

PRINCETON BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSIONERS

August 25, 2016

A meeting of the Princeton Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners was held on August 25, 2016 in the Princeton Recreation Department (PRD) lower level Conference Room, 380 Witherspoon Street.

Present: Mr. Koontz, Ms. Olivares-Weber, Dr. Nosker, Ms. Rogers, Ms. Butler and Dr. Frawley

Also Present: Mr. Stentz, Mr. Moorhead and Mr. Marrolli

Absent: Mr. Young, Ms. Germaine, Dr. Cahill and Mr. Groeger

Activities Report

- Mr. Marrolli reported that the first Special Sports Dance of the school year will take place on Friday 9/16/16 at 7pm at John Witherspoon MS Gym.
- Mr. Moorhead reported that PRD will host the annual Rutgers SAFETY Clinic for volunteer youth sports coaches on Wednesday, 9/21/16 at 7pm in the court room at 400 Witherspoon.
Discussion was held.

Public Comments Opened

Sharon Bolen (CP Pool member; 106 Nassau St.)

- Ms. Bolen requested that CP Pool be kept open for two (2) additional weekends beyond Labor Day for 2016. Ms. Bolen has been in contact via email with Mr. Stentz prior to the meeting and has presented a petition with approximately 200 signatures in support of her request. Mr. Stentz responded to Ms. Bolen via email explaining why it is not possible to keep the pool open later this year.
- Ms. Bolen stated that the two extra weekends have been part of the CP Pool tradition, and that Labor Day is very early in the calendar this year, and that CP closed early in 2015.
- Mr. Stentz informed Ms. Bolen that the decision on whether to keep the pool open beyond Labor Day is based on a staff recommendation to the Commission, and that the Commission can decide to vote in favor or against the idea. The staff recommendation is based on several factors, most importantly the availability of lifeguards & other staff and the planned maintenance schedule.
- Mr. Stentz stated that the primary issue this year is staffing. This includes not only lifeguards, but customer service, pool managerial and maintenance staff. A bare minimum of 15 people are needed to safely open the complex. The vast majority, if not all, of our college aged staff have already left to go back to school. This places the burden of staffing directly on the high school aged staff. As soon as school starts after Labor Day, the commitment of those high school students switches from employment to school, sports and other extra-curricular activities. Mr. Stentz reported that we do not have enough staff to safely operate the pool beyond Labor Day.
- In response to Ms. Bolen's statements, Mr. Stentz responded that the pool did not close early in 2015, that Labor Day is not early on the calendar this year, and that he does not see it as a tradition to extend the summer season past Labor Day since it didn't happen in 2015 and has only happened 2-3 times in the last six (6) years, and never happened before 2011.
- In addition, there is an important maintenance component to the pool shut-down and a domino effect on other PRD maintenance responsibilities. Keeping the pool open extra weekends does significantly delay the start of the winterization of the pool. In turn, that has an effect on the back

end with delaying the park related winterization and clean-up tasks that our staff must tend to in mid to late fall.

- Ms. Bolen inquired as to whether the Commission would consider overriding the staff's recommendation not to open beyond Labor Day. Dr. Frawley stated that, in theory, the Commission could over-ride the staff recommendation, but that it had no interest in doing so, especially when the recommendation was based on sound reasoning and with safety in mind.
- Dr. Frawley stated that the Commission does consider keeping the pool open beyond Labor Day every summer and that it is a courtesy that the Commission likes to extend to pool patrons, when possible. Unfortunately, it is not possible this year.
- Ms. Bolen inquired as to whether this was an issue of funding and if patrons offered to pay extra, could the complex be kept open later. Mr. Stentz replied that this is not an issue of money and reiterated that we do not have enough available staff to consider the request.
- Dr. Frawley pointed out that several years ago, PRD began offering a Lifeguard Training Course in August in order to increase the number of available high school aged lifeguards on staff at the end of the summer. In prior years, there had been difficulty in even getting to Labor Day with the number of available staff.

Kip Cherry (Princeton resident; address not stated):

- Ms. Cherry stated that she is speaking on behalf of the Witherspoon-Jackson Neighborhood Committee.
- Ms. Cherry expressed concern that the Committee feels it has not received enough feedback on the recommendations they have previously submitted to the Commission regarding the Mary Moss Playground improvement project.
- Mr. Stentz stated that all recommendations, including those from the W-J Neighborhood Committee, have been passed on to the MMP Subcommittee and to the design consultant, The RBA Group. In addition, the W-J Neighborhood Committee has been informed of this information via email reply by Mr. Stentz.
- Ms. Butler reminded Ms. Cherry that W-J residents, Shirley Satterfield and Leighton Newlin, have agreed to work with the MMP subcommittee to determine the best way to honor the legacy of Mary Moss in the renovated playground. Ms. Butler also stated that many of the recommendations from the W-J Committee had previously been heard by the MMP subcommittee and taken into consideration. Mr. Stentz reiterated that many of those suggested items will be included in the renovated playground (native plantings, water fountains, additional shade, timer features on the sprayground) and that safety has been and will continue to be a primary concern.
- Mr. Koontz advised Ms. Cherry not to expect any major changes to the design concept that has already been approved by Mayor and Council. Suggestions that are outside the scope of the approved design would be difficult if not impossible to include. In addition, Dr. Frawley cautioned they should not expect to hear immediate feedback on each and every single request. There is a process in place and the process is being followed.
- Ms. Cherry brought up the topic of a speed bump on John St which has been discussed previously at a Princeton Council meeting as a potential safety measure to deter speeding on John St. Ms. Cherry was reminded by the Commission that this particular topic is not the purview of the Recreation Commission.

Public Comments Closed

Director's Report

Mr. Stentz reported on the following:

- **August 20, 2016 Incident @ CP Pool:** Based on the preliminary information provided by the Princeton Police Department (PPD), Mr. Stentz provided an update on the incident that occurred at approximately 2pm on Saturday, August 20 at CP Pool. Mr. Stentz prefaced his report by saying that at this time, there are many facts that are still not known and that out of respect to the patron's family, speculation will be avoided. PPD continue to conduct their investigation and are waiting for the autopsy results from the Medical Examiner (ME). PPD have indicated it could be 6-8 weeks before the ME's report is available. Counseling support services (Corner House) have been made available to any and all staff that were affected by this incident, as well as to the patron's family. In addition, Mr. Stentz has been in close communication with the Princeton High School (PHS) Guidance Staff in hopes that support services can continue for PHS students during the school year. Mr. Stentz thanked PPD Chief Nick Sutter, Corner House Director Gary DeBlasio and the Corner House Staff, as well as Recreation Commission/Council member Jo Butler for their ongoing teamwork, support and assistance.
- **Mercer at Play Grant Funding:** Mercer County has made available a new round of grant funding for municipalities in Mercer County thru the Mercer at Play Program. Mr. Stentz suggested forming a sub-committee in the near future to discuss possible uses of the funding. Per guidelines of the new grant, Princeton cannot apply for the funding until we have closed out the current Mercer at Play Project (Mary Moss Playground improvement). Going forward, there will be a time limit put on municipalities to use the funding. *Discussion was held.*
- **Mary Moss Playground Sub-Committee:** The next meeting will take place on Monday, August 29 at 4pm. Our design consultant, RBA Group, will be present at the meeting.

Old Business

No Old Business

New Business

Hosting of the 2017 PASDA Swim Championships: Mr. Stentz recommended that CP Pool agree to host the 2017 PASDA Swim Championships with the expectation that after 2017, the host site will be rotated among other PASDA clubs that can accommodate the event and also that PASDA will increase their subsidy so that PRD does not lose money on the event. Mr. Stentz reminded the Commission that weather can impact the schedule and necessitate the closing of the pool to the public for longer than planned. *Discussion was held.*

Dr. Nosker made a motion for CP Pool to host the 2017 PASDA Swim Championships, seconded by Ms. Butler, and approved.

RT Reserve Project – Platform Tennis (Courts 3 & 4): The back two platform courts need to be resurfaced prior to the start of the upcoming platform tennis season. The front two were resurfaced 4 years ago. Typically, RT Reserve requests are handled in the winter, however, this particular request is time sensitive as the platform tennis season starts in late November/early December. The project will cost approximately \$7,900. Resurfacing of courts typically takes place every 8-10 years. *Discussion was held.*
Ms. Butler made a motion to approve resurfacing platform tennis courts 3 & 4, seconded by Mr. Koontz, and approved.

Installation of signage @ Greenway Meadows re: Michael Kenwood Memorial Bench: Princeton First Aid and Rescue Squad has requested permission to install a permanent plaque in memory of first responder,

Michael Kenwood, near the existing memorial bench at Greenway Meadows. Mr. Kenwood died while responding to an emergency call on Rosedale Rd during Hurricane Irene. PFARS will host an event at Greenway on Sunday, 9/18/16 from 5-8pm. *Mr. Koontz made a motion to approve the memorial plaque at Greenway for Mr. Kenwood, seconded by Ms. Olivares-Weber, and approved.*

Communications:

- **Drone usage in parks:**

Mr. Koontz followed back up on a previous Commission discussion regarding use of drones in municipal parks. Mr. Koontz stated that Mercer County does not specifically name drones as being prohibited, but it does prohibit the flying of all other objects (model airplanes, rockets, kites) in County parks. Mr. Koontz raised the question as to whether or not the Recreation Commission has authority to enact ordinances. *Discussion was held.*

Approval of Minutes

- *Mr. Koontz made a motion to approve the June minutes, seconded by Dr. Nosker and approved. Ms. Olivares-Weber and Dr. Frawley abstained.*

Approval of Bills

- *Mr. Koontz made a motion to approve the bills, seconded by Ms. Butler, and approved.*

Next Meeting Date

September 22, 2016

Adjournment