

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

July 6, 2022

7:00PM

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by David Hewitt, Committee Chairperson at 7:00 P.M. The following notice requirement was read aloud:

NOTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Adequate notice of this meeting was provided in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act by being published in the Hunterdon County Democrat on January 13, 2022 and telefaxed to the Express Times on January 10, 2022.

This meeting agenda was posted on the Township website on June 30, 2022 stating that this and future meetings will convene at the Kingwood Park, 200 Union Rd. Pavilion until further notice which will be posted on the Kingwood Township website.

In order to ensure full public participation in this meeting, all members of these committees, and also members of the public are requested to speak only when recognized by the Chair so that there is no simultaneous discussion or over talk. Your cooperation is appreciated.

ROLL CALL

Present

Andrew Russano, Jr.
David Hewitt
Chuck Kolvites
Richard Dodds
Timothy Jordan
Mara Tippet
Karen Nuckols

Absent

Jack Niciecki

Privilege of the Floor

Brian Rays of DVAA requested to address the Committee regarding possible use of the baseball fields at Kingwood Park. Mr. Rays stated that DVAA stopped using the Park fields because the Park would be closed whenever there would be any significant rainfall which caused havoc with the season game schedule. There are many families involved with DVAA that live in Kingwood and he believes it would be beneficial to their club to try using the Kingwood Park ball fields again.

The T-Ball and Coach Pitch teams could use the current softball field and the older players would use the baseball fields. Mr. Rays will discuss this plan with other management members of DVAA. Another possibility for DVAA would be to combine the baseball and soccer leagues since the soccer fields at Kingwood Park are also available.

The Committee approved DVAA's continued use of the Kingwood Park garage for equipment storage.

Horseshoe Bend Park/Ukarish Property Update

Jack MacConnell reported the below concerns:

- There has been some vandalism at the Horseshoe Bend Park so greater vigilance is necessary.

Recording 21:25 – 21:40

- There is an 844 Forest Fire Truck with a bull dozer attached which is a high-water rescue vehicle. It has been used for rescue in the past which is why it is stationed at the Park.
- Mr. MacConnell stated that there was “politicking” going on at the Senior Picnic on June 5th and that he heard someone approach the table next to him introducing themselves as a candidate for Township Committee. D. Hewitt replied that R. Dodds had also mentioned “politicking” to him at the Senior Picnic. Mr. Hewitt stated that he did not see or hear any “politicking” at the Picnic but while volunteering at the “Free Tree Giveaway” event in April Lance Riggio approached the driver of each vehicle that came through introducing himself as a candidate for the Township Committee. Mr. MacConnell and Mr. Hewitt both agreed that this behavior is not appropriate for Township run events and must not occur in the future.

Calendar of Events Scheduled for the Horseshoe Bend Park for July 2022:

July 18th-20th – Del Val Jr. Terriers Cheer Practice

July 24th – South Park NJ Mycological Assn. Foraging Walk

Kingwood Township Park/Applications/Updates for July 2022:

July 10th – Don Miller Meet & Greet Event

July 16th – Chelsea Barclay Birthday Party

July 24th – Katie Weckenman Birthday Party

July 30th – Wedding Reception Picnic

New and Pending Business

Motion to Approve the Minutes of the June 1, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes for the Parks and Recreation Committee

It was moved by Andy Russano, Jr. seconded by Timothy Jordan to approve the June 1, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes for Parks and Recreation Committee.

Roll Call Vote:	Aye	- Russano, Hewitt, Kolvites, Dodds, Jordan
	Nay	- None
	Abstain	- Tippet, Nuckols
	Absent	- Niececki

Green Acres Compliance Inspection of Funded Properties

Recording 34:20 – 53:15

A Russano, Jr. stated that there has been discussion between Township Counsel and Mr. Kevin Appleget of NJ State DEP Green Acres regarding a time to meet to review the Green Acres inspection report. A. Russano, Jr. believes that working together the areas of possible violation can easily be corrected. The audit showed concerns but the Park is still open. Some concerns have already been addressed such as filling the holes in the Leash Free Dog Area and moving some equipment off site. The Department of Public Works will be mowing the Leash Free Dog area per Green Acres recommendation. R. Dodds stated that there can be no mowing of the area until the end of August which is the end of protected birds nesting season. A. Russano, Jr. state that we received an email from Sandra McNicol of Environmental Commission stating that mowing could commence after July 15th. Secretary Walters was asked to forward that email to Parks and Rec Committee members. A member of Parks and Rec will contact the National Resource Conservation Service for confirmation.

During the time that Counsel has recommended that volunteers cease trail maintenance work Department of Public Works staff will remove any falling or fallen trees. A. Russano, Jr. stated that he hopes that the gathering of support documents, correcting all noted areas of concern and meeting with the State DEP Green acres and Parks and Forestry Departments will occur quickly and volunteer work at the Park can resume. He did state, however, that he hopes we are not penalized for activities that may have occurred at the Park over the years. Mr. MacConnel stated that won't happen because the State never penalizes for these types of issues.

C. Kolvites asked A. Russano, Jr. why the volunteers were made to cease work on the trails. When the State did not require that they stop work on the trails. A. Russano, Jr. said that the Township Committee was advised by Counsel to cease all volunteer work until we are cleared with the State and find out what the expectations of processes moving forward are for creating new trails, bridge building and any other changes to the Park. C. Kovites feels that the Township Committee members would be personally responsible if a tree were to fall on a hiker.

R. Dodds expressed frustration that the Township Committee did not contact the members of the Parks and Recreation before consulting with Township Counsel and before requiring the cessation of trail maintenance work. A. Russano, Jr. stated again that this inspection resulting in possible violations is being handled by Counsel and requested that at this time both the members of Parks and Recreation Committee and the Township Committee work together to resolve the noted issues. When asked if there was an MOU State Department of Parks and Forestry R. Dodds stated there was which gives the right to manage those lands.

When Secretary Walters informed the Committee that a 2017 renewal for the 2012 original MOU with State Parks and Forestry, managed by D and R Canal could not be located R. Dodds stated that there wasn't one. At the time renewal was due he had a telephone conversation with Marlen Dooley, the Attorney for D and R Canal at that time, in which R. Dodds accepted a verbal agreement of extension of the MOU from M.s.Dooley which is why there is no hard copy on file at the Municipal building.

Recording 56:15 – 56:45

R. Dodds stated that there are many issues that need to be cleared up regarding the properties listed on the Green Acres letter which are Horseshoe Bend Park, Horseshoe Bend East, Hudson Grant, Axelrod and Maritan. One concern in particular is that the blue trail bridge is not located in any of those referenced properties. For the record R. Dodds stated that material for all the bridges in the Park was given to them by DEP and all plans were approved. Believes the inspector was unaware of the property boundaries.

T. Jordan recommended that once all necessary documentation has been gathered by the Township the Committee should have a public meeting including the members of Parks and Recreation Committee to gather further input before meeting with the State representative.

M. Tippet asked if copies of Sandra McNicol's letter regarding the July 15th date for mowing at the Park be emailed to the Committee members. It was suggested that Secretary Walters contact Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to determine official date for the end of the protected birds nesting period in New Jersey is.

Old Business

C. Kolvites asked why the backstops at the baseball field were removed expressing frustration that the Parks and Recreation Committee was not notified beforehand. Michael Ewing, DPW Foreman had discussed the reasons for removal of the baseball field dugouts and backstops at the June 1st meeting. D. Hewitt had spoken with Mr. Ewing about the backstops and was informed that after the insurance company inspection it was determined that too much of the wiring was broken which rendered them unsafe. Mr. Ewing was asked to remove the backstops along with the dugouts. Mr. Ewing to report to the Committee regarding this topic at the August 3rd meeting.

Kingwood Township Park Playground Mulch

D. Hewitt presented reasons why rubber mulch will be a better choice than wood mulch stating that although it is more expensive in the short run it is much less expensive over time. The Committee agreed to replace the current wood mulch with new rubber mulch in cocoa brown color. R. Dodds recommended increasing the required depth of the mulch from 4 inches to 6 inch depth for greater safety.

Motion was made to approve the acquisition of 25 yards of cocoa brown rubber mulch at a 6" depth with additional border/curb materials to replace the current wood mulch at the Kingwood Park Playground. The estimated total cost of this acquisition is \$15,000.00 and this motion is contingent upon the Township Committee's approval of using the Open Space, Historic Preservation and Recreation Trust fund to fund this purchase.

It was moved by Timothy Jordan, seconded by Karen Nuckols to approve the acquisition of 25 yards of cocoa brown rubber mulch at a 6" depth with additional border/curb materials to replace the current wood mulch at the Kingwood Park Playground. The estimated total cost of this acquisition is \$15,000.00 and this motion is contingent upon the Township Committee's approval of using the Open Space, Historic Preservation and Recreation Trust fund to fund this purchase.

Roll Call Vote: Aye - Russano, Hewitt, Kolvites, Dodds, Jordan, Tippet, Nuckols

Nay	- None
Abstain	- None
Absent	- Niciecki

Reports

Financial Report
Reviewed

Correspondence

Response email from Joe Floyd re: Dog Park Mowing
Thank you email from Jim Honda
Thank you letters to Shop Rite and Independent Bakers
It was noted that the correspondence from Joe Floyd was not included in the meeting packet.
Secretary Walters will send that communication to all members via email.

ANNUAL SENIOR PICNIC

June 5, 2022 - Review

FISHING DERBY

June 18, 2022 – Review

It was noted that this event went well but the cook-out for lunch didn't start until the event was almost over. Next year the Parks and Recreation Committee will supply all food.

TOWN WIDE YARD SALE

October 1st and 2nd 2022

ANNUAL TREE LIGHTING

December 3, 2022

Other Matters

Committee discussed the Community Day and the need for a Sub-Committee for planning.
Heidi Diminick, David Hewitt, Caroline Nuckols and Ellen Jordan volunteered.

Jack MacConnell recommended that next year the Committee produce a sponsor book to help fund the Community Day.

Leash Free Dog area was discussed. It was noted that there is a high degree of non-compliance to the posted rules by people who use this area. Dogs are permitted to be off-leash from the car to field, dogs are frequently permitted to dig holes, owners often times don't have their dogs' leashes in hand for quick access in case trouble arises, umbrellas are left up even after asking that they be removed each day for safety reasons.

T. Jordan explained that due to work location change he will not be able to attend the next few in-person Parks and Recreation meeting. He will, however, be able to attend once the meetings switch from in-person to Zoom in October or November. The Committee had no issues with Mr. Jordan's short-term absence.

A.Russano, Jr. discussed the possibility of applying for a 519 Economic Development grant for \$8,000.00 through the County. There are 24 private, small businesses along this corridor and the grant could be used to assist and enhance these businesses with web site design, brochures and other means of marketing.

Donations

None

Adjournment

It was moved by Andrew Russano, Jr., seconded by Timothy Jordan to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 PM.

All voted Aye on Roll Call Vote.

Respectfully submitted,
Michele Tipton-Walters
Secretary, Parks and Recreation