

**Harrington Park Recreation Committee
Minutes
Wednesday, September 12, 2018**

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chairman DeGruccio called the meeting to order at 8:05PM.

Chairman's Announcement

In compliance with Chapter 231, Public Law 1975, adequate notice of the scheduled meeting was made. It is posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Center. Copies have been mailed to the BERGEN RECORD, SUBURBANITE, and THE NORTHERN VALLEY PRESS. A copy has been filed with the Borough Clerk, and copies have been mailed to individuals requesting the same.

2. ROLL CALL

| COMMISSION Members | PRESENT | ABSENT |
|------------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Charles DeGruccio (Chairman) | X | |
| Paul Baly (Vice Chairman) | | X |
| Nicole Benasillo | | X |
| Lynne Cappelmann | X | |
| Thomas Donnelly | X | |
| Thomas Gleason | X | |
| Patrick (Kelly) Kramer | | X |

ALSO PRESENT:

Joon Chung, Council Liaison
Carolyn Lee, Secretary

3. ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC

Girl Scout gold award proposal - Gianna Niece (buddy benches at Highland Field)

Gianna Niece from Girl Scout 1402 would like to install buddy benches at Lower Highland by the playground area as well one by the Valley Program in Norwood. Buddy Bench is an idea where the kids can foster friendship. The Valley Program students are familiar with the buddy bench where it is a safe spot to make a new friend. The benches will be marked indicating the kids sitting there may have autism or special needs. The Recreation members like the idea. Gianna was not sure of the street name but would like to put a bench across from the church in Norwood. Gianna wanted to know if the Recreation Commission would approve the idea before the materials are decided. The Buddy Bench at the HP School is wood with handprints from kids in the Valley Program. There will be something indicating that it is a Buddy Bench and possibly a symbol for autism or special needs. A question was asked if the Valley Program would endorse the bench. Gianna had talked to Candice and Cathy who both like the idea. Tom G. wanted to know if the Valley Program will verify the symbols and idea so that it would be universal. The Recreation Commission would like to know:

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- What it would look like
- The location so it would not interfere with the playground
- Is it permanent and need footings?

Gianna said that these details would come later. Recreation said that it was a great idea.

4. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Approve August 15, 2018 minutes

Motion: Lynne Second: Tom G.

All in favor said "Aye". None opposed.

5. UPDATES

a. **Finance and Budget (Tom/Charles)**

i. **Sports Fees for Field Maintenance**

Charles has not received any report if any sport has paid, not paid or objected.

Carolyn said that the only person who questioned it was Jon Mangano and wanted an itemized list of what the fee was for. Charles noted that it was a contribution to fee maintenance. There is nothing to itemize.

b. **Field Requests (Charles)**

(1) **TGA – need COI**

Field request form was received. Paul has not received the COI. Paul should contact TGA for the COI. Tom D. said that there were kids instructor lead classes there a few weeks ago. The classes started this week for the fall tennis.

c. **School Coordination (Lynne)**

Lynne received the forms for soccer to use the school fields. Basketball has scheduled the tryouts for October.

d. **Sports Coordination (Paul)**

e. **Town Programs**

i. **Town Day (Sept.8, noon-4pm, Rain date Sept.9, 1-4pm) - Lynne, Kelly**

About 350 ride tickets sold. Beer sales were lower than last year. Possible lower sales or attendance could be because it was a long weekend. We received more sponsor money than last year. People asked about Town day and if this money goes to the Recreation Dept. This is a day for the town to get together and we charge money to break even and cover the expenses for Town Day.

Comments included:

- Next year reach out to Norwood Preschool as a sponsor. Tom Simpson noted that they would be willing to sponsor the event.
- Possibly letters from the Mayor's office will be more impressive for sponsoring town day. Joon said that Recreation should be the committee looking for sponsors and the Mayor should not be.
- SUEZ did not sponsor this year. Joon will follow-up with the Mayor.
- Increase the number of follow-ups for potential sponsors
- Include Applebees, Cyclebar, Mike Plesia (construction company) as sponsors

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- Lynne contacted the lacrosse team (Northern Valley Lacrosse) and asked if they wanted a table and they did not. Mike Plesia wants to increase the numbers and wanted to set up a demonstration at Town Day and contacted Paul. No one replied to him. It may not be the same group that Lynne contacted. They contacted Tom D. to see if they could participate next year. Recreation is very interested for next year.
 - Have an action area for sports such as archery, basketball, maybe batting cage, or soccer goals. Lynne will see if Funtime has more activities.
 - Archery was very popular and basketball was busy all day. Jon was willing to give the basketball game away. Carolyn agreed to his offer, but has not heard back.
 - Tom D. will go to an event at the High School and look at the advertisements on the fence and add them to the list of sponsors.
 - Have sports contests
 - Great idea that the slide was not a waterslide this year.
 - DJ missed some announcements or it was difficult to hear.
 - Heard that Meatheads was good, but they ran out of food at 1:41PM. The Juniors are interested in using the hut and selling the food.
 - The Greek Flame needed more advance notice if they would sell food at Town Day
 - Vicolo donated this year, but donates food to Old Tappan's Town Day.
 - Dino's has not participated in the past, but donates food for charitable events.
 - We need more volunteers to serve the food.
 - Peppercorns had good feedback about their sandwiches
 - Callahan's may need to be contacted earlier if they are a food vendor
 - Mario's may donate food as well.
 - A pair of sneakers was missing at town day. The DJ announced to bring it over to the table. There was not update.
- ii. Ragamuffin Parade (Oct. 27, 10am, Rain location APR) – Lynne, Kelly**
- Lynne put in the request to the school for rain location
 - Volunteers for the Ragamuffin should arrive at 8:30AM to set up the games
 - Teens for Tomorrow will get some volunteers for the games.
- f. Park & Playground Maintenance (Charles, Kelly, Tom)**
- i. Field Maintenance (Charles)**
- Joon received a letter from Senator Cardinale. People from town complained that athletic fields are being sprayed regularly with substances that may be toxic to users for up to 72 hrs according to manufacturers instructions. The residents said that the flags are not being put up. Joon contacted FieldPro and they always put the flags up. Ann Bistriz responded back and said that we looked into this matter and are always in compliance to that.

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Tom G. put the soccer lines down this year and said that the fields (Highland Field 1&2) look terrible. There is crabgrass. With the sprinkler system, the grass should look better. Upper Highland still looks good. Tom D. said that many landscapers said that the chemicals were washed away because of so much rain this summer.

ii. Maintenance schedule coordination with sports

iii. Pondside (Charles)

iv. Highland (Lynne/Kelly)

v. George street (Paul)

vi. School (Carolyn)

The school had complained that the softball infield was covered with grass and weeds and bugs borrowing in the dirt. Recreation maintains the school softball fields. The fields are not scarified if people are not playing on them. The grass/weeds grow over in the summer if the fields are not used. The field along Hackensack closest to the forested area used to be a baseball field and the infield grass was pulled out. This could be why there is more grass on this softball field. Many of the softball fields in nearby towns look similar. Joon said that Recreation should consider adding scarifying in the bid. Scarifying is done during the season.

vii. Beechwood (Nicole)

viii. Don Horsey (Tom)

ix. Columbus (Carolyn)

Tom D. commented that people walk their dogs and do not pick up after them at Columbus Field. Kids play there in the winter if there is snow and get dog feces on them. There are signs everywhere and bags available. Suggestion is a larger sign. The sign could read "Children play here. Pick up after your dog.". SUEZ is playing for the garbage can and bags. Dogs are allowed in Columbus. The police can do the enforcement. Joon spoke to the police about it for the school. There have been notices in the past 2 newsletters about curbing your dog. This time a fine amount should be added in the newsletter. Joon will ask the police to start enforcing this at the school as well as other places. If a few summonses were given, then the rest of the town will know about it. Maybe the Boy Scouts can make larger signs.

g. Tennis (Paul, Kelly)

i. Tennis Court Project

This is not a project that Recreation decided not to work on this year because of the costs. Joon ask Greg Polyniak if the courts could be patched and the fence fixed. If the courts are patched, it will not be cheap. In a couple of years, it will need to be fixed again. Lynne asked if we could determine a timeframe for the courts to be fixed. Joon said that she asked Neglia about funding. There is open space or green acres grants. Both are matching grants. He suggested open space grant for the tennis courts. Tom D. suggested asking the senior housing developer for funding and do a senior tennis program at the tennis court. They could be bused over. Charles said that it was done in Norwood, but the tennis courts were across the street. The senior home development has not started construction yet.

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- ii. **Tennis Badges**
Recreation usually sells about 20+ badges a year. This year only 4 were sold.
- iii. **Tennis Signage**
- iv. **Tennis Net pole is bent**
The pole has been removed and cannot be straightened. Tom G. asked if there are spares stored with the DPW. Carolyn will verify with Mark about the spare poles. Recreation is in favor of replacing the pole. Carolyn will order the pole if it cannot be repaired or replaced with one in storage. The poles would cost about \$300. The pole will fit into the sleeve. It will be charged to maintenance. Recreation will need to complete the purchase order, but Mark can help with everything else.
- v. **Perimeter Fence**
The fence and tree is off the court. The court is playable, but the fence is broken. Charles asked if the money raised at Town Day could be used for the fence. Joon replied that the money from town day is put into Rec Trust and is reserved for next year's town day. Carolyn has asked Mark for an estimate to repair the fence. Joon will verify if it would be covered by insurance.
- vi. **Request for Paved walkway**
A resident suggested that pebble walkway be changed to a paved walkway for families with strollers. The pebbles make it more difficult to push the stroller. Recreation talked about changing the surface to a stone dust, but we cannot put more impermeable surface in that area.

6. PROJECTS

- a. **Highland Field – pavilion (waiting for grant – Dec. 2018)**
No update.

7. OTHER ITEMS

- a. **Lightning Detector – Highland Field 3 (August 19, 2018)**
One of the police officers noticed that the lightning detector was flashing from green to red. The lightning detector company looked into it and said that branches were covering the solar panels and the battery was not charging. It was recommended that the branches around the solar panel should be trimmed. Mark verified that there are no trees around the detectors, but the trees across the path are large and block the light. The trees would need to be chopped down for light to get through. Since there were many lightning storm this summer, the battery has been used a lot. The recommendation was made for the past 3 years, but it has gone through the school. Charles asked if the detector could be moved to the soccer pole in the green acres side (outfield of Field 1 & 2). It would get a lot of sun. The request would go through the school. There was no cost to check the battery, as it is part of the maintenance fee. Moving the detector most likely would have a cost to it. It is a safety issue. Joon will ask Dr. Fried if we can move the location.

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Tom D. said that the electrical box on the telephone pole where the train starts, it looks like someone pried open the door. Recreation will ask Mark to look into it.

b. Field Maintenance Specs for Bid

Charles made copies of the spreadsheet that Brian had created for a previous bid and updated the dates. Charles reached out to Mike Rutigliano about baseball. Registration is low and there may be only a couple of teams. Maintenance is about \$25,000. A member was not happy with the quality of the fields. Discussion about why DPW does not maintain the fields like other local towns such as Cresskill and Haworth. DPW mows the lawns. Sports would rake and take care of the fields. At the end of the season we would repair the fields. Every few years we would rebuild the baseball fields. FieldPro maintains the infields, fertilizes and seeds the fields. Recreation is spending a lot of money on the field maintenance contract but is getting marginally better results. The sprinkler system has not made a big difference in the condition of the field. Recreation will ask FieldPro what would make a difference to improve the fields. Charles and Kelly will get together to review the contract. Tom D. would like to ask Mark about equipment to make it easier to maintain the fields such as collecting the grass for soccer and baseball outfield. Recreation does not need to accept any of the bids. Recreation can speak to the Council if we can think of something better. There was discussion if and when DPW should be involved with field maintenance. Recreation should determine their needs first. KJ is the main contact with FieldPro. The contract covers 9 fields. Are there other towns that use FieldPro? First thing is to get the bids. Lynne will ask who maintains the high school fields. A question was asked if we could justify field maintenance fees. In the past, Steve Paccico was an advocate of this maintenance and the fields have improved. In recent years, there lower number of participants in sports and fewer kids in town.

c. Teams using HP Fields without approvals

There are teams such as Norwood Raiders Cheerleaders and Bears (white, blue and orange uniforms?) using Highland Field without contacting Recreation. When the town rec baseball team arrived for practice, another baseball team said that they have priority and paid for the field. Tom D. called Mike R. said that they were a travel team, but HP Rec has priority. Mike did not tell Recreation about the field request. Recreation noted that HP Rec sports teams always get priority. What do we do about these organizations? What is the insurance implication? Organizations should complete a field request form and the insurance. Most people do not know that this is the protocol. Tom D. will email the organizer of the cheerleaders the field request form to complete. Lynne recommended that they should apply every year like NVSC submit the application and insurance every year. There are no signs on the fields indicating that they need a permit.

d. Coach Certification

There are coaches on the little league that do not have the required certification for volunteer coaches. Tom D. mentioned that all coaches need to be background checked and fingerprinted. Tom D. said that all the coaches in Old Tappan are fingerprinted and

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background checked. Recreation will look into this new law. Carolyn will remind the sports commissioners to verify if the volunteer coaches have completed the Rutgers and concussion training. Other towns have all the sports under the same umbrella. Tom G. explained that it comes down to volunteers. If there weren't volunteers then someone would need to put a lot of effort to organize it. There was discussion about a part time recreation director and how recreation and the sports commissioner are organized. Each sports association has their own money. In other towns, there is a more centralized function. Norwood does background checks and are in charge of it and make sure that the sports comply with it. If it is under town insurance, there are protocols that the town should follow. Carolyn used to send out reminders to the sports commissioner at the beginning of each sports season to about Rutgers certification and concussion training. There are coaches who say that they are certified, do not have a coaches card and are not on the Rutgers list. The sports commissioners do not have a list of coaches or are reluctant to provide a list. There should be a way to police how volunteers are working with the kids. There are clinics that can be organized in Harrington Park, but a date needs to be agreed on. There are clinics in Westwood every month.

e. Advertising signs

The signs are in the field house. HP would make the signs and the advertisers would provide the artwork. Tom G., Paul and Tom D. will go through the old emails. Gerald Griffin is the person who created the advertising binder. Crestron is very generous and has donated to HP Town Day and could be another advertiser. Highland has a lot of traffic at this time that could be taken advantage of.

8. NEXT MEETING

Next regularly scheduled meeting is Wednesday, October 17, 2018 at 8:00PM

Meeting adjourned at 9:30PM.