

PRINCETON BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSIONERS

A meeting of the Princeton Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners was held on October 7, 2021 remotely via Zoom.

- Present: Mr. Young, Mr. Williamson, Dr. Cahill, Dr. Nosker, Mr. Burt & Ms. Germaine
- Also Present: Mr. Moorhead, Ms. Paulucci, Mr. Petrucelli, Andrew Marshall, Audrey Blanford & Tracey Liu
- Absent: Dr. Frawley, Ms. Rogers & Mr. Koontz

Public Comment

Junglien Chen (Princeton Resident) – Asked that Mr. Moorhead and the Commission discuss a pickleball presentation that he emailed the Recreation email inbox earlier in the day. Mr. Chen stated that the popularity of pickleball has grown tremendously in recent years, that it can help fight the obesity pandemic, and that anyone can learn to play the sport. Mr. Chen expressed an interest in seeing pickleball courts built in Princeton. Mr. Moorhead and Ms. Paulucci determined that neither staff member had seen any presentation emailed to the Recreation inbox. Mr. Moorhead asked Mr. Chen to re-send the presentation directly to him by email. Mr. Moorhead stated he had received a few emails from residents in support of having courts installed in Princeton, but like many potential projects, there are both financial and logistical challenges, including determining a viable location. Mr. Chen asked about the plans for the Mercer-At-Play grant. Mr. Moorhead commented there are several potential ideas for utilizing the Mercer-At-Play grant funds, but nothing has been voted on yet. *Discussion was held.*

Corner House Student Board

Mr. Moorhead introduced the PRD staff and Rec Commission, and welcomed the board members to the meeting. All three Corner House student reps introduced themselves and stated their schools and interests. Ms. Liu stated that CH is currently planning their Annual Dodgeball Tournament, which is set to take place at Community Park South basketball courts on 11/12/21.

Activities Report

In addition to the activities in the agenda packet, Mr. Petrucelli reported on the following:

Fall/Winter Programming

- Boys & Girls basketball clinics started the week of 9/30/21.
- PRD is collaborating with US Sports Institute again for a fall program. Over 40 participants are currently registered.
- Adult Chair Fitness started on 9/29/21 in the CP Community Room. There are 20 participants registered.
- Platform Tennis Registration will open on 10/4/21.
- Mr. Petrucelli is unsure how the Dillon Youth Basketball and Squash programs will proceed this winter due to COVID-19 restrictions and access to indoor facilities.

In addition to the activities in the agenda packet, Ms. Paulucci reported on the following:

- Ms. Paulucci noted that utilization of the Pool Community Room has allowed us to offer programs such as Chess, Mindfulness & Empowerment that we might otherwise have not been able to run.
- On 10/10/21, an Adaptive track clinic will take place at the Princeton HS track with Coach Harrington, a Special Olympics Coach, directing the event.
- An Adaptive Basketball Clinic directed by Princeton University Men's Basketball Head Coach Mitch Henderson was held in September and was a tremendous success.
- PRD Staff was notified that indoor Adaptive dances cannot be held in public school facilities at this time (due to covid restrictions). As a result, the Halloween dance will be held on 10/15/21 at the CP Pool Community Room.

Dr. Nosker asked whether the Chair Fitness Class would be able to accommodate younger children. Ms. Paulucci informed the Commission that based on current registration levels, the various age groups will likely be grouped together. *Discussion was held.* Mr. Moorhead reiterated that Ms. Paulucci has developed and implemented new adaptive programs on very short notice, while continuing to work on several other program options for the fall. Mr. Moorhead thanked Ms. Paulucci for playing a leading role in helping to fill the void left by PSS. Mr. Moorhead commended Ms. Paulucci and Mr. Petrucelli for making excellent use of the CP Pool Community Room for programming this fall. Mr. Moorhead stated that staff is planning for winter programming options. However, it remains to be seen, whether the public schools and the university will allow outside groups to use their facilities. PRD is delaying a final decision on winter programming as long as possible in order to allow those entities time to make that decision. Dr. Nosker stated there is still a lot of uncertainty from a public health standpoint in the short term. *Discussion was held.*

Director's Report

Mr. Moorhead reported on the following:

- **2021 CP Pool Season:** Mr. Moorhead reported on damage to the pool complex because of Hurricane Ida on 9/1/21. During the storm, the pressure of the ground water underneath the pools forced open the hydrostatic relief valves and flooded both the main pool and kiddie pool with a considerable amount of debris and dirt. The maintenance crew was able to get to the facility and begin working on cleaning the pools by mid-day on 9/2/21. The kiddie pool was drained, cleaned and refilled and back up and running within 24 hours. Through the course of working on the main pool, the maintenance crew determined the filter system had sustained damage to internal components. As a result, the main pool remained closed to the public for the rest of the pool season. The dive well operated on a hybrid schedule of lap/recreation swim for the Labor Day weekend in order to accommodate swimmers misplaced due to the main pool closure. Over the course of the past few weeks, maintenance staff has started taking apart the filters to assess the damage. Staff is working on a quote for replacement parts. Staff is also in the process of winterizing all three pools at this time.
- **CP Pool Concessionaire:** Mr. Moorhead stated that our pool concessionaire for the past 10 seasons, R & K Poolside Grill, would likely not return in 2022. Mr. Moorhead publicly thanked Ray and Kathy for their outstanding service to the CP Pool Community since 2011 and stated the duo would typically go above and beyond in order to provide excellent service to pool patrons.
- **CP Pool Locker Rooms:** The shower areas in both locker rooms were repainted this fall. This work was done in-house in order to save money.

- **Mary Moss Playground:** The spray pad features at Mary Moss Playground were turned off on 9/27/21 for the season. Staff will begin winterizing the facility soon. New fencing was also installed near the embankment slide by the rock area. The fencing was installed at the request of our Insurance representative in order to reduce the danger of a trip or fall in the area of the rocks. Ms. Germaine asked to see photos of the newly installed fence and inquired as to whether a faulty switch at the spray pad had been repaired. Mr. Moorhead commented that the new part was installed with the help of an electrician. Dr. Nosker asked about the origin of the failing switch. *Discussion was held.*
 - A Witherspoon-Jackson Neighborhood Heritage Trail Plaque will be installed at MMP in the near future. Mr. Moorhead has been notified that a dedication will be held when the plaque is installed. He will inform the Rec Commission as soon as he knows the full details.
- **Grover Park:** The basketball court was recently resurfaced and new lines were painted. All cracks were also repaired. PRD staff is now running basketball clinics on site.
- **Platform Tennis:** The back two platform tennis courts have been resurfaced and relined, and will be ready for the upcoming winter platform season.
- **Sustainable New Jersey Grant:** The Municipality recently dispersed a small amount of money from a sustainable New Jersey grant for use on battery-powered equipment. PRD utilized the funding to purchase a battery-powered leaf blower for use by staff around the complex. Staff has been given the directive to explore all battery-powered options for new equipment purchases. Mr. Moorhead stated there are performance-related issues with several battery-powered equipment pieces, especially those utilized for snow plowing and towing. Battery operated machinery is not powerful enough for many of the current jobs the PRD maintenance crew completes on a daily basis. Mr. Moorhead will be meeting with an individual from Sustainable Princeton to discuss the town mowing contract and whether or not it would be appropriate to require battery-powered equipment from outside vendors as part of that contract. Dr. Nosker commented there are mowing contractors in California who offer services using battery-powered equipment and charge much higher amounts than contractors who uses gas-powered equipment. *Discussion was held.*
- **Princeton Employment Engagement Team:** PRD hosted the first ever Princeton Employment Engagement Team outing, a catered lunch, on 9/23/21 at CP Pool. PEET is a reinvention of the MVP team, which seeks to engage Municipal staff in a social setting.
- **Assistant Director of Recreation Vacancy:** Interviews for the Assistant Director of Recreation vacancy have been completed. Thirty Four (34) applications were received. Nine (9) of those individuals were selected for the first round of interviews (all virtual). Three individuals were asked back for a second round in-person interview. Former PRD Program Supervisor Joe Marroli was selected to fill the open position. Mr. Marroli worked at PRD from 2011-2017 and has been serving as Director of Recreation & Senior Services for Pemberton Township for the past 4.5 years. He brings a combination of experience running PRD programs, as well as directing the Recreation department in Pemberton. Mr. Moorhead is excited to have Mr. Marroli start in his new role at PRD. *Discussion was held.*

Old Business

- **Mercer at Play Update:** Mr. Moorhead provided an update on the status of Mercer at Play (MoP). Mr. Moorhead, Dr. Nosker, Mr. Young and Mr. Burt took a trip to Lawrence Township to inspect their adaptive/inclusive playground in early September. After discussion, the group then visited Hilltop Park to review the site and discuss whether it might be a viable location for installation of

a new adaptive playground. Mr. Moorhead followed this up by meeting with a representative from the playground company on site and requested a proposal for an adaptive playground at Hilltop Park. Staff has not yet received that proposal. Mr. Moorhead stated the engineering department reviewed the pathway that leads from the playground area to the parking lot and it would require renovation in order to be considered accessible. *Discussion was held.*

- **Recreation Commission Update (MoP):** Ms. Cahill, Dr. Nosker and Mr. Young recently met with Mayor Freda regarding the Commission's letter to Mayor/Council and their handling of the proposed turf field project at Hilltop. Mr. Young stated that the meeting was an opportunity for the commission members to discuss their concerns, the need for improved athletic fields and desire to have their voice heard as part of this process. *Discussion was held.* Mr. Moorhead thanked the Commission members and Mayor Freda for meeting.

Mr. Moorhead reminded the Commission that there was not a "plan B" for the MoP funding, as all staff time and effort was poured into the artificial turf proposal. In addition, we were down a full-time staff person during our busiest season of the year. Therefore, it will take some time to move a new project from the idea stage to execution.

Dr. Cahill asked about potentially using some of the funding to improve and expand the Hilltop Park parking lot and potentially add a drop-off area to make access/egress safer for park users. Mr. Moorhead acknowledged the parking issues but was unsure whether MoP funds could be used towards that end. Dr. Cahill also commented that additional handicapped parking spots should be considered at Hilltop Park if plans for the adaptive playground were to move forward. *Discussion was held.*

New Business

No new business.

Communications

Communications shared in agenda packet.

Mr. Moorhead highlighted emails from residents requesting the town consider adding pickle ball courts, some emails regarding Marquand Park, as well as some emails with compliments on recent PRD programs.

Approval of Minutes

No minutes to approve.

Approval of Bills

Dr. Nosker requested more information on several of this month's bills. *Discussion was held.*

- **Dr. Nosker made a motion to approve the bills, seconded by Mr. Williamson and approved.**

Next Meeting Date

November 18, 2021