

MINUTES of a meeting of the **SOMERSET COUNTY PARK COMMISSION WORK SESSION** held Thursday, December 3, 2009 at 7:00 AM at the Somerset County Park Commission Headquarters, 355 Milltown Road, Bridgewater, NJ.

"In accordance with Public Law Chapter 231, the open public meeting notice requirements have been satisfied whereby the starting time and place of this meeting have been filed with one County newspaper and the County Clerk and posted in a public information area in this office."

President Fuerst called the meeting to order.

PRESENT

Paul Consiglio
William Crosby
Steven Fuerst
Walter Hansen
Christopher Paladino
Dot Paluck
Gary Walsh
Rick Fontana, Freeholder Liaison

ABSENT

John Gillen
Joanne Jaeger

Other staff members present were:

Raymond Brown, Director
Joanne Steinruck, Executive Assistant
Tom Boccino, Principal Planner/Land Acq.
Pierce Frauenheim, Deputy Dir. Park Maint.
Stuart Lederman, Counsel

Dan Livak, Deputy Director, Business Admin.
Brian Newman, County Treasurer
Robert Ransone, Deputy Director, Golf Mgmt.
Cindie Sullivan, Deputy Director
Donna Van Deursen, Manager, HR

RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution in Appreciation

Resolution thanks Freeholder Fontana for his 12 years of service in County government and as a constant source of support for the Somerset County Park Commission and the programs, services, and facilities that it provides to the people of Somerset County.

Resolution in Appreciation

Resolution in appreciation of John Kitchen for his years of service as a Freeholder, Park Commissioner, and Deputy Director of the agency.

Rejecting Proposals for Governmental Affairs Consultant Services

Resolution recommends all proposals be rejected due to budget constraints.

Award of Contract for Design of Promotional Materials

Resolution recommends award to LaMountain Communications for the following:

	\$2,675
Project B: Annual Golf Magazine:	
Duke Island Park Concert Series Poster,	\$ 950
Newspaper Ads	

The promotional budget was scaled back and some of the work will now be done in-house.

Award of Contract for Public Relations Consultant

The consensus of the Commissioners was that the Reitman Group has a long history of experience with the community and the award would go to the Reitman Group.

Award of Contract for Labor Counsel

This RFP is under review. A recommendation will be forthcoming.

Award of Contract for Health Benefit Consulting Services

Resolution recommends award of contract to Gallagher Benefit Services, Inc. for an annual fee of \$23,000.

Award of Contract for Entertainment Consultant for Summer Concerts

Resolution recommends award to La Guardia & Associates Entertainment for entertainment services for the summer concerts at Duke Island Park at the rate of 10% of the artist's fee.

Award of Contract for Sound Production Services

Resolution recommends award of contract to RTD Productions for the 2010 Concert Series held at Duke Island Park. The fee is \$800.00 per Sunday concert and \$1,200.00 for the July 4th concert.

Award of Contract for Farrier Services

Resolution recommends award of contract for the third and final year to Brosh Goldgraber, Professional Farrier Service, Inc.

Award of Contract for Veterinary Services

Resolution recommends award of the third and final year to Running S Equine Veterinary Services.

Award of Contract for Equine Dentistry

Resolution recommends award of contract for the second and final year to Dr. James Smith.

Award of Contract for Golf Shop Resale of Merchandise

Resolution recommends award of contract for resale of merchandise for Green Knoll, Spooky Brook, Neshanic Valley, Quail Brook, and Warrenbrook Golf Courses.

Bridgestone Golf

76 Summer Street

Edison, NJ 08820-2436

Hornung Golf Products, Inc.

815 Morris Street

Fond Du Lac, WI 54935-5611

Ad-wear & Specialty of Texas

8120 West Glen

Houston, TX 77063

Award of Contract for Tree Trimming and Removal

Resolution recommends awarding the second year of a two year contract to Tamke Tree Experts at the rate of \$170.00 per hour (regular time) and \$212.50 per hour overtime and holidays.

Authorizing State Contract Purchase of a 2010 Chevrolet Express Van

Resolution authorizes the purchase of an Econoline eight passenger van from Hertirch Fleet to be used at the EEC and will be replacing a 2002 seven passenger Dodge Caravan. The cost is not to exceed \$19,679.29.

Authorizing State Contract Purchase of a 2010 Ford Pickup Truck

Resolution authorizes the purchase of a Ford F250XL pickup truck to be used by the Horticulture Department at Buck Garden and will replace a 13 year old Dodge. The cost is not to exceed \$32,774.00.

Authorizing State Contract Purchase of Two 2010 Toyota Prius

Resolution authorizes the purchase of two 2010 Toyota Prius from Hudson Motors Partnership. One Prius will replace a 1996 Dodge seven passenger Caravan at the EEC and the other will replace a 1999 Dodge Caravan for Park Maintenance. The cost is not to exceed \$40,588.00 (\$20,294.00 each).

Adopting the 2010 Fee Schedule

Resolution recommends the new fee schedule to be effective on January 1, 2010.

Adopting Permit Guidelines

Resolution recommends changes to the Permit Guidelines to include the Torpey Athletic Complex, which now includes a concession area to be rented to local municipal recreation departments and non-profits agencies. The concession will be a carry in-carry out. A fee will be collected at the beginning of the season and given back at the end of the season if the concession is left how it was at the beginning of the season.

Purchase of the Bellemead Development Corporation Property

Resolution is regarding the purchase of 36.17 acres in Bedminster Township. This property will append the County's Lamington Greenway. This property is vacant and wooded off of Route 78 and will create a buffer around the development and Fiddlers Elbow Golf Course.

Purchase of the Constructural Dynamics, Inc. Properties

Resolution is regarding the purchase of 510 acres in Hillsborough and Montgomery Townships. This property will append the County's Sourland Mountain Preserve. This property is the largest acreage the county owns. It will require subdivision but will be left natural and will be trails only. Roaring rocks will now become part of the Sourland Mountain Preserve.

Setting the 2010 Work Session Dates

January 14, 2010	July 8, 2010
February 11, 2010	August 12, 2010
March 11, 2010	September 8, 2010 WEDNESDAY
April 8, 2010	October 14, 2010
May 13, 2010	November 12, 2010 FRIDAY
June 10, 2010	December 2, 2010

Setting the 2010 Park Commission Meeting Dates

January 21, 2010	July 15, 2010 at 8:00 AM
February 18, 2010	August 19, 2010 at 8:00 AM
March 18, 2010	September 16, 2010
April 15, 2010	October 21, 2010
May 20, 2010 at 8:00 AM	November 18, 2010
June 17, 2010 at 8:00 AM	December 9, 2010

DISCUSSION:

Goals

The goals of each department were handed out to each Commissioner and the staff will comment on specific points at the Park Commission meeting next week.

2010 Operating Budget Status

A formal presentation will be done in March. The budget has been cut by five percent of the Freeholder allocation or \$410,000. The health benefits package had a 26% increase that was eventually negotiated to under 20% increase. Commissioner Paladino commented that perhaps the Park Commission could consider more of a deductible on the employee benefits rather than increasing the contribution. Ray Brown reported that option has been discussed and will be a component of the final budget.

Professional Services: Services have been cut back as shown in the resolutions.

Salary: The budget anticipates a 2% salary pool but acknowledges that we may, in fact, be recommending no increase in an effort to save jobs. The Commission will use the same standard established by the County.

Full-Time Positions: Vacant positions will be filled by part-time employees. There is an on-going issue of being short staffed in the Park Maintenance Division that will not be addressed in the proposed new budget. As the county continues to aggressively acquire open space and parkland, the commission management obligations also continue to increase. This dilemma is one that will have to be resolved in the near term if we are to maintain these properties as the public and the Commission expect. Commissioner Walsh asked Counsel Lederman if he might discuss the possibility of using funding from Green Acres or the County Open Space Trust Fund with County Counsel. Stuart reported he will research that option. Brian Newman reported that in 2005 the Freeholders voted to not include the maintenance of open space properties in the referendum. Ray recalled that the Trust Fund's original enabling legislation may have prohibited using those resources for maintenance purposes.

Re-evaluate Fees: This has been done and is reflected in the 2010 Fee Schedule provided.

Divisional Budgets: Each department head has decreased their budget.

Surplus: This year the Finance Committee has reluctantly suggested taking \$1.2 million from surplus. That almost depletes the surplus. Brian Newman reported that there is no other choice but to do that. Programs have already been reduced and fees have been increased.

There are no other options. The surplus is for emergencies and this is an emergency. The county does not know what the state will be doing as far as the budgets. Ray Brown commented that the Freeholders and the Commission needs for the possibility of State Park closing in 2010. If that occurs, the Park Commission's parks and facilities will be even more heavily utilized than in the past. Freeholder Fontana reported that at their budget meetings the Freeholders need to be informed of the consequences of these anticipated budget cuts.

Furlough: President Fuerst asked Donna Van Deursen to look into how and if the state gives unemployment if furloughs were to be considered.

Re-examine Current Policies: Ray Brown offered that selling cigars and beer and wine at the other four golf courses could help increase the commission's revenues. Such a policy reconsideration would also assist the concession vendors in making their operations more profitable.

Review: We are anticipating a five percent reduction on the County's allocation, we are guessing at a two percent salary pool, we feel we have negotiated the best possible rates with Horizon, we have discontinued certain professional services, we have selectively increased user fees, and we are recommending \$1.2 million of the surplus will be utilized to balance the proposed budget.

Brian Newman commented that the December 23rd Close-Out meeting will be for transferring of money. His office will be realigning our accounts and they will send out the information on the transfers within the next week.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 a.m.