

# RECREATION COMMISSION

## REGULAR MEETING

**October 24, 2013**

Present: Mr. Kevin Bodnar (arrived at 8:04 p.m.)  
Mr. Michael Breslin (arrived at 7:38 p.m.)  
Mr. Salvatore Cortese, Chairman  
Mrs. Jan McCabe  
Mrs. Maureen McEntee  
Mr. Gerard Sittmann, Vice Chairman  
Mrs. Maggie Slawinski

Present: Karleen Leahey, Recreation Director  
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. He requested that the first speaker come up to the table and the microphone.

### **Basketball Organization**

Mr. Ken Newman, 11 Burch Drive, Morris Plains, representing the basketball organization, introduced himself. He advised that regular registration for the recreation program has just closed which is combined with recreation and travel numbers 208 participants, down by approximately 15 participants from last season. They have an inter-league, inter-town recreation program now. For third grade and higher they play other towns. With the three courts now, it will free up nights (summer league being over) and all three grade levels will be able to participate at the same time. As to current needs, he believes the organization is in good shape as is the Board. They have 16 sponsors for their program. Friendly's will partner with them on Saturdays and the proceeds will be split between the Friendly's and the organization. Their next project is exploring how to attract older children and what kinds of programs could accomplish this. He

provided detailed information about the various recreation and travel teams. He comments that the Vo-Tech school has been very gracious so far.

Mr. Cortese cautioned that any coaches planning on using the Vo-Tech school must be realize that this is privilege, not a right. This ability could be lost by just one “bad” action.

Mr. Sittmann added that all coaches must go through the organization’s head to Mr. Cortese, not directly to the Vo-Tech school itself.

Mr. Newman mentioned several things that possibly could be done or bought for the Vo-Tech school to support them; for example, a portable scoreboard that his organization uses so the Vo-Tech is not buying it or donate some basketballs. In other words, showing a good faith gesture.

Mr. Cortese commented on shared services and that as of right now the Borough shares with the Vo-Tech school and the Vo-Tech school shares with the Borough, not necessarily always evenly, but agreeably. He also provided information on funds provided by the basketball organization to improve or create various courts. He thanked the organization for funding this work.

Mr. Newman stated the organization still needs two more coaches; there are a variety of problems in securing coaches and it is essentially the same with each sports organization. He also provided information in connection with background checks and the concussion training.

Mr. Cortese advised that a letter received from the school mandates that any coach on school property must have concussion training.

## **MP Soccer**

Mr. Jeff Emge, 151 Granniss Avenue, Morris Plains, representing MP Soccer, introduced himself. He provided information on what he defined as a very successful season. He mentioned a need for registration through Morris United for fifth through eighth graders for the recreation teams. This soccer organization had the pre-K kickers (3 years old through kindergarten) and the first through fourth graders recreation teams have games on Saturdays and practice during the week. He is a coach for the fifth and sixth grade boys, and it is great. He provided information on what municipalities make up the teams currently and how the mix of where participants live are kept in mind when forming/joining teams. There are about 100 participants in the pre-K kickers and about another 115 in the first through fourth graders. In the fifth through eighth program, he estimates about 60 participants. He spoke about some of the occasional frustrations he, coaches, and parents experience from time to time. He advised they have been using the turf field. He hopes a first and second grade event will be able to be held on the last Saturday night of the season.

Mr. Cortese asked about this organization's spring program since problems may crop up with the lacrosse program's games and practice.

Mr. Emge advised they only need a field(s) for Sundays. They do not do weekday activities. There were no problems last year, and they anticipate doing the same for their 2014 spring season – again with no problems. He commented on the issues relating to the problems securing coaches and coaches being able to get to the practices on time during the week. He wondered if additional lighting might be able to be hooked up to shine on one or more certain fields at Simons Park.

Mr. Cortese advised that this is something Mr. Emge has to ask.

It was requested that Mr. Emge put this request for lighting in writing to the Commission.

Mr. Cortese suggested that Mr. Emge research pricing on several lights. This would involve two poles at the back that possibly can be outfitted to shine lighting on at least one other field. The Commission will need to know if this additional lighting is installed that it will really be used.

Mr. Emge advised their season will end on November 2, 2013, a Saturday. There will be a Board meeting on Tuesday.

### **Junior Colonials Lacrosse Club**

Mr. Matt Wendorff, 124 Sun Valley Way, Morris Plains, representing the Junior Colonials Lacrosse Club, introduced himself. He thanked the Commission for all their previous support of their program. Last year there were approximately 310 boys in the program, about 55 to 60 percent of them residing in Morris Plains. Six out the nine voting members of their Board are Morris Plains residents. Three out their five advisors to the Board are also Morris Plains residents.

Cross discussion about the need for their Board to approach the Morristown and Township Recreation Commissions and the Township and the Town and start "making noise." to let them know that support is needed from the Township and the Town is obtaining field use at Central Park.

Mr. Wendorff stated this is one of the goals on their list of projects to do this year; these goals are both to grow the program and to become more involved in giving back to the communities.

Mr. Cortese stated that Mr. Wendorff and this organization constantly are helping the children, keeping them off the street, and keeping them off the video games. "You don't owe us anything."

Mr. Wendorff stated that the goals of these programs are to teach the boys not only about the game they are playing, but also the importance of giving back. Being part of a team says that you need to give back to your community in some way.

Mr. Cortese ticked off some of the kinds of promises the Township and the Town have been promising this and possibly other sports programs over the years, but have not followed through on by actually living up to their promises.

Mr. Wendorff advised this organization will continue to press for greater support from the Township and the Town. He commented on their wish list such as new goals for the turf section at Simon's Park. The number of girls in lacrosse last year was roughly 120. The boys count will probably come out to 370 this year. Their coaching situation is pretty good this year. This organization has eight committees this year and one is for equipment. The plan is to lock up goals in the future.

Mr. Cortese commented on storing of lacrosse goals.

Mr. Wendorff stated he cannot speak to the girls program because while they operate under one umbrella, they are two separate programs. The program is for pre-K through eighth grades. There are approximately 170 Morris Plains residents (boys) in this program/clinics or slightly more than 50 percent.

Mr. Cortese reminded Mr. Wendorff to remember that he is not represented by a municipality in relation to use of Greystone fields and so on. He has to do this on his own, trying to get time with the Park Commission. There are 39 municipalities in Morris County.

### **Junior Colonials Hockey**

Mr. John Carlin 4 Sherman Avenue, Morris Plains (actually Morris Township), representing the Junior Colonials Hockey, introduced himself. There are 55 participants in the Plains Squirt Pee Wee program with 19 being from Morris Plains. He also commented on a middle school hockey team that is a feeder program for the high school, more than half of the current 35 players are from Morris Plains; the starting five are all from Morris Plains. As for Central Park and Greystone he has been in touch with the Park Commission about using the rinks there for practice.

Cross discussion about the expense of ice/ice time, including use of Central Park rinks that has a \$35 hourly fee and the recommendation to submit an application for this opportunity and reserve for two nights a week.

Mr. Carlin advised they are in the Twin Oaks League (\$19,000) and the Mennen League (\$20,000). He also spoke about the difficulty in securing ice time

availability. He said he lost many players on the teams he coached to travel teams, now he has first-year players. He needs to work primarily on the basics with them on ice rather than any fancy/advanced plays. He provided the various difficulties presented by the need for so much ice time and the cost associated with this. There will be a practice session on Monday for one hour at Mennen; however, after that they are faced with a serious lack of ice time.

Mr. Cortese stated this organization could use the Borough's stipend toward this expense. Instead of paying \$300 per hour for participants who need to learn the simple basics of the game, the organization could spend \$35. He offered to assist with submitting the application for Morris County. The Commission has contacts for these kinds of needs/requests.

Mr. Carlin mentioned requests from parents concerning the possible development of a girls' field hockey program. He provided information on the current Board for this organization, and that the president is Tom McLaughlin, but his active involvement is changing.

Mr. Cortese requested he provide an update on contact information for this organization.

### **Mo-Town Grapplers Wrestling**

Mr. Steve Dilluvio, 160 Granniss Avenue, Morris Plains, representing the Mo-Town Grapplers Wrestling, introduced himself. He advised that generally there are 60 to 80 participants in the program, of which about five are from Morris Plains. There is a board and members who recruit; they are anxious to do recruiting through the schools. He is looking to make contact with Sean Dolan who coaches for Long Valley with the hope of getting more children interested in this sport, including those who live in Morris Plains.

Mr. Cortese asked that if a student at Borough School wanted to wrestle, could he come to Frelinghuysen?

Mr. Dilluvio replied yes, and in fact his son is doing this. Practice time is the issue as it begins before the school day at Borough School ends. The age of participants is first grade through eighth grade. They currently practice at Frelinghuysen. He explained the kinds of services they must pay for; membership is \$90 with the clinic being less. The season starts on November 16 and goes through February. He also provided information on a number of the events they are involved with.

Mr. Cortese stated the Commission will continue to support this activity.

The suggestion was made that Mr. Dilluvio include information about this organization on the Borough's web site in addition to the school web site that he already is using to provide information.

Mrs. Leahey reminded Mr. Dilluvio that a voucher was sent in July to this organization in connection with the Commission's contribution to this organization, but it has not yet been received back signed. The \$500 check will be issued once the paperwork is returned.

Mr. Dilluvio will check with members of the organization to locate this voucher, get it signed, and returned as quickly as possible.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Cortese requested that all members review the minutes of the Commission's September 25, 2013 Regular Meeting.

Mrs. Leahey advised that there needs to be a change in these minutes. It is in the Fee Schedule section – it was decided that the Camp Fee Registration would stay the same as for the 2013 season -- \$165, not \$170. The Late Fee would be \$250. She will change these two amounts.

Cross discussion about the actual cost – more or less – in connection with the Bonfire. The consensus was that the \$2 amount mentioned in the minutes should be stricken with no mention of an amount. Members confirmed that Swim Team members are Pool members both during and after the swim team season.

Mrs. Slawinski moved that the minutes of the September 25, 2013 Regular Meeting be accepted as amended, seconded by Mr. Sittmann. Voice vote. All in favor (Mr. Breslin abstained). **Motion carried.**

### **RECREATION DIRECTORS' REPORT – October 2013**

Mrs. Leahey presented the Recreation Director's Report for October 2013.

Mrs. Leahey advised that Morris Plains Little League told her they would be here tonight, but obviously they were not. The Model Railroad Club stated they could not attend, but that the \$400 stipend amount as contributed in previous years would be fine. She has not yet received a signed voucher from Babe Ruth. She will give a call to this group.

**Townwide Garage Sale Days** - The total money collected for fees was \$1,365. She spent \$101.50 on the *Daily Record* ad and \$70 for a new garage sale sign. The total profit was \$1,193.21. She is uncertain where this money is allocated to or if it is merged into the Recreation budget. There was an increase of 10 participants from last year – 80 to 90.

Mr. Cortese stated it is "all one pot."

**Fitness** - Mrs. Leahey stated that Stacy Williamson, the fitness instructor, has had some health issues and was unable to conduct her classes this week. The classes were covered by a sports training person/company. She will be back on Tuesday.

**Bonfire** – Mrs. McEntee provided an update on this event. The pumpkins were ordered, and she believes they will be dropping them off; she will double check this. The Boy Scouts will provide the food and the soda and water. The Girl Scouts will provide cider. The candy corn is all counted, Chris Gardner is set, and there will be a roaming magician. She said there are hot dogs left over that will be used; they are in the freezer. Plans were worked out to pick up the various supplies, including that the hot dogs will be picked up on Friday and placed in the refrigerator. The members decided the number of tables that will be needed for the food and other items.

Mr. Cortese said he will contact the Department of Public Works (DPW) to obtain the tables. A grill must also be brought to the site along with two coolers. The bleachers are there. Hay will be picked up at Agway on Friday. He asked if help was provided to the children getting on and off the hay ride. There will be two DPW staff at the event – one to drive the tractor and the other to help load. The steps are made out of the hay.

Continuing, Mr. Cortese advised he spoke with Jeff Gomez at Agway and asked him to take a \$100 donation for the hay. Jeff advised he would not take any money for the hay. The Port-a-Potty should be at the site tomorrow, the lights will there on Saturday. One extension cord should be available. Mr. Cortese surveyed the Commission members to determine who will be able to be at this event, when they would arrive and for how long they will be able to stay. He has also spoken with the Fire Department (Chris Shays) and the ambulance squad (Gary Windt); there will be an ambulance there. The bonfire cannot be started until the Fire Department arrives.

Councilwoman Fu offered to contact the Police Chief tomorrow.

Mr. Cortese cautioned that one or more members attending this event must be prepared to stay “to the last ember.”

**Halloween** – The ending point will be at Simon’s Park, not the Borough School. The Fire Department has requested help at this event from the Recreation Commission.

Cross discussion about possibly using the \$100 for the donation that Mr. Gomez at Agway would not take to buy candy that could be dispersed to the residents in close proximity to Simon’s Park who really get visited by many, many trick or treaters. The thought was that perhaps it should be given only to older residents, not to everyone.

**2014 Budget** – She included paperwork along with other items in members’ packets for use in preparation for discussions at the November meeting. She asked that members keep it handy for future use. If anyone wants to review it prior to the November meeting, that would be fine, too.

Mr. Cortese stated that Public Comments is re-opened at 8:47 p.m.

Mr. Tom Bergeron, 4 Druetzler Drive, Morris Plains, introduced himself stating he is representing Morris Plains Little League. He presented his “Wish List.” The first wish relates to the scoreboards – both are no longer operational (Fields 1 and 2). He believes they were purchased in 2001 with a five-year warranty; they lasted 12-13 years. He left material in connection with current scoreboards that are available for purchase. He pointed out that the organization likes the second one of the list which costs \$7,800 (for two). He hopes they would be able to get this cost reduced. Another concern is that they are not allowed to host any All Star games on the main field (Fleury Field) without a working scoreboard.

Mr. Cortese asked how much Little League has that can be put toward the cost of the scoreboards. This expense would fall under the capital budget which Councilmember Fu is involved with since she oversees Public Buildings and Grounds; she will be able to bring this request to the Borough Council. He recommended that three bids be issued for the installation of the scoreboards.

Mr. Bergeron stated he believes they have a total of about \$7,000 in their account right now. He provided information in connection with the installation process, including they are hoping for new signage and sponsorship opportunities. He mentioned Honeywell and the new Shop-Rite.

Continuing, Mr. Bergeron commented on issues relating directly to the fields, including field maintenance work done by a particular company on other fields; for example, in Rockaway Township next to the Rockaway Mall. A representative visited to provide estimates for work on the two fields. To re-do Fleury Field with this new kind of sod would cost \$9,500. Burnham Field has this sod; its big advantage is that it absorbs rainwater and any other water very rapidly, allowing faster use of the field. As to Field 2, he believes it has become a safety hazard, including problems with a metal drain behind first base on the actual field. A board that was placed on this field did not help the drainage problem near the dugout. He thinks the drain may need to be raised. To re-do Field 2 professionally and drain it correctly, the cost estimate is \$18,000. He provided details as to the composition of the various teams. There are about 250 to 300 participants in Little League total program. Since Field 2 does not have lights, there may not be a strong argument for upgrading at an \$18,000 cost. He is uncertain as to the right answer for these two fields, particularly Field 2. He

advised that a Borough resident who once was a professional golf course builder also visited the site to see if he could determine any solutions.

Mr. Cortese advised they have clay and if problems can be addressed using clay, this is probably what will have to be done due to lack of available funds to accomplish certain kinds/levels of work.

Mr. Bergeron advised that Field 3 needs the lip cut out a bit more and there was tremendous improvement as to the drainage problem at home plate. A good supply of clay will top it off again. Field 4 which is bigger and deeper, has been cut back somewhat to try 50-70 (slightly bigger infield). This idea worked well and will continue to be used in the future. As to the softball league players, they liked the 50-70, too. Softball wondered if it could be cut back another 10'. The DPW did this last year – cut the grass to make the infield bigger.

Cross discussion about the 50-70 field format, including that a meeting could be set up with DPW to discuss this matter and what DPW can do to help maintain this format in good shape. It also included general field maintenance work suggestions about the work and when to best do it.

Mr. Cortese asked Mr. Bergeron if the scoreboards are his priority, and that work on Field 1 would be the next priority.

Mr. Bergeron replied yes – to secure All Stars. As to the enhancement work for Field 1, this he believes is very important, too. He stated he does not know what to suggest for Field 2.

Mr. Cortese suggested that as to Field 2, perhaps with minimal repair, putting down of more clay, and putting the board higher, that this field can probably be used for one more year before anything more significant is done.

Mr. Bergeron responded that yes, this can probably work. The metal item must be removed.

Mr. Cortese will check out the metal item tomorrow. He also said that the floor of the dugout is so much lower than the playing field that this causes the drainage problem.

Mr. Sittmann raised the topic of the Borough School fields. It is his understanding that these fields have come under the Commission's responsibility to provide maintenance before the season begins. He believes Little League might be able to assist with this.

Mr. Cortese advised that he does not believe the Commission will be responsible for this. He thinks the school has to do it.

Councilmember Fu advised the Borough takes care of the grass. She stated there will be a shared services meeting shortly, and this subject can be one of the agenda items.

Cross discussion about how these Borough School fields are used and by whom.

Mr. Bergeron gave field size information: (1) Little League, (2) 50-70, and (3) 60-90. The Borough field is the same size as the VFW Field. Little League is considering purchasing a 14' net to add behind the backstop on Fleury Field. The cost will be roughly \$700-\$800. There is also a request for a shed for Field 4.

Mr. Cortese reminded that the cost of the proposed work on Fleury Field must be approved by the Borough Council. He recommended that Little League could do fund raising and allocate the funds raised specifically to the proposed work on Fleury Field. He suggested that as to the signage, approach advertisers/sponsors. For the \$9,500 expense, discuss with the Little League Board and check exactly what amount of money they currently have on hand, and then advise him. He wondered if there was any chance that a commercial person could provide some or all of these funds for Fleury Field. He said all cost information from Little League will be needed for the November Commission meeting. All fields will be 100% safe. The kind of winter weather will dictate how much work can be done during the winter. He also hopes that perhaps a sponsor(s) can provide funds for the scoreboards and for Fleury Field. The work to be done on Field 2 and Field 4 can be handled in house by DPW. Field 5 appears to be fine; it is the T-Ball field.

Mr. Bergeron advised that for Field 5 they will buy nets since many balls are lost without the nets. If need be, they will spend all the money they have; they did this last year and would be willing to do it again. Significant funds were raised at the Fourth of July celebration.

Mr. Cortese reminded Mr. Bergeron to please provide the information requested in time for the Commission's November meeting. He is pleased that Little League is pro-active about fundraising for their needs. The Commission respects this kind of approach to self-support by the sports organizations to the extent they can make this possible.

The suggestion was made about considering a change to how the snack bar is operated, specifically that a number of Borough teenagers be hired to operate the snack bar.

Mr. Bergeron advised this has been discussed on and off for several years. This idea is not as easy as it seems. An adult will still have to be present. He also raised two issues relating to the snack bar. When water is turned on in the

restrooms, the water runs for only about three seconds, not 15. The door jams at the bottom, that may allow critters access to the snack bar.

Mr. Cortese and Councilmember Fu will address these two issues. Perhaps Little League parents would donate and a plaque could be placed at the snack bar recognizing such donations.

Mr. Bergeron provided an AED update. They now have them and will be installed outdoor – it is very common around the County that the AEDs are put outdoors and kept unlocked. Their plan is to approach Rotary to see if they would cover the \$600 cost for the two. He commented on the need for conventional/traditional CPR training for the coaches. He has spoken with the Minutemen about this.

Mrs. Slawinski commented that the AED is the most important part of the treatment to have available in the case of a heart attack. Many people simply cannot do CPR properly, and the training is good for only two years. The cost of the CPR training may not justify the expenditure of the funds. She also offered to provide the AED training for the Little League staff. She reminded that both the Morris Plains Police and the Minutemen will be at the scene very quickly. She also offered to go through the AED process at one of their Board's meetings.

Mr. Bergeron commented on the need for several community people to be AED trained and certified. Their coaches will be AED-certified and CPR-certified.

Cross discussion about the condition of the bleachers and the annual maintenance steps provided to keep them safe and useable.

Mr. Cortese reviewed the costs of the items on Mr. Bergeron's Wish List and also discussed the likelihood of how much Little League could raise by doing fundraising.

Cross discussion about the work provided by both the Commission and Little League last year on Field 1 and that much of this effort would be lost if the professional sod company installed the new sod, including the eventual waste of money by addressing such problems by continually "Band-Aid"- patching the trouble areas; problems with Field 3 and how those problems have (or have not) been addressed; lift problems; proposals made by Mr. Bergeron; number of years certain work is likely to last; and general maintenance costs year over year

## **VOUCHERS**

Mr. Cortese asked the Commission members to check the vouchers.

Cross discussion as to whether a certain cost(s) should be approved or removed from the voucher payment list.

A question was asked about a \$3,000 Commission contribution and an additional \$5,000 contribution. Was this for the court?

The response was that yes, it was for the court.

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

### **COUNCILMEMBER FU PRESENTATION**

Councilmember Fu reminded that the League of Municipalities will be meeting during their Regular Council meeting week, so the Council will be meeting a week earlier on November 14, 2013. All vouchers for November will need to be in all that much earlier. The Council will only approve vouchers at the November 14 meeting. She will attempt to be back in time to attend the Commission's November meeting. There have been no recent update in connection with Greystone. She mentioned the invitation to the Kids Helping Kids mentor recognition on Monday, 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Operation Take Back to collect unused prescription drugs will take place this Saturday at Stop & Shop from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. There will a shared services meeting soon between the Council and the Superintendent. She will present the issue about the ball fields and clay and use of the gymnasium on Saturday afternoons for both schools for basketball and for Sunday practice games of the Morris Plains Recreation Basketball. Other topics that may need to be included for at this meeting are issues relating to summer camp needs and fees for using the gymnasium. The shared services meeting must still be scheduled.

Mr. Cortese advised he received an e-mail relating to lacrosse and advising the lacrosse program is growing, especially the girls' lacrosse programs. He asked the Commission members to give some thought to the contribution anticipated to be given to this program. Should there be a split between the boys' program and the girls' program? This can be discussed further at the November meeting.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

None.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

None.

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

Maureen Sullivan  
Recording Secretary

Karleen Leahey  
Commission Secretary