

# RECREATION COMMISSION

## REGULAR MEETING

October 22, 2015

**Present:** Mr. Kevin Bodnar  
Mr. Michael Breslin  
Mrs. Jan McCabe (arrived at 7:35PM)  
Mrs. Maureen McEntee  
Mrs. Maggie Slawinski  
Mr. Jake Cahill  
Mr. Gerard Sittmann, Chairman

Karleen Leahey, Recreation Director  
Councilwoman Laurie Fu

**Absent:** None

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Sittmann called the meeting to order. He stated that adequate notice of this meeting has been posted and published in accordance with Chapter 231 of the Public Law of 1975, "Open Public Meetings Act."

### COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mr. Sittmann opened the meeting to the public to speak on matters other than those on the agenda.

Mr. Joe Summer, 34 Northview Drive, Morris Plains, stated he was at this meeting to represent the Basketball organization. He provided an overview of this organization and its activities. They have roughly 200 registrations currently for this fall's program. A total of 95 children registered for the summer basketball program, the highest to date for this program. Their investments are now showing very positive results. Their season begins on December 5, 2015 at 10:00 a.m. at Borough School.

Councilmember Fu reminded him to ensure that the Borough Council and the Mayor receive invitations to this Opening Day event. She will make sure it is published in *Plains Talk*.

He next provided information concerning the needs the organization has right now. They need improved storage facilities. The current locations are leaking and/or have other problems. Additionally, if the storage area(s) could be heated that would be preferable. They need storage for balls, baskets and other equipment. They need night and weekend access to the stored equipment. They also need a new AD machine for Mountain Way since the one they have is locked in the nurse's office. They have a portable one that they use at the Vo-Tech School.

Councilmember Fu thought that perhaps she could check with Mountain Way School to

use at the Vo-Tech School.

Councilmember Fu thought that perhaps she could check with Mountain Way School to see if there was a way that the machine could be made available to them as needed.

Matt Wendorff (in attendance in the audience) advised they have three portable machines and they are in off season when basketball is playing. This person offered to check to see if basketball could use one of their machines during its season.

Mr. Summer also advised that extra gym time is always needed. He provided information on other sources they contacted for gym time, but so far they have not been successful in finding additional gym time space, including St. Virgil. While the relationship with the Vo-Tech School remains a good one, other municipalities are “sweetening their pots and giving them fields also”.

The Commission thanked Mr. Summer for coming to the meeting and for providing the update on the basketball program.

Tom Bergeron, Brian Volker, Rob Cowing and Dave Marcantonio represented Little League Baseball. Mr. Bergeron thanked the Commission for its efforts in connection with various fields and a variety of field issues. He mentioned the “yellow things” (safety guards) that are on the fences. He asked about replacement of these items for every field, but states he did not know what the cost of such replacement would be. He commented on drainage issues relating to Field #4 in the outfield. He also mentioned Field #2, but advised they do not use this field very much now, but did not give information on how much they do use this field.

Brian Volker, 50 Hawthorne Avenue, Morris Plains, introduced himself to the Commission. He spoke about Field #3 (the box, the bullpens and the batting cages) present difficulties for the players because apparently there are many rocks/stones/holes in this area. He stated that “dirt would be fine” with him. He also recommended installing tarps for each dugout to reduce the amount of sun.

Cross discussion about different ideas that might be used to correct the situation on Field #3.

Mr. Volker advised that Morristown American is taking down their scoreboard at center field, and they have offered it to them. To use it will involve two new pipes that will need to be installed. He provided details about the size of this scoreboard and that it will cost \$300 to \$400 to truck it from Morristown to Morris Plains.

Mr. Robert Cowing, 40 Washington Avenue, Morris Plains, spoke about power at the field(s) and that Pete has offered to put it up a score board offered to Morris Plains Little League from Morristown Little League. He is not willing to do anything more right now until this plan has been authorized by the Commission. A decision needs to be made fairly quickly since they will be taking it down and if Morris Plains does not want it, they will dispose of it.

The comment was made “that we would never consider it, but it works and it’s free.”

Cross discussion about the potential cost of work to install this scoreboard which would include I-beams, concrete, who will actually do the work to install it, who will be responsible for this work, and other related issues. This discussion also included where to store the scoreboard until it is installed.

Mr. Marcantonio advised there were 162 boys in the baseball program and 66 girls in the softball program. He also provided statistics for other baseball programs (such as T-Ball, Single A, etc.). He provided details about the various teams and also clinic participation and activities. Comparison data was given for several years.

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Cross discussion about the condition and maintenance of the fields, including what work will probably be needed prior to the 2016 season; how best to spend funds on the fields; which groups of children generally play on which fields; fences and fence distances; fund raising activities and potential ideas for making money; Fall Ball; the longer baseball/softball seasons compared to past years resulting in more support from the Department of Public Works (DPW); background checks; travel team issues; and miscellaneous other related subjects.

The Commission thanked Mr. Bergeron, Mr. Volker, Mr. Cowing and Mr. Marcantonio for coming to this meeting and providing an update on baseball.

Mr. Matt Wendorff, 124 Sun Valley Way, Morris Plains, advised he is at this meeting representing lacrosse. He provided information on background checks done on those involved with the lacrosse program. He next advised of the insurance the program carries. There boys and girls lacrosse programs. Last year there were 160 boys and 120+ girls. The ages range from third through eighth grades. He provided information on their clinic which had approximately 130 participants last year and is for pre-kindergarten through grade two. One of the organization's long-term goals is to find a "home". He explained some of the problems created by the weather of the past two winters and needing to spend a lot of indoor time which cost a significant amount of their funds.

Finding affordable indoor space is also a goal, and he provided information as to the kind of space needed. He provided information about the organization's board/officers.

He spoke about the importance of walls to hit against. Having such a wall would be wonderful. He has extensively searched for an area that the organization can call "home" – either in Morris Plains or elsewhere. He does not believe Morristown will provide any help on this, but there still might be a chance with Morris Township. He advised that Montville has six fields. Registration opened last week. Their season begins March 1, 2016 and it typically ends in July. They also have a summer camp. He believes that approximately 50% of the participants and clinic are from Morris Plains. He briefly commented on the Central Park facilities and use of them.

Cross discussion about Field #2 at Community Park and its pros and cons.

The Commission thanked Mr. Wendorff for coming to this meeting and updating on the lacrosse program.

Ms. Stephanie Crowley, 4 Trowbridge Road, Morris Plains, introduced herself to the Commission stating she is representing the Swim Team.

Ms. Susan Pittaro, 52 Dogwood Road, Morris Plains, introduced herself to the Commission as co-president of the Swim Team along with Ms. Crowley.

Ms. Crowley talked about a new registration process. Responding to a question about doing background checks, she advised that to her knowledge they do not do any. The Head Coach and the other two coaches are teachers. The parents are not involved other than as volunteers helping the organization. There were 105 registered this year; seven were out-of-town swimmers. She advised that in retrospect the software system used for the registration may not have been the best decision for a five-week program. The registration cost was discounted for a second swimmer in the same family. She provided cost information in connection with the registration system. She does not want to do anything that would hinder anyone from signing up for the team because of the cost. The online registration is strictly for the Swim Team; she believes the use of this system must be purchased annually.

Cross discussion about various details of the Swim Team program, including fund raising activities, and she explained some of the problems that were encountered during the 2015 season; new fund raising ideas that are being considered for the 2016 season; possible

Cross discussion about various details of the Swim Team program, including fund raising activities, and she explained some of the problems that were encountered during the 2015 season; new fund raising ideas that are being considered for the 2016 season; possible ways to conserve funds going forward; other teams that the Morris Plains team competes against; wish list items for the future; credit card use to pay for the fee; and related matters.

Mr. Sittmann asked if the coaches are certified for first aid, lifeguard certification, WSI certification and so on.

Mrs. Crowley replied they are certified for lifeguard, but she is uncertain but other certifications.

Mr. Sittmann stated this is an issue that must be checked and confirmed.

Mrs. Crowley advised the Commission they might possibly consider a lower cost for registering for Swim Team. She specifically mentioned a \$105. amount for this current year; and may consider “going back” on this cost (to prior cost of \$75.). The Swim Team also has the extra cost of purchasing a swimsuit each year. The business where the swimsuits are purchased does sell them at a discount price to the parents. She explained some of the problems that have been encountered over the years with the production of the swimsuits and T-Shirts.

The Commission thanked Ms. Crowley and Ms. Pittaro for attending this meeting and updating on the Swim Team program.

Recreation Director Karleen Leahey advised that Mr. Brian Klinger had provided information. She had asked those who could not attend this meeting if they would like to provide information about their organization. Mr. Brian Klinger advised that the numbers for the Wildcats so far is 140 for tackle, 110 for flag, and 62 cheerleaders. He was unable to provide a breakdown of how many participants were from Morris Plains. Morris Plains Soccer was unable to attend this meeting – Mrs. Leahey invited them to attend the Commission’s November meeting. There were several sports organization that did not respond at all (such as hockey and Babe Ruth).

Mr. Sittmann raised the question as to how many Morris Plains participants are playing with Babe Ruth at this point. He wondered if Babe Ruth should continue to be on the contribution list in light of several issues (non use of fields, number of Morris Plains players). He also advised that the Vo-Tech School is not using fields like they used to and that this may have a negative impact on the basketball program. One of the Vo-Tech contacts will be retiring soon.

### **RECREATION DIRECTOR’S REPORT – OCTOBER 2015**

Mrs. Leahey presented her report.

**Halloween Parade and Party** – A stipend will be given to the Morris Plains Fire Department to support this activity. Halloween is on a Saturday this year, and she anticipates that this will result in increased numbers of participants. She is hoping to identify sufficient volunteers to help at this event. It begins at 4:00 p.m. at Roberts Garden and then marching down to Simon’s Park for refreshments.

Cross discussion as to whether this event will really produce increased numbers of participants since being on a weekend day, this may actually reduce the number of participants.

**Garage Sales** – There was a total of 75 participants. After the costs to advertise were paid, the Commission had remaining funds of \$977.42. As far as Mrs. Leahey knows, the \$977.42 amount is absorbed into the Recreation account.

**Bonfire** – This event is this coming Saturday, October 24. Everything is ready. If anyone would like to volunteer, please feel free to do so.

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**Volunteer of the Year** – Mrs. Leahey will prepare and mail the appropriate letters.

Cross discussion about the logistics of arranging for this event.

**Pool Membership Meeting** - Mrs. Leahey reported on this meeting. Some of the items discussed were: (1) membership enhancement(s), (2) extended evening hours, (3) early-bird discount, (4) more options for shaded seating, (5) family fun events (dinner, entertainment), (6) new website, (7) hosting birthday parties.

Cross discussion in connection with the need to have a Fee Schedule prepared shortly for approval by the Council.

**Enriching Minds Courses** – Mrs. Leahey explained the Morris Plains Borough School is currently offering "Enriching Minds"; 6 week "mini courses to run throughout the Fall. She also mentioned low participant numbers for a current "Kids Helping Kids" program; perhaps due to competition. She will not be running any other "Kids Helping Kids" programs right now. She commented on enrichment programs.

Cross discussion about these programs, including classroom space, recreation programming, 2016 fall programs, use of facilities, that parents will be paying for programs, and related matters.

**Fee Schedule for 2016** – Mrs. Leahey stated work must be done on the proposed 2016 Fee Schedule; due by October 30, 2015.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Sittmann asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the Commission's July 23, 2015 meeting.

Mrs. Slawinski moved that these minutes be approved, seconded by Mr. Bodnar. Voice vote. All in favor (with appropriate abstentions). **Motion carried.**

Mr. Sittmann asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the Commission's September 10, 2015 meeting.

Mr. Bodnar moved that these minutes be approved, seconded by Mrs. McCabe. Voice vote. All in favor (with appropriate abstentions). **Motion carried.**

#### **APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS**

Mrs. Leahey provided information concerning a spreadsheet and provided answers to any other questions that were asked by Commission members as they reviewed the vouchers to be approved.

Mrs. Slawinski moved the vouchers be approved, seconded by Mr. Bodnar Voice vote. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

None

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### **Communications/Reports of Councilwoman Fu**

**Lights Maintenance Contract** - Councilwoman Fu advised about lights at the Little League Field, etc. The Borough had a ten-year contract for maintenance of these lights when they were installed; it has now expired. Part of the contract required that all the bulbs be relighted at the end of the contract and this has been done by the contractor. There now needs to be either a renewal of this agreement or an agreement with a new

bulbs be relighted at the end of the contract and this has been done by the contractor.

There now needs to be either a renewal of this agreement or an agreement with a new vendor. The cost to renew will be \$10,000 for both fields. She is recommending that this contract be renewed.

**Central Park Turf** – The hours for use were submitted by the October 15, 2015 date.

The Borough requested 665.5 hours. Notification of the time slots approved should occur by late November/early December.

**E-Scrap Collection** – This service has been unavailable for some time now, but will return soon.

**Bonfire** - There was a brief cross discussion about getting port-a-potties. Councilwoman Fu asked that this be absolutely confirmed before Saturday.

Sheryl McNichol, Recreation Events Coordinator, was contacted during this meeting, and she reported that the port-a-potties are being delivered tomorrow (Friday) and will be placed in the same location at last year.

Additional cross discussion about lacrosse’s wish list item for more playing space – a place to call “home.” This discussion also included the suggestion that at a future meeting (perhaps in January) the Commission re-assess the participation levels in all the sports organization and some of the wish list items of other sports organizations.

## **2016 FEE SCHEDULE**

Commission members reviewed the current Fee Schedule. The separate fee for swimming lessons will be eliminated; it will be included in the pool membership fee. A total of 123 families signed up for the Pool by June 5, 2015; 11 families signed up after June 5, 2015. The cut-off date was June 5, 2015. Brief discussion about at what age is a person considered to be a senior. Mrs. Leahey believes it is 62 – it is stipulated in the pool booklet ”.

### **2016 FEE SCHEDULE**

<b><u>Service</u></b>	<b><u>2015</u></b>	<b><u>2016 after 3/31 before 3/31</u></b>	
Swimming Lessons	\$50.00	In Family Pool Membership	
Before March 31st	\$N/A	\$ less 10% membership fee	
Early Bird Special Pool Membership (March)			
10% less than regular fee			
Family Pool Membership	\$345.00	\$350.00	\$315.00
Couple Pool Membership	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$225.00
Single Pool Membership	\$190.00	\$190.00	\$171.00
Senior Couple Pool Membership	\$110.00	\$110.00	\$ 99.00
Senior Single Pool Membership	\$ 90.00	\$ 90.00	\$ 81.00
Swim Team Pool Membership	\$170.00	\$160.00	\$144.00
Babysitter Pool Membership	\$115.00	\$100.00	\$ 90.00
Non-Resident Family Pool Membership	\$400.00	\$400.00	\$360.00
Non-Resident Couple Pool Membership	\$330.00	\$330.00	\$297.00
Non-Resident Single Pool Membership	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$225.00
Non-Resident Senior Couple Pool Membership	\$160.00	\$160.00	\$144.00

Membership	\$250.00	\$250.00	\$225.00
Non-Resident Senior Couple Pool Membership	\$160.00	\$160.00	\$144.00
Non-Resident Senior Single Pool Membership	\$105.00	\$105.00	\$95.00

Guest Passes will be \$10.00 for adults and \$5.00 for children under 12.

Summer Camp Registration Fee (BEFORE May 12)	\$175.00	\$180.00
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Summer Camp Registration Fee (AFTER May 12)	\$235.00	\$250.00
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Cancellation fee (Limited to \$ 10.00 \$ 10.00  
Summer Camp & Enhancement Programs)

Tennis Court Key	\$15.00	\$15.00
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Cross discussion as to exactly when the early bird discount timeframe should (can) be, including that it could be from January through March 15; that it is unlikely all the material can be prepared by January or on the website either; and that perhaps it could apply to all memberships paid during the month of March 2016 (this was the option decided on). The Early Bird Special Pool membership discount (10%) applies to all categories of memberships.

Mrs. Leahey asked Councilwoman Fu when this 2016 Fee Schedule will be approved.

Councilwoman Fu advised the Council usually tries to approve the Fee Schedule(s) by December. She also requested information on the number of people who registered late (after the discount timeframe ended) for Summer Camp.

Mrs. Leahey advised that in the 2015 season the late fees for the Summer Camp amounted to \$9,400.00 (40 people signed up late).

Mrs. Leahey advised she must re-do the Pool booklet, prepare forms, and have printing done. She believes it can be on the website by March 1, 2016. She also discussed the cancellation fee for Summer Camp and Enhancement Programs. She would like this cancellation fee to again be effective for the 2016 season since handling the cancellations was time consuming for her (preparation of vouchers). The cancellation fee is \$10.00.

Brief cross discussion about occasional problems with fields/courts not having been cleaned after use, including that part of the problem may be that garbage cans are not emptied on a frequent enough basis and perhaps larger garbage cans could be used.

Councilwoman Fu advised that the Parks and Communities chairperson is working with the DPW to acquire some new receptacles; receptacles are now inside the gate and there is also new rules signage posted. Volunteers will visit the fields several times yearly to help care for them.

Mr. Sittmann commented that a complaint he often hears is that the restrooms are too far away from the fields.

Cross discussion about fees for the use of fields, specifically mentioning travel teams using the fields. Charging these teams for use of the fields would help cover costs for field maintenance and other related costs, including that the Fee Schedule information indicates that one-time use would be \$300, up to three weeks is \$600, between four to six weeks is \$800 and an entire season use would be \$1,000. At one point this discussion also included reference to Little League's use of the fields. A question was asked as to

weeks is \$800 and an entire season use would be \$1,000. At one point this discussion also included reference to Little League's use of the fields. A question was asked as to whether anyone Recreation Commission member(s) attend the meetings of any of the various sports groups. A response was made that "we do now".

Councilwoman Fu stated that the Commission's recommended Fee Schedule will be discussed at an upcoming Council meeting as well as requesting guidance about any of the fees as appropriate.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Mrs. Slawinski moved the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Mr. Bodnar. Voice vote. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

Karleen Leahey  
Commission Secretary

Maureen Sullivan  
Recording Secretary