

Delaware Township Recreation Commission Minutes – October 7, 2019

Chairperson Brian Sulewski called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Notice Statement – The Notice Requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act have been satisfied by notification to the Hunterdon County Democrat and Trenton Times and by posting with the Township Clerk and on the Delaware Township bulletin board on September 26, 2019.

Flag Salute – Members recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Present: Judy Allen, Connor Devlin, Charles Herman, Aidan Ricci, Julie Luster-Roell, Toby Ruttenberg, Steve Smotrich, Tim Soltis, Brian Sulewski, Linda Ubry

Approval of Minutes from the Meeting of June 10, 2019 – Members agreed to postpone approval of the minutes from the meeting of June 10, 2019.

Approval of Minutes from the Meeting of September 9, 2019

Steve Smotrich moved to approve the minutes from the meeting of September 9, 2019, Linda Ubry seconded the motion, and members approved the minutes with one abstention by Connor Devlin.

SCOUT PROJECTS AT THE DILTS PARK – UPDATES

Brian reported that Girl Scout Troop 80357 raised funds at the Community Block Party toward the cost of its project to construct picnic tables at an expanded playground. Steve reported the trees in that area will die due to Emerald Ash Borer and the Township will replace them as part of this project. Brian said Vincent Colalillo received approval from the Boy Scout Council for his project to replace the fire pit and benches by the pond. He is moving forward. Ethan Gillespie is waiting for approval from the Council for his project to construct a bocce court.

REPORTS:

Teens – Connor Devlin said he, Toby and Aidan continue to work on a 3 on 3 mini basketball tournament for DTS Middle School students, probably in January. He suggested adding activities at the Community Block Party that would attract middle and high school students. Possible other teen activities were discussed including rock wall climbing and a teen bracket at the next Fishing Derby. Members encouraged these and other potential activities and agreed to support them.

DTS BOE – Linda said the Board of Education will hold a referendum on December 10th to seek funding approval for several repair/replacement/upgrade projects at the School. If approved by residents, the State will provide up to forty percent in Debt Service Aid.

SCOUT PROJECTS – UPDATE

Charles Herman reported that the Township Committee approved the three proposed Scout projects at the Dilts Park. There may be grant funding to replace the ash trees by the playground with more mature trees instead of young, small trees. Tim reported that the Benincasa Family will work with Ethan Gillespie to fund the bocce court project.

TEEN REPORT UPDATE – Connor, Aidan and Toby discussed the teen basketball tournament to be held possibly in January. They will provide a final date. Brian said the Commission will support teen activities. A roller skating night was discussed.

DTAA

Brian reported that the new scoreboard for the Field of Dreams has been erected. It will be dedicated on the Opening Day of Baseball and Softball season.

Julie reported that the number of registered soccer players is the highest ever. There are players from nearby municipalities where soccer programs have met with issues. With the growing participation, an improved Makara Field may be needed soon to accommodate play. Tim suggested charging a higher enrollment fee for non-Township players with the difference used for field maintenance.

OPEN SPACE

Steve said there is a new initiative for a Green Plan in the Township. Potential projects include a rain garden at the Police Headquarters. The Plan will involve Township volunteers.

REVIEW OF RECREATION ELEMENT OF MASTER PLAN

Steve said the Recreation Element of the Township's Master Plan was last updated in 2014. Members reviewed Commission comments from a 2014 discussion provided by former Commission member Tracy Wright. One comment raised the idea of a future community swimming pool. However it was recognized that it may be a difficult project for several reasons. Another comment recommended an expansion of activities.

There were not many responses to a Commission survey of residents in January, but the majority of respondents supported an increase in trail and pathway connectivity, improvements and/or renovations to existing amenities at Township parks and facilities, and expansion of programs and activities.

Members discussed possible projects at the Dilts Park. Walking trail repairs have been completed. The Park is now open year-round, but no snow plowing will be provided. Members agreed a community pool is probably not possible in the near future. Clean up of the pond was discussed at length. Improvements to the Makara Field are needed because of the need for additional fields.

Members discussed other Township owned properties, focusing on the Sergeantsville Green across from the Township Building and a property on Rt. 519 in Rosemont. Members will discuss possible options for Rosemont including a passive recreation area with perhaps a small playground. Members discussed a possible gazebo at the Green. Advice will be requested from the Historic Advisory Committee on a design. Copies of the deeds to both properties will be reviewed to determine whether there are any restrictions against recreational uses. Julie said DTAA has discussed the construction of a pole building at the Dilts Park for indoor recreational opportunities year-round. Members discussed the playground there as well. Charlie said the Department of Public Works will help with the upcoming Girl Scout project there. Judy thought more playground equipment is needed. Julie said additional equipment would require an

expansion of the playground area. Tim said a new water fountain is needed by the restrooms. Members discussed the condition of the Snack Shack and possible construction of a new Shack. Judy suggested building a new Shack attached to the pavilion. The current Shack could be used for equipment storage. Charlie thought the Commission should recommend a Park assessment by a professional planner. Julie suggested two pedestrian crosswalks in the Park parking lot and the development of a list of open space trails available to the public. Reference should be made in the Recreation Element to the special meeting in January 2019 to discuss recreational options and the questionnaire made available to residents. Discussion will continue at the November meeting.

FISHING DERBY – SEPTEMBER 28

Tim said 90 children registered for the Fishing Derby. The event went well. Steve supervised parking. Not enough fish were caught. He suggested moving this event to the spring next year, possibly May 16 with a May 17 rain date. He said the Copelands, hosts for this event at their pond, were happy with the event and were willing to host it again. Skip Opdyke of Skip's Outdoors donated prizes. He may solicit corporate sponsors for the next Derby. Maegan Harrington offered to co-host this event next year. Tim said there was some discussion before the Derby about whether the event should be open to Township residents only with the decision made not to limit participation. It was agreed that prizes would be awarded to children only. However, a separate category for teen fishermen may be added to encourage more teen participation. Julie moved to purchase two \$50 gift certificates for the Sergeantsville Inn to thank Cheryl Copeland and Harrie Copeland IV, Tim seconded the motion, and members unanimously approved the motion. More fish will be needed next year. Duckweed on the pond was a problem. The Barnas offered to address this problem next year. Julie said Jeannie Colalillo offered food donations from the Flemington Shop Rite – perhaps simple pre-packaged food and fruit. Any leftovers could be given to the Flemington Food Pantry. Julie suggested ending the event at 11 instead of Noon.

COMMUNITY BLOCK PARTY – OCTOBER 5

Brian said this event went well. The weather was good. The Department of Public Works did a good job preparing for this event. Tim said the Girl Scouts did a good job providing activities for children. Profits from the \$5 charge will be applied to the cost of the picnic table project at the Dilts Park. They would like to repeat their activities next year. Julie said there were some complaints about the \$5 charge. Members recalled that there was a charge to use the inflatable rides at prior Community Days at the Dilts Park. She said there were also complaints about trash behind the band. More garbage and recycling containers should be provided next year. Tim said the Sergeantsville Volunteer Fire Company provided lighting and grilled food. Julie asked whether the SVFC really wants to grill. Volunteers already do so much. Brian said the SVFC was so helpful with this event, the Fishing Derby, and the Welcome to Fall Fireworks. The Commission can not run its events without the assistance the SVFC provides. Likewise, the help provided by the Department of Public Works is critical to the success of these events. Steve said both Departments deserve special recognition. Julie thought it would be good to announce the Township's Volunteer of the Year and Employee of the Year at the Party, as it did years ago. Brian discussed vendors. Julie said there is a problem with vendors. There is an annual Hunterdon County Community Day, and vendors can participate in it. Linda asked what events might attract an older crowd. Someone could ask the Seniors Group what would interest them.

Charlie suggested a Seniors' bakeoff. He thought the SVFC could use the Party as a recruiting opportunity. Steve thought the Party time might be adjusted to 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. He said Janet Hrehowesik volunteered her time to paint faces. She did it as well for the Crate Race and fireworks events. Tim moved to purchase a \$50 gift certificate to the Sergeantsville Inn to thank her. Steve seconded the motion, and members unanimously approved the motion.

CHILI COOKOFF

Julie thought a Chili Cookoff, perhaps in February, might be a good winter activity. Notice to the Board of Health would be provided. February 21st was selected as a tentative date.

PLANT SWAP

Jes Stahl arranged for the Plant Swap at the Sergeantsville Farmers' Market on October 5th. Leftover plants were made available to any takers. Jes thought she would incorporate a spring plant swap at the Farmers' Market as well.

RECREATION COMMISSION BUDGET – YEAR –TO-DATE

Members will review YTD financial information at the next meeting.

ADULT AND TEEN RECREATION – Julie asked whether the nights for adult coed indoor soccer and adult coed volleyball could switch. She will look into this. Waivers are required for all participants.

MINI GOLF AT PINE CREEK

Julie did not think the Commission should continue the Mini Golf event at Pine Creek for various reasons.

APPROVAL OF DILTS FARM PARK APPLICATIONS – There were no applications for the Commission to review and approve.

COMMITTEES:

Holiday Decorating Contest – December 16, 2019 – Final Judging (December 15 if weather conditions on December 16 warrant.)

2020 BUDGET

Members will discuss the 2020 budget at the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Dilts Farm Park – Members discussed adding a bonfire and campout to the fireworks event next year. The restrooms will close at the end of the soccer season.

Great Crate Race - There are leftover Great Crate Race tees-shirts. Julie suggested giving them to Delaware Township School for use as painting smocks. Tim suggested lowering the shirt price next year and changing the shirt fabric. Julie thought there should be an earlier test drive date for crates. The end of Jurgensen Road going downhill to the turnaround may be a good location. The cost for crates is high, in part due to the expense of shipping them. Donations of

crates from prior seasons will be solicited. Directions on how to build a crate will be included in the next newsletter with the suggestion that a crate kit may be a good holiday gift.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:26 p.m.

Next Meeting – Monday, November 4, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.