

**HILLSDALE RECREATION COMMISSION
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**HILLSDALE RECREATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES OF 6/6/24**

Councilman: Clemente Osso

Recreation Director: Dan Conte

Attendance: Ed, Sara, Dewey, Jill, Greg

Borough – Mike Ghassali

Council Member – John Ruocco, Abby Lundy, John Escobar

Public: Rob Harris, Craig Kardell, Nikesh Shah, Ed Rilli, Anthony DeRosa, Ron Miller

- Ed called meeting to order at 6:38pm

Pledge of allegiance

Minutes

- Approved by Sara and seconded by Dewey

Remarks from Citizens/Sports Association

Rob Harris – HBSA season is finishing up. Getting ready for travel. Wants to focus on Memorial Field and make it a premiere field.

Craig Kardell – Football is getting ready for the season. Closing registration at the end of the month. Give out equipment. Wants to get field house fixed up. Will shop and or help out for whatever is needed. People are using bathrooms. There will be a new AD at PVHS. Will play home games there. Hoping games to be done by 4-4:30pm so no Saturday nights as opposed to 9-11pm if use Memorial.

Ron Miller – Chair of Access for All – Planning with library the annual Art Exhibit at the library for people with disabilities. Inclusive arts & crafts, garden planning. Would love Rec to coordinate with them. Reminds everyone to make the Beechwood Park playground inclusive.

Dan's Recreation report

- Field updates – create new wish list for committee. Committee to consist of Ed, Dan, Clemente, Abby and John. Asked HBSA for consolidated list.
- Dewey had concerns regarding playing baseball on grass over turf. Don't need lights as it now stays light until 9pm. Compare costs to have lights at Centennial. Concerns for Men's Softball not having area to use.
- Craig is concerned with the grass at Beechwood. If fields can't be maintained they will be unusable. He said sprinklers go off even when not needed. Has to keep canceling games. Doesn't need lights if use on Saturdays from 10am-4:30pm. Concerned about dog waste all over fields that isn't removed by dog owners. Doesn't like turf except that they can play on it more.
- Mike – Engineer will do survey based on the wish list. They need it to give them direction. After survey is completed, Council will make the final decision. Turf or grass not to be decided here.
- Dan will send wish list in google doc to have everyone look at the list and make comments. They can see Dan's list live.
- Dewey wanted to know why Hillsdale and River Vale don't mix for sports.
- Craig said it doesn't work. River Vale's participation is high and they don't need us. Montvale and Woodcliff Lake sign up with us when needed. Mark Lane Field is owned by River Vale schools not the town. Their 4 teams fully utilize the fields. PV can't be used as too many sports are already using it. Can only use the field on a Saturday around 3-4pm.
- Mike suggested Dewey come to a Council meeting to make his point as they make the decision.
- Rob Harris- Turf benefits baseball and softball. They can fundraise to help cover the costs.
- Greg - people don't want games/practices scheduled that effect family's schedules. Grass is not feasible he said.
- Nikesh – younger kids barely move so let them get on the field
- Mike –Centennial to go for approval next Thursday for approval to prepare bid package for basic field improvements and drainage system so teams can start using fields. No extra lights, pathways etc. at this time. Will be all grass. Dan and Field Committee will meet every week.
- Craig acknowledges and Dewey happy to have everyone at Rec Commission meeting to discuss.
- Dan – the order will be Rec. Commission to Field Commission to Council. Collier's engineers will let us know what on the wish list can happen. Come up with a concept plan with sketches made and shared.
- Mike – The conversation is that Memorial will be turfed and Centennial will be grass. \$1.8 million set aside for field improvement fund. Another ½ million to be put in each year. Spending more \$ on maintenance of fields.
- Dewey asked about Community Center at Stonybrook. Mike said Council voted to put it to the side as we are getting a free Community Center. Dewey thanked Mike for hiring Dan.

- Dan – Camp will start June 24th. Trips are ready to go and camper paperwork is being done. EMT was hired. Will follow Camp Pascack as it is the largest camp.
- Summer Concert Series – Sara worked hard to get 3 bands. 1 to play in June and 2 to play in July. We received donations from ShopRite - \$7.5k, Pascack Valley Medical Center \$2.5K and Valley Bank \$1K. Blue Foundry may sponsor an ice cream truck at one of the concerts. It was brought up about adding more concerts. We can always expand if needed. A lot going on right now. Discussed bringing in a food truck so campers can stay after camp or come back. Suggestion to get Uncle Louie G's truck for one of the concerts.
- Bandshell improvements were discussed. Need a few contractors – roof, electrical, and backroom. Have matching grant for \$112K. Dewey would like an amphitheater. John Ruocco was concerned about the safety of the structure to alter. Is it better to spend \$ now or hold off to develop a plan to recreate a better one.
- John R. suggesting doing something for Ann. Ed first approved. Sara seconded. Use Rec trust \$.
- Town Movie Night to happen in August. Possible movies – Goonies or Sandlot
- Adult night – October Fest – sponsored by Davey's Locker possibly. DL wants to give \$ in honor of their 50th anniversary. Maybe 10/18 or 19 or 26? Offer Beer and Cider. Charge admission or have DL give portion of \$ to Recreation after they cover costs. Put up a fence around alcohol area, play games, have band perform.
- Grant Update – waiting to hear back on open grants. Collier submitted for trail. Beechwood ADA compliant playground – replace whole thing. Cost up to \$350K. Grant pays 75%, town pays 25%. Carducci playground – gave drawing; inspected all parks. Will show if grant happens. End of June, early July new Ralph Park equipment. Need wheelchair paths. Retaining wall \$ to go to playground.
- Logo – presented revised drawings. Like some aspects of each but need to be more professional. Dan wants to open a store with Ed from AEG 4x a year. Recreation would receive a portion of sales. Merch would be shipped here to avoid tax to customers on clothing. Rec would distribute. Dan will send out logo options to view.
- Spring programs – pickleball and tennis were successful.
- Memorial Day – Kings donated water bottles and treats. Dewey recommends we buy little flags to give out next year. Greg suggested to reach out to gov't surplus to purchase items like a golf cart to pass out items.
- Fall Festival – need more vendors, someone suggested to reach out to dog groomers

Council comments

- Clemente thanks all those who came to meeting.
- Said it is important to be transparent.
- Prefers grass over turf. There is value in having grass.
- DPW has been doing a great job so far this year.
- Happy with 3 concerts.

Sara made motion to adjourn meeting at 8:28pm, seconded by Greg.