

**Colts Neck Recreation Committee
Minutes – June 4, 2014**

**COLTS NECK RECREATION COMMITTEE
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Attendees: Jim Valenti, Frank Baker, Brian McNally, Phil Maida, Rich Rehm. Paul Wild,
Judy Laufer, Chris Adams

Excused Absence: A.J. Garito, Joe Mancino, Ed Piotrowski

Township Liaison Absent: Mayor Russell Macnow

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Frank Baker at 7:00 p.m.

The Sunshine Statement was read.

The Committee approved the minutes from May 7, 2014.

The Treasurer's Report was read.

Old Business

Critique Memorial Day Parade, Ceremony and Firehouse – Mr. Rehm commented the speakers were not loud enough. Mr. Hennessy reminded the committee that Mr. Dalakian donated the system, and he did contact him and discussed improving the system. Mr. Maida suggested maybe more speakers are needed. Mr. Valenti noted that it left a negative impact that no one could hear the guest speakers at the cemetery. He also added the Barbershop Quartet would like a microphone with stand in the middle of the group and felt if we invited them each year we should accommodate them. Mr. Baker commented Col. Sfayer knew no one could hear and spoke louder. He also stated the crowd seemed less along the parade route. Mr. Hennessy noted the weather was perfect for the beach. Mr. Rehm suggested starting the parade earlier. Mr. Valenti stated if we have more people in the parade others will come to view the parade, for example, more scouts, Sports Foundation etc. Ms. Laufer asked if Recreation can send the postcards to the Veterans' as in past years. Town Hall tax department will provide mailing labels. Mr. Valenti suggested a dress code for participants i.e. High School Band Members. Mr. Wild felt the parade is deteriorating, and we need to make it better. Maybe start a subcommittee. Mr. Hennessy noted if speeches are longer than 5-10 minutes the audience drifts off. A suggestion to shorten the ceremony was mentioned. It was noted the Color Guard dropped back at the ceremony, previous years they were up front. Mr. Wild suggested to go back to having a Grand Marshall; someone who will draw a crowd, Mr. Maida stated about 16 participated in the bike contest. Not many above the 3rd grade, mostly pre-K. Mr. Hennessy sent an email to the girl scouts asking them to participate and put the experience towards a badge. Ms. Laufer asked him to reach out to the Reformed Church for participants in the bicycle contest, they have a school. All agreed, military vehicles would be great. Mr. Hennessey will start now to request military vehicles for 2015.

Stewarts of the Park – Ms. Laufer found over 20 plastic water bottles not in trash cans at Bucks Mill Park. She found the bottles around the middle of the playground. Mr. Valenti stated Big Brook Preserve is in good shape. During the clean up in April, trash was at a minimum.

New Business

Summer Program Guide – Mr. Hennessy stated the Summer Program Guide has been distributed to all residents. Mr. Wild asked if the fitness programs are still self sustaining. Mr. McNally asked what is the most popular class. Ms. Byrne replied the weight/sculpt class on Monday mornings. Mr. Hennessy replied the most popular sponsored sports camp is Cougar Basketball.

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Summer Camp staff consists of 43 Counselors and Counselors in Training with some volunteers. In addition to ten Supervisory staff. Many staff are moving to full time careers, fortunately, others within the camp, will move up to Supervisory staff. Camp orientation will be on June 27, and will include moving supplies into each school. Orientation includes a personal safety manual. Mr. Valenti asked if all adult staff will be receiving background checks. Mr. Hennessy stated those already working at a school have already completed a background check. Non-school employees will receive a background check prior to the start of camp.

Maintenance – Mr. Hennessy noted temporary employees were hired last week to mow fields. Spring soccer, baseball, fall ball etc. are using fields full time with no time to rest any fields. Mr. Adams asked if there is a solution from the Township to maintain fields. The Sports Foundation will pay for a landscaper to cut grass to ensure fields will be playable for games. He and others in the Sports Foundation have already spoken to Mayor Macnow regarding maintenance of sports fields in the Township. Mr. Valenti noted in the past the Township had designated days, Tuesday and Friday to mow fields. Mr. Hennessy noted there has also been a lot of rain. Mr. Adams stated it was a good two weeks before the grass was cut at Five Point. Mr. McNally asked how many employees are assigned to maintain the parks. Mr. Hennessy reminded the committee that the Township decreased the Public Works Department by 40% and there are no plans to replace any staff. Mr. Hennessy has requested bids to outside vendors to maintain the four fenced fields. Mr. Bowden, Township Administrator, is aware of an estimate cost of \$500/week from March through to November for an outside vendor to maintain these fields. Mr. Hennessy noted the possibility of the Sports Foundation paying half of the maintenance. He stated that still leaves physical infrastructure such as bases, batter boxes, and mounds to be maintained by the Township. The priority is to pick up brush and leaves; with a small staff there is no time or manpower to maintain fields. Mr. Rehm commented it would be better to outsource field maintenance rather than use and maintain machines within the Public Works Department. Mr. Hennessy stated the American Youth Football and Cheer are installing fencing at Cedar Drive. Volunteer groups are small compared to years ago. With a decrease of volunteers and employees in Public Works is it difficult to maintain all of the fields as the Township has the same amount of assets. Mr. Adams stated it is difficult to find volunteers to work at the snack shed at Laird Road too. Mr. Hennessy received an evaluation from T&M Associates to repair the basketball courts and tennis courts at Cedar Drive, and the tennis courts at Laird Road. These repairs are necessary to keep the facilities safe. The construction cost is \$225K for Cedar Drive three (3) tennis courts and \$75,000 for the two (2) basketball courts. Mr. Hennessy noted there is an interest to run a men's outdoor basketball league in town. The lower cost fix is \$200,000 which involves modifying the outfield grades, including pipes, inlets, etc. The other alternative is to rebuild the fields with under drain systems for the approximate cost of \$500,000. Mr. Hennessy asked the committee to think about all of the park maintenance issues for the next meeting. Mr. Valenti will recuse himself of future discussions of T&M Associates, as he is an employee of the firm. Mr. Baker stated if facilities are unsafe, the Town should shut it down. Mr. McNally asked compared to other towns are we over spending. Mr. Hennessy stated no, more likely under spending. Mr. Valenti commented there are many demands in the Township. Mr. Maida asked how many people are hired for summer help with Public Works. Mr. Hennessy stated four, however he has no control of what work they are assigned. Mr. Hennessy noted irrigation is key to field maintenance, Five Point # 2 will have installation within the next two weeks. Mr. Adams commented it was a very nice sight this past weekend to see soccer teams playing at Five Point, in addition to people walking the perimeter of the park. Mr. Hennessy stated Bucks Mill # 2 and # 3 are in need of a system for irrigation.

Upcoming Events Mr. Hennessy shared the list of events with the committee.

Mr. Maida asked where the circus will be parking cars.

Mr. Valenti asked how will the Lions Club clean out the ponds at Bucks Mill. (event listed for 6/7/14) Mr. Hennessy they will use crab traps, fishing poles and a small boat.

Mr. Hennessy read some of the 37 trips campers will be participating in during camp this summer, including an ice skating and swimming outing on the same day.

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Mr. Hennessy stated Schlesinger Preserve will have a trail expansion, through a Scout project. There is funding from the Schlesinger Family Trust to preserve an existing trail in the Preserve.

Senior Citizen's Report – Ms. Laufer reported 261 members in the club. Trips for June include Surf Light Theater on Long Beach Island. Future trips include Niagra Falls and Two River Theater.

The committee agreed to suspend meetings for July and August.

With no other matters to discuss, Mr. Valenti adjourned the meeting at 8:25 pm and wished everyone a good summer. Our next meeting will be Wednesday, September 3, 2014 at 7 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Byrne, Secretary