

Warren Township Recreation Advisory Committee
Minutes of February 3, 2021 Meeting

The meeting of the Warren Township Recreation Advisory Committee convened at 7:02 pm on Wednesday, February 3, 2021, virtually via Zoom due to the pandemic and keeping consistent with the social distance order.

In attendance were: Joe Filo, Linda Bosco-Devine, David Cole, Aparna Virmani, Daniel Croson, Zachary Drozd, Heather Silver, Recreation Director Joe Passaro, Township Committee Person Jolanta Maziarz and Township Committee Person Gary DiNardo.

Open Public Meeting Statement - Adequate notice of this meeting was given by posting a copy on the Township Bulletin Board and sending a copy to the Township Clerk, Courier News, and Echoes Sentinel as required by the Open Public Meeting Act.

Recreation Advisory Committee Secretary, Amanda Altavilla asked for nominations for a chair. Daniel Croson nominated Linda Bosco-Devine as Chair, and Dave Cole 2nd with all others in favor.

Dave Cole motioned to approve the regular meeting minutes from October 7, 2020 and Joe Filo 2nd.

DIRECTORS REPORT- Joe Passaro reviewed key points from the Directors Report.

- See attached

DISCUSSION

All members introduced themselves, as there are three new members to the committee.

Joe Passaro discussed the pavilion project and stated that the Township Committee voted on the funding of the project at the last meeting. He stated that there are many opinions about the project with some people against it so he would like members of the committee to spread why the project is beneficial to the town. The brick fundraiser will be started again and seeking out corporate/business sponsors to help with the burden of the cost of the project. Daniel asked Joe as to why there is negative feedback about the project and wanted to be informed about the details of the project to better explain to residents. Joe explained how the project evolved overtime to be a new structure due to the current failing structure and the bathrooms need upgrading since they are one-person bathrooms. Daniel asked about funding and timeline on the project and Joe responded that funding will come from various sources such as bonds, fundraising, open space, grants, etc. and the project is about a year out from completion due to waiting for final design, bid process and demo/construction.

Joe explained that Somerset County has a new grant program that the department will be applying for the pavilion and Duderstadt Turf projects. Duderstadt Turf is approaching 15 years, which is past life expectancy and needs to be replaced including replacing the border of stone around the field with turf. Watchung Hills Soccer Association and Watchung Hills Lacrosse will be contributing financially to the project. Joe will be speaking with Tom Boccino from the county about the grant and that Manville has been awarded \$200,000 for a park. Joe stated that WBSI will contribute to improvements for the baseball fields and WYBA wants to be a partner to upgrade the basketball courts at the Municipal Complex.

Joe Passaro asked the committee if they have any ideas about different segments that we can run on the cable channel or if any members want to film a segment to let him know. Aparna asked if the town has looked into have a YouTube Channel to get attention of different age

groups and it was discussed that using a combination would be appropriate since many seniors still utilize the cable channel.

Decisions about the fishing derby and summer camps are still lingering as to what we can do based on regulations and Governors Orders. Joe stated that a conversation has been started with Teen Camp Director, Franco Caruso on how we would scale back our summer camp and we are leaning to do a hybrid model. Linda asked how much lead-time is needed for the derby, which Joe stated that not much is needed and Heather stated that pre-registration could be done to help control numbers at the event.

Heather stated how she appreciated the recreation department and towns' generosity in the past with helping with graduation parades and trunk or treat during COVID and that she will probably be coming to the town again for field use applications if outdoor celebrations are needed. Joe stated that he does not want to take over school events, such as graduation celebrations, but will help out if need be. As the advisor to the schools, Jolanta agreed with Joe that we are responsible for township activities and should not be mixing unless we need to help since those are the schools responsible for their activities and they do receive a lot of tax payer dollars to figure these situations out. Jolanta stated that the Library Advisory Board wants to partner with recreation on programs for the cable channel.

Linda asked what the lead-time would be for the Winter Festival and Joe responded it takes 6 months to plan that event. Aparna asked about the Cultural Festival that she wants to start and it was decided that a fall event would be better to plan on since COVID should be better by then. Joe told Aparna to stop by the office to talk more logistics.

Gary DiNardo stated that it is good we are looking forward to all these events but that we all must still remember that COVID is around still and this year may be a wash as well. He also stated that the dredging might interfere with the derby since it has been delayed and Joe reassured him that dredging has to stop in May due to spawning season. Gary reminded everyone to just have patience since with COVID it's day to day as what we can do. Jolanta welcomed back returning members, welcomed new members, and stated that she is excited to work on new projects and ideas.

ADJOURNMENT 8:02 PM Next meeting, Wednesday, April 7, 7 pm – via Zoom

Submitted by: Amanda Altavilla, Recreation Advisory Committee Secretary

Directors Notes for Rec Adv. Meeting: 2/3/21

1. The pavilion project was voted on and there are generally good comments on the Forum. There will always be those against projects like this. This a positive project for the Town, please help to get the positive story out there. We are starting fundraising programs, like the personalized bricks program that was successful in the past.
2. The Duderstadt field needs replacement, I have 2 of 3 bids already ... I am working with the County on an expanded grant program to possibly fund either the Pavilion project and or the field replacement. In every project, I try to lessen the burden on the Town budget and tax paying residents by other funding sources.
3. The third project that is in the long term plan is adding another playground and upgrade of basketball courts in the Municipal area...to be followed by an upgrade at Greenwood Meadows. The WYBA and I have met and they are interested in helping put lights on the courts and an upgrade of the area. It's a continuation of my theme to have the different organizations kick in for upgrades of the facilities.
Lastly, we are working with the WBSI on an upgrade and drainage project that they will also be contributing to also.
4. We are working on securing bands for the summer concert series...there will be 4 in July and at least one in the Fall.
5. Spring Tennis Instruction will be happening with the Adult-Cardio program.
6. We have been swamped with field use applications from many organizations for the spring, both in town org's and out of town.
7. We continue to make better use of the Cable channel...concerts were live streamed, our chair – yoga classes are running every day at 12pm and we have started special programming... pieces done by Bob Marino...the newest 'SNOW FROLIC' PLEASE CHECK IT OUT. As far new programming I hope to have a craft program, cooking and DIY home projects programs.
8. Decisions are still to be made on size and scope of fishing derby and summer camps. We will have to wait to see what regulations will be in place before each program to see if it can be accomplished.