MEETING MINUTES
Parks & Recreation Commission Regular Meeting
January 12, 2022 (Wed) - 8:00pm - via ZOOM

Commissioners in attendance: Joanne Baecher-DiSalvo (Chair), Gene Calamari, Aaron Golembiewski, Amy Listerman, Angela Reeve. A quorum is in order.

Also in attendance: Aaron Podhurst (Superintendent), Morgen Fleisig (Trustee), Anthony Costantini (Clerk), Rafael Zaratzian (Director of Technology).

1. Call to Order

2. Public Comment

Joanne Baecher-DiSalvo shared an email from resident Joanna Prisco regarding the skate park.
Joanne wants it known that the Parks & Recreation Commission has voted on the location of the skate park. The Commission has communicated this location (Burke Estate) to the Board of Trustees. Trustee Fleisig reported at our last Commission meeting that an inter-municipality agreement (IMA) was received by the Village from the school district and that the IMA is currently being reviewed by the Village lawyer. No further update on the skate park is available at this time. Aaron Podhurst spoke with Maureen Caraballo, Treasurer Hastings UFSD, and Maureen is working on getting the Rec Department an updated approval letter for the use of the Burke Estate from the current Board of Education.

3. Old Business

- Approve December minutes approved

- Hillside Woods - update
  Aaron Podhurst reports that the tree work in the demo area has been completed. The Parks staff is working hard to clear the debris and address some of the trees that were not on the contractor’s list. The supply chain issue with perimeter fencing has been resolved, so this week we started digging the holes and we expect the perimeter fencing to be complete in another week or so. Joanne invited commission members to take a walk along Edgewood Drive & Taft to see the portion of exterior fencing that has been installed. The “interior” (temporary fencing) will be attached to trees as opposed to fence posts.
A lot of work to prep demo area. Hillside Woods steering committee, Taro (County Arborist), Haven (Conservation Commission), etc all agree that we need more than just the parks staff to keep this part of the project going. Aaron reminds us of the recommendation from Land Beyond Sea that we would need more support than the existing parks staff. Aaron indicates that we’ll need some heavy machinery to do some of the work, and he has reached out to some of the local communities.

We have money to get the fencing up, and we have a deadline to get that fencing up.

Next Steps: discuss with the Hillside Woods steering committee. Will need to update the request for proposal (RFP) for this work.

Aaron thanks Haven Colgate for her assistance in updating the tree inventory of felled or girdled trees in Hillside Woods).

- **Grants - update**

  **Tree Maintenance grant** - all the work for the hazardous tree list inventory has been addressed. A little bit of money remains from that, and Aaron P received permission from the state to use those remaining funds towards addressing some of the immediate hazardous trees.

  **Tree Inventory grant** - Inventory has been completed of the four approved locations (Uniontown Park, Zinsser Park, Pulver’s Woods, Rowley’s Bridge Trail). A draft of the “Village of Hastings on Hudson Community Forest Management Plan” has been completed (reference Aaron P’s email to the Commission). This document will be shared with the Board of Trustees and Savatree Consulting Group will be presenting to the Board at their January 18th meeting. Aaron P encouraged the Commissioners to dial in to the upcoming meeting.

  Aaron Golembiewski asked if any community effort has been made to educate the community about the invasive trees that may be growing on their property? Aaron P indicated, to the best of his knowledge, no. Aaron G thinks that it would be a great idea to educate residents. Amy Listerman knows the pollinator pathway folks are starting to see if it makes sense to put something together to educate homeowners on what they can do to help with these efforts. Aaron P thought that a joint effort (with conservation, recreation, and tree board) might be a great opportunity to address the outreach/education component pertaining to invasive trees in the community.

  **MacEachron Park grant** - these efforts are moving along nicely. Some of the performance measures have been met, and some of the surveys have been completed. The report of the current conditions as well as temporary emergency measures to curtail
erosion is all being discussed now. Next stage will involve the marine engineer meeting with Aaron P, the Village Manager, and Trustee Fleisig. We’re hoping to receive the final report on MacEachron Park in late spring/early summer. The marine engineer is going to provide some numbers and estimates.

The education/outreach component of river access is extremely important. Currently there is kayak access in Kinnally Cove. We will consider the opportunity for kayak launching from MacEachron Park (but need NY State DEC approval, and we would want community support before pursuing that opportunity).

4. New Business

- Upcoming Programs
  (Commissioners reference Aaron Podhurst’s email dated Jan 12th with “handouts” for this evenings meeting).

  A current listing of Recreation programming can be found on the department’s section of the Village website. Found here: [https://www.hastingsgov.org/parks-and-recreation-department](https://www.hastingsgov.org/parks-and-recreation-department)

- Superintendent Report

  - Chemka Pool
    Anthony Costantini will not be the Pool Director in 2022 due to his recent full time appointment as Village Clerk. Aaron and the Village Manager are discussing ways that this position can be staffed. Work to repair the pump room will be needed. Aaron and Anthony will be presenting to the Board of Trustees at their January 18th meeting to give them an overview of the damage that was sustained and of the work that will need to be done.

- Priorities – budget 2022/2023

  Joanne opened the discussion by stressing the need to come up with a list of priorities that we as a Commission can agree on to submit to the Board of Trustees. She asked to first get a sense of everyone’s input before we then start to hone in on what will be our top list.

  Aaron P wants to inform the Commission that he has met with the Village Engineer regarding the drainage issue of the Uniontown basketball courts and there may be a solution that will be less invasive than we originally thought. While we are not sure of the
cost at this point, in discussing the issue with the engineer, it does appear that we will be able to fix the drainage issue.

Joanne asked for the Commissioners to indicate their list of priorities…

Mike (via an email to Joanne)
1- skate park
2- dog park
3- uniontown basketball resurfacing (only if it includes lines for pickleball)
4- MacEachron park - (grant is going to cover 30% of the design, but we should put money there to keep progress going).
5- Field maintainer

Gene:
1- field maintainer
2- uniontown basketball court (can include pickleball lines, as long as this location is not a permanent home for pickleball)
3- dog park
4- permanent home for pickleball at 9A
5- adequate access to back of Uniontown

Joanne:
1- skate park
2- MacEachron
3- Uniontown basketball court (with pickleball lines)
4- dog park
5- field maintainer

A note regarding the 9A Parcel – Aaron P shared that he has reached out to the former parks foreman (Rich Strobel) who confirmed that the 9A parcel would need to be prepped before we could do something at that location (ie. bring in proper fill/surfacing). Gene Calamari suggests the Village engineer take a look at the 9A site. Aaron Golembiewski and Gene Calamari have volunteered to continue the study of the 9A Parcel for parks & recreation use.

Aaron G:
1- leaf blowers department uses convert to electric
2- Uniontown basketball/pickleball
3- MacEachron park
4- educational program on invasive species (low hanging fruit)
5- dog park
6- replacing field groomer

Angela:
1- Skate park
2- Dog park
3- Uniontown basketball/pickleball
After each of the Commissioners shared their input on the priorities list, some additional information was shared and discussions ensued.

Trustee Fleisig outlined a high level recap of the next steps for the skate park.
1- the Village needs to clear the Inter-Municipal Agreement (IMA) with the Hastings School District.
2- the Board of Trustees needs to move on the Parks & Recreation Commission’s recommendation regarding the location.
3- work on HoHSkate for fundraising.

Aaron Podhurst - as a follow up to last month’s Commission meeting, looked into the field maintainer and reports that there is currently no electric version of this piece of equipment that exists. It is a niche market, and nothing is “on the drawing board” in the industry to produce an electric version of this type of machinery.

Aaron Podhurst points out that a dog park has been on the “ask list” for a number of years now. It seems that it has some more support. He looked at the area behind the Hillside Park tennis courts. The Parks staff has taken down a lot of debris at that site and has staked out an area that he invites all the Commissioners to go up and visit. Aaron P expressed some concern that it may not be large enough (being just under one half acre of land). The issue of drainage in that entire global area is being looked at by the Village (the area from Sugar Pond, down the path, around the courts and parking lot, right down to the pool). The Village is hoping that the drainage issue gets addressed as a part of the FEMA application for that whole area.

- Dog Park -
Anthony Costantini was asked to speak to why a dog park might work well behind the Hillside tennis courts. Anthony shared that this location is being considered for many reasons – it is generally accessible for walking and vehicles; and it is not a dramatically sloped property (which would be good for folks with mobility issues). As far as the concern folks may have as to “cutting into the woods,” Anthony points out that there is a significant number of norway maples (an invasive). There are some native trees in this area that we can leave and even work into interesting design features.
A lengthy discussion ensued factoring in months worth of thought/input and the additional information that was presented this evening.

Joanne summarized Parks & Recreation Commission's top 5 priorities for 2022/2023 as:

1. skate park
2. dog park
3. Uniontown - resurface the basketball court and install pickleball lines
4. field maintainer (packaged with electric leaf blowers for the parks department).
   It is noted that this is with the understanding that Hastings Little League is prepared to pay for half of the $30k cost.
5. MacEachron Park - funds to cover the balance of design costs

- Review/discuss Parks & Recreation Long Range Plan - 5-year -

Joanne pointed out that our “Long Range Plan for Strategic Management of Parks and Recreation Assets for the Village of Hastings on Hudson” has not been updated since 2016. That document is housed on the Village website, found here:


A lot has happened since 2016, and many of our projects have been completed. It is time to update our long range plan. Unless there is a Commissioner who would like to volunteer to spearhead this effort, Joanne will take on this project.

The section of the document, “Anticipate Future Capital Needs” (reference page 17 of the document) will especially require our review and discussion so that we can effectively update our long range plan.

Joanne asked each of the Commissioners to set aside time to review this document and start formulating their thoughts/input so that we can begin the process of updating.

5. Adjournment

Next P&R Commission Meeting: February 10, 2022 @ 8:00pm (Thursday) -

Meeting Minutes Prepared by A. Reeve
Minutes adopted February 10, 2022