MEETING MINUTES
Parks & Recreation Commission Regular Meeting
March 10, 2022 (Thursday) 8:00pm via Zoom

Commissioners In Attendance: Joanne Baecher-DiSalvo (Chair), Aaron Golembiewski, Mike Jacobs, Amy Listerman, Angela Reeve. A quorum is in order.

Also in Attendance: Aaron Podhurst (Superintendent)

1. Call to Order

2. Public Comment

- Melissa Marsh - Hastings - appreciates the Commission including the Hastings Swarm (swim team) on this evening’s agenda.

3. Old Business

- Approve February minutes - Approved.

4. New Business

- Upcoming / New Programs
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

Hillside Camp and Early Learning Camp
Peace sign has been repurposed and installed on the VFW lawn
Community ribbon making event (supporting Ukraine) - Mar 12 (Sat) 10am-11am, VFW Plaza
Hastings Parks & Rec Job Fair - March 24th @ JHCC
Eggstravaganza - April 9th (Sat) 10am - 12N downtown, children 3-8yrs old
Senior programs back (walks, exercise, BINGO, shopping trips - see March calendar)
St Patrick’s Day lunch for seniors (March 17)
Day Camp & Early Learning Camp - registration begins Monday April 4th
Little Kickers and Parent & Me (soccer)
Sports Hopper and Parent & Me (sports sampling)
Tennis (instructional program for youth and adult)
Tennis (spring break program)
Preschool programs are back - Spring Rainbow Cupcake Decorating workshop
Hillside After School Programs have resumed
Nature Walks in conjunction w/ Conservation Commission (one coming up this sunday)

For a list of the upcoming public education and outreach programs offered by Hastings Green, visit: www.hastingsgreen.org
- Superintendent’s Report

Staffing: P/T permanent position (year round, 29 hrs/week position) - we’re looking to fill this position. Coming into spring/summer, we'll be hiring summer seasonal parks staff

Wagner Park: Revolutionary Hastings has been actively working at this location, stop by to see the progress.

Villard Pocket Park: the Diane Dobbs Allen Charitable Trust for Hastings on Hudson will be paying for new pavers to upgrade this park. The broken pavers that were there will be replaced with bluestone – this is a repair and upgrade. The cherry blossom / haiku event will be back again this year.

-Updates on Facility Repairs

Chemka Pool - Aquatic and electrical engineers met with Aaron last week. Aaron expects the RFPs next week, that will be reviewed / approved and then put out to bid. Still hopeful for a Memorial Day opening. We’re pulling out the mechanical and electrical that is there and then replacing with new. WCDoH is aware that we’re in this process, and will work with us to push this along.

Hillside Woods perimeter fence that was damaged when the tree fell down – the outside company was asking too much money for the repair. The department purchased the galvanized fencing and our parks crew will do the repair (note the posts were already there…. just replacing the fencing).

Zinsser park garage roof was damaged - We were not able to file a claim with the Village’s insurance as Aaron had initially hoped. We'll move to put in a capital request to have the roof repaired.

Uniontown basketball court - working w/ Village engineer (Doug Hahn) and DPW to see if we can correct that issue with the drainage because we want to fix that court (and line with pickle ball - company feels like we could fit 2 courts there) Aaron believes this would be great use of the facility (multipurpose) and usage / users could compliment each other. If DPW is able to assist, then it can be done within this fiscal year with the funds that we have in this year, and we wouldn’t need to send out for engineering plans (since our Village engineer is overseeing this). The Superintendent of DPW feels he has the ability to do the work, but he just doesn't quite know when he could do it. Aaron had put in a request for $25k for the repair of the court, lining of the court (basketball and pickleball)

MacEachron Park emergency erosion measures - we’re waiting on DPW’s for their assistance. (To remind us, the marine engineer has received DEC approval to add temporary emergency erosion measures at this location). The grant that we have sets aside 30% for the conceptual design. Coir logs will be placed in a channel in front of the benches, secured by stakes, then
soil will be filled in, then seed/plantings to help with erosion. The Village Manager has approved
the emergency repair. Aaron has ordered the materials, and hopes those supplies will arrive
soon. (Cost of this temporary measure is estimated at $10k using labor hours provided by our
Village staff. Can’t give a definite as to how long this temporary measure will last… perhaps
3yrs? perhaps 5yrs.

Hillside Tennis courts will be repaired this spring (damage from Hurricane Ida). The courts have
been cleaned but some areas will need to be repaired and repainted. The work will likely be
done by the summer. (note this is an extremely busy time for court vendors). We’re looking to
restore the courts to previous storm conditions (we’re hoping FEMA will assist with 75% of this
cost).

Tennis permits will go on sale first Monday in April. Will send out email reminders. People can
be using the courts in the current condition.

Chemka parking lot, and trail - No new info on the flooding/damage area. This entire area is
being looked at for mitigation strategies by our Village engineer.

- Updates on grants

Tree Maintenance and Tree Inventory grants. Aaron is working with Haven Colgate and Susan
Harris (Vine Loppers) to get updates on the work volunteers have completed. Aaron is
preparing the quarterly progress reports for the grant. SavaTree presented to the Board of
Trustees last month, and some of this inventory work will be part of the Village record. As part
of the tree inventory grant, we had some left over money, so the vendor will look to MacEachron
and Dan Rile Park so that those sites can be inventoried and added to the report.

Prism Grant - Village applied for invasive species management program. (We will recall that
Land Beyond Sea did recommend removal of the invasives). We’re hoping to be awarded this
grant, so that we’ll have an invasive species plan and will provide the guidance / knowledge that
we need so that our Village parks and volunteers can then do the work.

- Pickleball - possible lining of court at Hillside tennis courts, etc

Joanne opened the discussion by giving a recap of our plans for Uniontown basketball court.
One of the Commission’s top 5 capital priorities submitted was for the resurfacing of the
basketball court at Uniontown to include pickle ball lines so the court could serve multiple
purposes. Joanne acknowledged that this plan/process may not be going as fast as the
residents (particularly those interested in pickle ball) would like. In response to the pickle ball
folks requesting lines be painted on the Hillside tennis courts, Joanne responded that the
Hillside courts are pretty heavily used for tennis, and noted we have a lot of instructional tennis
programs and permit holders. Joanne asked if Aaron could check with the school to see what
their position is for the use of Reynolds court.

Aarong P reported that the Recreation department’s spring instructional program is due to fill to
maximum. He did have a conversation with the athletic director and the facility director at the
schools and he received the same info as he has in the past – that is that the courts are
primarily TENNIS courts, and if those are in use then tennis would be allowed to play.

Aaron did try to discuss Reynolds basketball court again, and he will try to discuss that option
again when he next meets with the school in the next week or so. The caveat with Reynolds’s
basketball court is that the facility was gifted to the school district in remembrance of a former
student.

Mike J asked if we are against painting pickleball lines on tennis courts and just offer the courts
on a first come first serve basis?

Aaron P noted that the Town of Greenburgh is actively looking to put pickle ball courts at East
Rumbrook Park, and that would be a resource that would be accessible to Hastings residents.

Public Comment - Kai MacMahon, Hastings. We would like to recommend painting 1-2 courts at
Hillside, so they can have 2-4 pickle ball courts. He doesn't feel it would be contradictory. With
the Rec Commission’s approval, the pickle ball group could paint the lines this weekend.
Joanne disagrees. She’s seen those Hillside tennis players.

Amy asked if there were a way to sell permits, differentiating pickle ball permits vs tennis
permits, to see what the demand would be.

Joanne wants to point out that we already have plans to put 2 pickle ball courts at Uniontown.
Joanne is leary of doing too much at the Hillside courts. She wants to avoid a lot of acrimony.
Joanne thinks if we can push and move on Uniontown, that would be the way to go. Aaron P
pointed out that the earliest the funds would be available to address Uniontown would be June
1st.

In the near short term - the pickle ball interest group is asking to have permanent lines painted
somewhere. Working with the schools may or may not be possible, that will take time (school
controls that facility). But the Village controls Hillside Courts, so that seems to be the quicker
option.

Aaron G - could we ask the Village about the Zinsser lots for painted pickleball lines? The
Village has paved spaces in the Village that aren't being used on the weekends.

Mike J - does the Parks department own a lining tool that could be made accessible to the
pickleball group to line?

Village parking lot, Zinsser Park (top of the parking lot) is flat, asphalt already could possibly be
a temporary space (little league, parking yes a concern) but that might be a possibility.

Kai and his group will check out that space.

Kai wants to ask Joanne about Hillside (Chemka) courts - he plays both tennis and pickleball…
is the need on the pickleball side moving from a home grown thing to a more formalized group /
offering (hopefully will be Village supported) in terms about getting the balance between
pickleball vs tennis is there a concern that one will take over? Joanne, said this idea hasn’t been put out there publicly, but Joanne knows that in the recent past there have been wait times for use of the Chemka tennis courts. Joanne reminds us that we have to try and do the best we can with the resources we have.

Mike Jacob - suggests a pilot program at Chemka to see what we have for demand. Amy says especially since the courts are going to be redone.

Kai says the pickleball groups tend to play early (7am on the weekends). Pretty confident that the same process of accessing the courts will work (ie. if there’s someone waiting, you finish at the bottom of the hour to let the next/waiting person group come in).

Kai commented that If we were able to run a pilot and paint lines ahead of the work that is scheduled there in a couple of months it would help the sport in the Village and help more people playing… it would be a simple experiment and we’d be very appreciative if we could do something like this.

Amy suggesting a pilot test, and people will have to buy permits, and for a designated time period we would allow pickleball.

Kai and his group were asked to report back on use of Village owned paved parking lots.

Joanne - propose a trial basis April 1st - May 12th - for two pickleball courts, Amy suggest the one on the end closest to the school. Chalk or paint? Pickleball players have to have a permit just like tennis players. Amy suggests a few guidelines. Paint of a different color.

The Commission supports a pilot program.

Joanne asked Aaron P to develop a clear communication that would go out about the pilot, and the need to purchase permits.

- Swim team planning/discussion

Joanne asked Aaron P what he is planning thus far in terms of the budget for the swim team. Aaron first noted that he circulated a letter from the swim team parent support group to the Commission. Aaron shared that the support from the swim team parent group has been great, noted that enrollment last year was terrific, and we’re hoping for strong enrollment this summer too (referring to an email from the parent booster group).

Public Comment - Melissa Marsh, Hastings. Parent boosters request that Rec please consider: 1- Budget commensurate due to size. Recognize that the reason that we grew that team to that size, was to hit the budget mark. We want to get the right size team at the right budget. $150 per swimmer, but please remember every swimmer must be a member of the pool (individual member or part of a family membership).
2- Coach/Assistant Coaches - we appreciate that 4 WSI’s were made available. We don’t think the additional costs should be incurred. We are requesting their responsibility be clearly laid out so that those WSI’s were given swim team responsibilities. So we don’t think it will be an additional cost, just the same number of headcount that are more clearly connected to what their responsibility will be.

3- Pool Time - especially pre-season. Use of pool space. Better to specify the programming times at the beginning of the season so that expectations as to availability is clear (especially early morning lap swimmer time, and two weeks in June after school time).

Coaching resources - looking for to bring a number of kid count so that they can get the same resources as the Village provided in the past.

4- Headcount of the team - if the Village is going to “cap” the team registration count (120 or 125) what they are asking for is that they would cap it at, say 110, so the team itself could nominate any additional participants to nominate to join (especially those high schoolers that may have missed the registration deadline so they can recruit for those hard to fill age groups). So maybe a 110 cap, and then a Wait List and the TEAM decides who comes off the wait list based on where the team needs members.

Joanne asked Aaron P how we were coming along with the Pool Director position. Aaron noted there is currently one applicant that we will interview.

- Planning for formal opening of bocce court at Riverview Park

Any commissioners have any dates to suggest in May? Note, Little League opening day is April 23rd. Perhaps the same day about 1pm? Aaron P will run this by the Village Manager.

- Dog park - possible sites, etc
  (due to the time, the Commission will “table” this discussion for next month). But, in brief:

Aaron P reached out to the dog park expert that came out to Uniontown (Dr Marilyn Glasser). Told her we are considering 2 or 3 sites. Regarding the budget - we are not “shovel ready,” and we’re not going to move forward with the creation funds. We could put in for development/design (Dr Glasser charges $125 per hour to come out and assess and create a report with recommendations).

Mike J thought we had decided to focus on the Chemka site (behind the tennis courts).

Aaron P noted the engineer is looking at that entire area and will make mitigation recommendations for the storm water issue (this was considered as part of the FEMA application for funding). The design that is proposed by the engineer does include catch basin / pipes that would address this proposed dog park location behind the tennis courts.
- Earth Day/Month - report from Conservation Commission liaison

Amy Listerman reported the Conservation Commission very focused on Earth Day / Month. They have been in touch with Parks to do a number of community events.

Quarry Park - Commissioners asked Aaron what was in the works for the opening of that location? Aaron pointed out that Quarry Park was a big project worthy of a big grand opening… final touches are going on for this park.

May 1st - Bike Rodeo… trying to tie this in to green commuting

May 15th event - asked if the Conservation Commission could have a tie in to that day… (Aaron P pointed out that this is the Village Downtown Advocate that coordinates this event).

May Eco Event.

Amy is meeting with Lisa O’Reilly (Recreation) this Wednesday, and they’ll brainstorm if there are some of these things they could do in joint with the Conservation Commission.

Do we have any other ideas how we jointly address these topics in a fun eco-theme?

Village Clean Up weekend would be great to consider for joint efforts on this.

The Take It Or Leave It Shed (“TILI” Shed – every Sunday from 11am - 3pm, located at Andrus, and will open first Sunday in April).

Hastings Zero Waste org website is up (Amy will send us a link)

Textile waste bins are up around town.

Hillside Woods - part time urban forester position, Conservation Commission still wants to stay close to this discussion. What are the learnings from the fence? If Parks and Rec feels that a P/T urban forester position is so important, then perhaps Conservation Commission needs to make more of a point to stress this too.

Amy concluded her liaison update by mentioning that there are currently two openings on the Conservation Commission, so help put the word out there that we’re looking for volunteers to apply.

5. Adjournment

Minutes prepared by A. Reeve
Minutes adopted April 7, 2022