

RECREATION COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING

June 27, 2013

Present: Mr. Kevin Bodnar
Mr. Michael Breslin
Mr. Salvatore Cortese, Chairman
Mrs. Jan McCabe
Mrs. Maureen McEntee (arrived at 7:41 pm)
Mr. Gerard Sittmann, Vice Chairman
Mrs. Maggie Slawinski

Present: Karleen Leahey, Recreation Director
Susan Carey, Recreation Camp Coordinator
Councilwoman Laurie Fu

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. Larry Hoey, 53 Franklin Place, Morris Plains, stated he was at this meeting to provide and acquire information concerning recreation programs, specifically soccer. He is particularly interested in being able to schedule games in one of the new Greystone fields when they are available.

Mr. Cortese spoke about how he believes game field use will be made available for play. He also spoke about fields lined as half fields and full fields (large fields).

Mr. Hoey stated he would generally be interested in being able to use a full field, but realizes he also will still have Simons Park. Monday through Friday they would generally be interested in being able to practice from 5:00 p.m. until it gets dark, usually around 8:00 p.m.

Mr. Cortese asked if he would be interested in alternating between grass and turf – some at Simons Park and others at Greystone and then switching the groups from one location to the other.

Mr. Hoey replied that the idea of alternating the locations sounds workable.

Mr. Cortese asked about use on Saturdays and Sundays.

Cross discussion about use of the fields on Saturdays and Sundays, including using a field for half a day on Saturdays for turf, that two games would start at 10:00 a.m. and end around Noon. Primary use would be in the fall and spring.

Mr. Cortese advised that Mayor Druetzler worked with the Morris County Park Commission and arranged for some funding for the fields which will result in the Borough having a “privileged position” in comparison with other municipalities. Morris Plains also is the closest municipality with the most homes to the Greystone fields, too.

Mr. Matthew Wendorff, 124 Sun Valley Way, Morris Plains, stated he is at this meeting on behalf of the Junior Colonials Lacrosse and the Lady Colonials. He is the current vice president. Their practices begin in early March until the season begins.

Several Commission members suggested having practices begin in early March. They usually do two practices a week in March a Monday through Friday schedule, the same as for soccer. There was a caution raised that the fields will not be able to be sitting empty and unused.

Cross discussion included what timeframes should be used – some participants will have to have earlier time slates and others will be able to practice later into the evening – late practices and early practices; what offerings may have been made by Morris Township and Morristown; that Morris Township and Morristown appear to be refusing to get involved with it (football, lacrosse); that the great support provided by the Commission and the Borough contributes significantly to the increasing and sustained interest in the various sports; that all the discussion at this meeting about use of the fields are wishes/wish lists and hopes, not absolute promises or guarantees that everything will be able to be worked out as discussed; weekend use of fields; home vs. away games; establishing a need for fields schedule that the Commission can submit to the County Park Commission; length of various sports seasons and when they start and finish; use of the fields for tournaments; what sports the fields will be lined for; and the details of what is involved, permitted and existing in connection with field lining.

Mr. Cortese commented on the use of these fields in terms of the number of Morris County municipalities, the number of public schools, non-profit organizations, and private schools. He also commented on the benefits of

hosting tournaments. He requested that the Borough sports organizations ask their staffs to present their needs, wants, and requests to the organization's president or vice president to contact the Commission – request that coaches please not be calling the Commission or the Mayor directly. He also spoke about at some point having a boys and girls game under the lights in the future.

Messrs Hoey and Wendorff thanked the Commission for its time and consideration of its requests.

Councilwoman Fu commented on her letter and her discussions with the Superintendent, Sean, Board of Education members, the soccer coaches and that Sean is willing to meet after the Fourth. She asked that the Commission indicate who would like to be part of this meeting.

Cross discussion about such a meeting and sports schedules.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Cortese requested that all members review the minutes of the Commission's May 23, 2013 Regular Meeting.

Mr. Sittmann moved that the minutes of the May 23, 2013 Regular Meeting be accepted as circulated, seconded by Mrs. Slawinski. Voice vote (Mrs. Slawinski abstained). All in favor. **Motion carried.**

RECREATION DIRECTORS' REPORT - June 2013

Mrs. Leahey presented her report. She advised she received an e-mail from the store manager at a local Wells Fargo in Morris Plains. She is wondering if she could attend some of the Commission's events where she could have a table, offer refreshments/snacks and network with the community.

The suggestion was made that the best venue for such activity would probably be at the Farmers Market. The Wells Fargo representative might also consider contacting the presidents of the various sports organizations to see if she could do this at some of their events.

Mrs. Leahey thanked the Commission for their suggestions and will offer them to the Wells Fargo representative.

Community Park Pool - The total is approximately \$103,000 as of today.

Summer Camp – Total Enhancement camp programs and summer camp together is approximately \$86,000. The summer camp alone is roughly \$62,000. The number of program campers is about 375. Thirty people signed up after the early deadline. She briefly discussed some of the problems that occur when the early deadline date is missed and indicated she would like to address this situation at a future meeting. She also believes there will need to be future discussion about the enrolling in many programs only to cancel them later;

perhaps there will need to be some kind of non-refundable fee attached to canceling enrollment in programs. Several policies may need to be discussed further prior to the start of the 2014 season. Another item for discussion is the maximum capacity for the various programs.

Basketball Court Ribbon Cutting – This will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Friday, June 28, 2013.

Mr. Cortese thanked Councilwoman Fu for her efforts on this project.

WMTR – The radio station wants to attend Family Day with their WMTR band, games, and giveaways. Mrs. Leahey provided Mr. Bodnar's cell phone number.

Cross discussion as to whether there are other Commission events throughout the year that may be appropriate for WMTR to have a presence. Sports organizations Opening Days and the Bonfire might be good events. Caution was raised in that it could be viewed as setting some type of precedent. Is there any possibility that WMTR could provide some level of educating interested people, particularly young people about the field of radio broadcasting?

Mrs. Leahey concluded her presentation.

Summer CAMP - Update Report – Susan Carey

Susan Carey commented that a summer recreation program staff orientation was held on Monday and provided pertinent information about it including that Mr. Sittmann arranged for Pool days, one on July 3 and another on the last day of camp. She confirmed the days with Mr. Sittmann. She also referenced securing a bus for the local trips with the Teen Camp participants. She thanked both Councilwoman Fu and Mrs. Leahey for all their support in preparing for this summer camp season. She advised she has received the swim team practice schedule and lessons schedule as well as raising the topic of volunteer walkers; four counselors have contacted them to advise of taking different jobs. There are others (lifeguards for one group) who may possibly be able to also serve in the capacity of counselors.

Cross discussion about the matter of volunteer walkers; about being user friendly for every parent; paying counselors while enhancement programs participants eat lunch; that the camp is 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon and enhancement programs start at 12:30 p.m.; it is not a babysitting business nor a full-time camp; salaries offered to counselors; perhaps reconsidering the ability to continue/always provide the current services in future summer seasons; fees for enhancement programs; perhaps reconfiguring counselors work schedules to fill in where help is needed; children needing to be escorted to and from the Pool and the Community Center; talking with Tina regarding the Pool-related issues; problems in communications with young people hired and sometimes their parents, too, regarding work schedules; identifying additional staff, most urgently four

counselors; checking with the Council regarding approval to work; and related issues and concerns.

Mr. Cortese expressed concern in connection with the current reduced work force for the summer camps and also budgetary and funding matters.

Mrs. Leahey stated she received “comments” due to her efforts of salary control and several negative e-mails were also received. Most of the funds taken in goes to pay the 60 or so counselors. For instance, some of the staff comes at 8:30 a.m. vs. 9:00 a.m.; there is no reason for everyone to be there at 8:30 a.m. and not everyone who stays until 12:30 p.m. is actually helping. Clean-up does not require 60 staff members. Mrs. Leahey advised that a number of the counselors who left were older and have graduated from college.

Susan advised about the purchasing of certain supplies (including snacks and paper goods) that are needed for the summer camp. She provided information about her various shopping trips and how they turned out. She asked for guidance about doing this type of shopping going forward.

Cross discussion about the use of Costco cards; shopping at other supply outlets; adequate storage for purchased products; and the difficulties encountered in doing this shopping. Some suggestions were made as to alternate ways of being able to shop for all the supplies at once and how additional freezers and/or refrigerators could help this situation.

Susan concluded her report.

COMMUNICATIONS

Councilwoman Fu thanked the Commission for all their efforts in connection with the summer recreation programs, opening day at the Pool, and Family Day. She also thanked the Department of Public Works (DPW) staff for all their help. She raised the subject of how DPW can help in connection with the Summer Concert Series and how it is arranged for.

Mr. Cortese thanked Councilwoman Fu for her support and provided information on contacting DPW in connection with help needed for the Summer Concert Series. He reminded that Commission members have already agreed to serve as an Event Coordinator for each of the concerts and what must be done in this role (make sure the stage is there and that the sign is up; that you have the check from Mrs. Leahey; and be present at the concert.

Mr. Bodnar asked who is authorized to make the “rainout of events” call.

Mr. Cortese advised that for Family Day it is Councilman Cecala because of the fireworks. He also commented on the Commission members who will be there the most if not all of the time.

Cross discussion about issues relating to when an event may have to be called due to rain. In connection with the concerts, usually the band will decide whether they will play or not due to not wanting to risk damage to their instruments.

Councilwoman Fu advised the baseball Majors won the Little League inter-league. Two new policemen who have just graduated from the Police Academy are new Borough hires.

Mr. Cortese commented that when there are sports wins such as this, the coaches should prepare a write-up that can be published in *Plains Talk* as well as the *Morris News Bee* and *Patch*.

Mr. Bodnar raised the topic of the tennis club which was raised by Mr. Brian Clark at the May Commission meeting; they have asked for an update on what the decision would be.

Mr. Cortese stated he believes the Commission was willing to consider a three-week pilot program for this tennis club activity consisting of play on three Sunday evenings. They should complete a park use application with Mrs. Coffey at the Borough Annex. They should be able to reserve two courts in connection with this pilot program.

Mr. Bodnar will contact the Clarks tomorrow. He will also confirm how many courts they need.

Family Day Update

Mr. Bodnar asked if DPW staff could be at Community Park by 3:00 p.m.; 4:00 p.m. is too tight a timeframe. If this would be possible, it would be great. He also asked about the availability of canopies for use by the Municipal Alliance, the Teen Center and one additional use.

Councilwoman Fu will check with Councilwoman McCluskey about borrowing Farmers Market canopies; she herself has two that can be used.

Mr. Bodnar asked about freezer space, tables from the Community Center, and volunteers. He advised he called counselors – starting with counselors, then seniors and then to the juniors. There was one response; they would be paid for helping out. They would be working four hours. Some parents have also stepped up to volunteer. Football did not respond at all. All the rides that absolutely need a volunteer on are covered. The ones where they want coverage are the rock wall and the bungee. The vendor will also be providing staff who will be helping. The volunteers essentially are needed for crowd control to assist the vendors' staff in accomplishing this. Everything is confirmed.

VOUCHERS FOR APPROVAL

The Commission members reviewed the vouchers presented for approval.

Mr. Sittmann moved to approve the vouchers; seconded by Mrs. Slawinski Voice vote. All in favor. **Motion carried.**

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

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

Karleen Leahey
Commission Secretary

Maureen Sullivan
Recording Secretary