

Pocono Township Recreation Committee

April 14, 2015 - Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order by President Charlie Trapasso at 7:45am.

Members Present: Alex Grum, Jim Olizarowicz

Members Absent: Denise Herbert, Bobby Felins, Andrea Learn, Mary Riley Frantz

Also Present: Gregg Schuster (Township Manager); Dean Hartshorn (Park Director); Jeff Clapper (Public Works Director); Commissioner Lastowski (Commissioner)

Guests: Dee Raneri, Northampton Community College; Anthony Carprario, Intern ESU; Dario Ulundi, Ulindi Soccer Organization & Joe Pino, Ulindi Soccer

Meeting minutes of March 10, 2015 and Special Meeting minutes of March 20, 2015 were not approved due to a lack of quorum. Tabled until next mtg.

Charlie provided Commissioner Lastowski with a copy of the HJP Recreation Plan and suggested Pocono Township consider updating the existing plan before spending \$50-\$75,000 on a new Recreation Plan. Commissioner Lastowski stated he sensed from some members of the HJP Board (no one from Pocono) that they think Poconos' attitude toward HJP could change after the election as a newly elected Board of Commissioners could potentially decide to renegotiate the HJP arrangement. Gregg further commented that although Pocono Twp has already provided notice to HJP to leave the agreement as of Dec 31, 2015, "the door is always open" for this to change in the future. Commissioner Lastowski affirmed this point.

Dee Raneri, Northampton Community College:

Following a meeting with Gregg and Dee, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was presented by Dee to Gregg and forwarded to the Recreation Committee members by Charlie. The MOU depicts a partnership between the community and township. Working with the NCC, Dee's personal enrichment center has the room to expand. The program is based on programs already planned in 2015 by the Community College. Dee would like to find ways to work together with the township to provide university perks. Her program starts on June 22nd, but she would like to plan something in July, perhaps tennis (She has access to a tennis coach, but no courts. MVP courts could fill this void.)

The township will probably be able to accommodate the NCC's pilot program in addition to its commitment to HJP without cannibalizing each other's activities. The NCC can offer day-long activities or shorter activities too. Gregg confirmed that HJP activities would not be affected. A follow-up meeting is to be scheduled sometime next week.

Dario Ulindi Soccer:

For the past 3 years, Dario Ulindi has been teaching soccer for Notre Dame and Stroudsburg school districts. He has been utilizing the soccer fields at Mountain View Park. He was invited by Charlie to introduce himself and perhaps gain support for providing soccer training and camps for underprivileged youths who cannot afford the exorbitantly high fees that most organizations charge. While the organization is expanding, it is run by volunteers. The goal is to hire paid coaches to make their teams competitive against more conventional clubs and to expand their reach in the area.

His club does not disallow students from playing for school clubs. Due to limited resources, a concern is the need to become fit in such a small time frame which is causing injuries in other leagues. Dario hopes to expand the practice and playing time to prevent such injuries but doesn't have the resources to do so. Just last year the club spent \$12,000 for the use of the Pocono Dome (\$150 per hour). His club plays at Mountain View Park in the summer however without an indoor facility, their training and competitive opportunities in the winter months are diminished. Their membership usually stands at 60-70 participants, with children ranging from elementary school to high school. If this club can keep costs down, it can allow children as young as age 5 to start playing. It also allows such children to play casually, but also develop the skill set to be competitive with European leagues. 20 of their players have been sent to college with full scholarships.

Jim expressed concern about melding independent clubs with those managed by the school. The schools and clubs need to resolve these concerns by communicating and coordinating their efforts to make the kids fit and ready for soccer, specifically by having the kids work on their fitness in May rather than August.

Alex, Charlie and Gregg expressed interest in assisting Dario with developing his soccer program. They would also need help in the acquisition of equipment while the NCC plans to have a soccer field built this summer. The club would prefer 3 nights per week to practice, but can also work with two.

Gregg and Charlie will sit together to set up an approach by which they can encourage the Board of Commissioners to subsidize Dario's soccer program if need be. A concern over the subsidy would be whether the money goes towards Pocono Township residents, as opposed to an organization outside of the township. It could officially be run by the township in coordination with NCC and Dario's soccer club. The first two would probably have to handle equipment, field and insurance costs. Both the NCC and soccer club have year round youth programs.

The township could perform a "summer kickoff" to help Dario's soccer club with their fundraising. Dario will text Dean about what size soccer nets are needed. Charlie will follow-up with Gregg to outline a plan.

ESU Intern – Anthony Carprario:

Anthony and Gregg met to outline Anthony's duties and responsibilities regarding the internship. Prior to a May start date, Charlie requested Anthony provide an outline of his understanding of the terms and priorities for the position.

Pocono Township Manager:

Consideration of the Community Center's extensive interior bathroom renovation was taken off the table. To comply with ADA requirements and code would require a major financial investment which would not result in more usage of the building. The township is pursuing a future home which could potentially house a community center. Lowes will make its decision sometime in April to refurbish the façade as part of their "2015 Heroes' Project".

Charlie inquired about the status of the "No Smoking" signs. Gregg will research to see if an ordinance is needed to enforce a No Smoking Zone. Dean stated he had "Young Lungs at Play" signs or No Smoking signs in storage.

Public Works Director – Jeff Clapper

Charlie reminded Jeff that the location of the septic and field was imperative as the Crossing Abilities Playground committee is ready to present a proposal to the BOC for the expansion of the Autism section. Jeff is researching and will get back to Charlie. Jeff was asked to arrange for a septic cleanout as 3 months have passed without arrangements being made.

Park Director - Grounds & Equipment:

Grounds are being cleaned and the park is being utilized. An inspection from a certified Playground Inspector is forthcoming. Until that inspection, Charlie is holding off announcing on Facebook the park opening.

Charlie reminded Dean to purchase a commercial grade power washer in order to clean the playground equipment and pavilion roofs.

Old Business:*2015 Comprehensive Plan*

A walk-through with the sales representative of Boyce Playground; Paul Grim, Charlie, Dean and Gregg took place on April 13, 2015. Concerns were raised about old pieces of playground equipment that could potentially cause serious injury. The stage carriage, the red geodesic dome and the swings that go towards each other pose the most obvious safety concerns. The last official inspection was 10 years ago. Since that time, unofficial inspections were conducted annually. The new township insurance company will send an inspector to MVP and TLC relatively soon. Should the inspector recommend a piece be removed, Gregg stated emphatically they will be removed immediately. If the inspector takes a month to file a report, removing the equipment while the park is open is a concern. Spring apparatus are not suitable for a community park as they were designed for a more controlled environment like a daycare facility. Dean stated on an annual basis he replaces the springs on the 4-seater apparatus and individual horses costing the park approximately \$300-400 per year.

Staying within the 2015 budget, the intent is to pave the road leading to Pavilion 3 and the flooring at Pavilion 3 prior to the official school closings.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was presented by Charlie and seconded by Alex. Meeting adjourned at: 9:42a.m. Next meeting will be 7:30 a.m. on May 12, 2015 at the Mountain View Community Center.