

Parks & Recreation Commission Regular Meeting
James Harmon Community Center - 44 Main Street
Thursday, December 6 , 2018 8 PM
MINUTES

In Attendance:

Joanne Baecher-DiSalvo (Chair), Gene Calamari, Anjali Chen, John Dailey, David Downs, Mike Jacobs, Angela Reeve, Aaron Podhurst (Superintendent).

A quorum is in order.

1. Call to Order

2. Public Comments

- Peter Shaffran, Executive Producer of River Spirit Music & Arts Festival, came to introduce himself to the Commission and shared that the Village of Hastings' Board of Trustees has renewed the partnership to proceed with another summer concert series in 2019. Peter has already met with Aaron Podhurst and Lisa O'Reilly and initial planning is already underway. River Spirit is planning 5 or 6 Tuesday evening concerts for summer 2019 (noting discussions are underway with the first group, Bash the Trash). He also noted the date of Saturday, September 7, 2019 as the River Spirit Music & Arts Festival in Draper Park.

The Commission asked Peter if he would share some "lessons learned" from the 2018 summer concert series. Mr. Shaffran shared that signage is key (where to park, and how to get to MacEchron Park from parking locations, and getting the signs up in time), as well as always looking for better and quicker means of communicating to concert goers when there are changes due to weather. It was suggested that the 5-corners might be a good spot to advertise any last minute changes to the location of any particular concert due to weather.

David Downs expressed concern that 1 van/shuttle to move concert goers is inadequate, especially considering the half mile walk from MacEchron Park to the train station parking lot (people are carrying chairs and coolers, and may have physical limitations that make that walk unrealistic). He stressed the safety considerations in the event that the park needs to be evacuated quickly in an emergency (such as sudden thunder/lightning storm). Mr. Shaffran says Hastings police estimated attendance to be 400 concert goers on a good night, and 100 or so on a rainy night where concerts were held in the Community Center.

In response to these concerns, Mr. Shaffran offered this input:

- Traffic flow - the "turnaround" is in Harvest's section of the parking lot, and Harvest had

barriers that did not allow for their lot to be used.

- Liability policy - River Spirit has a liability policy in place and the Village's liability policy as a back-up
- Pickup & Drop Off - Mr. Shaffran recommends the Village gets another bus/shuttle on concert nights (perhaps school bus size)
- Parking - Village has instructed Mr. Shaffran to advertise parking for the summer concert series is in Zinsser lot

Joanne Baecher-DiSalvo suggests Parks & Rec talk to the trustees about funding another bus. She also questioned whether we should approach Harvest regarding the possibility of allowing a "turn about" in their parking lot.

- Wendy Naidich, Hastings, indicated that she is here this evening to hear any discussions relevant to a proposed dog park in the Village as she is in support.

3. Old Business

- October Minutes presented. Note there was no P&R Commission meeting in November.
- Skateboard park - follow up
Mike Jacobs shared some info as a follow up to our discussions in October. He spoke with Trustee Lopez and their idea of a skate park in the Village was received well. There were concerns over the location and financing of such a project.

Mike also spoke with Maureen Caraballo, Treasurer Hastings UFSD, who also expressed interest. She shared that while the school district would not pay for a skate park (suggesting it would have to be funded by the Village or crowd sourcing), she said the School district would consider having such a park on their property. Asked if Lower Reynolds field was an option, Ms. Caraballo indicated no because of how that space is currently used during the week for the schools and on weekends for AYSO. She suggested two possible sites on the Burke Estate... 1 just south of the parking lot, and the other just south of the driveway to the field, off of Farragut Ave (for this site Ms. Caraballo expressed concern about how such a site would affect trees in that area). She pointed out that any possible site she would approve would of course have to then go to the Board of Ed for consideration/approval. Mike walked both sites proposed, and it seems that the area by the driveway would be more conducive.

Joanne asked Mike what he felt that we as a Commission could do to support this proposal. As a next step, Mike offered to draft a letter that would come from the P&R Commission and be addressed to the Board of Ed for their consideration for use of property space. In terms of the funds, it was suggested that the community group would need to get a better handle on the cost estimates (engineering, design, equipment, etc).

- Report on most recent Waterfront Rezoning Committee meeting
Anjali reported that a guest presenter (from the Department of Planning & Economic Development for the Village of Port Chester) shared with those in attendance Port Chester's experience with stake holders engagement, working with a consultant team, preparing the site plan, RFP structure, zoning for their waterfront, and shared lessons learned from the whole process. Anjali shared that the Hastings WRC is working on an initial strategic plan to run the process. There is \$250K in the budget to use toward funding a consultant team, and the WRC is preparing the RFP for consultant services. Anjali also noted that WRC members indicated that they had received and reviewed David Downs' letter on behalf of the P&R Commission.

- Dog park - ways to seek community input online
David reviewed some points from prior discussions pertaining to possible site locations (Judson Avenue in Hillside Park, area near the Hillside tennis courts, 9A parcel, Quarry Park, waterfront, etc) and the Commission discussed ways to solicit public input. Mike asked what discussions have been had in the past pertaining to Quarry Park as a possible location. John shared that suggestion of that as a possible location had been met with resistance in the past from the adjacent neighborhoods. The possibility of the 9A parcel was again put forth, with the thought that the lot was big enough to create additional parking spots and still have enough space for a dog park. In terms of gaining public input, Aaron shared that it is his understanding that our Village website/platform may now have the ability to allow for "virtual town hall" which may be a means of starting conversations. Another option -- Aaron is building a community survey to help determine what parks/facilities residents are using. David offered to work with Aaron to develop some questions for the survey that could indicate community interest.

4. New Business

Upcoming Programs: (flyers outlining the particulars are available online or at the Rec Office)

For Preschoolers:

- Snowman Surprise workshop - Dec 10, 1-2pm

For School Aged Children:

- Winter session of Hillside After School program - registration underway

For Seniors:

- Trips / Current Events / Busy Bees, Senior Club (ref. Calendar handout)
- Ornament Making Workshop - Dec 10, 12:30pm @ JHCC

For Families / Community:

- Tree Lighting - Dec 7 @ 6pm, JHCC
- Letters to Santa - Dec 7 - 17, drop @ JHCC
- Drop & Shop Bingo - Dec 13, 6-8pm @ JHCC
- Winter Celebration - Dec 16, 2pm @ JHCC
- Drop & Shop Movie Night - Dec 20, 6-8pm @ JHCC

Staffing needs / retirement of pool director:

The Commission reviewed a memo that Aaron prepared that outlines the needs for a full time recreation staffer that would, among other things, take on the role of pool director and all ops pertaining to the Chemka pool. Aaron will send that to the Village Manager. The Commission also developed a letter of support to this proposal that Joanne will forward to the Village Manager.

Spray Pool - update

Aaron and the Village engineer have explored the option of finding an individual contractor who might be capable of taking on the work, and in that case the Village would act as the general contractor. This option however fell through as the few contractors who looked at the work were not willing/able to take on the repair. Aaron reminded the commission that the bids that came back from the falls RFP process came back at well over \$200K for the repair -- much higher than we had hoped. Aaron and the engineer (Hahn) have contacted the Westchester County Department of Health (WCDoH) to advise them where the Village is in this process. Aaron is hopeful that we can open in Summer 2019 under the same arrangement that we had last summer (in that we would supply the County with weekly water samples from the Spray Pool to ensure that the water chemistry is well within the County's required range). The Commission asked Aaron if he could pursue with the WCDoH to see if we could get this offer/arrangement in writing. This would certainly help to alleviate some pressure and allow the Village to rebid the project again in early Spring to see if we get more favorable estimates.

Quarry Park - update

Anjali met with Christina Lomolino (Quarry Park Study Committee). We are reminded that the DEC approved the plans to remediate that park and we cannot really stray from those State approved plans. The Village Manager sent out the bid documents last month and interested parties were to reply by this week.

Uniontown Park - update

Gene gave a recap of the completed renovations. The renovation plans were well executed and the desired dimensions all came out accurately and the work came out great. Gene noted that with the side fencing (currently at 12') Hastings Little League (HLL) recommends 25' of foul ball territory. This is a small issue that the Village vendor (Numat Fencing) can take a look at.

As an aside, HLL got an estimate of an overhang on Zinsser 2 to prevent foul balls, and they also noticed that the foul poles don't match (one was replaced as a result of prior storm damage). Gene will ask HLL for help with these issues.

Aaron shared that the new bleachers for Uniontown have arrived, as have 2 benches and 2 picnic tables. This equipment is onsite and will be installed in the spring.

Parks signage - update

Aaron handed out a draft of the proposed signage that the Parks & Rec would like to use to bring consistency and clarity to use of all Village parks. The Commission asked if he would get

clarity to see if there is a Village ordinance on smoking in Village parks. Aaron is proposing uniform signage on all Village Parks. Aaron also pointed out that permits are required for group activities (Gene suggested scratching the proposed number of 15 participants as a number to define "group." David suggested wording this as "scheduled group activities require a permit." Mike suggested vetting thru Village lawyer and Trustees, and also thought it was worth getting a professional graphic designer to develop the signage once content has been approved. Aaron will factor in the Commission's input and will next take the proposed signage to the Village Manager.

Aaron also indicated that after the survey results were in, he is interested in developing a department logo for Parks & Recreation.

2019 Summer Concert Series - update
{discussed above under Public Comment}

NEW Recreation Department Hours effective January 1st, 2019: Mon - Fri, 8:30am - 4:00pm. Aaron and the Village Manager discussed that these new hours would bring the department in line with other Village departments.

5. Meeting Adjourned 10:00pm

Next Meeting: January 17, 2019

Minutes prepared by: A. Reeve

Minutes adopted on: January 17, 2019