

Yorktown Recreation Commission  
Thursday February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023  
Town Hall

Commissioners Present: Chairperson Matt Talbert, Vice Chairperson Patrick Cumiskey, Joe Falcone, John Campobasso (joined late), Diego Jaramillo, Thomas Dunn

Also Present: James Martorano Jr., Superintendent of Parks and Recreation, Tom Diana, Town Supervisor

Absent: Commissioner Christine Dunn

Chairperson Talbert called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

Approval of January Meeting Minutes: **Chairperson Talbert makes a motion to approve the meeting minutes following edits to be made by Vice Chairperson Cumiskey.** Chairperson Talbert, Vice Chairperson Cumiskey, Commissioner Joe Falcone, Commissioner Diego Jaramillo and Commissioner Thomas Dunn vote in favor of the motion. **Motion passes.**

**Note: Commissioner Campobasso was not present at time of vote.**

Relay for Life: Kate Corsito

Kate Corsito requests to have the Commission waive the rental fee for the use of the Jack DeVito Field for the annual Relay for Life event to be held Friday, June 9<sup>th</sup> 2023.

**Chairperson Talbert makes a motion to waive the field rental fee for Relay for Life for this event and all future events going forward. The Commission states a memo will be sent to the Town Board for a resolution. Vice Chairperson Cumiskey seconds the motion.** Chairperson Talbert, Vice Chairperson Cumiskey, Commissioner Joe Falcone, Commissioner Diego Jaramillo and Commissioner Thomas Dunn vote in favor of the motion. **Motion passes.**

Yorktown Pride Festival at Railroad Park:

Sarah Wilson, Yorktown for Justice requests the use of Railroad Park on Saturday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Yorktown Pride Festival followed by a presentation on the details of the event itself. Event setup will be 11:00 am to 1:00 pm, with the event to take place 2:00-6:00pm. Event will be free to the public. The event will not require street closure.

The event plans to bring in Yorktown based organizations as exhibitors and utilize the paved area in front of the building as a performance area.

Food Trucks will not be present at the event to encourage participants to utilize the local eateries instead and will provide a map for people to walk to nearby places.

Safety and Logistics: Plan to bring in bathroom accommodations, plenty of free parking nearby, will provide crossing guards at crosswalks, no alcohol, should be little trash but will clean up after, use picnic table space as safe children's area.

Sarah notes that they will be paying the nonprofit rental fee for the use of Railroad Park and will provide insurance.

Questions:

Vice Chairperson Cumiskey asks about the expected number of people. Sarah responds with around 100 people. Vice Chairperson Cumiskey recommends more than one (1) port-o-san for the amount of people expected.

Vice Chairperson Cumiskey asks if the event will require Parks and Recreation staff. Sarah responds it won't truly be necessary. Superintendent Martorano states he could ask someone for overtime if needed.

Vice Chairperson Cumiskey asks if the police department has been informed. Sarah states that the Pride March coordinators usually reach out, but will reach out as well.

Commissioner Diego Jaramillo appreciates the thought put into the presentation and states he doesn't recommend Uncle Giuseppe's as good parking.

Commissioner Tom Dunn asks if they will be expecting more participation compared to last year. Sarah responds that the hope is by bringing them together, the attendance will increase.

Commissioner Joe Falcone asks if there is a rain date. Sarah responds no, there will not be a rain date. Commissioner Joe Falcone asks if there will be interference with the trailway. Sarah states that they will plan to avoid putting tables and chairs on the trailway so it can remain open.

#### Proposed Sparkle Lake Trail Public Hearing:

Tony Savastano presents a history of Sparkle Lake and it's uses over the years. Tony presents a proposed trail around the lake to create a safe place for residents to walk without needing to walk on Hyatt Street.

Jane and Walt Daniels of the NY/NJ Trail Conference explain what the MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) is and what the trail conference can and cannot do when creating and maintaining trails. Jane then overviews the process of the approval and creation of the proposed trail. Jane Daniels explains that the residents are first notified of the proposal and invited to a public hearing where the residents are able to voice their opinions on the proposal. Following a public hearing and a trail walkthrough the Recreation Commission will either approve or deny the proposal. If approved, a wetlands permit will need to be applied for and an environmental assessment completed. A trail crew will need to be gathered to build the trail, fundraising and budget developed to fund the building of the trail and a crew will need to be trained to maintain the trail.

#### Comments and Questions:

Chairperson Talbert reiterates to the public attending that the proposed trail is in the discovery stage and has not been approved. The Commission will listen to comments and complete a walkthrough before coming to a decision.

Vice Chairperson Cumiskey states this is not the first time going through this process and the mindset of the Commission will always be for the greater good. Vice Chairperson Cumiskey states the trailhead near his house is generally used only by the community. Vice Chairperson explains the experience with the Tall Timbers Trail where there was great opposition at first, but with adjustments made to the original proposed trail has been open and in use for over a year and currently going very well. Vice Chairperson Cumiskey asks the residents to please remember civility and to be respectful to the community and neighbors while voicing opinions.

#### Public Comments:

The residents effected by the proposed trail provide comments.

Concerns regarding the trail include: attraction of more ATV's and dirt bikes; will provide a hangout spot for kids; potentially increasing chance of vandalism; could bring people into wildlife areas increasing the chance of wildlife encounters and/or disturbing wildlife habitat; general increase in security and privacy issues; clear visuals of certain homes from the trail and the privacy concerns that come along with that; maintenance and cleanliness concerns; unknown vehicles on Elm Road; increase in people in wetlands; encourages recklessness in people's backyards; liability concerns with other dogs if no visual barrier between trail and private property; potential that not all impacted residents were informed; makes adjacent backyards accessible to public and increases the chance of break-ins.

Positive comments regarding the trail include: Making alternate routes to exclude the lake and go through the woods towards Curry instead to have less environmental impact on the lake; trail will not be too extensive and will remain residential; won't bring in people outside the community; safe area to bring kids to walk in nature; trail will keep area cleaner; may deter ATV's and dirt bikes.

Other comments include:

Lake itself has been let go and the weeds have become a safety concern that should be removed.

Ken Belfer, MLID states he completed a walkthrough and saw one example of recent evidence of dirt bikes. Mr. Belfer also states the other side of the lake is more of a hike than a walking trail. Ken Belfer provides the following statements regarding environmental impact: in response to pictures of abutting properties, it was noted that less nutrients from stormwater runoff are absorbed by lawn than by trees/brush and it is not ideal for lakesides; weeds such as cattails are native and a sign of a healthy lake; phragmites is an invasive species and should be removed when possible and notes the harvester will not be of help with that, as it is not designed to go near shallow area of the shore. He also states clearing the natural weeds is unhealthy for the lake and without the weeds you encourage algae growth.

The Commission addresses the public:

Chairperson Talbert states the ATV concern has been brought to the Town Board's attention.

Vice Chairperson Cumiskey addresses some concerns such as providing a hangout and build-up of garbage. Vice Chairperson Cumiskey states that in his experience, once the trail was built less people from outside of the community came and there was less trash build up because people will clean as they go. He states ATVs remain a concern for the Commission throughout several parks in the town.

Vice Chairperson Cumiskey would like to send out resident notification letters to a larger area in the future so all residents potentially impacted can be properly informed.

Vice Chairperson Cumiskey states to the public that all trail flags are on Park property, not on anyone's private property.

Vice Chairperson Cumiskey addresses the residents of Elm Road stating that in regards to the maintenance of the road itself, it is recommended that they discuss with Dave Paganelli and/or the highway department.

Commissioner Diego Jaramillo addresses and agrees with the public's concerns regarding the lack of visual barriers. Commissioner Jaramillo also states the trail can be a great opportunity for the community.

Commissioner Thomas Dunn acknowledges the public's civility throughout the hearing. Commissioner Dunn states that the Commission's past experiences show that the trails don't create the concerns that are feared, but all comments from the public are important. Commissioner Dunn reminds everyone that they will have the opportunity to experience it together during the walkthrough.

Commissioner Joe Falcone states that all concerns will be addressed during the site visit and walkthrough.

Vice Chairperson Cumiskey questions Jane and Walt Daniels regarding potential alternate routes. Jane Daniels states that a major cleanup would be necessary. Walt Daniels responds that there are no setback regulations for trails along private property and according to the town assessment used for mapping the proposed trail, the section of Elm Road is town parkland, however a GPS error could have resulted in trail flags being closer to private property than expected. Jane Daniels states in her experience, wildlife use the trails and will run environmental assessments even when not required to in order to minimize impact.

Vice Chairperson Cumiskey addresses concerns regarding the decision-making process stating that throughout the Tall Timbers trail proposal experience, the Commission participated in multiple walkthroughs with the neighbors and multiple adjustments to the trail were made resulting in an overall positive reception, even when the negative comments were the loudest.

Chairperson Talbert states the Commission plans to host a site visit on Saturday March 4 at 9:00am. Those participating should meet at the Sparkle Lake Recreation office prepared to walk the suggested path. Chairperson Talbert states this will be an opportunity to ask questions and have a discussion. Chairperson Talbert reiterates no permits will be applied for until the trail is approved by the Commission.

Vice Chairperson Cumiskey clarifies that people can reach out to the Commission via email as well to express their opinion on the trail development if they cannot attend the walkthrough and/or the meeting.

Chairperson Talbert states a notice will be sent out to all neighbors prior to the walkthrough.

Town Supervisor Tom Diana joins the meeting.

Commissioner John Campobasso joins the meeting.

The Commission takes a 5-minute recess at 8:59 pm.

The Commission reconvened at 9:04pm.

#### Old Business:

Chairperson Talbert provides an update on the Legacy Field sinkhole and closure. An additional investigation is ongoing, and the park remains closed until the investigation is completed. Chairperson Talbert recommends that the town clubs plan Spring schedules assuming the park will be opening April 1<sup>st</sup>.

Vice Chairperson Cumiskey provides an update on the HESP project at Granite Knolls. Discussions are ongoing to plan a work schedule and traffic control plan that does not cause an unreasonable interference with the use of the park.

Dan Kelly reports to the Commission that the Ice Breaker Tournament will have a team limit, allowing them to only need 60% of the provided parking space at Granite Knolls. They have also secured Walter Panas HS and Yorktown HS for Sunday and will confirm with the school districts. Dan Kelly sent a request email to Superintendent Martorano.

Superintendent's Report:

Superintendent Martorano provides an update on various playgrounds. Blackberry Woods playground has two units, unit 2 has been removed and unit 1 needs repairs of about \$3,000 and currently at the top of list to repair. Unit 2 would be around \$50,000 to replace. Superintendent Martorano informs the Commission that parts to repair the Sparkle Lake playground aren't made anymore. Repairs can range from \$3,000 - \$9,000 with 4-5 playgrounds requiring repairs within that range. Currently the park improvement line is being utilized for these repair costs. Superintendent Martorano is working with his Parks Department staff to compile a capital improvement list of all the parks/playgrounds requiring repairs and/or upgrades, as well as the costs associated with those repairs/upgrades. Superintendent Martorano would like to discuss the capital improvement needs with the Town Board.

Superintendent Martorano provides the Commission an update on Shrub Oak Park stream. Currently barriers are up blocking the damaged part of the walkway, but there has been no movement from engineering.

Vice Chairperson Cumiskey states a Capital Improvement Plan should be presented to Town Board each year as required by the resolution that created the Commission.

Town Supervisor Tom Diana states a grant writer should include Parks and Recreation needs going forward.

Superintendent Martorano updates the Commission on the lights at Rt. 202 field. Currently trying to determine what service is included in the Sourcewell. Town Supervisor Tom Diana would like to have a deeper discussion. Commissioner John Campobasso notes that August would be ideal time to replace the lights.

Superintendent Martorano updates the Commission that the tile bid is out and states the cost last year was \$15,000 for labor plus \$5,000 for tile purchases.

Superintendent Martorano states field requests are due on February 7<sup>th</sup>.

Superintendent Martorano provides an update on winter and senior programs.

Superintendent Martorano explains the situation between Jefferson Village Travel Club and Jefferson Owners Foundation Travel Club.

Chairperson Talbert suggests the Commission attend Planning Board meetings as more senior developments are being proposed.

The Commission holds a discussion regarding recreational fees and the minimum requirements for recreational facilities.

Superintendent Martorano informs the Commission of a vendor proposal for a hot dog stand by the Granite Knolls Pavilion. Chairperson Talbert suggests the Commission have a discussion regarding exclusive food vendor rights at any facilities and determine if an RFP should be created.

Supervisor Tom Diana explains to Commission that there is currently no law in place keeping food vendors from using Granite Knolls Park and confirms food vendors do require permits in the Town.

The Commission and Town Supervisor Tom Diana discuss the net, fence and status of Granite Knolls Park. The Commission states that it was voted on and agreed to close the park following the removal of the nets due to safety concerns. Town Supervisor Tom Diana states that he does not want to close any of the Town's parks and the park should remain open with the fields locked. Chairperson Talbert would like a permanent solution for the lack of proper fencing and would like a Town Board resolution to allow the Commission to use Trust and Agency to purchase a fence. Town Supervisor Tom Diana states a deeper discussion needs to be had in order to come up with a solution.

Superintendent Martorano provides an update on the security cameras at Granite Knolls Park. The cameras are all working but memory is shortened to only 24 hours instead of 30 days. Superintendent Martorano is getting a quote for the memory repair.

#### Liaison Reports:

Jane Daniels, NY/NJ Trail Conference:

Jane Daniels distributes inventory document with trail objects with the details of the object, who created it, etc. and explains they are currently going park by park to complete the document.

Jane Daniels states they will be going into Legacy/Woodlands except for the one kiosk due to it being too close to the sinkhole.

Ken Belfer, Tall Timbers:

Ken Belfer discusses a request for an alternate entrance on Hayward Street. The entrance has been walked and approved by the those living adjacent to it but the Commission had suggested postponing the addition until the trail has gone through all 4 seasons. Ken Belfer would like to move forward with the new trail now that the trail has been established for a year.

Chairperson Talbert requests an updated letter from the HOA and continue discussion next meeting following the outreach.

Vice Chairperson Cumiskey states the Commission needs to know if the direct homeowners approve and what the majority of the population feel about the addition of another entrance to the trail.

The Commission agrees it to be too premature to be adding on to the trail at this time.

Tom Regan, YAC:

Tom Regan states spring registration is open.  
Superintendent Martorano agrees to have a further conversation regarding the men's soccer field scheduling.

Al French, YYSC:

Al French would like to know if access will be stopped following the registration period or will it be read only. Superintendent Martorano will confirm with Deanna.

Al French suggests the field permits should have the usage in order to have a signed permit giving them proof of field reservation.

Al French requests clarification on the garbage section on the field rental checklist that states the renter is responsible for the removal of garbage and putting it in the dumpster.

Chairperson Talbert states this will be discussed further.

#### Public Comment:

George Souls:

George Souls distributes a document to the Commission and presents various ideas to bring in revenue and community outreach such as: College and local club regional tournaments, offer classes through places like Hilltop Hanover Farm, create a calendar of events to attract visitors to the Town including historic sites, create new visitor guides/maps, create a business map to attract businesses and patrons to existing businesses. To discuss innovative ideas email address: [karol92@cs.com](mailto:karol92@cs.com).

#### New Business:

The Commission agrees there is no interest in exclusive concessionaire agreements at the parks.

Superintendent Martorano provides clarification on how the Friends of Yorktown Parks and Recreation aides the department, such as sponsor the brochure, scholarships, and more.

The Commission discusses the light poles from Downing tennis courts and agree that they should be used in the proper, safe setting and there is engineering to be done before the lights can be moved to another location. Vice Chairperson Cumiskey recommends research into battery powered light poles for Pickleball.

Vice Chairperson Cumiskey asked about the status of an updated map showing all of the property within Yorktown that is deemed parkland to be used in conjunction with the Capital Improvement Plan when discussing future subdivisions with the Planning Board.

Vice Chairperson Cumiskey states he has all the Commissioner start and end dates. The alternate position needs to be advertised and filled.

Vice Chairperson discusses the overlay district and the recreation fees. Vice Chairperson Cumiskey states the master fee schedule was distributed to the Commission which clearly shows the \$4k per unit due in recreation fees should the Planning Board agree to fees in lieu of recreational development.

Vice Chairperson Cumiskey reminds the Commission that he sent out the links from the DEC of what is required for a stream bank stabilization permit for the Shrub Oak Park issue and the link to standard specifications for a stream bank stabilization/repair.

Old Business:

Superintendent Martorano and the Commission agree that further discussions need to be had regarding the sensory garden area at Granite Knolls Park.

Chairperson Talbert announces the Commission will go into closed session at 11:22pm.