

**MINUTES** of a Special Opening Meeting of the **SOMERSET COUNTY PARK COMMISSION** held January 11, 2024 at 3:30 P.M. at Somerset County Park Commission Headquarters, 355 Milltown Road, Bridgewater, NJ.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Director Hayes.

This is a Special Meeting of the Somerset County Park Commission, and adequate advance notice of this meeting has been provided by publication in The Courier News on November 25, 2022 and the Star Ledger on November 29, 2022. Notice was also posted on the bulletin board at the entrance in the Somerset County Park Commission Headquarters and filed with the Somerset County Clerk in compliance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.

Legal Counsel, Eric Bernstein, led the swearing in of Commissioners. Commissioner Giordano, Commissioner Hunsinger, and Commissioner McCallen were administered the oath of office.

Commissioner Caliguire presented the slate of candidates prepared by the Nominating Committee. The slate proposed consisted of: President Nancy D'Andrea, Vice President Joseph Kempe, and Secretary Geoffrey Soriano. Director Hayes called for a motion to approve the slate prepared by the nominating committee. Moved by Commissioner Giordano; seconded by Commissioner Hunsinger. YEAS: Commissioners Caliguire, D'Andrea, Foelsch, Giordano, Hunsinger, Jones, and McCallen. NAYES: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Commissioner Kempe.

President D'Andrea called the meeting to order.

Roll Call:

PRESENT

Nancy D'Andrea  
Mark Caliguire  
Bill Foelsch  
Mike Giordano  
DJ Hunsinger  
Randy Jones\*  
Kevin McCallen\*  
Paul Drake  
County Commissioner Liaison

ABSENT

Joseph Kempe

\*Participated via videoconference.

Other staff members present were:

Dan Hayes, Director

Geoffrey Soriano, Secretary, Dir. Of Ops.

Janine Erickson, Admin., Exec. Services\*

Donna Umgelter, Admin., HR

Maria Vasquez, Coordinator, HR

Stephen Dahl, Mgr., Recreation & TR

Doug Vornlocker, Manager, Rangers

Ken Fivek, Manager, Golf Operations

Darrel Marcinek, Director, Golf Maint.

Carrie Springer, Admin., Leisure & Community Services

Mike Ballow, Manager, Fleet

Ryan Quick, Web, Design, and Digital

Media Coordinator

Also in attendance: Eric Bernstein, Legal Counsel, Adam Bloom, Park Commission Engineer, Yvonne Childress, Park Commission Treasurer, Tom Boccino, Park Commission Principal Planner/Land Acquisition.

\*Participated via videoconference.

### **OPEN MEETING FOR PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no comments from the public.

### **SERVICE AWARDS**

President D'Andrea presented a service award to the following employee:

~ Steven Ackerman, Fleet and No. County Park Maintenance, 10 years

### **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

President D'Andrea called for the approval of the minutes of the special closing meeting held on December 28, 2023. Moved by Commissioner Foelsch; seconded by Commissioner Hunsinger. YEAS: Commissioners Caliguire, Foelsch, Hunsinger, Jones, and McCallen. NAYES: None. ABSTAIN: President D'Andrea and Commissioner Giordano. ABSENT: Vice President Kempe.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

### **RESOLUTIONS**

Resolutions R24-01-001 through R24-01-012 were moved by Commissioner Foelsch; seconded by Commissioner Giordano. YEAS: Commissioners Caliguire, Foelsch, Giordano, Hunsinger, Jones, McCallen, and President D'Andrea. NAYES: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Vice President Kempe.

### **Resolution R24-01-001 – Adopting the 2024 Temporary Budget**

Resolution adopts the 2024 temporary budget.

### **Resolution R24-01-002 – Authorizing Use of State Contracts**

Resolution authorizes the use of state contracts.

**Resolution R24-01-003 – Authorizing Use of Morris County Cooperative Pricing Council Cooperative Purchasing System**

Resolution authorizes the use of the Morris County Cooperative Pricing Council Cooperative Purchasing System contracts.

**Resolution R24-01-004 – Authorizing Use of Educational Services Commission of New Jersey Cooperative Purchasing System**

Resolution authorizes the use of the Educational Services Commission of New Jersey Cooperative Purchasing System contracts.

**Resolution R24-01-005 – Authorizing Use of Bergen County Cooperative Pricing System**

Resolution authorizes the use of the Bergen County Cooperative Pricing System contracts.

**Resolution R24-01-006 – Designating Public Agency Compliance Officer**

Resolution designates Melissa Kosensky as Public Agency Compliance Officer.

**Resolution R24-01-007 – Designating Official Newspapers**

Resolution designates the Courier News and the Star Ledger as official newspapers.

**Resolution R24-01-008 – Designating Representative to the Regional Center Partnership of Somerset County**

Resolution designating Dan Hayes and Janine Erickson as representatives.

**Resolution R24-01-009 – Designating Bank Depositories for the Somerset County Park Commission**

Resolution designating Citizens Bank for Somerset County Bank Accounts.

**Resolution R24-01-010 – Approving a Memorandum of Understanding between the Somerset County Park Commission and the Raritan Valley Community College Center for Environmental Studies**

Resolution approving a memorandum of understanding with Raritan Valley Community College for Environmental Studies.

**Resolution R24-01-011 – Awarding Second Year of a Two-Year Contract for Rental and Use of a Portion of Lord Stirling Stable for Equine Assisted Therapies for Special Needs Children**

Resolution awarding contract to Rocking Horse Rehab.



**Resolution R24-01-012 – Authorizing the Use of Contract CC-0022-24 for Purchase of Golf Course and Park Maintenance Materials**

Resolution authorizes use of Andre & Son Inc., Aspen Outdoors- Allentown, Davisson Golf, Extech Building Material, Fisher & Son Company Inc., Genesis Turfgrass Inc., Grass Roots Turf products Inc., Herman's Trucking Inc., Landscape Materials Inc., Nutrien AG Solutions, Plant Food Company Inc., Pocono Turf Supply, Primos products Inc., Seeton Turf Warehouse LLC, SiteOne Landscape Supply, Storr Tractor Company, Tuckahoe Sand & Gravel, and Viersma Sales & Service

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Director Hayes submitted a report for the month of January 2024.

**COMMISSION CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence.

**APPROVAL OF BILLS FOR PAYMENT**

The following resolutions were moved by Commissioner Hunsinger; seconded by Commissioner Giordano. YEAS: Commissioners Caliguire, Foelsch, Giordano, Hunsinger, Jones, McCallen, and President D'Andrea. NAYES: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Vice President Kempe.

**Resolution R24-01-013 – Payment of Claims**

Resolution authorizes payment of claims in the amount of \$411,651.53 comprised of Claims in the amount of \$0.00, Other Expenses in the amount of \$36,710.77, and Salaries and Wages in the amount of \$374,940.76 for the period of December 22, 2023 through January 5, 2024.

**Resolution R24-01-014 – Confirming Orders**

Resolution authorizes payment of confirming orders totaling \$33,708.39.

**Resolution R24-01-015 – Refund of Recreation Fees**

Resolution authorizes the refund of unused recreation fees.

**Resolution R24-01-016 – Amending and Canceling of Certification of Funds for Previously Awarded Contracts**

Resolution cancels and amends certification of funds for previously awarded contracts.

**Resolution R24-01-017 – Authorizing Additional Funding for Previously Awarded Contracts (Administration)**

Resolution authorizes additional funds for previously awarded contracts.

**Resolution R24-01-018 – Authorizing Additional Funding for Previously Awarded Contracts (Park Operations)**

Resolution authorizes additional funds for previously awarded contracts.

**Resolution R24-01-019 – Authorizing Additional Funding for Previously Awarded Contracts (Leisure Services)**

Resolution authorizes additional funds for previously awarded contracts.

**Resolution R24-01-020 – Authorizing Additional Funding for Previously Awarded Contracts (Golf)**

Resolution authorizes additional funds for previously awarded contracts.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**FINANCE**

Commissioner Caliguire, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for the month of December 2023.

**HUMAN RESOURCES**

Commissioner Hayes, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for the month of December 2023.

Donna Umgelter, Administrator of Human Services, thanked the staff for their help with the job fairs held in January and is optimistic that the job fairs attracted new candidates for various open positions.

**LEISURE SERVICES**

Commissioner Foelsch, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for the month of December 2023.

Stephen Dahl, Manager of Recreation & TR, shared that registration will be opening soon for winter session programs, special event applications, and for show mobile requests.

Carrie Springer, Administrator of Leisure Services, stated that the upcoming water line work along the road will cause closures at Buck Garden in January or February. A new gardener has also been hired for Buck Garden. The staff at Colonial Garden will be updating plantings at the Merrill House and the Neshanic Valley Golf Course. The environmental education center will be hosting a children's art show, "Nature Through a Child's Eye", through February 4<sup>th</sup> which will feature over four hundred pieces of art from kids in kindergarten through sixth grade. The Stable at Lord Stirling Park has been generating some positive comments regarding hayrides and new events. She also noted that Stephen Dahl achieved his Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP) certification through the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).

Commissioner Foelsch offered his congratulations to Stephen and mentioned that there were lots of photos of the many activities hosted by the Leisure Services department in the December report.



### **GOLF MANAGEMENT**

Commissioner McCallen, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for the month of December 2023.

Manager of Golf Operations, Ken Fivek, stated that responses for the award of a new golf cart rental agreement will be opened by County Purchasing later today. The golf courses are still open but the golf rounds are dependent on the weather. The golf shops are accepting registrations.

Darrell Marcinek, Director of Golf Maintenance, said that his rain gauge indicates that we've received 11 inches of rain since December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023. He said that the courses were built to drain so the courses are in good shape despite the frequent rains. However, the flooding is causing issues with the bridge and irrigation projects.

### **INFORMATION MANAGEMENT**

Commissioner Kempe, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for the month of December 2023.

### **VISITOR SERVICES**

Commissioner Foelsch, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for the month of December 2023.

Doug Vornlocker, Manager of Park Rangers and Property Management, shared that the Rangers are assisting with flood clean up activities in the parks.

### **PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

Commissioner D'Andrea, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for December 2023.

Doug Vornlocker, Manager of Park Rangers and Property Management shared that deer hunting season is in full swing. Commissioner Foelsch asked if they were reporting more does or bucks. Doug shared that 4 does and 1 buck have been reported so far by the hunters.

### **PLANNING AND LAND ACQUISITION**

Commissioner Jones, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for December 2023.

Tom Boccino, Park Commission Principal Planner/Land Acquisition, said that he will be starting his annual report and that in 2023, about 23 acres were acquired. He shared that we hope to do more property acquisition in 2024. Tom also indicated that the County has finalized the design of new Open Space signs and will be installing them soon.

### **CAPITAL FACILITIES – CONSTRUCTION AND ENGINEERING**

Commissioner McCallen, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for December 2023.

Adam Bloom, Park Commission Engineer, provided an update on his engineering report. He shared that both golf capital projects are still on schedule, the North Branch Greenway

pickleball courts and Warrenbrook Pool bid opening will be on February 8<sup>th</sup>, and the County Commission will be awarding the new barn project at the Stable during its meeting this evening. The Green Knoll Golf Course golf cart/pedestrian bridges and the replacement of the Warrenbrook Golf Course irrigation system projects are underway.

### **PARK MAINTENANCE**

Commissioner Kempe, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for December 2023.

### **AUDIT COMMITTEE**

There was no audit report.

### **COUNTY COMMISSIONER REPORT**

Commissioner Drake welcomed Commissioner Hunsinger, McCallen, and Giordano. He also pointed out that 2023 was the hottest year on record and that this shows the significance of climate change. He looks forward to working with the park commission and emphasized that the park commission has the opportunity to protect and manage lands to work to make a difference on a local scale.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

President D'Andrea thanked everyone for her nomination. She shared her background which includes her love of traveling to National Parks and her goal to walk the entire 74-mile D&R canal. She is looking forward to the year ahead and enhancing natural resources in Somerset County.

Director Hayes shared that the proposal to update the bylaws will be reviewed and he will ask for them to be approved at the next meeting in February.

Director Hayes also mentioned an upcoming county-wide program for art in our open spaces. The program will involve artists coming to the parks to create art of the parks. The Secretary, Geoff Soriano, added that this program is focused on artists creating art, and that none of the art will be installed in the parks. Tom Boccino, Park Commission Principal Planner/Land Acquisition, added that the event is a collaborative effort with the Somerset County Cultural & Heritage Commission called "Farm to Frame". The artists will use various media to create their art then they will be exhibited at the county building. This year the focus will be on open space to highlight recreation and open space properties. Tom added that the exhibit is proposed for March 2025. Carrie Springer, Administrator of Leisure Services, expressed an interest in hosting an exhibit of the "Farm to Frame" open space art at the Environmental Education Center.

President D'Andrea asked the Administrator of Leisure Services if they received a grant. Carrie Springer shared that she was notified by Yvonne Childress that their grant for an inclusive program was approved but that she needs to gather additional details to share at a later time.

Seeing no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:07 P.M. was moved by Commissioner Giordano; seconded by Commissioner Hunsinger. YEAS: Commissioners Caliguire, Foelsch, Giordano, Hunsinger, Jones, McCallen, and President D'Andrea. NAYES: None. ABSTAIN: None. ABSENT: Vice President Kempe.

Respectfully submitted,



Geoffrey D. Soriano  
Secretary



Zinnia Cheetham  
Executive Assistant