

Harrington Park Recreation Commission

Minutes of Meeting

July 17, 2013

Commission

Siobhan Bailey	Present
Jennifer Brackenbury	Present
Paul Baly	Present
Jerry Esposito	Absent
Tom Gleason	Absent
Steve Marotta	Present
Steve Pacicco	Present

Town Council Liaison: Michelle Ryan – Present

Secretary: Michael Amdur

Meeting called to order at 8:05 PM

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Call to order. In compliance with the Sunshine Act of 1975, adequate notice of this meeting was made.

MINUTES

Minutes for both May and June formally approved by unanimous vote.

FINANCE AND BUDGET

Steve P. informed the Commission that he did not receive anything from Judy Curran - as per where the Rec Trust money is and the current balance.

Steve P. invoiced Sports from the Borough's General Ledger system because of this problem with the Rec Trust money. Steve would like Judy to invoice baseball and he also wishes to speak with her about softball and lacrosse.

As per softball's claim that they had no money left whatsoever and a zero balance, Siobhan clarified the situation by stating what her husband – Bill Bailey – told her. He said that there is approximately \$1,500 in the account. What happened this year is that there were a lot of old invoices that came in (thousands of dollars) and needed to get cleaned out. Thus, leaving anything less than \$1,500 would not be a good idea.

Softball is essentially asking for a waiver this year – the “good faith” measure.

Steve M. would support the waiver request and suggested that softball merge with baseball so that there is one overall bill/invoice, not two. Also, it would be a way to save money.

Steve P. offered stats as to how much softball and baseball revenues/attendance are down this year. Last year, baseball paid \$7,500 and this year the Rec Commission would like them to pay \$4,375 (baseball has not paid anything yet this year). This year, softball is down \$2,500 – Steve P. did not offer comparison numbers for softball.

A motion was proposed by Steve P. to not bill softball for the maintenance fee this year. Motion passed unanimously.

FIELD REQUESTS

A discussion ensued concerning (1) the use of Pondside for soccer and (2) Soccer's request to relax the Rec Commission's “good neighbor” policy. The “good neighbor” policy asks people to stay off fields until noon on Sunday (rather than 10 AM).

Paul suggested that it should be the (soccer) league's call, as per relaxation of the policy.

Michelle brought up the “good neighbor” policy, in that – originally - Reverend Kaden requested that people wait until noon to use the fields. Michelle thought that she recalled the Community Church having only one Mass – which occurs Sunday at 10 AM. Michelle also thought that OLV – for some of the grades – only offers CCD at 9 AM on Sunday.

Steve M. suggested a compromise: to relax the policy from Sept. 1 to Nov. 1 (because of Fall games) and then enforce the policy during the rest of the year.

Siobhan asked members to consider how important it is to maintain relationships with various religious institutions (in town). Steve M. responded that the policy has been violated over the years.

Steve P. suggested that Soccer could undergo a “pilot program” that lasts for the coming athletic year (***see motion below***).

Jen mentioned that one factor – leading to sympathy with Soccer's position – is that Mitch has been willing to put in his own funds for the benefit of Soccer. In addition, Harrington Park is virtually “the last town standing”, as per not allowing more flexibility for sports teams on weekends.

A motion was proposed by Steve P. to allow Soccer the 10 AM start for the coming athletic year. The initiative will be evaluated and discussed by The Commission at one of the upcoming Sports Commissioner's meetings. Motion passed unanimously.

SUGGESTED/UPCOMING TO-DO'S (no one specifically assigned/volunteered to the following):

- 1) Jen suggested that a courtesy call should be made to Reverend Kaden, as per this change in policy.**
- 2) Jen also suggested that a courtesy call or email should be made to Sue Evanella, as per this change in policy.**
- 3) Steve M. suggested that Mitch go ahead and schedule his games on Sunday mornings, if needed, but be prepared to change next season if he receives complaints from Rev Kaden, Sue Evanella or the affected Softball families.**

As per Soccer's use of Pondside, Steve P. reminded members that the goals are there, stemming from when Rec did the Pondside renovation. Part of the deal was to buy two goals.

FOLLOW-UP: The Rec Commission was to determine if Soccer was going to use Pondside for practices OR games. The Commission will wait for a "Field Use Request" before responding officially to Mitch.

Steve M. told the Commission that the goals are huge and are chained to the fence. Once the goals are moved and set (for soccer), the field wouldn't be able to be used for anything else. This issue of moving the goals could present a possible problem going forward.

Steve P. said that Pondside is the only 60/90 field in town. As such, room should be made for fall baseball.

Steve P. said that the Homes for Veterans was approved by the M&C.

Michelle said that there is a field use request for a fundraiser at the picnic/basketball court area of Highland Field. The fundraiser is on Saturday, August 17 from 12-6 PM. There is a resident from H.P. who is involved with this organization that builds homes for veterans.

A motion was proposed by Steve P. to allow field use by the Homes for Veterans at Highland Field. Motion passed unanimously.

GRANTS

Siobhan appeared at the M&C meeting on Monday (July 15) to reiterate support for the Walking Path Lighting project. Greg Poliniak gave a report on the potential grants that were out for the town (including Rec). What he said was that he originally thought that the lighting project would not be something considered favorably by Open Space. However, once he discussed it with M&C, it was his opinion that it was something that would be available/eligible for funding.

Michelle elaborated that if Rec only puts in only that one project, the chances of funding (compared with other projects) were slim. Poliniak suggested that Rec come up with a different project. The idea is that Rec should have a back-up project because the project is not flashy enough for Open Space. Poliniak did call the County and they responded that it is a project that may get approved.

Michelle informed the Commission that – three years ago – the railroad ties gave way at the Old Burial Ground. Part of the wall started coming down onto the sidewalks. It is a \$100,000+ project to stabilize it with new railroad ties. It also appears to be the priority of M&C for grant funding. The matching part of the grant would come from Open Space.

Poliniak said that there are two parts of the Open Space grant: (1) funding for municipal park projects and (2) historic preservations. Rec can submit for both because they are not competing.

Michelle commented that - in the past - in order to qualify for a grant, the land must be owned. Since the Rec Commission doesn't own the land, it is possible that Rec will not qualify.

Poliniak did say that – on the municipal parkland grants – the average project last year received \$54,000 in funding: \$27,000 from the County and another \$27,000 matching from the town.

The deadline to submit applications is August 29. Neglia Engineering will be submitting Rec's application, not the usual grantwriter.

SPORTS COORDINATION

Steve P. informed members that another Sports Coordinators' meeting will be done in October.

TOWN DAY

Jen informed members that the Lions Club is preparing to contribute to Town Day. Michelle will help Jen negotiate for a higher fundraising amount.

Michelle told the bank that Rec would expect that the Bank (not identified by name) to contribute, at least, the same amount (\$5,000) as last year.

United Water will only take a request directly from the Mayor. They did say it has been a difficult year for them financially.

Michelle informed the Commission that the petting zoo and the pony rides are confirmed, so she will need to put a deposit in.

Jen asked Steve P. how much she can spend on everything (rides, etc.). Steve P. responded that Rec has \$4,000 left over from last year. From what he knows (given the budget issue discussed earlier), Steve said that there was \$5,794 available – from the last time he received a balance.

PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS

Steve P. said the courts need some repair.

Jen inquired about the flooding at the school field and what Rec will be doing about it. Steve P. said Dugan has been coming up with some proposals.

Michelle said that the Highland Field bathrooms have been closed. The bathrooms have not been opened by the Police, however, at 9 or 10 PM at night they will ensure that it is locked.

Paul said that Mark Kiernan has a list of all the requests for repairs and is in the process of fixing them.

Steve P. received a proposal recently. Softball didn't think that the school fields were being scarified by DPW. Steve P. went up there twice within the last week and it looked like the fields hadn't been dragged both times.

Steve P. mentioned that crabgrass is starting to grow on the infield of the Hackensack Woods field. Rec has had to remediate that infield every year because DPW has not done a consistent job scarifying it. Rec is heading toward a \$7,500 bill to remediate that field next Spring.

FIELD TURF PROJECT

Jen hasn't heard anything more concerning the Field Turf project at the High Schools.

CPR ISSUE

Michelle sent an email to some of the council members in different towns and Recreation boards. They seem to be on-board but would like Michelle to spearhead the effort. Michelle asked Commission members if they would like her to spearhead it.

Michelle asked about the three options that are available for the Commission to consider: (1) offer CPR training to the coaches, (2) mandate CPR training to the coaches or (3) have a specialist at the field.

Steve M. suggested that – at the next Sports Commissioners' meeting in October – the least intrusive approach is to offer CPR training on an optional basis. Having a trainer at the field would likely be the most expensive, hardest to implement option.

Michelle added that other, surrounding towns use their ambulance corps to offer training. She suggested that it could be offered on different nights and opened up to surrounding towns. There would be not much of a cost, except possibly for certification.

Siobhan observed that the Commission doesn't want to scare off people who are already (emotionally, physically) taxed by volunteering, yet the Commission doesn't know whether the Commission could be liable if one Coach didn't follow the rules.

TO-DO: Michelle will follow up on specifics of this issue (presumably on the subtopic of how to determine if coaches are certified).

AED Devices: Ann Bistriz told Michelle that there may be money in the bond for one device.

Siobhan said that Charles Summers had a lot of discussions with Chris Wood concerning the cost-saving measure that it would be prudent to buy through the ambulance corps.

DOG PARK/RUN

Michelle said that it would be \$50,000 in start-up costs for this project and an additional \$10,000 per/year maintenance.

Michelle spoke at length with the County and she offered to reach out to large pet superstores and fencing companies to see if any of them would be willing to donate money.

There has been no definitive location for a potential dog park.

Approximately 20 people have approached Michelle expressing support for this project.

Jen noted that - every day - the County goes to clean up dog parks, but the County does rely on people to “do the right thing.”

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECTS

Michelle mentioned that Joseph Niece (the Eagle Scout) is likely coming back in the Fall to get permission for the signs that describe the flora, etc.

PIE CHART

Steve P. related that - at the June meeting – there were eleven projects that were identified via the course of discussion. Those eleven – plus approximately 70 more that were brainstormed some five years ago – were included on a handout for members to consider prioritizing.

FOLLOW-UP: Steve P. will send the spreadsheet to all members one week before the September meeting in order for each person to rank the projects. As per Steve M.'s suggestion, each person will list their top ten projects. Any projects that are not listed on anyone's Top Ten will be dropped. Projects within the Top 10 will be calculated according to both popularity and ranking.

Steve P. asked Sports to work amongst themselves to come up with projects and then relay that list to the Commission. Steve suggested that – in addition to Rec's Top 10 – projects from the different sports leagues will be collected and added on to the Commission members' Top 10 List.

Next meeting is on August 21, 2013.