

**Parks & Recreation Commission Regular Meeting**  
**Thursday, January 11, 2024 (8:00pm)**  
**James Harmon Community Center**

In Attendance:

Joanne Baecher-DiSalvo, Gene Calamari, Josh Dean, Aaron Drahushuk, Mike Jacobs, Amy Listerman, Angela Reeve. A quorum is in order.

Also in Attendance: Aaron Podhurst (Superintendent).

**AGENDA:**

**1. Call to Order**

**2. Public Comment**

Angela Reeve - Amherst Drive, Hastings - commends Anne Russak on her contributions to a vibrant / varied program/trips/activities for senior residents.

**3. Old Business**

- Approve December meeting minutes - approved

-Skate park - update

Joanne asked Josh to check on the status of the Inter-Municipality Agreement (IMA) with the Village Manager. Josh shared that Rivertown Skate Society has raised about \$60k to date and indicated that they are researching grant possibilities.

-Hillside Woods - update

Aaron P circulated the final version of the signage for the Hillside Woods Restoration Project. In sum, signage asks visitors to report damage of fencing, keep dogs leashed and on trails, clean up after your dog, and refrain from bike riding in the wods. a QR code links to detailed information about the project.

Community deer drive - tentative date is March 16 (snow date March 17). The Hillside Woods Steering Committee has been developing a community education program to roll out (in the form of two Zoom trainings with Q&A sessions) prior to the drive.

Aaron P has been working with the engineer to tweak the S gates to ensure they will effectively keep the deer from passing through.

Invasives management - we are fine tuning the proposal with Bartlett Tree to address the invasives. Target start time to tackle the invasives is Fall 2024.

Staffing - the “joint arborist” position shared among the Rivertowns Villages (a person 29 hrs/wk ) is grant funded. Commissioners expressed support for asking for a full time person (task oriented) who would support the many parks going forward (Quarry Park, Hillside Woods, etc)... The grant-funded position would provide for a person with “specialized knowledge” who could then in turn (feasibly) work with our parks staff to train/educate staff how to care for the Village parks (noting that now with Quarry Park and Hillside Woods open/operational, this represents a significant amount of support needed to maintain the parks).

Aaron P can put forth that request (with the support of the Commission... Aaron P suggests Joanne writes a letter of support) outlining the need to have more help to care for the parks/resources in the Village.

Gene will get data from neighboring Rivertowns (# of park workers, acres of parkland) and will meet with Aaron P to develop the job description of said proposed full-time staffer. The idea is to put forth this “ask” in the next operational budget submission.

#### **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 young children:*

>Toddler Time Tuesdays (ages 1-3yrs with caregiver) Jan 9 - Feb 6 @ JHCC

*For school aged children:*

>Afterschool Program (grades K-4), Jan 8 - Feb 16 @ Hillside School

*For seniors:*

>Senior Calendar is available hard copy at the Rec, and online

>New Year’s Luncheon, Jan 11th (Thur) @ JHCC

>Senior Weekday (11am) Exercise Program @ JHCC - \$30 for 3 month session.  
Senior Sneakers, Chair Yoga, Aerobics, Tai Chi.

>Trip to Bruce Museum in Greenwich, Jan 18.

>Lunch and Learn (how to avoid scams that target seniors) Jan 23 @ JHCC

>Trip to Clay Art Center and Greenwich Historical Society, Jan 24

*For the community:*

>12th Annual Community Breakfast honoring Dr Martin Luther King Jr, Jan 15

- Superintendent's report

The Village has received the all terrain electric utility vehicle (that was requested in prior year's budget). That vehicle will soon be put into service. As a recap, this resource was sought to significantly support the Hillside Woods Restoration project (as well as other Village parks) allowing for the transport of water and materials for maintaining the native plantings and allowing for regular monitoring of the fencing around the perimeter.

Roof damage at the Historical Society has been repaired and Aaron P is happy to report that the recent storms have resulted in no leaking. The remainder of the improvements/repairs at the cottage are mostly complete and the results are very nice.

Tennis ball recycling program at Hillside courts has been successful (Aaron P noted that the Board of Trustees had asked the Recreation department to look into this effort as discarded tennis balls pose an environmental challenge. Reference [www.recycleballs.org](http://www.recycleballs.org))

Tennis courts (Hillside Park) were closed for the season at the last snow storm, and we will reopen them in early spring as weather permits. Same goes for pickleball.

Purple Hearts Signs (made for Veterans who have served in the US Military) throughout the Village will have new frames. This is an initiative that received Board of Trustee approval.

Pickleball - in reference to the Commission's prior conversations on how the Uniontown Park facility is going to be shared between pickleball and basketball, Aaron P wanted to note that he has received a few complaints about the early morning noise of people playing pickleball (note the park hours are 8am - dusk, and the complaints have been about noise occurring prior to the 8am timeframe). Aaron has put some signage at Uniontown and has put the word out to the pickleball community. Mike suggested plantings, shrubs, acoustic blankets, etc be considered to help address the noise in general.

Use of 9A Parcel -

Joanne can talk to the Mayor to review if this parcel was designated as parkland so we could consider this when thinking about this for parks/recreation purposes. It was noted that the previous parks foreman had advised the Commission of drainage issues with that parcel.

Seniors - local seniors enjoyed a great New Year party today at the JHCC.

- 2024 - 2025 P&R Budget and review of capital projects  
operating expenses don't vary too greatly from year to year

The JHCC is getting old and is showing its age in certain areas. HVAC, plumbing, etc.

Anticipated future capital needs - (see Aaron's email to draw our attention to the "Village of Hastings-on-Hudson Capital Budget Plan - Fiscal 23-24 to Fiscal 27-28"), found on the Village website here:

[https://www.hastingsgov.org/sites/g/files/vyhlif7561/f/uploads/capital\\_plan\\_09.19.2023.pdf](https://www.hastingsgov.org/sites/g/files/vyhlif7561/f/uploads/capital_plan_09.19.2023.pdf)

MacEachron Park – (reference \$3M Deal Impact Park & Water Tower - Rivertowns Enterprise, January 5, 2024). Lead paragraph reads:

*"Hastings - The Hastings Village Board approved an agreement with the Atlantic Richfield Company (ARCO) on Dec 28 that obligates the British Petroleum subsidiary to pay the Village \$3 million for resiliency work at MacEachron Waterfront Park. The agreement also obligates ARCO to store the water tower, a vestige of the site's industrial past, elsewhere on ARCO's 28-acre property while the company remediates the land underneath its current location. Once that remediation is complete, ARCO will be responsible for landscaping the shoreline, and must retain a landscape architect for that work."*

Aaron P points out that with this money, we can expect that the work down at the waterfront park will move forward.

- Capital asks - priorities of the Commission

- 1 - Skate Park
- 2- Boardwalk at Kinnally Cove (\$100k) to rebuild
- 3- JHCC window repairs
- 4- Zinsser roof replacement
- 5-

Rowley's Trail is off the list

- Dog park - follow up

no strong interest at this time

- Review of recent grants for waterfront park

Reference "Village of Hastings-on-Hudson Capital Budget Plan - Fiscal 23-24 to Fiscal 27-28" (page 13) that reads:

"MacEachron Park... \$1,221,578

Erosion has long been occurring at MacEachron Park eating away at the shoreline and reducing the usable area of the park. This, combined with the ever-increasing heavy storms, has caused the park to both flood and erode. The Village obtained a grant from the Hudson River Estuary Fund, which was used to hire the Mott MacDonald engineering firm to prepare a design to make the park more resilient. The total project cost is \$3,000,000. The Village has submitted a grant (\$500,000) to begin implementing a long term solution to address erosion at MacEachron Park, it has a match of \$500,000 and an additional \$221,578 will be required to pay for the first phase of the restoration which includes restoring the southeast portion of the shoreline and building a kayak launch.

The cost will be paid with a grant of \$500,000 and \$721,578 match in Unassigned Fund Balance."

- Conservation Commission - liaison's report

Amy wants us (as citizens of Hastings) to know that the Electric Owl project is moving forward. From a Village perspective, there is a lot going on with this project. It is a big building and the developers are asking for a lot of variances. Amy noted that the Conservation Commission is involved to further understand what is involved with this project.

## **5. Adjournment**

Next P&R Commission Meeting: February 8, 2023 (8:00pm) @ JHCC

January Meeting Minutes prepared by A. Reeve

January Meeting Minutes approved on: Feb 8, 2024