

**Parks & Recreation Commission Regular Meeting
James Harmon Community Center - 44 Main Street
Thursday, April 19, 2018 8 PM
MINUTES**

In Attendance: Joanne Baecher-DiSalvo (Chair), Gene Calamari, John Dailey,
David Downs, Angela Reeve
Aaron Podhurst (Superintendent), Lisa O'Reilly (Rec Assistant)

1. Call to Order

Joanne Baecher-DiSalvo (Chair) officially welcomed Aaron Podhurst as the new Superintendent of Parks & Recreation.

2. Public Comments

- Haven Colgate, Hastings resident, expressed ecological concerns over any suggestion to put a dog park at the end of Judson Avenue. These concerns include the increase number of dogs (possibly off leash) that would walk through Hillside Park and Hillside Woods to access the site. Dog feces that owners do not pick up and discard properly and increased foot traffic off trail will have ecological effects on the woods and nearby watershed of Sugar Pond. Haven reminded us that during last spring's public forums forestry experts advised that the health of Hillside Woods is dire. Any consideration to put a dog park at the end of Judson Avenue must take an ecological approach.

<issue discussed further later in the evenings agenda under Parks and Potential Uses>

- Denim McNeal, Hastings resident, and group returned to report on some further research findings as a follow up to last month's presentation to the Commission expressing an interest in building a skate park in Hastings:
 - The group has now collected 400 signatures on their petition to solicit interest among residents
 - Skateboarding is now an Olympic Sport;
 - shared an 4/8/18 Sunday NY Times article "Skateboarders Won" that goes on to report that skateparks are booming around the world as we head toward the first skateboarding Olympics.

The group suggested the Village consider Zinsser Park (the space at the back end of the drive/parking lot) and suggested 5,000 sq. feet. Accessible bathrooms, use of fields and playground nearby make this an attractive location, easily accessible by the age group of population that would have interest in such a park.

Rough cost estimates were provided (based on figures for nearby Nyack facility) of: \$120K for poured concrete OR \$80K for structured parts (ie. rhino ramps)
Suggested that poured concrete is more versatile to users.

Fundraising - the group reminded the Commission that they are growing a base of adult volunteers who would be interested in helping them fundraise to cover the expense. The group introduced Anthony Fischetti, new Hastings resident of Windsor Road, who has experience in building a skatepark in Ithaca, NY as one of the volunteers who has offered his time and talent.

Joanne Baecher-DiSalvo thanked the group for “doing their homework” to then come to tonight’s meeting with additional research/information to present. She offered that the Recreation Department could take this idea to the Village Manager and Board of Trustees, sharing that certainly any such proposal would need to be run by the Village attorney who would need to take a look at New York State laws as they pertain to skateparks.

David Downs pointed out that the current budget (starting June 1st) has already been submitted, so realistically any “ask” for a proposed skatepark would not be made until the 2019 budget cycle (initial process starts in December, submitted to BoTs for review in early March, budget work sessions conducted in late March, approvals roll out in April).

Joanne suggested the group write a formal letter to the Mayor and Board of Trustees expressing their interest.

Joanne asked that Aaron Podhurst (Superintendent P&R) take the suggestion to the Village Manager who in turn could convey to the Board of Trustees.

Joanne invited the group to return to next months P&R Commission meeting so we can share any preliminary feedback, explaining that the P&R Commission is an advisory board, and that the BoT as the governing board would need to grant approval on such a request.

Aaron questioned those in attendance if their suggestion was for strictly skateboarding, or bmx bikes or scooters, noting that any design would need to take that factor into consideration. Aaron (who shared that he managed a skate park in a previous job) noted that it is also helpful to know what features are being considered in determining the space needed for a skatepark.

David asked if Aaron could visit the proposed site at the back of the Zinsser Park lot to identify any preliminary issues and take some rough measurements to see if that location is viable.

One parent in attendance asked if a “membership fee” might be charged (citing the

example of the permit fees Rec charges for use of the tennis courts) to help support the cost of maintaining a skatepark. Aaron shared that it has been experience that the cost of supervision factors into the maintenance cost of a skatepark, and while New York State may have changed its laws to require signage only, the Village's insurance carrier may feel differently. Gene Calamari expressed support of a "membership fee" as a way to support the cost of funding supervision.

Next steps:

Aaron will walk the Zinsser parking lot site and speak with the Village Manager. Group in attendance was encouraged to write a letter to the Mayor and Trustees expressing interest.

Commission invited group to return to the May meeting so initial feedback from the Village could be shared.

3. Old Business and Upcoming/New Programs:

- Approved and adopted minutes from February and March 2018 monthly meeting.
- Old Business - Lisa O'Reilly reporting...
 - Chemka main pool is uncovered, cleaned and we await nicer weather to start painting.
 - Chemka Pool brochure was finalized and posted to the Village website.
 - Non-resident pool permits went on sale April 2nd. At present, a few remain.
 - Summer Camp registrations and sale of resident pool permits are well underway.
 - Revenue Report (Mar 8 - Apr 19) showed \$181K in revenues collected, of which \$65K was for camp registrations, \$74K in pool revenue, and \$42K in all other department revenue in this time period.
 - Shared use of Zinsser fields (between the Village programs, schools, and Hastings Little League) is working well.
- Upcoming/New Programs - Lisa O'Reilly (referencing program flyer handouts)

For young children / preschoolers:

Sports Hoppers (and Sports Hoppers Parent & Me) - Apr 20 - May 25

Little Kickers - Apr 17 - May 22

Tennis - Apr 18 - 23

For school aged children:

Hillside After School program - underway thru May 25

STEAM series - April 11 - May 9, topics vary weekly

DJ Classes (ages 10yrs+) - Apr 12 - May 31

Tennis - (in conjunction with US Sports Institute) - Apr 18 - 23

For young adults / adults / seniors:

Tennis (18+ yrs) - in conjunction with US Sports Institute - Apr 18 - May 23

Walk 15 (exercise group) - Apr 14 - May 26

Lifeguard Training - June 2018 @ Chemka

Senior Calendar of Events (see handout for April)

Senior Trip to Arthur Avenue - April 24

Senior Sampler - Celebrate Aging - April 26

Senior Trip to Philipse Manor Hall & Lunch @ Castle Royale - May 8

Salute to Seniors - Rock, Roll and Remember - (sponsored by Westchester County) - May 2

For Families and the Community:

Village-Wide Clean-Up Weekend - April 21-22

Village-Wide Tag Sale - June 2

4. New Business

- **Uniontown Park** - update

{reference 4/19 email from Village Manager to P&R Commission}

- expect asphalt binder will be put down late next week

- the large leaning oak has been evaluated by an arborist and can remain

- Once fence installed, the outfield can be seeded (goal to have grass germinate prior to summer so turf established for fall play)

- new I-beams will need to be installed for scoreboard

- dry stacked stone walls adjacent playground area completed with use of the rock broken up on site

- we have collected a series of drawings of playground apparatus, and we can start the discussion of what type of play apparatus might be best suited for that site.

- the \$70K that was in the operating budget moved to capital reserve fund

- Village Manager met with a representative of Rosedale nursery who will assist in inspecting out plantings for the park. Goal is to commit funding this fiscal year, but trees would not be installed until late fall.

David, having been involved in all aspects of the Reynolds park playground renovation, offered to sit with Aaron and talk him through the process we worked through for that location, echoing Village Manager's request to have opportunity for public input pertaining to the Uniontown Park playground.

Gene Calamari expressed an interest in walking the site to view progress first hand. Lisa O'Reilly will coordinate details to allow Commission members to walk the site Sat 4/21 at 8am.

- 2018-2019 Budget - Capital Expense Items

David attended the recent public budget work session and reported on the capital requests put forth by the P&R department:

- Fencing Hillside Woods \$146K - rejected
- Sugar Pond Shed Roof Repair \$20K - rejected
- Paint Uniontown Basketball \$10k - rejected
- Maintenance & Repair of Main Room JHCC \$50k - rejected
- Fencing \$26K - approved (though not specifically for 9A location as requested)
- New Stairs Zinsser (Materials) \$3.5K - approved
- Bocce Court \$4K - approved
- Specialty tools for Parks dept \$4K - approved

- Hillside Woods - update from David Downs

Land Beyond Sea (LBS) has been hired to conduct a study and devise an action plan to address the condition of Hillside Woods and that report should be available at the end of August. At that point, perhaps Board of Trustees will ask for funding of a bond (in which they may include funding for proposed fencing). David noted that there will be nothing further to report until fall. Note: funding to conduct the survey/study was covered by the \$29,500 grant that was awarded to the Village by New York State.

- Parks & possible uses (bocce, skate, dog)

Bocce - request for \$4K in capital funding to create a bocce court was approved for the June 1st fiscal year. The 5 Commission members in attendance voted unanimously to approve Riverview Park as the location to create the bocce court.

Skateboard park - reference this evening's earlier discussions under Public Comment

Dog park - in addition to the discussions started in this evening's Public Comment.... Discussions of possible sites for a Village dog park included:

Judson Avenue - David reported that the Village of Dobbs Ferry is also interested in discussing possibility of a shared dog park at this site. From the Dobbs Ferry side, people would access the location from Judson Avenue. From the Hastings side, people would park at Chemka pool (or any access point to Hillside Park) and walk about 1/3 mile to the location.

Area behind Hillside Park Tennis Courts - David suggested Aaron take a look at this location as a possible site.

Draper Park - it was noted that site could not be considered because of stipulations in the deed granting that land to the Village

Quarry Park - John Dailey noted that this site has been discussed as a possibility in the past, but cited lack of parking as a primary issue. As well as the inability to regulate who would have access to the site being that it falls along the public Old Croton Aqueduct trail.

9A parcel - Joanne asked about this site. John suggested any space would need to be large enough to accommodate a design with areas for both larger dogs and smaller dogs.

Waterfront - John suggested that the future design of the waterfront might want to consider including a dog park, but that would be many years down the road. It seemed that there has been recurring interest in creating a dog park.

Riverview Park was widely discussed years ago as a potential site. Nancy DeNatale (Friends of Riverview Park) was in attendance and offered to share all her old notes and diagrams from some of the previous meetings involving this topic, including contact names of the residents who at that time expressed an interest in creating a dog park so that the Commission can start to put together contact information for residents who expressed support of a dog park in the past. Ms. DeNatale will pass along her notes and information to Aaron Podhurst

Angela Reeve to follow up by reviewing prior Commission meeting minutes to start to compile a contact list of residents who have attended meetings in the past to express support of a dog park. Joanne suggests the Commission provide an opportunity for interested residents to have input to discussions of possible sites. John suggested it would be helpful for Parks & Rec to rule out sites (such as Draper because of the deed, etc), so that prior to any public discussions we as a Commission and Department know what possible sites could even be considered.

Aaron to provide a list of possible sites for dog park for next P&R Commission meeting. P&R Department will reach out to those residents who have provided their contact info in the past to invite them to the next P&R Commission meeting so we can get their opinions regarding possible sites.

- P&R Liaison to the Waterfront Rezoning Committee -
No commission members were able to attend last week's WRC meeting. Joanne again encouraged any/all Commission members to attend their May meeting (May 12 at 7:30pm in the Orr Room of the Library) so that we can begin to learn from their discussions during these early stages. David thought it would be helpful to have P&R Commission present to the WRC some of the long range goals that P&R has for the

Village to start putting some of those ideas on the radar. P&R chair (Joanne) plans to attend the 5/10/18 meeting of WRC to introduce self to chair, Ms. Kate Starr, to lay groundwork to begin dialogue to insure that the P&R's needs/vision are included in plans for the waterfront.

Added to this evening's discussion:

- Village Parks & Rec and Hastings UFSD relationship - David encouraged Aaron to reach out to the Hastings School District to set up a meeting to introduce himself and learn more about the current arrangements that exist between the Village Parks & Recreation department and the School District, citing specifically use of fields and facilities. John added that in the past, the public's ability to access school fields on the weekends for pickup games was a tradition enjoyed by many adults and families, but since the fields upgrades such use has been prohibited.

5. Meeting adjourned 9:45pm.

Next Meeting: May 17, 2018 - 8:00pm at the James Harmon Community Center

Minutes prepared by: A. Reeve

Minutes adopted on: June 21, 2018