

# Harrington Park Recreation Commission

## Minutes of Meeting

June 19, 2013

### **Commission**

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

Town Council Liaison: Michelle Ryan – Present

Dugan Savoye	softball assistant commissioner
Eric Cappelman	baseball commissioner
Mitch Helfman	soccer commissioner
Gerald Griffen	sports boosters
Mary Dunlea	sports boosters

Secretary: Michael Amdur

Meeting called to order at 8:10 PM

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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

### **MINUTES**

Minutes were delayed formal approval because there was not an official quorum.

## **SPORTS COMMISSIONERS DISCUSSION**

### *FUNDING/MAYOR AND COUNCIL DECISION*

Steve observed that the Commission had spent much of 2012 trying to fix much of the maintenance funding in town. He felt that the Commission made some progress.

In an effort to develop a five-year-plan, Steve welcomed input (specifically addressing the Commissioners) about any projects that should be considered for budgeting. Steve emphasized that there is some \$400,000 in Open Space funds as well as some budgetary freedom now that the Mayor and Council have decided not to do the Pondsides dredging.

The Recreation Commission presented - to the Mayor and Council - three options to use the Penny Tax fund/Open Space monies. The options were listed in some detail:

- 1) Use the Penny Tax Fund for some part of maintenance:
  - The town is provided approximately \$106,000 per year. Rec would prefer to use \$49,000 of this on maintenance (rather) than invest in new fields that cannot be maintained properly
  - Eliminate field use fees from the sports
  - Reduce Rec maintenance budget by \$5,500 and use the balance to address other maintenance needs
  - Total of \$54,000 on maintenance per year
  
- 2) Increase Rec maintenance budget by \$35,000 (from \$11,000 to \$46,000)
  - Reduce town field use fees to \$8,500 (from \$17,000)
  
- 3) Increase town sports registration fees

The Commission emphasized to the Mayor and Council that the status quo was not sustainable and that something needed to be done.

A decision was made to use the Open Space monies to fund a portion of the maintenance costs. However, the budget for Rec was reduced slightly (\$3,850) which helped with some of the other needs in town outside of Rec.

The Rec Commission would continue to request that the sports fund a portion of the maintenance, but at a 50 percent reduction. As a result of the reduced maintenance fees, the sports would commit to reduce their registration fees correspondingly. A rough estimate was that the reduced registration fees will be approximately \$25 per registrant (depending on the specific sport).

The DPW would commit to regular scarifying (2x per week) of each infield to reduce the cost.

Mary asked if there was a commitment to Open Space funding going forward or if it is a year-by-year situation. Steve responded that "there is a commitment to request it every year, but it is a request every year." In Steve's opinion, if monies are coming in from Open Space, the No. 1 priority (to be funded) should be maintenance.

*SOCCKER*

Mitch emphasized that the funding/maintenance monies/changes doesn't impact soccer that much because "nobody is touching our fields...with the use we put on that one field, we're still going to tear it to pieces. It'll still be a mud pit...and that's the problem." The big concern for Soccer is to have more use of different fields. Essentially, every practice during every week during the soccer season is on one field – and so are the majority of the games. What ends up happening is all the new grass in the goalbox and middle of the field is gone.

Mitch asked the Commission if he could get temporary lights and put them on other fields, so he can spread out practices. That way, he can have more practices and also spread them out on more fields. He would love to use Pondsides and be able to put lights on the back field there.

Steve would like to see a sprinkler/irrigation system on the lower Highland soccer fields. On Lower Highland, he said that – when Rec installed the sprinklers on the baseball infields – zones were set up so that the rest of the fields can be done. The footings are all there -- it just needs to be done.

Mitch said that he has been considering purchasing two lights for Lower Highland and then putting four on the back field. Then, he would put the younger players over at Pondsides. That way, there would be three fields plus Upper Highland and that would help significantly.

Mitch got pricing from a contact in Northvale -- \$300 per light per month (\$1,200 per month).

Jerry suggested that Mitch put together a package/field use request, send it to the Commission, then Michelle could take that back to the Mayor and Council.

Gerald Griffen pointed out that - for years - Boosters had asked Soccer if they needed anything done (projects) and that he was told "we're cool." Mitch emphasized that is not the case now.

*PROPOSED MAINTENANCE PLAN*

Steve pointed out a table in the handout that outlines a proposed maintenance plan. An abbreviated summary:

MAINTENANCE PLAN ELEMENT	COST
Turf Program	\$21,600
General Maintenance	\$15,000
Weekly Grooming	---
Materials	\$3,500
Subtotal	\$40,100
Other Rec Needs	\$7,250
Total	\$47,350

Steve also highlighted another table in the handout that outlines the proposed sources of funding:

SOURCE	REQUEST	CUMULATIVE FUNDING
Rec Budget	\$10,100	\$10,100
Baseball	\$4,375	\$14,475
Softball	\$2,050	\$16,525
Soccer	\$5,000	\$21,525
Lacrosse	\$1,000	\$22,525
Summer Basketball	\$1,000	\$23,525
Sports Boosters	\$3,000	\$26,525
Open Space Request	\$20,825	\$47,350

### *SOFTBALL*

Dugan mentioned that one of the challenges of softball this year is that two or three teams had to be dropped from the league because of lower registration numbers. Bill Bailey claimed that softball's funds are non-existent "at zero." Dugan expressed concern that if the mandate is to cut registration fees then that - combined with losing participants - will put downward pressure on their budget.

### *SPORTS BOOSTERS*

Gerald pointed out the inconsistencies between the budget pains that have been voiced versus what has been said in the past. When Gerald approached Gary Capazzi in the past about any assistance that softball has needed, Gary claimed that he would get back to Sports Boosters and then never did. For soccer, Gerald had heard "oh we're set...we don't need anything." However, Gerald singled out Steve Marotta (in baseball) as someone who understood and took advantage of Boosters' generous offers, thus baseball benefited.

Gerald explained that one of the ways that Sports Boosters raises money is through the sign program. Sports Boosters is not at 100 percent occupancy on the signs. The only revenue that Sports Boosters has gotten is via knocking on doors. Gerald said that Sports Boosters revenue has been intended to go back to specific projects for all sports. However, Boosters cannot allocate funds without requests and competitive bids so that - when Boosters allocates funds - it has been done properly. The second way Boosters raises money is through the 5K race. It not only raises money for Sports Boosters but allows for charitable donations to be made through it. Lastly, Gerald unveiled the reinstatement of "poker night." With those three sources of funding, Gerald claims that there is a lot of potential funding to be had to eliminate many of these projects.

Another project identified was to put dugout coverage on fields #4 and #5.

With funding by Sports Boosters already committed, the Rec Commission approved making Upper Highland Field #5 a dual-use softball and 50/70 baseball field. The project includes putting in the base footings at 70 feet and purchasing a portable mound. Gerald also suggested the Rec Commission purchase a shed to store this equipment up on field #5 so that it is stored properly. Gerald summarized the situation by saying that advertisers would love to hear requests such as: portable mounds, sheds, portable benches, new softball and baseball cages, etc. The advertisers would be wary about their money going toward cutting grass and supplementing DPW salaries.

**TO-DO: Mary proposed meeting again in September. Steve said that - after this meeting - he would send an email out listing some of these projects. Steve asked the**

**Commissioners to respond to the email, even with some other project(s) they may have thought of. Then, in September, the Commission can prioritize the list with the Commissioners.**

#### *BASKETBALL COURT LIGHTS/SIGNS*

Gerald also discussed the importance of leaving the basketball lights on because Sports Boosters sells the \$1,800 sponsorship saying that it has visibility during the day and during the night (until 10 PM).

#### *MORE FIELD MAINTENANCE ISSUES*

Steve asked if Sports Boosters would be able to contribute something to field maintenance over the next couple of years. Gerald and Mary confirmed that they would.

Sports Boosters is currently working on bringing in 30 new garbage cans (branded with "keep H.P. clean" in the same color) to Highland Field.

Dugan said that the school has a community service program that can - potentially - have a handful of students do Field Maintenance. It would have to be coordinated between what DPW could and could not do, what the school team could and could not do, what Tom and the other custodians (at the school) could do, and what Rec needs.

**TO-DO: Steve said that he will send an email to Dugan and Tom Gleason about field use conflicting with softball schedule.**

#### *AED (automated external defibrillator) MACHINES/CPR ISSUES*

Michelle noted that Northvale is the only town that actually has the mounted AED devices at one of their fields. Old Tappan, Closter and some other towns had been talking about it recently. All of the towns said they would be interested in talking (as a group) to see what can be done.

Michelle spoke with administrators from Northvale and Old Tappan. The administrator from Northvale was going to try to spearhead a coalition of towns (joint CPR nights, etc.). The administrator from Old Tappan warned Michelle that if there was a CPR requirement and if something calamitous happens, then you could have a logistical nightmare and liability issues on one's hands (examples: if only one coach has the training, if a parent/coach isn't at the game that night).

As far as requiring coaches to be CPR-trained and certified, none of the towns have requirements. They have classes but there is no requirement.

**FOLLOW-UP: As per a follow-up inquiry from Michelle, Steve was amenable to having Michelle speak to officials in the other towns. He first would like Michelle to get people together and talk about the issues, then move forward from there.**

Siobhan asked about funding for the AED program. Michelle responded that the reallocation in the unused portion of the bond would be used for the program. Siobhan inquired as to the cost of AED machines.

### FYI – post-meeting research

According to a Nov. 2012 article at [www.howmuchdoesitcost.me](http://www.howmuchdoesitcost.me), AED machine costs are listed as:

New and recertified machines cost range from \$700-\$3,000, with the world's largest automated external defibrillator source "AED Superstore" ([www.aedsuperstore.com](http://www.aedsuperstore.com)) selling a large line of models ranging from \$1,200-\$3,000 (most in the \$2,000 range).

Gerald mentioned the new website that Sports Boosters has: <http://hpreg.leag1.com>

### TENNIS ASSOCIATION

Jerry asked for permission to give new Tennis Association member/participant Tara Belous the green light to keep moving forward with the development of the Association. Tara has a connection with West Rock (in Rockland County) that can help jump-start the Association.

### ONGOING FINANCE ISSUES

Steve said that the Rec Trust monies (some \$15,000) are still outstanding/need to be found. Steve is unsure of the new general ledger format, so Michelle and Steve will try to communicate/coordinate with Judy Curran about this issue.

**TO-DO: Michelle planned to send an email to Judy on Thurs. June 20, as per the above issue. After communicating with Judy, Michelle told Steve that she would email him dates and times that would work for him.**

### MISCELLANEOUS

The grading is off/not built to spec on the Pondsides baseball field. A pitcher's mound should be 11-12 inches high...thus 11-12 higher than home plate. Currently at Pondsides, while the mound is 11-12 inches high, the slope is 22 inches higher than home plate. The water runs directly down toward home plate from the whole infield. Steve expressed concern that it may not necessarily be a small fix.

### TOWN DAY

Michelle mentioned that there is a question concerning the vendor of the petting zoo and the pony ride. The vendor wants to know immediately whether Rec plans for two or three hours for the petting zoo and ponies. For two hours, it would cost \$675; for three hours it would be \$850.

Despite not having a quorum for the night, those Rec Commission members present in the room agreed to three hours. However, there was no uniform agreement as to specific hours proposed by Michelle (1-4 or 12:30-3:30).