

Harrington Park Recreation Commission

Minutes of Meeting

May 22, 2013

Commission

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

Town Council Liaison: Michelle Ryan - Present

Secretary: Michael Amdur

Meeting called to order at 8:20 PM

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

FROM THE PUBLIC

Eagle Scouts Kurt Sigler and Joseph Niece appeared before the Commission to talk about their respective projects.

After a walkaround of several places in town, Kurt updated the Commission as to where he will place three bat-houses. There will be one stand/arch at each location: Highland, Pondside and the Swim Club. Each arch will now have *[revised, since the April meeting]* six houses each. Three houses will be on one side of the arch, three on the other.

First bat-house: Pondside baseball field – outside of third base line

Second bat-house: Upper Highland field – back in perimeter area (between Upper Highland and the mulch pile)

Third bat-house: At the swim club, back by the lifeguard house

Tom asked Kurt what the footings (of the bat-houses) would be like? Would Kurt be digging holes and placing them there? Kurt responded that he will fill it with (preferably) peat gravel or concrete.

Tom suggested having the Pondsides and Highland structures as far from the field as possible – away from spectators and players. Kurt added that he does not foresee a problem with that.

Kurt believed that the project will be ready by mid-June (at least will be built by then; possibly fully up at that point).

Kurt would like to install everything on one weekend. Does not want his responsibilities staggered over time.

Tom inquired as to whether the Commission might need anyone from the Town to approve the project. Michelle responded that Kurt had gone before the Town/M&C in April and they were generally supportive of the project – essentially deferring to Rec. about the placement.

TO-DO: Michelle volunteered to double-check any additional approval at the June M&C meeting.

A motion was proposed by Tom to formally approve the Sigler bat-box project. **Motion was unanimously supported by members.**

Joseph Niece introduced his project – consisting of building wooden informational signs around local town parks that would educate the community about the local flora and fauna. So far, Joseph had gone to the Environmental Commission to introduce his project. The frame of the signs would be constructed out of wood, and a piece of Plexiglass would be placed on top of the sign – with information underneath.

Joseph suggested that one sign be placed at Pondsides by the path, another placed at Highland Field by the path. Joseph estimated that he would be placing ten signs in total.

Paul Baly suggested that three important factors (to him) about the project are: (1) having correct signs, (2) signs being in the right places, and (3) appropriately useful information on the signs in those places.

Tom reminded Joseph to be sure that he (Joseph) chooses an appropriate ink that will last in outdoor weather.

APRIL MINUTES

Tom proposed a motion to approve the March Minutes. **Motion was approved unanimously by members.**

BASEBALL INJURY INCIDENT/SCARE AT HIGHLAND

Steve P. reminded the Commission about the incident at Highland Field – when an eight-year-old male player was hit by a baseball, CPR was performed and he was taken to the hospital.

Steve P. said that there has been talk about getting coaches certified in CPR. He asked Commission members if Rec should take the initiative on the CPR front.

Michelle mentioned that Ann Bistriz thought there was reallocated money - from a local bond - to purchase a (dummy-proof) digital-type device that performs CPR. Otherwise known as an automated electronic defibrillator (AED) machine.

Siobhan asked if there was some sort of informal, non-certified class (preferably of brief duration) that would be available to substitute for formal training. Discussion ensued, though no definitive, agreed upon responses.

TO-DO: Michelle offered to contact neighboring towns to find out more information/what system(s) they have in place.

TO-DO: Steve P. will place the issue on the agenda at next month's meeting – with sports commissioners.

TO-DO: Michelle volunteered to forward details of the baseball injury incident to Tom tomorrow (May 23).

FINANCE & BUDGET

Steve P. disclosed to members that the Commission has only spent \$1,500 this current year out of the \$9,500 budget.

Steve P. mentioned that - as per an email thread with Commission members - “Judith” does not have specific Rec Trust balances (money set aside for the walking path, field maintenance) available. She also does not know where to look.

TO-DO: Steve P. asked Michelle to get clarity about where the money/balance is.

FOLLOW-UP ON FINANCE/FIELD MAINTENANCE ISSUE: Steve P. said that he had just gotten the proposal from Tri-State on the field maintenance. Over the next month, he will try to nail all that down in order to figure out whether the Commission is still on track

to request \$25,000 out of Open Space for maintenance. Currently, Steve is unsure as to whether the Commission is still on track for that or if the scope needs to be scaled back (or - even if to ask for more money).

Steve P. mentioned that registration was down considerably this year for baseball and softball.

Michelle offered to help with fundraising – as opposed to raising fees for sports.

FOLLOW-UP: Steve P. intended to discuss the issue of raising fees next month.

FIELD MAINTENANCE

Steve M. said that DPW had been scarifying 2x a week.

Based on sports schedules, the overall calendar and simple practicality, Steve M. could not support spending additional money (several thousand dollars) on field maintenance/remediation at Pondsides. He felt that Rec was better off ordering the clay and asking DPW to speed up the scarifying...try to get through until mid-July (unless the field becomes “horribly unplayable”).

Jen attended the field turf meeting at the High School (as per two fields at O.T., three fields at Demarest, as well as a home for the program for the 18-21 year olds with special needs). Approval is pending for the projects. Jen added that plans included an expected groundbreaking by next summer and a start of late-August (this year).

The location is the varsity baseball field. Tom explained that the varsity field will be transformed into two multi-use fields in the outfield.

Michelle learned of an \$8 million cost estimate for the projects. Michelle added that the M&C have not voted on the issue yet.

Sports Boosters approved a portable mound. They would have to scout out a location to build a small shed on Upper Highland (for the mound).

FIELD REQUESTS

Tom relayed a couple of items:

- 1) There will be a Summer Concert in the Park on Friday, May 24...Mark K. repaired all of the lights.
- 2) He had a field use request on Thurs, May 23 for H.P. teams. Junior Woman’s Club is sponsoring it and providing their liability insurance, however, they did not have an insurance form in yet. Tom felt sure that he would receive one before the day of the event. Juniors was looking to use Columbus fields, however, Tom directed them to Pondsides – which has a bathroom.

Tom proposed a motion to approve the Juniors request, pending receipt of an insurance form. **Motion was approved unanimously by members.**

SCHOOL COORDINATION

Tom said that school is pretty much wrapped up. Outside there has been softball.

GRANTS

FOLLOW-UP: Michelle is waiting to hear about any grants for the cemetery wall project.

SPORTS COORDINATION

Steve P. said that a reminder will be sent out to the heads of the Sports and Sports Boosters (about next month's meeting). Steve was predicting that the agenda would consist of funding it, CPR issue, and whether there are other needs/projects in Town.

Siobhan and Paul both sit on Sports Boosters and are affected by that group's by-laws. They both cannot vote on issues related to their money/budget and projects, so as to avoid any sort of conflict-of-interest. The overall theme is that Siobhan and Paul are not taking projects and requests with the Rec Commission and pushing them with Sports Boosters. Discussion ensued on the nuances and conflicts inherent or existing based on the two of them being members of both organizations.

TOWN DAY

Jen will send out donation letters, concerning this event.

PARK AND PLAYGROUND MAINTENANCE

Jen mentioned that there is a rock at Pondsides (near the porta john) brightly marked with a curse word.

Michelle said that she reported to the police that people were driving on fields.

Paul said that he had spoken with Mark Kiernan and that Mark would take care of the playground equipment. In particular, getting the painting on schedule and also taking care of the disattached cables.

Paul expressed concern about the merry-go-round at Highland; it is a general danger and constant source of anxiety for the parents.

Michelle said that, at George Street, there is a step that is mangled. She spoke to someone (contractor) who will send her pictures and a price to fix it.

TO-DO: Michelle will forward the pictures and info to Paul when she receives it.

HIGHLAND FIELD BATHROOMS

Steve P. mentioned that he received an email concerning the Highland Field bathrooms. They have started to get abused and have not been closed at night.

Michelle said that she spoke with the police chief and he seemed amenable to the P.D. opening and closing the bathrooms (April through November).

Michelle also said that the M&C would like more information before putting any bathroom trial (open on the weekends) into effect.

Discussion revolved around a lingering concern about the police needing to ensure that the bathrooms are locked at 10 PM.

Michelle reported that there has been paper towel and toilet paper theft and abuse.

TO-DO: Michelle will contact the police chief and ask him how many bathroom keys he will need. If it is only one or two keys, Tom can give it directly to him.

TENNIS COURTS

The tennis court path remediation has been finished.

WALKING PATH LIGHTING PLAN

Siobhan is seeking any matching grants via Marlene Casey. Siobhan emailed her directly, but has not heard back from her.

Steve P. inquired as to whether community parks funding is available (\$29,000).

TO-DO: Siobhan plans to have a conversation about this issue with Marlene. Siobhan will try to contact her over the coming week (May 23-May 30).

DOG RUN PROPOSAL

Michelle contacted Bergen County government and Teaneck gov't and had not received any callbacks.

15-20 people in town have come up to Michelle and insisted on a Dog Park. Michelle asked each if they were willing to work to get a dog park. The people said "yes".

Steve P. recalled that - some time ago – members of Rec seemed to feel that the park would not be properly maintained. However, Steve felt it would be worth resurrecting the issue.

Steve M. felt that the concept of dog parks in cities is understandable, however, he inquired as to whether there is already enough of an opportunity to walk one's dog.

FOLLOW-UP: Issue should be put on the agenda for next month, as per Michelle.

NEW WALL AT CEMETERY

Michelle reported that the project is on hold.

FISHING DERBY

Will take place on Sunday, June 16.

PLANTING BEDS

Michelle said that there are planting beds that have been maintained by The Junior Woman's Club. There are four (individual beds) at four select locations in town: (1) outside of Pondsides, (2) at Don Horse Park, (3) on Old Hook Road at the island by United Water and (4) across from the reservoir. The Club doesn't have the number of volunteers nor money to maintain them.

Michelle inquired as to whether the Commission wishes to (spend a few hundred dollars and) take over the project. The Club spent \$600 last year to put the plants in and to pay a landscaper to put them in.

The Garden Club is willing to take over the project next year and plant perennials – with the benefits of the plants coming up every year and inherent low maintenance. However, it is too late in the current season to plant the perennials.

A motion was proposed by Steve P. to take over the project, but to spend no more than \$300 on plants. **Unanimous approval by all members.**