

PRINCETON BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSIONERS

A meeting of the Princeton Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners was held on November 17, 2022, in the Princeton Recreation Department (PRD) lower-level Conference Room, 380 Witherspoon Street.

- Present: Ms. Pirone Lambros, Mr. Burt, Mr. Koontz, Mr. Young, Dr. Nosker, Dr. Cahill, Ms. Germaine & Ms. Rogers
- Also Present: Mr. Moorhead, Ms. Paulucci, Mr. Petrucelli, & Mr. Marrolli
- Absent: Dr. Frawley

Public Comment

No Public Comment

Corner House Student Board

No Corner House Student Board Report

Activities Report

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

- **Programming Update:** Mr. Petrucelli thanked the Princeton University Women's Basketball Team for their efforts running a youth basketball clinic on 11/12/22 at Jadwin Gym. Registration is ongoing for Dillon Youth Basketball with games set to begin on 1/7/23. As of now, all league games will be played at the Hun School of Princeton. Mr. Petrucelli is exploring alternative program offerings such as Adult Yoga and Sports Performance Training. Mr. Young asked where the Yoga and Sports Performance Training classes would take place. Mr. Petrucelli responded those programs would most likely take place at the Suzanne Patterson Center.

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

- **Programming Update:** Ms. Paulucci reported PRD has been offering Adaptive programming at Suzanne Patterson and the facility location has been received well. Over Halloween Weekend, roughly 140 kids participated in a Kid's Running Race at Smoyer Park. The event was very successful. Adaptive Yoga has also been very successful and well attended. Ms. Paulucci reported Chess, Empowerment and Magic Workshops are all potential programs for the Winter, depending on indoor space availability. Dr. Nosker asked what the Empowerment program is. Ms. Paulucci responded it's a program for girls in grades 3 – 5 and 6 – 8 and focuses on building self-esteem and a sisterhood of friendships. *Discussion was held.*

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

- **Pickleball Update:** In late October, pickleball lines were added to two tennis courts at CP South. Staff has made an attempt collectively to monitor usage since that time. There have been several occasions where as many as 10-12 people have been playing pickleball at one time. During the good weather days, the pickleball courts, tennis courts and tennis wall were all utilized

frequently. Feedback from the public on the installation of pickleball courts and equipment has been mainly positive. *Discussion was held.*

Director's Report

Mr. Moorhead reported on the following:

- **Pickleball Update:** The Town Topics recently ran an informational blurb on the opening of the Pickleball courts. PRD has promoted the courts being open on social media as well as on the PRD website. Staff has heard that at least one pickleball group has formed via social media in order to schedule play. PRD's Women's Platform Tennis League participation numbers are down, and one reason for the decline is that many female players are now playing pickleball indoors during the winter season at the indoor facility in Ewing, NJ. The Suzanne Patterson Center also lined their hardwood floor with one pickleball court and now offers lessons and open time. Dr. Nosker asked if the Suzanne Patterson Center athletic area is the same space that Ms. Paulucci utilizes for her adaptive programming. Ms. Paulucci confirmed the same athletic space is utilized for adaptive programming.
- **Dog Park Update:** Construction of temporary fencing at CP South, along with a "small dog" zone and a "large dog" zone, should be completed by the end of November or beginning of December. As soon as construction is completed, the 90-day temporary ordinance should be activated. The off-leash hours, 7-9 am at Quarry Park, have already started. Ms. Pirone-Lambros mentioned there was one complaint that a dog was soiling the area, but it turned out this was not occurring during the off-leash hours, and may be from another animal. Ms. Pirone-Lambros commented there have not been any other complaints otherwise. *Discussion was held.*
- **Mercer-at-Play Grant Update :** Mr. Moorhead and Mr. Marroli presented the revised Mercer-at-Play Grant Proposal to the Planning Board on 11/3/22 for a courtesy review and the feedback received was positive. The amended resolution changing the intention of the project from a turf field to an adaptive playground and batting cage was approved at the 11/14/22 Council Meeting. Mr. Moorhead is now in the process of sending all the amended documents to the Mercer County Planning office for approval. Mr. Moorhead hopes approval for the amended documents will take place at an upcoming December County Commissioner's Meeting and that work on the new adaptive playground, batting cage and field light conversion can begin in the spring of 2023. Ms. Pirone-Lambros asked if a fence is part of the new adaptive playground. Mr. Moorhead responded that a formal decision on a fence has not yet been made, but PRD has been moving through the process assuming a fence will be part of the project, and recently received a few quotes from York Fence for various types of playground fences. Ms. Germaine suggested that the new playground should be completely fenced in. Mr. Koontz added a completely enclosed fence would not only help contain children within the new playground, but also provide caregivers assistance in supervising the children they are responsible for. *Discussion was held.*
- **CP South Master Plan RFP Update:** Six proposals were received for the CP South Master Plan RFP from qualified engineering, landscape design and architectural firms. Staff reviewed the proposals for qualifications, project team experience with similar projects, scope of services and price. Three (3) of those firms were interviewed in-person by Mr. Moorhead, Mr. Marroli, Mrs. Stockton (Municipal Engineer) and Mr. Lesko (Acting Planning Director). Following the interviews, Municipal staff reached a consensus as to which firm was preferred, references were called, and the preferred firm is reputable and in good standing. The plan is to have a professional services

contract with the preferred firm on the 11/28/22 Council Meeting with the community engagement process slated to start in early 2023.

Dr. Cahill asked for specifics about the intent of the RFP. Mr. Moorhead responded that the RFP is to hire a qualified Engineering/Landscape Design Firm to conduct community outreach and provide concept designs for CP South. This will include meeting with the Commission, various stakeholder groups and residents for community engagement and feedback. The community engagement process will determine the specific amenities that would be included in the new design. The idea is for the new CP South to be the “crown jewel” of the PRD park inventory.

Dr. Cahill asked if there is a dedicated CP South Redesign subcommittee and does not remember such a subgroup was established. Mr. Moorhead responded that Dr. Nosker volunteered to be part of the process and staff feels that going forward the formation of a steering committee to help direct this project would be appropriate. The RFP is a starting point for this process to help drive feedback from the community. Mr. Koontz asked why the RFP for the CP South Master Plan was not submitted to and approved by the Recreation Commission prior to being made public. Mr. Moorhead mentioned the RFP process has been discussed at various Rec Commission meetings leading up to this point. Mr. Koontz commented he does not remember hearing about the RFP process. *Discussion was held.*

After discussion was held, it was determined a special meeting will be set for the Rec Commission to meet and discuss the RFP proposals, as well as make a recommendation to mayor and council of a qualified firm. A sub-committee was formed for the CP South Master Plan, consisting of Mr. Koontz, Dr. Nosker and Dr. Cahill. The special meeting was tentatively set for 11/29/22 via zoom at 7 pm.

- **Fall Youth Sports :** The Fall athletic season is winding down and most organized sports will be ending on 11/20/22.
- **Maintenance Staff Update :** The Maintenance staff has been busy winterizing all park restrooms and working on other small park projects. A contractor has been hired to install several small heaters in various park restroom buildings. This will enable restrooms to remain open longer into the fall season, and also allow them to open earlier in the spring season without concerns about plumbing freezing. This should reduce the need to rent port-a-johns on site for youth sports groups late in the fall after restrooms have already been closed for the season.
- **CP Tennis Court & Basketball Court Lights :** The lights at CP Tennis & Basketball Courts are still active and available in the evenings until 11/27/22.
- **Commission Meetings :** Mr. Moorhead requested feedback on whether the Commission would like to continue in-person meetings or hold zoom meetings. Dr. Nosker commented that he wants the Commission to be careful with in-person meetings during the winter based on concerns about transmission of germs/virus. Ms. Rogers commented that she feels that communication is better during in-person meetings. Mr. Young suggested the meetings continue to be held in person unless another health crisis occurs. Ms. Germaine suggested using a larger room for future in-person meetings. Mr. Moorhead will investigate reserving the community room in the Municipal Building, which is a larger meeting room, for future in-person commission meetings.

Old Business

- a) **State Statute Title 40: Section 12, Subsection 6:** Mr. Koontz passed out a handout that details the administrative jurisdiction of the Recreation Commission according to State Statute Title 40: Section 12, Subsection 6. Mr. Koontz feels that the Municipal Council may have overstepped their jurisdiction in establishing a temporary dog park and temporary off-leash hours in a municipal park according to State Statute. Mr. Koontz suggested that the Rec Commission put forth an amended resolution to resolve the jurisdiction conflict that would reference this statute along with an explanation. Mr. Koontz also feels the Rec Commission should be involved in reviewing the results of the trial dog park programs. Ms. Rogers asked who is responsible for legal liability within Municipal Parks, specifically as it pertains to dog parks on Municipal property. Ms. Pirone-Lambros added the Recreation Commission operates slightly differently than other boards and commissions and feels the approval process should be reviewed so that the Commission and Council are on the same page regarding projects moving forward. *Discussion was held.*

New Business

- a) **Hourly Wage Increase – 1/1/23:** Mr. Koontz made a motion to authorize PRD to raise the minimum hourly rate for seasonal employees to \$13/hour on 1/1/23 and to increase the starting hourly rate for first year lifeguards to \$14.50/hour in 2023, seconded by Mr. Burt and approved.
- b) **712 Contract – Bookkeeping Services 2023 :** Mr. Koontz requested that documentation be included with the agenda packet for all contractual and financial items for the Commission to vote upon in the future. Mr. Koontz made a motion to approve the renewal of the contract with 712 for Bookkeeping Services for 2023, seconded by Ms. Germaine and approved.
- c) **RT Reserve – Re-line Platform Tennis Courts 1 & 2:** Ms. Germaine made a motion to approve the RT Reserve Expenditure for Re-lining and Re-surfacing Platform Tennis Courts 1 & 2 in the amount of \$10,605, seconded by Mr. Koontz and approved. Mr. Moorhead explained that this work will take place sometime in '23 after the platform season ends but that we want to lock in the contractor now to avoid any fee increases.

Communications

Aside from the communications shared in the agenda packet, Mr. Moorhead referenced a new adult lap swim program that will take place at the Princeton Middle School pool over the winter. This program will be administered by the Princeton Public Schools and is geared towards Princeton residents. It will utilize an online digital ticketing system. The Princeton HS Athletic Director requested Mr. Moorhead help share this program with the public. Commission members were supportive of staff sharing this communication with our pool patrons.

Approval of Minutes

- a) **August 25, 2022:** Dr. Nosker asked about the removal of the John Street basketball courts and if they will need to be replaced. Mr. Moorhead commented he doesn't have any more information on this item, however, the Open Space Manager is taking the lead on this project and working through Green Acres to determine if the courts will need to be replaced. *Discussion was held.* Dr. Nosker made a motion to approve the August 25 minutes, seconded by Ms. Germaine and approved. Mr. Burt abstained. Dr. Cahill voted to adopt the minutes, but commented the minutes are starting to look a little less like a reflection of the discussion and more like a summary of what PRD staff are doing. Mr. Moorhead commented he feels people are more engaged as part of meeting in person in comparison to zoom meetings.
- b) **October 6, 2022:** Mr. Koontz made a motion to approve October 6 minutes, seconded by Mr. Burt and approved. Ms. Germaine and Ms. Rogers abstained. Dr. Cahill voted no.

Approval of Bills

- Mr. Koontz requested the approval of the donation to St. Jude's Children's Hospital in memory of former PRD employee Andy Tamasi be pulled from the list and voted upon separately. Dr. Nosker made a motion to approve all other bills aside from the donation to St. Jude's, seconded by Mr. Koontz and approved.
- **Donation to St. Jude's in Memory of former PRD Maintenance Foreman Andy Tamasi:** Mr. Moorhead offered words on Mr. Tamasi's role/impact on the Department/Community during his 27 year tenure as maintenance foreman (1971-1998) and 80+ years as a Princeton resident. Dr. Nosker made a motion to approve the charitable donation in memory of former Recreation Maintenance Foreman Andy Tamasi, seconded by Mr. Koontz, and approved.

Next Meeting Date

December 15, 2022