

**Colts Neck Recreation Committee
Minutes – February 4, 2015**

**COLTS NECK RECREATION COMMITTEE
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Attendees: Jim Valenti, Frank Baker, Brian McNally, Joe Mancino, Judy Laufer, Rich Rehm, Chris Adams, Paul Wild, John Rocco

Excused Absence: Phil Maida, A.J. Garito.

Township Liaison Absent: Jarrett Engel

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 January 7, 2015. (noting correction to John Rocco's name)

The Treasurer's Report was read.

Liaison Report: Mr. Hennessy stated Mr. Engel could not attend the meeting. Mr. Engel asked Mr. Hennessy to advise the committee, the Township is aware of a sports complex Holmdel Township is planning to approve on Rt. 520 along the northern tributary to Yellow Brook.

Old Business

2015 Recreation and Parks Budgets - Mr. Hennessy submitted a \$390,900K Capitol Budget to Mr. Bowden today. The recreation and parks budgets have both been submitted last week. Colts Neck Sports Foundation has funding for field enhancements; he does not have the details. He did state they have adopted Laird Road Park # 2. Mr. Hennessy plans to enhance all fields. Mr. Valenti asked what are the dates for budget reviews. Mr. Hennessy noted recreation is usually towards the last day.

CNSF Use of Facilities – Mr. Hennessy shared documentation of all bookings for the Community Center to date. Examples included, Cedar Drive School wrestling, indoor Sports Foundation baseball, soccer wrestling practice to a wedding in September.

Winter Programs – All fitness programs that are running do so, on a self funding basis. If a fitness program has too few participants, it will be cancelled.

New Business

Stewards of the Park – Mr. Baker shared photos from Town Hall Park of the deteriorated Blind Garden and a sizable gopher hole to the side of the walking trail. He found the paths to be clear without any erosion for the current weather. He asked if something could be done with the Blind Garden area, maybe a different use. Mr. Hennessy will investigate. Mr. Valenti toured Obre Road Preserve and suggested the current map be replaced. It was mentioned on Laurelwood Road, there is a nice map of Big Brook. Mr. Hennessey stated he could obtain an aerial view print out for Obre Road Preserve from Monmouth County that could serve as a map. Mr. Valenti He also noticed a past bird house project fell to the ground.

Upcoming Events were read by Mr. Hennessy. Easter Egg Hunt – March 28, Earth Day Week April 19 – 25, Colts Neck Pet Fair May 23 – 24, Memorial Day Parade - May 25, Cole Brother Circus – date(s) to be determined, Fishing Derby – June 6 at Bucks Mill Park, Battle of Monmouth Lacrosse Tournament – June 20 – 21, Summer Camp June 29 – August 7. Mr. Hennessy was contacted by Alan Ryan, Colts Neck Fire Department, who would like to do something special for the Veteran's this year by providing breakfast at the firehouse before the Memorial Day Parade. Mr. Hennessy asked him to contact Col. Jim Sfayer to partner in the effort. Ms. Laufer asked how the Veteran's would get to the start of the parade. Mr. Hennessey stated he would provide transportation.

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Field Refurbishment – Mr. Hennessey stated the Upper Field at Bucks Mill will cost \$7K to repair the damage caused by vandalism of vehicles driving on the fields in the past few months. He has secured a tractor for spring that he will be able to use to concentrate on repairing that field. The tractor also comes with a seeder, aerator and hopper. He will be applying grass seed etc. to that field. There is a security camera on Cedar Drive School, where he believes one vehicle entered the Bucks Mill Park between the tennis courts and the corner of the school. Mr. Hennessey has contacted Principal Rigby and will be viewing the film to hopefully identify the vandals.

Upper Cedar Drive – Mr. Hennessey will ensure the removal of accumulated trash.

The drainage problem on Laird Road # 3 and # 4 will be addressed via a number of drains that will divert the water off the fields.

Another refurbishment request is for irrigation of Five Point # 2. Mr. Hennessey stated it will cost \$10K just to bring the field to a playable condition from use by the USABL (United States Amateur Baseball League). He has not received a commitment of funds for baseball fields from the Sports Foundation as of yet. He advised the committee most of the Capital \$390,900K budget will be spent on Basketball and Tennis Courts at Cedar Drive. The Department of Public Works does have a new macadam machine that may be able to patch the courts, that and approximately \$80K to build up the courts from water pooling is being also considered as an alternate option.

Chairman Valenti addressed members of the public. Ronnie Sullivan and Julie Richards were in attendance from the Colts Neck Trail Riders Club.

Ms. Richards stated the club realizes how important sports are in Colts Neck and the revenue it brings to the Township. Being sponsored by this committee they are here to share some concerns.

What they would like to see the trails at Bucks Mill Park maintained for the safety of horseback riders. They would also ask field use for sports be limited when they have an event. An incident occurred last year later, after setting up for their PACE event, a soccer group showed up that morning and interfered in their event. Their main concern is for Bucks Mill trails to be safe for horses. It seems the park is sometimes overused with sports. The club has moved their April Pace event from Colts Neck, because they could not get a guarantee for a Sunday at Bucks Mill Park, free of sporting events.

Another concern is litter at Bucks Mill/Cedar Drive. The upper field used by the football program, has goal posts and other garbage dumped in the woods. It has been very dangerous for horses to maneuver their way around fences and debris at Cedar Drive. The Trail Rider's Club have cleared these trails each year. They've used chain saws if necessary to ensure safety for horseback riders. They would like to have a better relationship with Recreation and request help from the committee to clean up Bucks Mill Park. Mr. Hennessey shared an aerial map of Bucks Mill, and pointed out the trails being discussed.

Mr. Valenti emphasized the committee represents all township residents, not just Sporting groups. It is here for runners, walkers, fitness groups, etc. He and the committee look at the Trail Riders Club as part of the community. The issue with the Pace event last year, was perhaps a timing issue, that can be avoided in the future. Mr. Hennessey added 90% of the fields are used by the Colts Neck Sports Foundation who pay nothing, and generate no revenue. He stated there is no more than \$5-\$6K in revenue collected from field permits. The revenue is not that high to choose one event over another. Mr. Valenti stated horseback riding in Colts Neck is an entity and the committee values those who choose to ride horses here. The issues mentioned tonight seem to be communication issues, that can be easily resolved. He stressed trash should not happen anywhere in the Township, we do have limited resources to assist in that area. Ms. Sullivan advised there are 150 members and we encourage all to use Bucks Mill Park.

Mr. Valenti asked Ms. Sullivan and Ms. Richards return to the March meeting and provide an overview of their club in detail. He also advised they provide Mr. Hennessey with their 2015 schedule requests. Mr.

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Hennessy noted he was told Thompson Park was a better fit for their Pace event's needs, and it was not because of any issues at Bucks Mill Park. Ms. Richards stated members were uncomfortable riding in Bucks Mill Park, and unlike Colts Neck they have to pay to use Thompson Park. Mr. Hennessy asked if she would send a copy of their bylaws as there is nothing documented that states they are sponsored by the Recreation Department. Mr. Valenti asked if they would provide the breakdown of residents vs. non residents in their club. Both Ms. Sullivan and Ms. Richards agreed they would be in attendance at the March 4 meeting.

Senior Citizen Club – Ms. Laufer stated 77 attended the luncheon today at the Colts Neck Inn. They are planning a cruise, the location to be determined, and will be funded 100% by the members. They are returning to Hunterdon Hills Playhouse in March. They have 254 members. Hopefully next month their membership book will be completed.

With no other matters to discuss, Mr. Valenti adjourned the meeting at 8:15 pm. Our next meeting will be Wednesday, March 4, 2015 at 7 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Byrne, Secretary