

RADIO CLUB

Members get waiver from fees at center

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FAIR LAWN — Out-of-town members of the Fair Lawn Amateur Radio Club will no longer have to pay a fee to use the Fair Lawn Community Center.

During a work session of the council on May 8, Mayor Steve Weinstein proposed the borough not charge members of the radio club the \$150 fee required for use of the center by those who do not live in the borough.

The council voted 4-1 with Deputy Mayor Marty Etler against

dropping the fee for out-of-town members of the radio club.

Weinstein said the group voluntarily assists the Office of Emergency Management and also contributes to borough events such as the Memorial Day parade and Fourth of July fireworks. The mayor noted the club has also raised about \$10,000 to purchase equipment at the center.

"We are there," said Gene Ottenheimer, a member of the radio club since 1962.

Ottenheimer said the group

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worked with the American Red Cross at Bergen Community College during the recent nor'easter. The club's services were also used when cell phones did not work during Hurricane Floyd, he said.

Ottenheimer added about one-third of the group's 14 members take part in the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) even though they do not live in the borough.

Etler argued the radio club is a hobby and while the group may provide a service to the borough it is not one that is required.

"I don't believe the Borough of Fair Lawn should support a hobby," he said.

When Councilwoman Jeanne Baratta noted firefighters are also volunteers, Etler countered the borough is asking those volunteers to provide that service but has not asked the radio club to do so.

Councilman Ed Trawinski said this group differs from others using the community center because it relates to the borough's emergency medical services.

Also at the work session, Weinstein suggested the borough allow the Board of Education to use the center for free for the Fair Lawn Community School's summer Broadway camp program.

"They should be able to take advantage of the state-of-the-art theater," said the mayor.

He said participants in the camp pay a fee to the community school, which paid a fee to use the center last summer. The borough does use some of the schools for its summer camp programs, added Weinstein.

The mayor said it is fitting "in

is a member of the shared services with the Board of Education in which officials from the school district and borough look at ways to save money by sharing services or joint purchases.

Etler said once the council grants free use to one group, what about others that ask to use it for free.

"I don't see any reason to change the policy now," he said.

"I want to be fair across the board," said Baratta, who asked how this is different from Walsh Pool.

During the regular meeting, the council approved an agreement with the Board of Education for the community school to use the pool for a fee for its camp programs.

Council members asked how many children take part in the program and also how many are from Fair Lawn. Deputy Mayor Joseph Tedeschi, who did not participate in the discussion because he is the director of the community school, noted that information is available.

Trawinski, who is also a member of the shared services committee, asked if the matter could be held until the next meeting of the committee on May 30.

"I would like to have a chance to talk about it," he said.

The council decided to hold off making a decision until additional discussions take place.

Related to the community center, a resident exactly how much it costs per residence for the center because he has seen it listed as a cost per resident. He noted most tax numbers are listed on a per home basis not per resident.

Noting he had a point, the council did the math to determine it is \$72.91 a year per home for the