

MINUTES of a meeting of the **SOMERSET COUNTY PARK COMMISSION** held Thursday, August 20, 2015 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 DiFrancesco called the meeting to order.

PRESENT

William Crosby
Donald DiFrancesco
Jim Leonard
Helen Haines
Doug Ludwig
Kevin McCallen
Christopher Paladino
Dot Paluck - Telephone

ABSENT

Paul Consiglio
Christopher Paladino
Patricia Walsh, Freeholder Liaison

Staff members present were:

Raymond Brown, Director
Joanne Steinruck, Executive Assistant
Jim Avens, Manager Horticulture
Mike Ballow, Manager Park Maint.
Tom Boccino, Principal Planner/Land Acq.
Chester Czaplicki, Feet Manager
Dave Dendler, Manager Park Rangers
Betsy Flanagan, Counsel
Pierce Frauenheim, Deputy Dir. Park Maint.
Dan Livak, Deputy Dir. Business Admin.

Darrell Marcinek, Director Golf Maint.
Marge Margentino, Manager Stable
Alex Mathew, Manager Info. Mgmt.
Shawn McCrohan, Manager Env. Science
Brian Mundhenk, Park Section Engineer
Karren Newman, Manager Recreation
Bob Ransone, Director Golf Mgmt.
Cindie Sullivan, Deputy Director
Dina Trunzo, Manager TR

Also in attendance: Chris Hart and Rich Reitman

OPEN MEETING FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

No comment from the public.

SERVICE AWARDS

President DiFrancesco presented a five-year service award to Peter Carone, a 10-year service award to Tammy Stephens, and a 25-year service award to Jeffrey Elfo.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

President DiFrancesco called for the approval of the minutes of the last regular meeting held July 16, 2015. **MOVED BY:** Commissioner Crosby; seconded by: Commissioner Haines. **YEAS:** Commissioners Crosby, Haines, Leonard, Ludwig,

McCallen, Paluck, and President DiFrancesco. NAYES: None. ABSENT: Commissioners Consiglio and Paladino.

APPROVAL OF BILLS FOR PAYMENT

Resolution R15-062 – Payment of Claims

Resolution authorizing payment of bills for \$799,435.51 comprising of check numbers 3213-3239, 3300-3322, 3164-3212, 3240-3299, 3323-3382, 3387-3448, 3453, and 3454-3508. MOVED BY: Commissioner Crosby; seconded by: Commissioner Leonard. YEAS: Commissioners Crosby, Haines, Leonard, Ludwig, McCallen, Paluck, and President DiFrancesco. NAYES: None. ABSENT: Commissioners Consiglio and Paladino.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Brown submitted a report for the month of July 2015.

Ray showed the Commissioners the award received from the World Federation of Rose Societies for Garden Excellence. Ray sincerely thanked Jim Avens, Mike Inzano, and the Horticulture staff for making the garden a destination.

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Director Brown introduced Robert Butvilla of Suplee, Clooney & Company. Mr. Butvilla advised there were no recommendations for improvement or issues.

Director Brown reported that the Audit Committee has reviewed the report and recommends approval.

Resolution R15-063 – Accepting the Audit Report

Resolution recommends accepting Suplee, Clooney & Company auditor's letter dated July 22, 2015 and the audit report for the year ended December 31, 2014. MOVED BY: Commissioner Crosby; seconded by: Commissioner Leonard. YEAS: Commissioners Crosby, Haines, Leonard, Ludwig, McCallen, Paluck, and President DiFrancesco. NAYES: None. ABSENT: Commissioners Consiglio and Paladino.

COMMISSIONER CORRESPONDENCE

1. Letter from Linda Helm Krapf, Executive Director of the Printmaking Center, informing the Park Commission she has accepted a new position with the Trenton Children's Chorus. The new Director will be Sandra Fernandez.
2. Letter from Printmaking Center asking to extend the lease for the use of the Reeves Cultural Center from October 2015 through October 2017.
3. Photographs received from The Raritan Millstone Heritage Alliance, Inc. of miscellaneous parks that were used in their guidebook and personal collection.
4. Letter from a neighbor of Howe Athletic Complex asking for a barrier between their property and the Complex. They are having a problem with soccer players entering their property looking for soccer balls. The neighbor stated that field lights currently remain on all night and any cars in the parking with headlights on shine into their bedroom.

5. Thank you letter from the same neighbor for Ray's response and they look forward to working with the Park Commission on a solution.
6. Letter from the parent of a camp participant thanking the Park Commission for the new Camp TR Adventures. The staff deserves a "tremendous amount of credit for providing top notch services to individuals with disabilities".
7. Thank you letter from the Freeholders for hosting a BOBO Fridays bin at headquarters, the EEC, and Lord Stirling Stable.
8. Letter from Township of Warren asking to use County-owned land for deer hunting by the Blue Ridge Sportsman Club.
9. Letter from Borough of Peapack/Gladstone requesting the use of Natirar Park for deer culling.
10. Letter from Bernards Township requesting to use two tracts of Lord Stirling property and Ross Farm for its Deer Management program.

CONSENT AGENDA

RESOLUTIONS

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

Resolution R15-064 – Rejecting a Bid for Golfing Simulators

Resolution rejects a bid for non-response due to not having a Public Works Contactor Certificate and a New Jersey Business Registration Certificate.

Resolution R15-065 - Award of Contract for Purchase of a Generac Emergency Standby Generator to Natirar Maintenance Building

Resolution awards a contract to Grainger, Inc. Generator \$14,930.84, auto transfer switch \$790.80, and the cold weather kit \$214.57 for a total of \$15,936.21.

Resolution R15-066 – Award of the First Year of a Two-Year Contract for Refuse

Resolution awards a contract to Premier Disposal, Dave's Suburban Disposal Service, Kohler Waste Services, Inc., and Republic Services of NJ, LLC.

Resolution R15-067 – Authorizing Morris County Cooperative Pricing Council Contract for Purchase of a 2015 or Newer Ford F550

Resolution awards a contract for the purchase of a Ford F550 Diesel, Dual Rear Wheel, and Two-Wheel Drive Automatic Transmission Heavy Duty Cab/Chassis with two Contract Options. The total cost is not to exceed \$38,366.00

COMMITTEE REPORTS

FINANCE/BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

President DiFrancesco, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for the month of July 2015.

Ray Brown, Director reported that staff has begun discussion regarding the 2016 budget. The Deputy Directors have done a good job on controlling spending.

HUMAN RESOURCES

A report was submitted for the month of July 2015.

LEISURE SERVICES

Commissioner Ludwig, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for the month of July 2015.

Cindie Sullivan, Deputy Director reported that it has been a great summer for all events. Cindie mentioned that she is serving on a Joint Task Force between the County and the Business Partnership. Matt Loper, the County Engineer is also a member of the committee. The purpose is to brand Somerset County for its uniqueness. Two meetings have been held. It was interesting to note, that at first meeting the members discussed the top reasons why people like Somerset County. The responses included protection of Open Space program and the County park system. At the second meeting, members were asked what they would do on their last day if they had to move out of the County. Some of the responses included spending the day at Colonial Park, playing golf at Neshanic Valley, walking the Greenway trail at Duke Island Park, hiking the Sourlands, and visiting the Environmental Education Center. It was impressive that so many people mentioned activities in parks that are part of the Somerset County Park Commission.

Shawn McCrohan, Manager Environmental Science reported that the EEC has been selected as one of 12 organizations to run a 30 day campaign. Funds will be raised for the repair of the Boondocks Boardwalk Trail. They hope to raise \$45,000 to rebuild the trail. Cindie and Rich Reitman will work on obtaining additional sponsorship through our website. The National Park and Recreation Association promotes this event at a national level.

GOLF MANAGEMENT

Commissioner Paluck, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for the month of July 2015.

Darrell Marcinek, Director of Golf Maintenance reported that aeration at Neshanic Valley Golf Course championship course was completed yesterday. The Academy Course will be done once the Junior Golf Program is completed. The other four golf courses will be done after the County tournaments in September.

Bob Ransone, Deputy Director Golf Management reported that all golf courses have been busy. The County championship will be held next month. This week is the last week of Junior Golf.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Commissioner McCallen, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for the month of July 2015.

VISITOR SERVICES

Commissioner Crosby, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for the month of July 2015.

Dave Dendler, Manager, Park Rangers reported that staff is busy patrolling the parks. Posting of no hunting signs will begin soon. Bow season begins the second week in September.

Commissioner Crosby thanked Dave, Pierce, and their staff for the great job at the 4H Fair.

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Commissioner Crosby, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for the month of July 2015.

PLANNING AND LAND ACQUISITION

Commissioner Haines, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for the month of July 2015.

CAPITAL FACILITIES – CONSTRUCTION and ENGINEERING

Commissioner Paladino, Chair of the Committee, submitted a report for the month of July 2015.

Ray Brown reported that a meeting was held with County Engineering regarding priority projects. The new entry drive at Natirar and Mountain View Park were the major topics.

PARK MAINTENANCE & HORTICULTURE

A report was submitted for the month of July 2015.

Jim Avens, Manager Horticulture reported that Buck Garden received an \$8,000 grant from the Watnong Chapter North American Rock Garden Society for construction of a new Tufa Garden near the Visitor Center. Upcoming events include a Flower and Garden Photography Workshop at Colonial Park Gardens on Saturday, September 12. Jim distributed a flyer to the Commissioners.

Pierce Frauenheim, Deputy Director reported that it has been a great summer and thanked the Park Rangers for their assistance. The managers volunteered to assist at the 4H Fair, and the 4H organization was happy. There were no issues during the Fair. Staff is preparing for fall events.

Commissioner Haines asked how much overtime was necessary for the 4H Fair. Pierce reported that the only overtime was on Saturday for four hours to take down fence posts and remove tape. Cindie Sullivan reported that the savings was \$20,000.

FREEHOLDER'S REPORT

No report this month.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business to report.

NEW BUSINESS

Ray Brown reported that the Freeholders have solicited proposals for a Management, Staffing and Finance assessment of the Park Commission. The independent review will be a cooperative effort between the Board of Freeholders and the Park Commission. Ray acknowledged that the County has its own economic issues to address and will not be in a position to provide the level of financial assistance it was able to provide in 2015. Ray explained that the Commission's operating budget has not been able to keep pace with the amount of growth it has experienced over the past decade. It is expected that this assessment will allow a totally independent review of the Commission's recent history with respect to its costs, operations and staffing and should provide a game plan on how to accommodate the agency's next generation of public service to Somerset County residents. Ray advised that he has worked with the Commission President, the Freeholders, Nick Trasente, and Mike Amoroso on the RFP. Senior Management staff is aware of the initiative and is prepared to cooperate. The RFP proposals are due August 25 with an award planned for September. A final report is due in January 2016. It is hoped this plan will assist with the recent budgetary issues that have faced the agency.

President DiFrancesco reported that this review is a good thing. The Park Commission provides great programs and staff and he sees this assessment as being necessary in order to keep pace. The report should provide some good recommendations. Don thanked the staff for their input and hard work and cooperation with the RFP.

Commissioner Crosby announced that the Park Commission will be hosting the Vietnam Traveling Wall next month and has asked that the Commissioners contribute by taking an ad in the booklet. Bill will distribute the information to all of the Commissioners.

Commissioner Leonard asked about the vending machines. Ray reported that the County has awarded a three-year contract with a vendor for the machines and the Park Commission facilities are included in that contract. Bob Ransone reported that the Park Commission is receiving 32.5 percent of the net from these machines which is more than ever before. The first two-month payment was one hundred percent more than the entire last year. Commissioner Leonard suggested we may still want to explore our own vending program that might include purchasing the required equipment and product, if it is shown that this approach would be an even more profitable revenue source for the agency.

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 a.m. was made by Commissioner Crosby and seconded by Commissioner Leonard. YEAS: Commissioners Crosby, Haines, Leonard, Ludwig, McCallen, Paluck, and President DiFrancesco. NAYES: None. ABSENT: Commissioners Consiglio and Paladino.

Respectfully submitted,

Raymond A. Brown
Director

Joanne Steinruck
Executive Assistant