

## **MEETING MINUTES**

### **Parks & Recreation Commission Regular Meeting**

**Thursday, October 8, 2020 at 8 PM (via ZOOM)**

#### **In Attendance:**

Commission: Joanne Baecher-DiSalvo (Chair), Gene Calamari, Anjali Chen, John Dailey, Mike Jacobs, Patrick McKenzie, Angela Reeve. A quorum is in order.

Parks & Recreation Department: Lisa O'Reilly, Anthony Costantini (Chemka Pool Director).

#### **1.Call to Order**

#### **2. Public Comment**

Joanne assured those listening in that all emails sent to her or the Recreation department email box pertaining to item(s) on this evening's agenda were forwarded on to Commission members prior to the start of this evening's meeting.

#### **3. Old Business**

**-September commission meeting minutes approved**

**-Commission vote on resolutions regarding proposed skate park in Village**

Joanne opened the discussion by summarizing the two resolutions that the Commission will be voting on this evening:

Resolution I.) The first and most important resolution is that we as the Parks & Rec Commission fully support and endorse the construction of a skatepark in the Village and see this as a priority in our mandate to address the recreational needs of our citizens, and that we recommend this endeavor to the Board of Trustees.

Resolution II.) The second resolution concerns the site we feel is most preferable for the proposed skatepark. We have already identified 2 possible sites, Burke Estate & Zinser, and will recommend to the Board of Trustees the one we feel is preferable.

Before the Commission votes, Mike would like to offer two thoughts to fellow Commissioners.

1- Over the course of the past two years, the residents in support of a skate park in the Village have consistently attended the Parks & Recreation Commission meetings and have taken our

concerns and gone out to do research and have always come back to our meetings with answers to our questions and information to address our concerns.

2- In thinking about how the Village funds projects of this scale, if we think of this project like a “playground,” consider that the Village spent \$125K for Reynolds playground. A couple years later, the Village set aside \$60K for Uniontown playground. That’s \$185K for two playgrounds for parents and children of ages (about) toddlers thru 10 years old. This request, to support a skate park in the Village, is for \$150K. In consideration of what the Village funds for projects of similar scales, this is not a huge ask. Mike is offering this perspective in hopes of framing our mind set as we are now ready to vote on a proposed skate park, pointing out that a skate park would benefit all ages, especially middle schoolers, high schoolers and even adults.

John Daily would also like to commend the number of people who have participated in these discussions and efforts over the course of the past couple of years. John has been particularly impressed by the participation of the young people.

Trustee Mary Lambert also expressed that she is very impressed by the presentation of the kids in support of this proposal, and impressed with the range of ages this proposal would span.

Joanne noted, the HoH Skate group gathered over 700 signatures in support of a skate park.

#### Commission Vote on resolution I --

Joanne Baecher-DiSalvo - yes

Gene Calamari - yes

Anjali Chen - yes

John Dailey - yes

Mike Jacobs - yes

Patrick McKenzie - yes

Angela Reeve - yes

The Commission voted unanimously in support of resolution I.

Commission Vote on resolution II -- The second resolution concerns the site we feel is most preferable for the proposed skatepark. We have already identified 2 possible sites, Burke Estate & Zinser, and will recommend to the Board of Trustees the one we feel is preferable.

A few thoughts were offered by the Commission prior to the vote on resolution II....

Joanne feels as a Commission we need to recommend ONE site. She thinks we all agree that both sites are viable and have been considered. And note that we also considered several other sites over the course of the past couple years..

Mike thinks it is to our advantage to offer BOTH sites.

John also thinks that it could be to our advantage to offer both sites.

Gene would vote for Zinsser immediately if it weren't going to take from any parking there.

This input considered, Joanne has asked each Commissioner to vote on the site they feel is preferred....

Commission vote on resolution II -

Joanne Baecher-DiSalvo - Zinsser

Gene Calamari - Burke

Anjali Chen - Zinsser

John Dailey - Burke

Mike Jacobs - Burke

Patrick McKenzie - Zinsser

Angela Reeve - Zinsser

Trustee Mary Lambert suggested to Joanne that she note, when passing the recommendation on to the board, that the Burke site has been considered for much longer. And that the Zinsser site has not been in discussions for as long as the Burke site.

**- Hillside Woods - update**

Patrick McKenzie - he's been away for a month, and has been quarantining for 14 days, but Haven Colgate has provided him with an update that he will share. There has been lots of volunteer work going.... 20 people last weekend for the privet pull, and flowers can be found growing in the clearings. Since July 3rd, volunteers have devoted 665 hours to the project. Recently, volunteers scattered seeds of native plants in some of the clearings... these are also great plants for pollinators. They've been talking about putting together a demo plot to illustrate how this deer enclosure will work. They have identified a site for the demo plot along Edgewood. Patrick will put some thought into how to construct some of the demo temporary fencing. A type of fencing that can be attached to living trees. Part of this process will be to

remove invasive trees in the demo plot. Ailanthus tree is one invasive they want to focus on removing. (high up on the docket for the demo plot, and high up for the overall project).

Anjali... the nature walks have been successful. We'll be continuing with these. Haven has attended, brings binoculars. Bird walks have been popular.

In looking at all the work volunteers have done, some decisions now need to be made. The \$100k from the County is about ready to be disbursed to the Village. On/about October 16th hoping to schedule a community meeting (Mary, Patrick, and Joanne)... 1-2pm in the afternoon. Anjali will send an email and draft agenda. It's feeling like there's some movement because we are nearing to when the \$100k will be coming in.

### **-Climate Smart Communities - update**

Anjali has stepped down. Not sure where Patrick and Mike are at. Trustee Lambert will give an update... Enterprise article last week highlighted that the Village of Hastings has officially reached silver status. The plan now is to go for gold (although it has not been officially announced that there will be a gold, with all that is going on in Albany). The main message / change between silver and gold is to try much more to allocate actions to different committees around the Village. The P&R Commission has taken on a couple of actions that they will address.

Patrick reported the "actions" the P&R Commission will take on -- setting aside of public lands that Hastings already owns, and doing a watershed assessment. (these are down the line). Trustee Lambert offered there is also a possibility for tree plantings.

Trustee Lambert took this time to give an update on the deer project -- met with Humane Society lead and she did a walk through Hillside Woods. Cameras installed on 11 trees to collect information to gather population estimates. It seems that the deer population numbers are down. The collision accident rate is two times lower than the initial observation period (20015 - 2017, and 2017-2019). The next step is this camera session, then perhaps come back in 2021. Humane Society is in their final phases of this project... need to wrap up the joint experiment between Tufts, Humane Society, and the Village of Hastings.

## **4. NEW BUSINESS**

### **New/Upcoming Programs - (Lisa O'Reilly)**

- Refer to list of activities Lisa sent to the Commission.

**Senior programs** -- the senior bus, activities, and outside classes are now being offered. We'll be taping some of Gina's exercise classes to put on WHoH TV so seniors can enjoy these exercises from home.

**Sports** programs are going

**After School** program renamed to “FALL INTO FUN” - meets outside

**Halloween Window Painting** (two sessions, social distanced, Sat Oct 24)

**Halloween on the Go** (commuter parking lot)... trick or treat, working w/ local groups to hand out candy from their decorated cars (again, socially distanced, time slot reservations)

**Halloween Cleanup Weekend** (Oct 24)... (since Spring 2020 clean up was cancelled due to pandemic). We are encouraging people to wear mask and gloves, and get together to clean up adopted areas in the Village

**Vest Pocket Park** - survey has come in. Already approved by BoT. Excited.

- **Chemka Pool Report** - Anthony Costantini (pool director)

Rough number for the 2020 season:

Income: \$120k

Expenses: (\$156k)

Net loss: (\$36k)

This does not include the approximate \$125k annual amount paid toward the bond

Joanne asked where we stand with the pool fund account. Rafael Zaratian (Village Treasurer) indicated we should have a better idea by next month's meeting.

Lisa reminded the Commission that having the Chemka Pool open this summer was a valuable service to the community, and with all the challenges that the COVID-19 pandemic presented, so asked that we not solely look at the numbers when reflecting on the success of the season. Joanne underscored that at last month's meeting the Commission offered appreciation and praise at the outstanding job the Chemka Staff and Rec Department did with the Chemka Pool operations this summer, and recognized the pool as a valuable respite in the community this past summer.

5. Before adjourning this evening's meeting, Joanne would like to offer her **thanks** to the Commission for their time and attention to the various issues that have come before the Commission. Joanne would especially like to thank Mike who has been an excellent liaison for the Commission for the skate park proposal.

**Meeting adjourned.**

**Next meeting:** November 12th, at 8pm

October Meeting Minutes adopted Nov 12, 2020.  
Prepared and submitted by A. Reeve