He suggested that the DJ nights continue on a regular basis as the kids will plan on attending if they have a regular event and not just a spur of the moment event. Rick stated that the next DJ night is scheduled for 1/23 (Saturday) from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. Everyone agreed for the target audience tweens/teens that Friday nights should be the DJ night vs. Saturday nights.

Joe added that a “Frozen” afternoon/evening skate be added for the younger children and that the other Board suggested theme nights be considered.

7. Adam asked if Joe ever received a written response regarding the meeting and follow-up letter that several members had with Larry Gentile and staff. Joe has not received a response but will ask that one be provided to the written letter that was given to the Township in August 2015. I have attached a copy of the letter to the minutes.
8. Barbara asked Rick about the cleaning schedule of the ladies locker room. She has received reports that the new mats have had mud on them and the floor has not be mopped. Since the “slop sink” is in the locker room the floor should be mopped daily since the females using the room have to put their feet on the floor when changing in and out of skates. Rick said he would get back to us.

New Business

- 1 Drew donated a spotlight to the Skatium to be used at special events, i.e., the Holly Berry, Theme nights, skating shows or special events.
- 2 Drew asked if Skatium management will be raising the advertising banners around the rink. These banners get damaged from the hockey pucks hitting the boards. Rick said that they will be raising them and has already put two up at the higher level.
- 3 Adam asked why all the metal guards were not installed on the light fixtures over the rink. He asked that they be installed ASAP because it is a safety concern should a puck hit the light.
- 4 Adam mentioned the recent article on skating rinks in Philadelphia magazine and the omission of the Skatium. “What kind of experience does the Skatium want to be known for?” He suggested that Skatium management think about that question and contact the magazine so it can be included next year.
- 5 Adam suggested that in addition to the theme nights and other suggestions that the Board made that the café install a “grotto” outside, have a gas heater or fire going with seating, build a pergola or something similar with lighting to add interest for people. Skatium management should be looking to see what other rinks are doing and aim for some new and innovative ideas to keep people interested and coming back.
- 6 The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

- 7 The next Meeting is scheduled for: Tuesday, February 16, 2016 @ 7:30 p.m. at the Skatium.**

Ice Rink Advisory Board

C/o Skatium

1002 Darby Rd

Havertown, PA 19083

[date]

Commissioners of the Township of Haverford

2325 Darby Road

Havertown, PA 19083

RE: The Ice Rink Advisory Board Report 2015, Goals & Recommendations for 2016

Dear Commissioners D'Emilio, Oliva, Hall, Siegel, Heilmann, Holmes, McGarrity, Connell & Wechsler:

During the past year, the Ice Rink Advisory Board (IRAB) has had a quorum every month for all regularly scheduled meetings. In this time, we have formed several sub-committees that held separate meetings to have focused, in-depth discussions in order to make certain recommendations to the whole IRAB.

A quick overview of the Skatium's Accomplishments in 2014-2015 include:

- Profitability in 2014 was in excess of \$200,000. Forecast for 2015 appears to be on track for a similar outcome.
- Recent construction of an upgraded front entry is complete, new employee office space was created, and a new point of sale system was installed and will be operational by the beginning of the school year 2015/2016. Payment options have expanded and credit card sales will now be accepted.
- Sound system was improved and the speakers were repaired this year.
- Boilers were reinforced.
- New edger was purchased to create a smoother puck playing and skating surface.
- Tenant occupancy (the snack bar, under new management, and pro shop) is at 100%.
- Various community events held, i.e., Winterfest, Spring Fling & Haverford Township Day.

It is the opinion of the IRAB that the 2016 Skatium singular goal and objective be to increase the amount of revenue generated by the Skatium toward the contribution and the financial benefit of the taxpayers of Haverford Township while at the same time, to uphold the positive values of the mission statement in the following Appendix "A," that is, to be a positive influence on the community while at the same time be a financially self-supporting facility.

The IRAB envisions the following two areas as areas of revenue growth and recommends the following actions:

Public Use of the Skatium (Public Skating Sessions and Group Lessons):

This is the area where the IRAB envisions the largest revenue potential for 2016.

Marketing Calendar:

Our Events subcommittee developed a year-long plan of possible weekend theme day & evening public sessions. The focus of the resulting marketing calendar, loosely adopted by the IRAB, is to attract the following customers: Families, students, people new to ice skating activities, and regular attendees of Haverford Township and surrounding communities.

Advertising:

The IRAB recommends raising the advertising budget for 2016 in order to achieve a significant increase in public skating awareness and consequent revenue.

1. Development of a Facebook page.
2. Advertisement & promotion of selected Facebook posts for businesses within a certain radius of the rink for wider local exposure of the Skatium.
3. Development of an Instagram account.
4. Create a hashtag to use across all social media platforms.
5. Negotiate for an annual deal with an "At Home Advertising" option such (but not limited to) Daily Times, Valpak, Clipper, Money Mailer. Offers should be sufficiently aggressive to motivate people to use the facility (i.e. "free admission" with coupon or "Buy 1 get 1 admission & free skate rental").

Inter County Scholastic Hockey League (ICSHL):

We believe that there is limited potential increase in revenue from simply adding games; there is not much ice availability to do so. The IRAB recommends focusing on an increase in the quality of games. As a board, we suggest priority and possible other benefits be given to those "qualified" teams that declare the Skatium as their home rink. We believe the residents and taxpayers of Haverford Township would be better served to have more quality games played here, and we believe that the fan base would better support the teams, the gate, the tenants and vending machine sales, because many of the games are currently held in places such as West Chester and Aston.

2016 Action Items:

1. Have a Skatium representative at every ICSHL meeting. This person would promote the rink's interest in the ICSHL.
2. Ask the local teams to write a letter asking the league to have local rivalries played at the Skatium.
 - o This would include Thanksgiving Eve & playoff games.
3. Have a pro-Skatium person seek appointment on the board of directors of the ICSHL to advocate the interests of the Skatium.

Develop Strategic Partnerships (e.g., Hockey Programs):

In one scenario, an elementary, middle school or club team participant of an approved program, wearing a jersey or jacket of his or her team, would get a special reduced group admission rate to a particular public session. The participants would enjoy the discount, show off their skating skills, and their presence would bring about greater visibility of those elementary, middle school or club hockey programs to every attendee at the rink.

The IRAB believes that such a scenario would be a win/win for the Skatium & hockey programs associated with the rink, and this concept would not necessarily be limited to hockey teams (could include other teams that compete on ice).

The IRAB would like to make the following recommendations to improve reporting functions. In order to better evaluate the finances and pinpoint where the areas of growth opportunity are, we recommend the following consolidations to income for calendar year 2016:

Public Skating Income - This would include: Public session admissions, skate rental fees, space rental fees, passbooks, lessons, and miscellaneous sales (skate helpers).

Hockey Income - This would include: Winter hockey programs, summer hockey programs, open hockey, tournament income and any hockey related private rental (with a coach for an extra practice).

Figure Skating Income - This would include: Freestyle, any private rentals for figure skating (same as hockey).

The following incomes to remain the same:

- ICSHL Gate & Ice
- Game Room Commission
- Vending Machine Sales
- Advertising (dasher boards)
- Private Ice Rental

Moving into 2017, the IRAB would like for the Skatium Director to consider the pros & cons of moving from a cash accounting system (when the check is received) to an accrual accounting system (when the ice is rented). In the current accounting system, one knows how much cash there is, while in an accrual accounting system one will know what the profitability is.

Future Skatium Improvements Suggested:

- Party lights for ambience, for public skating sessions and ice shows.
- Improvements and/or addition to girls' locker room to approximate or meet existing standards (i.e. boys' locker rooms).
- Vapor barrier for the ceiling.
- New water tank replacement.
- Painting.

The IRAB would like to thank the Commissioners for their time, attention and consideration of this report.

Sincerely yours,

The Members of the Ice Rink Advisory Board

Adam Terranova

Barbara Latsios

Charles McGarvey

Drew Simcox

Joe Noone (President)

Karen Samulenas

Rick Turnbull

Tamara Nedjar

