



Hopewell Township Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee
MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, April 16, 2018

Present: Mike Chipowsky, Theresa Dolhon, Tom Finn, Rob Marino, Brian Ross, Mark Shreve, Burt Sutker, Kurt Vollherbst, and Judy Niederer - Director.

Absent: Kristin McLaughlin- Liaison, Paul Kinney

Call to Order/Minutes Approval

The meeting was called to order at 7:04pm by Mike Chipowsky. The meeting minutes of Monday, March 19, 2018 were unanimously approved with a motion from Tom and a second from Brian.

Public Comment Section - None

Liaison Report - No report

New Member - Rob Marino is the newest member of the Recreation Advisory Committee. He also serves on the Board of HVSA and NLSA.

Director's Report - Judy Niederer

- **Past Events** - 4/11 "Showboat" Dutch Apple Dinner Theatre
- **Upcoming Events** 4/25 "Carousel" on Broadway (sold out), 5/10 NY Botanical Gardens (sold out), 5/17 2nd Trip Added for NY Botanical Gardens, 5/21 Overnight trip to Long Island and Hamptons (sold out), 5/24 New trip added - Tall Ships Luncheon Cruise (sold out)

• **Unfinished Business**

- **Mercer At Play** - No report
- **Field Use Fees** - a new packet of information was supplied to the RAC members and representatives of various youth sport organizations regarding increasing field use fees. When this was last discussed (2105), it was agreed that the fees would increase in steps and because a township Ordinance can only address one increase the second increase has not yet occurred. A discussion was held regarding the fee increase and to also charge for the use of grass fields. Here are some notes:
 - ◇ It was the consensus of the group and the youth organizations that the increase in fees for the turf field is done incrementally so they are not saddled with a large increase in field use in a one year time period.
 - ◇ We want to keep pace but not charge too much that the groups can no longer afford to use the public facility.
 - ◇ School turf field is empty because their pricing is a deterrent.
 - ◇ Groups like to use Twin Pines because it is centrally located, has lights, and is currently affordable enough to schedule as much use as available to them.
 - ◇ If they had to use other turf or indoor facilities, the pricing is too high.

- ◇ The leagues struggle when there are big increases. A 10% increase they could handle but not the 50% increases. If there is a need to make increases it should be implemented over time.
- ◇ If the fees are raised too high, there could be an impact on the usage of the field.
- ◇ The travel users can bear increases more than the recreational teams. The registration fees for rec leagues is significantly less which allows more kids to play at this level. This is why they would not want to see fees on the grass field - these are the fields that the recreational teams use the most.
- ◇ A motion was made by Burt to recommend a 10% increase this year and another 10% in two years. This was seconded by Tom and opened for discussion.
- ◇ Can we have two increases in one Resolution?
- ◇ We should give the organizations advance notice that another increase will be considered in two years so they should have this on their radar screen.
- ◇ Judy will prepare a Resolution with wording that is acceptable for the committee because you cannot bind future committees to an increase.
- ◇ The motion was tabled pending additional information that Judy will acquire at a meeting of the Recreation Directors of Mercer County that is being held on Tuesday, April 17.
- ◇ Grass fields - still the consensus that the grass fields be available at no charge to the groups.
- ◇ Another suggestion was made that the field be increased by \$2.50/hour every year until it reaches \$50/hour. It was then suggested that there be an increase of \$2.50/hour in 2018 then an increase of \$5.00/hour in 2020 then another \$5/hour in 2022.

New Business

- **Open Space & Recreation Element of the Master Plan** - Judy explained to the RAC members that the Planning Board is looking at this element of the Master Plan and needs to update it. This has to be done because the Township cannot collect any funds from Green Acres for matching acquisitions without an updated Master Plan. Judy has reviewed the plan and made notes, suggestions, and revisions in the plan with information that is available to her. She will send all the RAC members a copy of this marked up plan to review and to then provide any feedback with changes they may have. All of these revisions will then be forwarded to the Planning Board and the township planner to be considered in the updated plan.

Comments for the Good of the Order - Burt was wondering if Hopewell Township could have an Ordinance banning use of or purchase of assault weapons. He did ask the township clerk and was told that the township could not accept any petitions that concern a ballot issue. He did say he will attend an upcoming township committee meeting to see how he can pursue this.

Meeting Open to the Public - No members of the public were present at the conclusion of the meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm with a motion by Tom and a second by Brian.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 14 at 7pm.