

TOWN OF RED HOOK RECREATION COMMISSION

7340 South Broadway, Red Hook, NY 12571

Phone: 845-758-4625 Fax: 845-758-5313

Recreation Commission Monthly Meeting

Monday, 13 January 2014

RECREATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Submitted by John D. Kuhn, Park and Programs Director

Review of Summer Recreation Playground Program

As discussed at our last two meetings, Supervisor Crane requested that the Recreation Commission review the Recreation Playground Program with an eye toward a restructuring it in ways that will increase interest and attendance. This topic will be the major consideration of the January 13, 2014 meeting. Please email me any thoughts on this topic for inclusion in the paperwork for this meeting. Everyone should have a copy of the 2013 Year-End-Report.

Fundraising Events

Following up on the email from Supervisor Crane concerning area fundraising events, the Recreation Commission is asked to consider possible activities that could become an annual event.

John Deere 4120 Compact Utility Tractor

I faxed the Purchase Order to Keil Equipment on +11 December 2013. The tractor will not be delivered until March 2014 so that we do not have to provide winter storage space. The Storage Barn is compromised currently by two 20' culvert pipes for the Aspinwall Access Project. This tractor comes with the 400X Loader and the 485 Backhoe.

Attic and Loft Weight Capacities

Emily O'Leary from Crawford & Associates Engineering submitted a full report setting the load capacities of the Snack Bar attic and the Storage Barn loft at 1,900 and 2,000 pounds respectively. I purchased load capacity signs from Dutchess Signs that will be affixed in each building. Before the sign can be put up in the Storage Barn, we must reinforce the front and rear load timbers with two 2x8's. This will be done first thing in the spring when the park reopens. The report from Crawford & Associates is available in the Recreation Office if anyone wants to read it.

Capital Equipment Budget Plan

The purchase of a JD 6x4 Gator on NYS Contract is our major planned purchase for 2014. This would be a Capital Equipment Budget Plan purchase that established the equipment needs of the Recreation Park for the next five years. I am worried that the current JD 6x4 Gator will break down. This machine is used seven days a week to groom fields, empty garbage, carry equipment, etc. If we no longer use it to groom fields, it may provide a couple more years of service. The John Deere 6x4 Gator purchase should be done while it is on NYS Contract or on NPP Contract.

2013 Year-End Report – OCFS Program Annual Assessment

We received an "in compliance" notification from the Dutchess County Department of Community and Family Services for 2013. I submitted the 2013 Year-End Report on 26 December 2013. Copies of this report are available in the Recreation Office. A copy was sent to Supervisor Sue Crane.

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2014 DCFS Funding – Individual Program Application

I attended the mandatory grants application workshop in Poughkeepsie on 22 November 2013. I completed and mailed the completed grant application on 9 December 2013. The funding source for 2014 has changed. We will no longer receive funding directly from NYS; all funding will go through the Dutchess County Department of Community and Family Services. We are no longer guaranteed funding based upon our youth population. In fact, we may receive no funding at all after our application is reviewed by DCFS. Copies of the application are available for review in the Recreation Office.

JD777 Equipment Problems/Repairs

As noted before, the JD777 is now not starting again. It is displaying the same problem as before. The cost to repair the John Deere Z-Trak was \$576.38. I contacted Keil Equipment and talked with Kim Keil about having a mechanic look at the JD777 in the Storage Barn at the Recreation Park since we felt the work done should have some sort of warranty. He said that he would get back to me.

Recreation Park Extension ACOE Approval

We received the following email from Brian Orzel, ACOE on 8 January 2014:

From: Orzel, Brian A NAN02 <Brian.A.Orzel@usace.army.mil>
To: Michael Nowicki <ecolsol@aol.com>
Sent: Wed, Jan 8, 2014 10:28 am
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Red Hook Recreational Fields - Linden Ave. (PCN) (UNCLASSIFIED)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Caveats: NONE

Mike,

We received the pre-construction notification on November 13, 2013.

Due to my excessive work load, I was unable to provide a written determination within 45 days of its submission.

In accordance with the current nationwide general permit regulations (Federal Register dated February 21, 2012), if the Corps of Engineers district does not respond to a pre-construction notification within 45 days of receipt, then the applicant may proceed with the project as proposed.

That means that the applicant must perform the work as proposed in the pre-construction notification, including any proposed mitigation. Any substantive changes to the project would require you to submit a new notification to this office.

If you have any questions, let me know.

Brian

Recreation Park Extension – SEQRA Next Steps

I talked with Dough Strawinski and Harry Colgan about the next steps in the SEQRA Process. As directed I sent an email to Christine Chale, Town of Red Hook Attorney, to inquire what public hearings, board resolutions, etc. are necessary. The Town of Red Hook is the lead agency in this project, and I

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anticipate that all necessary steps in the SEQRA process can be completed before spring.

Snack Bar Operator – Kate Cavotti

I talked with Kate Cavotti about the needs for the Snack Bar in 2014. Her major concerns are as follows:

1. Metal window cover mechanisms need lubrication.
2. Bird nests in the window cover casings must be removed.
3. Screening to prevent birds from nesting in the covers needed.
4. Hood fan is loud both inside and outside.
5. Hood and fan require duct cleaning.
6. Under-counter refrigerator not working – needs replacement.

In the spring we will address each of these concerns.

Snack Bar Under-Counter Refrigerator

When we were closing the Snack Bar in the fall, there was a loud humming noise coming from within the kitchen area. Eventually we identified the source as the compressor on the under-the counter refrigerator. The compressor was dangerously hot. We turned off the breaker in the service box. This refrigerator is over 35 years old and cannot be repaired. If possible it should be removed and replaced with one or two self-contained stand-alone units.

Snack Bar Roof

This project is a major priority for 2014. Preserving the integrity of this roof will prevent costly damage to the building. The Snack Bar shingles have never been replaced since it was built over 30 years ago.

Dugout Roofs

Both Baseball Field dugout roofs were removed and replaced in November 2013. The materials for the North Softball Field dugouts were purchased and are stored in the Roller Hockey Equipment Shed. The weather did not permit doing these roofs in the fall. As soon as weather permits, we will remove and replace these dugout roofs. Much of the dugout trim will also be replaced.

Aspinwall Access to Recreation Park Extension

The 8"x8" posts, the 2x12 pressure treated timbers and all necessary galvanized lags and washers, and the two 2'x20' culvert pipes for this project were purchased in December by Howard Callies for the Greenway and Trails Committee. These materials are now stored in the St. Margaret's Home Garage and the Storage Barn at the Recreation Park. As soon as the SEQRA process is complete, the Aspinwall Access Project will be completed in cooperation with the Greenway and Trails Committee.

Poison Ivy

We mowed the dead poison ivy plants under the pine trees as recommended by DEC. This should stress the plants even further and hasten their demise. Integral sprayed the poison ivy at the Recreation Park today, 9/9/2013. As you know from the emails I have sent to you, this has been an involved process. Keeping our park neighbors informed and addressing their concerns has always been a Recreation Commission priority. The next step is the pre-emergent treatment required in the spring. This will be scheduled with Integral Tree and Landscape Service. Once again we will go through the process of notifying the

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neighborhood and posting signs in the sprayed areas. It may take a year or two to "correct" the poison ivy problems at the park.

Town of Red Hook and RHCS D Intermunicipal Agreement

Harry Colgan, Doug Strawinski, and I met with the RHCS D to discuss the user fee for park use. Unfortunately, this meeting simply revisited old issues that we thought were resolved at least on the level of a mutual understanding. Future meetings are planned. As it currently stands, the RHCS D will pay \$10,000 per year for this and the next two years to use the park facilities for practice and games of seven interscholastic sports. A second meeting has not been scheduled.

Donation of Benches to the Recreation Park

Christine Kane called me to inquire if we were interested in a possible donation of benches for the Recreation Park. We could use benches for the west side of the basketball court. Christine will communicate with the potential donor to see if that is something he/she would be interested in doing.

Hot Water Heater in the Snack Bar

The hot water heater in the snack bar will require replacement in 2014. When the water is turned on in the park in the spring, I would like to replace existing hot water heater that is nine-years old. Todd Abrahams will give us a recommendation and an estimate for this work. We must provide hot water for the Snack Bar at appropriate temperatures to meet Board of Health requirements.

St. Margaret's Home

The brick damaged on the southwest corner on the building is now repaired. The water has been shut off and the system drained. Antifreeze was put in the sink and toilet. Because the back door was found unlocked, I bolted a board across the door to secure it. I also sealed the east cellar window with 2x6's and plywood to prevent someone entering the building through the basement. Jeff Tremper, Howard Callies, and I completed the final two-day fall cleanup.

Restroom Fans

The fans in both restrooms began screeching in the fall. The fan wires had to be cut because the fans are on the same circuit as the lights. In the spring before the park opens, both restroom fans will be replaced with commercial quality ones. A separate switch for each fan is needed when the new ones are installed. When the fans fail, they become very hot and become a fire hazard. The fans are in operation every day, seven days a week for 24 hours a day during the park season. Putting them on a timer with the lights should increase their life expectancy.

Snack Bar Attic Fan

I am donating the commercial grade attic fan I just removed from my house for use in the Snack Bar attic. This fan is only a few years old and should last at least ten years. If the motor does burn out, it is a model that always has a replacement available. The fan installation should take place when the new roof is done on the Snack Bar.

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Restroom Glass Brick Windows

I talked at length with local mason Chris Zietz about replacing the broken glass blocks. We would leave the Lexan that is currently covering both the inside and outside of the glass-block windows to prevent someone from breaking them again. Chris Zietz will submit an estimate in the spring. Shannon Miller donated the glass blocks needed for the repairs so material costs should be minimal.

Storage Barn Repair

The south east corner of the storage barn requires some block work. We hope to be able to remove and replace the damaged blocks. Water from the snow melt on the roof enters the corner of the building and then freezes causing damage to the wall. We may install sections of galvanized roofing on the corner to divert water away from the building. I would like to combine the Restroom window project with the Storage Barn repair to get a better price.

Recreation Playground Shed

A new roof is needed on one of the Recreation Playground sheds. This will be done in the spring. Shingles for this project were purchased in 2013. The Playground Shed purchased from Bay Horse Barns and Gazebos does not have any tar paper or ice shield under the shingles. This makes the roof susceptible to leaks from snow and ice sitting on the roof during winter.

Employee Background Checks

This issue resurfaces again and again. Our existing policy has been to hire those who have undergone background checks through their present employers. This has worked well in the past because nearly all our summer employees are teachers or staff in public schools. As our employee sources change, should the policy change as well? Little League and other local organizations do background checks on coaches and other volunteers at minimal expense.

Perhaps the following article suggests why this topic requires further discussion.

May 15, 2013

MOREAU -- Town officials are planning to do background checks on all job applicants and existing town employees after a convicted sex offender who lied on an employment application was hired to work for the town's Recreation Department.

Town officials said last week that background checks would be conducted on all job finalists, and they are working on formalizing a background check policy.

"I think we should take it a step further, and for those already working for the town, we should do background checks on them," Councilman Todd Kusnierz said at a Town Board meeting Tuesday night.

Robert J. Roberts, 57, a Level 2 sex offender, lied about his criminal history on a job application. He worked for the town for less than three weeks, and spent some time working at Moreau Recreational Park, next to Moreau Elementary School. Officials said Roberts was terminated once the discovery was made.

Roberts indicated on his employment application he did not have a criminal record, and the town did not perform a background check. His

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status as a Level 2 sex offender stems from a 2008 conviction in Washington County for repeatedly sexually assaulting an 11-year-old. Roberts spent three days working at the park and the remainder of the time at the town's transfer station. Roberts was supervised at all times he was working in the park, Supervisor Preston Jenkins said in a statement at the beginning of the board meeting Tuesday, adding that officials "have no reason to believe he had any contact with children."

Resident John Telisky told town officials at the meeting it would "send a proactive message to file a complaint," against Roberts.

Jenkins said Wednesday he wants to have a discussion with Saratoga County District Attorney James Murphy before making any decisions about pressing charges against Roberts.

"I'm not sure what those answers are yet," Jenkins said.

The town's personnel committee interviewed Roberts. Councilwoman Gina LeClair and Councilman Robert Prendergast serve on the personnel committee and, according to the minutes of the April 9 Town Board meeting, LeClair made the motion to hire Roberts, which Prendergast seconded. The Town Board unanimously approved hiring Roberts.

Jenkins goes through all of the employment applications, but the personnel committee narrows down the candidate pool and decides who to interview, Jenkins said.

Town officials have been in contact with state Comptroller DiNapoli's office about implementing a background check policy and process going forward, but nothing was in writing as of Tuesday night. Town Attorney Karla Buettner planned to develop a framework for a policy for the board to consider at its next meeting.

The goal is for the board to be able to adopt the policy at the May 28 meeting, Jenkins said.

Officials want to get a policy and process in place as soon as possible because the town already has job vacancies, and will now need to conduct background checks before those are filled.

The town is in the process of trying to hire three new employees, Jenkins said.

"We need employees now. We're short employees now," Prendergast said. "This can't wait."

Officials will need to establish a process for looking into an applicant's criminal history, and create specific parameters for what would come up in the background check that would preclude someone from further consideration as a job candidate, Prendergast said.

The town can request in its contracts with other firms that may be providing laborers at town facilities that background checks have been conducted on those employees, Buettner said.

Prendergast also suggested that the employment application itself may need to be revised. He thinks the town should impose the same restrictions for potential employees in all departments, not just the Recreation Department, he said.

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“If there are going to be background checks, I don’t care what you applied for,” Prendergast said.

This is the kind of situation that can wreak havoc on youth programs.

Flooding at Recreation Park

The recent heavy rains falling on frozen ground created flood risks along the track on the north end of the park. In the fall we cleaned out the drainage ditch from the Wetlands Walk all the way to the Sawkill Creek outlet. So far we have not lost the track to flood erosion. The expanded ditch has handled a remarkable amount of water. The extra effort made in the fall has proved well worth it.

2014 Rhinebeck Legion Band Concert at St. Margaret’s Home

The parking limitations at Abrahams Park and the lack of adequate handicapped accessibility and parking make it desirable to relocate this Recreation Commission sponsored concert to St. Margaret’s Home or to the Recreation Park. STMH is more central and probably the more attractive site for a summer concert. Arrangements for parking at the Hardscrabble Plaza could be made with Todd Baright. Folks could get an ice cream at Holy Cow and then walk over to STMH for the concert on the North Lawn.

I discussed the possible site change with Connie Kessel from the Rhinebeck Legion Band, and she opined that it would be an excellent venue.