

**Colts Neck Recreation Committee  
Minutes – November 5, 2014**

**+COLTS NECK RECREATION COMMITTEE  
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Attendees: Jim Valenti, Frank Baker, Phil Maida, Brian McNally, Joe Mancino, Rich Rehm

Excused Absence: Ed Piotrowski, Paul Wild, Judy Laufer, A.J. Garito, Chris Adams

Township Liaison Absent: Mayor Russell Macnow

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jim Valenti at 7:00 p.m.

The Sunshine Statement was read.

The Committee approved the minutes from October 1, 2014.

The Treasurer's Report was read.

Colts Neck Trail Riders – Mr. Valenti welcomed Ronnie Sullivan who is representing the Trail Riders. Ms. Sullivan wanted to thank the committee for the clean up at Bucks Mill Park's upper field. She also stated she would be attending future meetings to keep the Trail Riders informed. Mr. Valenti stated he had walked up to the field last weekend, water bottles were found at the upper field. Mr. McNally asked if the season is over for football. Mr. Hennessy stated the season is complete for the American Youth Football and Cheer. The Cheerleaders will be using the Community Center this Thursday and Friday to prepare for their competition. The football team had a jamboree and three home games at Cedar Drive Upper Field this year.

**Old Business**

Stewards of the Park – There were no reports. Mr. Baker stated the reminder to get back to the parks. He will have a report for the December meeting.

MCISCCL Meet of Champions – Mr. Hennessy stated 26 schools participated in this cross country event at Bucks Mill Park. They were rained out for their original date, but the following week they had a 70 degree day. Many people were in attendance, cars were parked on Freemont and Bucks Mill, which will be remedied next year with authorized no parking signs.

On Sunday the Ring Foundation for Epilepsy held a 5K at Bucks Mill.

Field Maintenance – Baseball is coming to a close for fall. Mr. Hennessy is looking at the winter season for field maintenance. He explained he has had two men this fall from Colts Neck High School's STAR program assisting with field maintenance from 10 am – 12:15 pm everyday for six weeks. Some of the activities have been putting up and taking down a temporary fence, loading seed, and fertilizer, setting up for a 5K event, and working on baseball fields. It has been a win/win for the students and Recreation and Parks.

Five Point # 1 is closed due to overuse. Mr. Hennessy explained to the committee that USABL provides a discount to the Sports Foundation for planning in their baseball league and in turn, they request fields through the Sports Foundation. The "use and leave" mentality lends to unmaintained fields. There is no maintenance, provided by the Department of Public Works, other than screening the fields on Mondays. Last evening someone decided to hold batting practice. They scooped and raked the water away from home plate and created another crater in the infield. A note has been sent to the Director of Baseball for the Sports Foundation. Capital funding will be necessary to repair this field and others. Field priorities will be reviewed by both the Township and Recreation and Parks. Mr. Mancino asked what is the alternative to avoid overused fields. Mr. Hennessy explained a "tournament environment" possibility might work. The Sports Foundation and the Township would host tournaments, with less daily play on fields. In the past

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Laird Road # 2 was used by RBC Freshman baseball. The requested dates were too early in the season with the ground freezing/thawing causing field issues. Next year, Mr. Hennessey will rest the field if adverse conditions prevail. Mr. Valenti asked what the estimated number of outside teams using the fields. Out of 230 games, 70 games are played by from Colts Neck. Mr. Valenti asked if they play on weekends too. Mr. Hennessey replied yes and some evenings. An experiment took place with Bucks Mill # 2, allowing qualified users, via a mentor system, has brought that field from 95% to 100% improvement. These users adopted the field, including maintenance. Mr. Valenti asked if the fees are reduced to qualified users. The abuse of fields seems disproportionate.

Mr. Hennessey stated (1) all Colts Neck home games should be played in Colts Neck. (2) Fees are based to break even or make a profit. Charging the use for maintenance of the field. Ms. Sullivan asked if it would be possible to quantify the revenue from field rentals vs. overuse maintenance costs.

Currently there are two fields with costing approximately \$4K for maintenance. Mr. Valenti asked how much is needed to fix the field at Five Point. Mr. Hennessey stated approximately \$10K. Mr. Rehm asked what is the breakdown for that money. Mr. Hennessey stated, regrade home plate with bricks, decrease the drop at the batter's box, regrade the base line for 1, 2 and 3, and redo the pitcher's mound. Mr. Valenti asked who does the work. Mr. Hennessey stated Boag Landscaping, who also did a great job on Bucks Mill fields # 2 and # 3. He reviewed a few other businesses and Boag Landscaping had the expertise, was established and dependable. He also completed the front field # 1 at Laird Road. Mr. McNally noted he did a wonderful job on that field. Boag Landscaping also completed work on Five Point field # 2 as part of an Eagle project, costing the Township only \$4K. Mr. Hennessey commented it seems teams are playing regardless of weather related conditions.

It would be nice to have someone from the Department of Public Works to maintain the fields every Monday morning, but the Township does not have the manpower. Mr. Valenti asked if the committee could have the number of teams in the league and what we pay to maintain the fields. Mr. Hennessey noted the teams will be diminishing as the school district's student population is declining. Our participation in USABL will correspondently decrease next year.

### **New Business**

Community Band Concert – The Fall concert will be held at Colts Neck High School on November 13. The audience holds steady with approximately 400. Mr. Hennessey shared the color advertisement listing details of the program. They will be holding a concert at Thompson Park on June 13, 2015 which is a great way to have Colts Neck represented. The Community Band is very selective on who becomes a member, their reputation is very professional.

Whispering Pines Art Contest - There are 12 entries this year. All are very well done. Mr. Maida asked if the schools submitted paintings. Mr. Hennessey stated Colts Neck High School submitted several, only one from Colts Neck Township schools. Judging will take place next week and the paintings will be on display at the library.

Veteran's Day Ceremony - This year's ceremony will be held at the high school at 10:30 am. It should be a wonderful program. It will feature the dedication to a military garden with statues representing each branch of the military, the high school band, NJROTC, and Cedar Drive School band and chorus. Lunch will be provided by the Colts Neck Women's Club and the NJROTC PTSO parents. Mr. Hennessey noted the time and Master of Ceremonies were published incorrectly in the Colts Neck Calendar. Mr. Maida asked of Col. Sfayer will be the Master of Ceremonies. Mr. Hennessey explained he chose not be involved this year but will return next year.

Holiday Festival Program – Our December 3 meeting will be held prior to the Tree Lighting on December 7, details will be discussed at that meeting. Mr. McNally noted it was a great help to have the two high school young men assisting at the event last year. Mr. Hennessey will reach out to the high school again for assistants looking for community service hours to help with the event.

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Community Center Winter Use – Mr. Hennessy stated Sports Foundation wrestling and soccer will be using the building this winter. November 21 the PTO will be having a fundraising event. The Sports Foundation is also planning to install flooring. The purpose is to prevent slipping by the sports groups while practicing in the building.

Winter Brochure – Programs are being compiled for publication next month.

With no other matters to discuss, Mr. Valenti adjourned the meeting at 7:50 pm. Our next meeting will be Wednesday, December 3, 2014 at 7 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Byrne, Secretary