

Harrington Park Recreation Commission

Minutes of Meeting

February 15, 2012

Commission

Chris Apostle	Absent
Jerry Esposito	Present
Jennifer Brackenbury	Present
Mickey Franklin	Absent
Tom Gleason	Present
Steve Marotta	Present
Steve Pacicco	Present

Lance Symons (Sports Commissioner) Present

Town Council Liaison: Glenn Quantmeyer - Present

Secretary: Michael Amdur

Meeting called to order at 8:05 PM

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Approval of last month's minutes, as amended.

REORGANIZATION

-- Mickey is giving up his Commissioner's spot. Steve Marotta nominated Steve Paccico for the position. The nomination was seconded and approved unanimously.

HIGHLAND FIELD

-- Bob Buono alerted the Commission that the Field needed some additional work, so he went ahead and did it because he wasn't happy with the condition of the mounds. In addition, there wasn't enough clay down. He actually was going to prepare the infield grass on Field #3, pretty much rip the whole thing out and re-seed everything and put on the turf

blankets. Thus, they are growing all new grass on Field #3. He thought we could get another year with the mounds because every three years the mounds should be rebuilt.

-- Little League issued a new code this year (height and distance of mound, distance of grass, etc.), so there was more cutting and more clay used. As a result of all this additional work, it was an additional \$1,995. One other thing that the Commission agreed to do with him is every year, he'll come back and re-seed the infields and put the turf blankets on the infields (not cover the clay). He'll be back a week before opening day to freshen up.

-- Steve Paccico said the cost to maintain various fields have been the following:
(Over \$13,000 total + additional \$1,995 additional cost, as mentioned above)
-- Rec Commission has \$10,000 in our maintenance budget

BREAKDOWN (according to table read out loud to members):
Upper Highland - \$1,465
Lower Highland/Soccer - \$5,500
All Lower Highland Fields - \$6,300
School Fields (which we didn't do) – approx. \$2,000 according to Steve M.

-- Steve P. said that five years ago, the infields were re-done at Highland Fields, and they "should" last over five years. They didn't last because the Rec Commission has not done a chemical program, along with other factors. Steve mentioned that the Commission has underinvested in-between, then has had to overinvest in a shorter period of time. Would like to see the Commission settle on a maintenance program and fund it.

-- Jen B. inquired as to whether there is a way the Commission can get the money from other places. She asked if, at budget time, could the Rec Commission mention/bring documentation to the Town Council that fees are continuing to go up for Town Members?

-- Steve P. responded that – four years ago – the maintenance budget was \$18,000 and it has been cut every year. Now it's approx. \$10,000.

-- Steve M. said that Tri-State Athletic has offered to put together a plan whereby the Commission would sign a contract for 3-5 yrs, then Tri-State can leave some equipment here in town (cheaper for him), store some clay here - all of which would reduce our costs and allow him to commit to dates. Right now, the Commission has been seeking him out in the Fall for Spring remediation.

-- The company that built Pondside (Field Pro) gave an estimate for repair work. They came in at \$3,490 for one field. With that, Field Pro gave us an annual maintenance program/plan that would come in at \$5,200.

-- Steve P. said that the Commission would need – on average - \$25,000-\$30,000 for multiyear commitment (three years).

-- Tom asked whether – the Commission's already spent \$14,000-\$15,000 – the Commission would want to spend another \$2,000+\$3,000 for the school and \$3,500 for Pondside?

-- Steve P. observed that the Commission has \$5,800 in Field Maintenance until the rest of the outstanding money comes in.

-- Steve P. and Glenn Q. mentioned that the Penny Tax cannot be used for maintenance issues, only for new things. In the Penny Tax right now, Steve P. mentioned that the Commission has \$364,958. - \$56,000 of which is encumbered for the Highland Walking Path. This coming August, the Commission receives another \$106,000 that can be added to that total.

-- Steve P. proposed that the Commission use the Rec Trust for work at Lower Highland and Pondside (together totals \$5,500). Then, the Commission will use the budget, but also speak with Ann Murphy and see if she can move the money into the Maintenance.

-- The above measure was seconded, voted on, and passed unanimously.

SPORTS COMMISSIONER ISSUE

-- Lance Symons spoke up and said that he spoke with Jerry E. concerning his application and had an issue with the process. He would like to have set days to play for the season. Also, Lance felt strongly that Pondside is for lacrosse and baseball and that the Commission should make room for both – that's how the project was conceived, funded and approved.

-- Steve M. suggested that softball and baseball should give up a field at H.P. school fields.

-- Steve M. said that the Commission would strive to get Lance at least one consistent day (Tuesday) if not two days (plus Wednesday) at Pondside.

FIELD USAGE/FEES

-- Soccer and softball have not paid for field maintenance.

-- Steve P. had two threshold questions he suggested members think about concerning non-payment of fees/field maintenance: (1) Is the Commission asking for the money and (2) If a selected group doesn't pay, what are the consequences (perhaps not granting field use requests, etc.)?

-- Glenn suggested that all the Commissioners come on one night, come up with a formula with how much they would pay (if soccer uses it more versus baseball, etc.), and have a meeting where the Commission says to them that they will not be scheduled for field usage until their check is paid. (see to-do list below for Chris A. contacting the sports commissioners)

-- Steve P. revealed that – this year – grass maintenance on the fields cost \$5,500.

OTHER ISSUES

-- The Commission will tackle the 5-year plan at next meeting.

-- Jerry reported that the Boosters bought 4 new tennis nets.

-- Jerry made badges, and will start re-doing the signs (so they are clear, badge rules are stated).

-- Jerry sent an email stating post-meeting "Field Maintenance- I have asked Neglia Eng. to give us a rough idea as to feasibility and cost to develop a field maintenance program. This documented program would be a central source for what needs to be done, where it needs to be done and when it needs to be done. I will let you know what feedback is given so we can determine value."

-- Tom had no update on the bleacher situation.

-- Jen expressed concern about the walking path between fields #2 and #3

-- She will observe conditions of the path until April, before which the Commission should take no action.

[post-meeting email message/notes from Steve Pacicco]

From the meeting last night, the major to-dos were:

Ø Develop the basis and amounts for developing sharing maintenance costs – Steve P

Ø Contact the sports commissioners to attend the April meeting (meeting is April 18) – Chris A

Ø Develop an annual field maintenance plan. Try to talk to Field Pro and ask for lesser amount. Confirm the cost of the school fields – Steve M

Ø Contact Soccer about the 2011 payment – Tom G

Also, we need a couple other things to get done for the fields and opening day:

Ø Contact the bathroom cleaning vendor

Ø Schedule to have the water turned on ahead of Opening Day on March 31

Since this is field maintenance, it's Tom, Mickey or Steve. Mickey seems very busy at work, so Tom or Steve, can one of you guys do this?

Jen B. announced dates for key events in Town later this year:

Ø March 31 is Opening Day

Ø June 17 is Fishing Derby

Ø Sept 8 is Town Day

Ø Oct 27 is Ragamuffin Day