

MINUTES of a meeting of the **SOMERSET COUNTY PARK COMMISSION** held Thursday, June 20, 2013 at 8:00 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 a county newspaper and the County Clerk and posted in a public information area in this office."

President Fuerst called the meeting to order.

PRESENT

William Crosby
Steven Fuerst
Helen Haines
Walter Hansen
Christopher Paladino
Dot Paluck
Patricia Walsh, Freeholder Liaison

ABSENT

Paul Consiglio
Dale Florio
Doug Ludwig

Other staff members present were:

Raymond Brown, Director
Joanne Steinruck, Executive Assistant
Robert Aufseeser, Counsel
Mike Ballow, Supervisor Park Maintenance
Tom Boccino, Principal Planner/Land Acq.
Dave Dendler, Manager Park Rangers
Pierce Frauenheim, Deputy Dir. Maint.
Don Korbobo, Property Mgmt. Coordinator
Dan Livak, Deputy Dir. Business Admin.
Matt Loper, Engineer

Darrell Marcinek, Director Golf Maint.
Margie Margentino, Manager Stable
Alex Mathew, Manager Info. Mgmt.
Karren Newman, Manager Recreation
Bob Ransone, Director Golf Management
Adam Slutsky, Principal Engineer
Cindie Sullivan, Deputy Director
Dina Trunzo, Manager TR
Donna Umgelter, Manager HR

Also in attendance: Yvonne Childress and Rich Reitman

OPEN MEETING FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

No comment from the public.

SERVICE AWARDS

President Fuerst presented ten year service awards to Joseph Gonzalez and Karren Newman, a 15 year service award to Steven Crofts, and a 40 year service award to James Palko.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

President Fuerst called for the approval of the minutes of the last regular meeting held May 16, 2013. **MOVED BY:** Commissioner Crosby; seconded by: Commissioner Hansen. **YEAS:** Commissioners Crosby, Haines, Hansen, Paladino, Paluck, and

President Fuerst. NAYES: None. ABSENT: Commissioners Consiglio, Florio, and Ludwig.

APPROVAL OF BILLS FOR PAYMENT

Resolution R13-052 - Payment of Claims

Resolution authorizing payment of bills for \$1,765,659.42 comprising of check numbers 234382-234407, 235054-235067, 235154-235164, 235426-235434, 236077-236094, 234676-234760, 235072-235150, 235435-235507, 235825-235859, and 236269-236374. MOVED BY: Commissioner Crosby; seconded by: Commissioner Hansen. YEAS: Commissioners Crosby, Haines, Hansen, Paladino, Paluck, and President Fuerst. NAYES: None. ABSENT: Commissioners Consiglio, Florio, and Ludwig.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Brown submitted a report for the month of May 2013.

Resolution R13-053 – Thanks and Appreciation of Brian Newman

Resolution recognizes Brian Newman for his years of service.

Update of Skillman Park

Director Brown reported that all the former state structures on the premises have been demolished. The first phase of the park to be developed will be a two-and-a-quarter mile loop trail which will go around the circumference of the property. The trail will consist of some old roads and driveways already in existence. Four parking lots will be created around the loop, one of which has already been constructed. There will be a kiosk with information regarding the site's history and prior use. The New Jersey Epilepsy Association has already created a report on the history of the area and has offered to assist the Commission with signage. The dam in the stream has been removed making it a continuously flowing stream. Montgomery Township would like to see future wetland restoration and a reforestation plan implemented as a component of the park's future development. The property has been cleared of old utility lines and concrete foundations thanks to the Park Maintenance staff with support and assistance from the County Public Works Department. Super Storm Sandy also caused extensive tree damage which had to be cleared. The Park has necessitated the creation of a major staff and equipment commitment. A planned ribbon cutting and official opening of the trail loop will possibly be held next summer at the earliest. Local Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops have expressed an interest in volunteering with the on-going cleanup. Currently a Girl Scout troop is working with the Park Commission on the restoration of the property's cemetery. The troop is in the process of soliciting funds to restore headstones and install benches. The Somerset County Park Foundation donated \$5,000.00 to get the project started. Pierce Frauenheim reported that the Joint Insurance Fund is very happy with the progress regarding the safety of the property. President Fuerst asked if there are any environmental issues remaining on the property. Matt Loper responded that all the issues have been eradicated at this point. There is no need for further monitoring and the cleanup was completed at no cost to the County.

COMMISSIONER CORRESPONDENCE

1. Letter from Governor Christie informing Freeholder Walsh that Somerset County has been selected to receive funding from the New Jersey Department of Transportation's Fiscal Year 2013 Local Aid Bikeway Program. The Raritan River Greenway Bikeway, Orlando Drive Connection will receive a grant of \$350,000.00.
2. Letter from a participant in the American Cancer Society Relay for Life complimenting the Park Commission (specifically Dennis Razzano and Jerry Mochonas) on how courteous and caring the staff was during the event.
3. Letter from the Trilogy Repertory advising the Park Commission that its Board approved the contract.
4. Letter from Somerset County 4-H Association regarding evacuation procedures at the 4-H fair during thunderstorms or other emergencies.
5. Letter from Middle Earth thanking the Park Commission for the leadership and support of the Frank "Nap" Torpey Memorial "Hills of Somerset" Bicycle Race.
6. Notice of Public Hearing from the New Jersey Water Supply Authority regarding the Township of North Brunswick's application for renewal of uninterrupted water supply from the Raritan Basin System.
7. Letter from the Montgomery High School Band Parent's Association complimenting Merri Makers on how professional the staff was and how the food was outstanding.

CONSENT AGENDA

RESOLUTIONS

The following resolutions were MOVED BY: Commissioner Crosby; seconded by: Commissioner Hansen. YEAS: Commissioners Crosby, Haines, Hansen, Paladino, Paluck, and President Fuerst. NAYES: None. ABSENT: Commissioners Consiglio, Florio, and Ludwig.

Resolution R13-054 – Authorizing the Release of Executive Session Minutes

Resolution authorizes the release of minutes from March 21, 2002, December 12, 2002, February 20, 2003, October 16, 2003, February 11, 2004, May 20, 2004, June 17, 2004, October 21, 2004, May 17, 2005, February 16, 2006, May 25, 2006, August 17, 2006, September 21, 2006, October 10, 2006, March 15, 2007, June 21, 2007, September 17, 2009, April 15, 2010, May 13, 2010, June 17, 2010, and August 12, 2010. This process will be done on a quarterly basis.

Resolution R13-055 – Award of First Year of a Two-Year Contract for Refuse Disposal Services

Resolution awards a contract to Carnevale Disposal Company, Inc., Republic Services of NJ, LLC, and Waste Management of NJ, Inc.

Resolution R13-056 – Renewal of Two Year License Agreement Renewal

Resolution renews a license agreement with the Printmaking Center for two years for the period of November 1, 2013 through October 31, 2015.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE/BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Dan Livak, Deputy Director/Business Administration reported that overall revenue is nine percent more than 2011 and is three percent more than the five year average. Dan has been working with the County Finance Department to change the merchant credit card processing and TD Bank has the lowest rate. The change will be completed by July 1. The audit is near completion and Dan will keep the Commissioners up to date.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Donna Umgelter, Manager, Human Resources reported that there are openings at Quail Brook and Spooky Brook Golf Courses. The Joint Insurance Fund has given the Park Commission the Award of Excellence in Safety. The requirement of the award is to hold safety meetings, audits of facilities, and safety training. The Park Commission was given a check for \$1,000.00 which is the highest award. The money will be used for the Safety Fair. Donna thanked all the staff that made the winning possible. Director Brown reported that Donna pushes safety and is active with the Safety Committee.

LEISURE SERVICES

Cindie Sullivan, Deputy Director reported that the Park Commission history book is at the printers and should be completed by the September Park Commission meeting. Cindie thanked every manager that assisted with the book. Many employees searched archives and slides that date back to the early 1960's. The author, Cliff Zink, interviewed previous staff members. The first half of the book is the history of the Park Commission and the second half is about each park, along with photographs in order of acquisition and development of facilities. The Park Foundation has paid for all the expenses involved with the creation of the book. The Volunteer Recognition dinner will be held on June 26 at Neshanic Valley beginning at 6:30 p.m. Cathy Schrein is retiring at the end of July and there will be a dinner held for her at Verve on July 23. Cindie will distribute a flyer.

Dina Trunzo, Manager Therapeutic Recreation reported that she has completed the camp assessments and has spoken to the teachers of all new campers. Camp begins on June 24 with 40 children. Dina thanked the Park Foundation for sponsoring three events at camp this year. In addition to bringing entertainment to the camp program, special guests help the campers learn how to sit through school assemblies without being disruptive. Staff will also work with the children on social skills each week. Some skills this summer include "Don't Be a Space Invader" and "Using my Words". The Garden Club program is back and Dina suggested to the Commissioners that they check out the TR garden in the courtyard.

Karren Newman, Manager Recreation reported that the Recreation Maintenance Department has moved into the Gaiser Barn in Warren. The ADA work on the pool is completed. Karren complimented the Duke Island Park Maintenance staff. The level of customer service provided is a big part of the reason that non-profits seek to use the facilities for their special events.

Marge Margentino, Manager Stable reported that the spring programs are completed. The summer programs begin on June 24 and the classes are full with a waiting list. The weather has been wet and the trail work continues. Trees continue to fall down due to the wet ground. The Stable has partnered with the Junior League Women's Club in Basking Ridge and is sponsoring a dog walk with Seeing Eye dogs. Several participants have never been to the Stable and this program has been a good way to introduce the Stable to new people.

GOLF MANAGEMENT

Commissioner Paluck, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for the month of May 2013.

Darrell Marcinek, Director of Golf Maintenance reported that Spooky Brook was acknowledged on May 30 with River Friendly certification. Darrell thanked everyone that attended the ribbon cutting. The staff has been busy preparing for the State Public Links Qualifier at Quail Brook. There has been eight inches of rain during the last 13 days and staff has handled the challenge of cutting the grass during that time.

Bob Ransone, Deputy Director Golf Management reported that the golf revenue for 2013 was approximately \$66,900.00 or 2.4% less than the five year average and approximately \$500,000.00 or 16.0% less than 2012. Other golf courses in the Northeast are more than 20% less than 2012. On June 17 a qualifier for the USGA National Drive, Pitch, and Putt competition was held at Neshanic Valley Learning Center. There were more than 100 participants between the ages of seven to fifteen. The finalists will compete for the National Championship next April at Augusta National the weekend before the Masters. The Park Commission and the USGA Museum have partnered with each other and will begin displaying advertising at Neshanic Valley and the Museum for each other. The New Jersey Monthly magazine has rated Neshanic Valley Golf Course as the following:

- No. 1 - County Facility, in Central New Jersey, Practice Facility, and Best Conditioned Publicly Owned
- No. 2 - Most female friendly based on multiple tees, modern facilities, and approachable staff.
- No. 4 - Most Challenging
- No. 5 - Most Scenic

Hole number seven on the Meadow Course was selected as the best short par four in the state of New Jersey. Quail Brook Golf Course was rated as the 40th best facility in the state of New Jersey. Bob thanked all the staff that helped achieve those ratings. Ray Brown thanked Bob for the hard work that was done to achieve those ratings. Commissioner Paluck commented that the USGA enjoyed working with the staff during the National Drive, Pitch, and Putt competition.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Commissioner Hansen, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for the month of May 2013.

Alex Mathew, Manager, Information Management reported that TD Bank will be the new vendor for the credit card system which will be converted on July 1. Alex has been working with the County on the computer network and how to improve the speed. Commissioner Hansen reported that there has been a lack of communication between facilities and Alex will be working on that. Alex, Dan Livak, and Ray Brown have been working with the County on an RFP for improvement of network connectivity. The County has retained an independent vendor and has offered to assist the Commission evaluate some of the long-standing issues it has been attempting to resolve related to unreliable connectivity. Once an assessment is completed, it is expected that specific recommendations dealing with system/network upgrades can be identified and implemented. Ray further reported that he has been working directly with the County Administrator on this issue and he has been assured that their professional assistance will be available to the Commission.

VISITOR SERVICES

Commissioner Crosby, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for the month of May 2013.

Dave Dendler, Manager, Park Rangers shared photographs of the Adopt-A-Boulder event. National Trails Day was held on June 1 at Washington Valley Park with 18 volunteers. Dave distributed parking passes for the July 4th event. Interviews will begin next week for the two Park Ranger positions and Dave is working with the Federal USDA Wildlife Goose Management.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Commissioner Crosby, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for the month of May 2013.

Don Korbobo, Property Management Coordinator reported that tree work from Super Storm Sandy continues and he is working on a farm license bid packet to be advertised in July.

PLANNING AND LAND ACQUISITION

Commissioner Haines, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for the month of May 2013.

Tom Boccino, Parks Section Principal Planner, Land Acquisition reported that a closing on a small parcel of two acres, Hinrichsen property, which is next to the Howe field. The residence will be demolished allowing for the possible future expansion of the athletic complex.

CAPITAL FACILITIES – CONSTRUCTION and ENGINEERING

Commissioner Paladino, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for the month of May 2013.

Adam Slutsky, Principal Engineer, reported that the Howe field is complete and the contractor will be performing irrigation training soon. The pond dredging at Colonial Park Mettlers Pond is completed and the lower pond should be completed next week. The construction of the wash down building at Green Knoll and the Van Camp Barn preservation continues. There will be several projects going to bid in the next two months as outlined in the monthly report.

PARK MAINTENANCE & HORTICULTURE

Commissioner Consiglio, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for the month of May 2013.

Mike Ballow, Supervisor Park Maintenance reported that staff continues to clean the parks from flooding. Staff is also preparing for the July 4 festivities. Howe house has been cleaned and a fence installed around the barn. Colonial Park is being prepared for the bocce tournaments.

Pierce Frauenheim, Deputy Director Park Maintenance reported that Rose Day was cancelled due to the prediction of heavy rain. Commissioner Haines commented how beautiful the Rose Garden is.

Pierce warned that half of his division's maintenance budget has already been spent on repairing overused equipment. Many pieces of equipment are being transported and utilized by various parks. There are more than 120 vehicles and 180 pieces of equipment in the Commission's Maintenance inventory. The new Gas Boy system monitors the hours and mileage for every piece of equipment and then flags when vehicles are due for service. Pierce noted that all equipment is being heavily utilized and as the Commission park inventory continues to increase so should the equipment.

In direct response to the continuing demands upon the staff, Recreation Maintenance has been relocated to the Gaiser Barn at East County Park in Warren Township which, location-wise will help with the EEC, Stable, Warrenbrook Pool, and Boudinot-Ross property. Pierce added that all field lighting at our athletic fields have been computerized so that will cut back on the Park Rangers having to drive to different locations to turn them off.

Ray Brown summarized that the tremendous growth of the Commission's park inventory over that past several years has become a capital issue. With the responsibility to maintain and operate a diverse system of public park facilities, the Commission inherits continued demands upon a rapidly aging and undersized fleet of rolling stock and maintenance equipment. Ray urged that we stay on top of this on-going matter if we are to maintain the good public relations we have enjoyed in the past related to the

quality leisure service experiences our park patrons have historically received and continue to expect.

AUDIT COMMITTEE

No report this month.

FREEHOLDER'S REPORT

Freeholder Walsh reported that the County Finance Committee has recently met and that one of the topics of discussion was the acquisition of the Skillman Park property and the need for additional capital funds and staff to maintain and operate the new park in the future. Freeholder Walsh assured the Commissioners that they are very much aware of this need and that it is on the top of their list.

OLD BUSINESS

No report this month.

NEW BUSINESS

Director Brown reported that the Park Foundation held a Tasting fundraiser which had good attendance and he thanked everyone that attended for their support.

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:34 a.m. was made by Commissioner Crosby and seconded by Commissioner Hansen. YEAS: Commissioners Crosby, Haines, Hansen, Paladino, Paluck, and President Fuerst. NAYES: None. ABSENT: Commissioners Consiglio, Florio, and Ludwig.

Respectfully submitted,

Raymond A. Brown
Director

Joanne Steinruck
Executive Assistant