

MEETING MINUTES

Parks & Recreation Commission Regular Meeting

November 9, 2023, 8:00pm @ the James Harmon Community Center

Commissioners In Attendance: Joanne Baecher-DiSalvo (Chair), Aaron Drahushuk, Amy Listerman, and Angela Reeve. Absent are Gene Calamari, Aaron Golembiewski and Mike Jacobs. A quorum is in order.

Also in attendance: Aaron Podhurst, Superintendent.

Agenda:

1. Call to Order

2. Public Comment - none

3. Old Business

- Approve October meeting minutes - approved
- Zinsser Community Gardens - update

Nicole Higgins has been working hard with Zinsser garden efforts. The first cleanup went well and we were able to assign 6 plots from those efforts. The next event is November 18th, and we are hoping to assign another 6 plots at that event. She has gone through the Wait List again and the number has been worked down from 52 down to 22 residents awaiting a plot. Nicole will be hosting the end-of-season gardener's meeting on Wed Nov 29th at 6:30pm at the JHCC.

4. New Business

- Upcoming/New Programs/Special Events

For complete details on current Recreation Department program offerings, visit:
<https://www.hastingsgov.org/parks-and-recreation-department>

For school-aged children:

Afterschool Program - Fall 2 Session (Nov 13 - Dec 22) @ Hillside
HoH Spanish Lab - after school program for grades K-4 (Jan 1 - Jun 13)
FUNominal Physics of Roller Coasters, grades 5-6, (Nov 15-Dec 13)
Youth Rec Basketball - grades 3-8th - games begin Dec 9

For Seniors:

November Calendar is online, lists trips, events, fitness, etc
Nov 14 - Senior trip to Katonah Museum of Art

Nov 16 - Senior Thanksgiving luncheon
Nov 30 - Senior trip to Woodbury Commons

For community:

Nov 10, 7-9pm - Party in Red & White Zumbathon Fundraiser
Nov 11, 11am - Veteran's Day Services at VFW Park
Nov 12, 11am - Terry Ryan Memorial Run (& fun run)
Nov 14, 4-5pm - Narcan Training (the WAY)
Rec department seeks donations of holiday decorations

- Superintendent's report
 - Terry Ryan run - new route (to avoid construction on Broadway)
 - Quarry Park - water and electricity are now installed at the park
 - Fields - working on winterizing (aerating, seeding) and they will be closed for a period of time (the public will be notified).
 - Tennis courts - winterizing
 - Village purchased 6 trees and received another 6 trees from the NYPA tree power program.
 - Wagner Park - some improvements at the request of Revolutionary Hastings group – we have lowered the park name sign, and relocated a “no smoking” sign and we are in the process of putting up a new frame and relocating the purple heart sign.
 - Pickleball clinic was rescheduled (due to rain) to this Sunday at Uniontown Park.
 - Senior programming - flyers and calendar in your packet. The Oct 26 Halloween Party was very well attended and can be viewed on WHoH TV. There is an upcoming trip to Katonah Museum of Art on Nov 14. There will be a senior Thanksgiving luncheon Nov 16. We have a host of activities planned for our seniors in December.
- Hillside Woods - update

Unfortunately, a portion of the deer fencing near the S gate was damaged/vandalized. It will need to be repaired. (This is the 2nd S gate located on the western side on the way up to the elementary school). The 30 acre “deer push” is still in discussion. Hastings Village Manager has notified the Dobbs Village Manager, but no date has been set as of yet. We met with Bartlett Tree Experts in regards to the invasives to clarify the scope of work.

- Projects - update
Hastings Historical Society - we are currently doing some painting repair.
We've consulted with Doug Emilio (chairperson of the Hastings on Hudson Architectural Review Board) regarding the historic preservation concerns.
- Dog park discussion
Presentation by Joanne Baecher-DiSalvo (Chair)

Summary of notes from Dr. Glasser's site visit to Graham Park Parcel (Aug 2023)

Size is adequate.
Will require tree & brush clearing.
Convenient community location.
Minimal proximity to residences.
Proximity to OCA may be a "plus."
Parking along Warburton Ave.
ADA accessibility may be "challenging."
Access for maintenance vehicles challenging.
Water access from Warburton? Stream?
Topography is adequate for dogs.

Dog park history of discussions since 2016

Nov 2016 - a dog park identified as a priority in Long Range Parks & Rec planning
Apr 2018 - dog park discussed as part of the Long Range Plan / Priorities.
Potential site exploration begins.
Jan 2019 - Village issues a Dog Park Community Survey. (results?)
2019-2022 - Dog Park among the top Priority Projects for Parks & Rec annual recommendations. Top Capital Recommendation in 2021.
Potential site exploration continues.

Ideal Criteria for a Dog Park

Generally safe area.
Easily accessible (walking/car, central location)
Access to water.
Generally open space.
Relatively flat and/or slightly sloped area.
Suitability of terrain.
Size (as close to 1 acre as possible)

History of potential locations for a dog park in the Village

Waterfront Park (future consideration with Waterfront development)

Quarry Park (resistance from local QP group & potential limited parking)

Hillside Woods Judson Ave (challenging access & conflict with Hillside Woods restoration)

9A Parcel (developer resistance. Not walkable for most Village residents)

Graham Park Hubbard Ext Trail (limited to “dog run” as shape is long and narrow. costly.)

Hillside Tennis Courts - area behind (is stormwater challenge resolved? is the size adequate?)

Farragut Parkway parcel (access challenge. Village entryway. Expense?)

Draper Park (local resistance, close to homes, possible covenant violation)

Graham Park Parcel

Commissioners in attendance agreed that while a dog park would be nice and could “catch on,” the reality is that residents have not expressed an interest as of late.

- Parks/Recreational Facilities List - updated Commissioner assignments
Aaron Draushuk will check on Quarry Park, Quarry Trail, and Vest Pocket Park.
- Draft update of anticipated future capital needs

Commissioners please reference “Anticipated Future Capital Needs” handout Aaron P distributed.

Note: Kinnally Cove boardwalk is degrading. Aaron P added the repair of the boardwalk to the category of Kinnally Cove.

- Conservation Commission - liaison’s report

Electric Owl - plan to cut down 200 trees and plant 400. Conservation Commission expressed concern as to which trees specifically. They also want to know about the accountability of the project.

USDA urban forestry grant – to hire a part time arborist (shared with other Rivertowns villages) - Amy asked Aaron P if he has received any updates. Questions continue to come up about an urban forester.

Exit 12 off SMRP - the trees in tubes, can they come out? Can we fence the area? (note there is a creek right in that area).

There's a *tree board*, but is there is process to check on Electric Owl or follow in with them?

Amy asked if anyone has heard any talk about a turf field at Burke?

Conservation Commission meets next week.

Amy expressed a sense that the Conservation Commission sees that they've done all these things (plantings), but we don't have maintenance monies etc to maintain and upkeep the trees that have been planted. Aaron P shared that it has been his experience that when going in front of the Board of Trustees we are usually in the position to ask for money to maintain the trees (but this can be after the fact versus being proactive to budget for these needs).

5. Adjournment

Calendar Notes:

- Village Tree Lighting will be 1st Friday of December at VFW Park.
- Next P&R Commission Meeting: Thursday, December 14th at 8:00pm @ the JHCC

November meeting minutes prepared by A. Reeve

November meeting minutes approved on: December 14, 2023