

**NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP
PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD MEETING
January 19, 2023**

Members present Steve Bryer, Chairman
 Jim Hembree, Vice Chairman
 Mary Anderson, Secretary
 John Bishop
 Marty Wade

Others present: Dr. Kim Rose, Supervisor Liaison
 Jennifer Fean, Director of Parks & Recreation
 Deborah Catoggio, Operations Manager

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. by Steve Bryer.

Roll call was taken.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Steve Bryer to approve the minutes from the December 1, 2022 meeting, seconded by John Bishop. The minutes were approved.

Reorganization

Mr. Bryer announced that the first meeting of the year is a reorganization meeting.

Mr. Bryer nominated Marty Wade for Chairman, seconded by John Bishop, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bryer nominated Jim Hembree for Vice Chairman, seconded by Marty Wade, motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bryer nominated Mary Anderson for Secretary, John Bishop seconded, motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Wade assumed the role of Chairman and the meeting proceeded.

Citizens' Concerns

None were reported.

Unfinished Business

39 Acre Park and Recreation Center Project -- Mr. Wade advised that there is nothing new to report other than meetings with the consultant, YSM, will continue with drawings being revised, updated, and reviewed prior to presentation at the next meeting. Mr. Wade added that YSM builds parks, they are not just any consulting firm. Parks are their specialty.

As stated in the previous meeting, the timeline for this project is aggressive as the Township wants to apply for the DCNR grant in April 2023. Public input meetings will be scheduled.

New Business

2023 Field Allocations -- Applications have been received and reviewed. Mr. Wade stated that there are a few conflicts which will require some conversation which is why fields allocations are not approved and finalized until the February meeting. Allocations will only be approved if all required documentation and paperwork has been submitted.

Report of Committees

Since reorganization was just approved, Mr. Wade advised that committees need to be formed.

Report of Field Users

Council Rock Basketball – there was no representative present.

Council Rock Holland Baseball – represented by Vince Barrilli. Clean up will begin early March, Opening day April 1 for Majors, April 15 for Minors. Nothing further to report.

Mr. Wade said Big Meadow needs trees. There are resources out there where the Township can obtain them, at no cost to the organization, then will consult with Holland Baseball prior to plantings.

Council Rock Northampton Baseball – represented by Jim Gallagher. They will be coordinating opening day will Holland Baseball. Their registration is still open using a new platform which is much more user friendly. Some discussion needs to take place regarding the placement of the sod on Diamond 3?. Looks like it can only be used as a 90 ft field now. Need to modify the arc. Mr. Wade commented that should not be a difficult modification.

Council Rock United Soccer – represented by Lew Spiewak who reported that spring registration is underway, with fall try-outs beginning in April. Fields are in good condition. Seeding and fertilizing should begin in March. Mr. Spiewak added that outside groups are “nesting” on Municipal Park Soccer Field 1. There are often license plates from New York, so they are clearly non-residents; some groups are organized, wearing uniforms, and refuse to move when teams show up. CRUSA stopped scheduling the field so that coaches would not have to confront them. Police have been called. Can the Board intervene?

Mr. Wade suggested more signs be placed there indicating fields are to be used by permit only. Dr. Rose suggested contacting NTPD Quality of Life officer, Ryan Jumper, for his assistance; that’s what they do.

Northampton Girls Softball – represented by Larry Patricelli. Initially Tom Setzer discussed concerns with outside groups, Xtreme Dimensions, renting fields for tournaments and requested the Township not approve any outside groups due to wear and tear on the fields that are maintained by volunteers from NGSA. Older, higher-level players, by nature of their game “tear up” the fields, creating ruts that are unsafe for younger players. Mr. Patricelli reported that NGSA is not opposed to Xtreme Dimensions using the fields if they are restored to their before use condition.

Mr. Wade said this group has a 15-year history of using township fields with no prior reports to the board of issues. Much discussion continued with several suggestions including: increasing deposits collected or securing a performance bond with no refund being issued until an NGSA representative “walks the fields” and signs off on them. It was mentioned that part of the issue may be that renters may not have tools available to restore the fields. Board Discussion will continue prior to any application approval. Mr. Wade shared that 1st priority will always be for intramural play, 2nd for residents to participate on travel teams, but we cannot forget our 3rd priority that we need to pay to keep the lights on.

Discussion of equipment storage continued; it was suggested that some equipment stored in the corral (golf cart) attached to the Miracle League garage might belong to outside groups. Mr. Setzer reported that the Wetzels concessions storage closet has been cleaned out as requested by Parks & Rec maintenance. NGSA has been permitted to share storage space in the Miracle League garage and the corral.

Northampton Indians Football – represented by Steve Szydluk. Flag football registration opened Sunday, January 15th with 303 of the 400 maximum spots filled the first day. With those numbers, they will have games for 4 hours on Sundays and 2 hours on Monday nights. The season will begin the first week of April and finish by June 15 due to school year ending and family vacations.

Report of Parks and Recreation Director

Jennifer Fean thanked everyone on the Board and the staff at the Administration Building for giving her a warm welcome to her new position as Park and Rec Director. She reported that everyone on the Parks and Recreation Staff were settling into their new roles without a hitch. Weekly staff meetings have been instituted to help the staff stay informed and connected across the two buildings the Parks and Rec team works from.

Jennifer stated that Public Works Director, Greg Hucklebridge was in the process of scheduling an on-site visit with the Township Engineer to assess the erosion issue at Big Meadow.

Finally, Ms. Fean reported that registrations for January were booming. Camp Registration opened on Jan. 7 and Camp Expedition at Churchville was already full with a waiting list with Camp Adventure at the Rec Center almost full with only 10 spots remaining. Preschool for the 2023-2024 school year is already full except for a few remaining openings in the two-day, three-year-old classroom.

Ms. Fean concluded that she was happy to be there and excited to work with everyone.

Report of Supervisor Liaison - Dr. Rose reported that she is happy to continue as Parks & Rec Liaison, with the reorganization of the Board of Supervisors, all remained in their same positions. Dr Rose congratulated

Mr. Hembree on being reappointed to the Parks & Recreation Board. She also congratulated Jennifer Fean on her new position as Parks and Rec Director and the whole department for all the work they did on the Township's 300th Anniversary Celebration. The final event which took place at the December Board of Supervisors meeting was awesome and the Supervisors and Parks & Rec staff looked amazing dressed in costume.

Dr. Rose announced that Ed Ingle will be awarded a Citizens Commendation posthumously at the next Supervisors' Meeting. Mr. Ingle was key in organizing the Car Show and other aspects of Northampton Days.

Announcements – Mr. Bryer announced that this year's Northampton Day celebration will take place on Sunday, October 1 at the old Richboro Middle School and the Star School grounds. This should not affect any sports except soccer. Mr. Spiewak reported that they have already blocked out that date for Richboro Elementary and Middle School fields.

Mr. Bryer also reported that the Miracle League Playground construction came up short and was not yet able to construct the planned sunshade. Happily, Northampton Day committee was able to contribute \$19,000 toward the shade. While that does not cover the balance needed, it is hoped that the goal will be reached prior to the year's end.

Mr. Wade announced that since they do not expect to have additional details on the 39 Acres Project by February 2, that meeting will be cancelled and pushed to February 16.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Anderson

Mary Anderson
Secretary
Parks and Recreation Board

Next Meeting – February 16, 2023 at 7:30 pm