

**MINUTES OF THE
RECREATION COMMISSION
HOPATCONG BOROUGH HALL, 111 RIVER STYX ROAD, HOPATCONG, NJ
APRIL 8, 2025
OPEN PUBLIC MEETING 7PM**

CALL TO ORDER: The Recreation Commission Chairperson called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT: This meeting is held in accordance with the 1975 Open Public Meetings Act, NJSA 10:4-6 et seq., annual notice having been forwarded to the New Jersey Herald/New Jersey Sunday Herald and posted on the bulletin board maintained in the Municipal Building for public announcements.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Recreation Commission Chairperson invites all present to salute the flag.

ROLL CALL: The Recording Secretary will call the roll.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Dave Barella, Darrin DiNapoli, Cheryl Ostman, Wendy Sutton, Jacking Turkington, Ulla Vinkman

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Superintendent of Recreation Max Vasile, Councilwoman Jennifer Johnson, Recording Secretary Nancy McCormack

OPEN SPACE UPDATE: Liaison Dave Barella—Trying to plan April 24, 2025

OUTER SPATIAL UPDATE: Liaison Dave Barella— Trying to plan April 24, 2025

CELEBRATIONS OF EVENTS UPDATE: Liaison Wendy Sutton—No meetings and no updates

OLD BUSINESS:

Street Hockey

Practices have started. They have 107 registered compared to 77 last year. There is a bill of \$154 for fingerprinting for 18-year-old player that needs to be voted on and paid. Commissioner Barella requested the money not come from street hockey funds, since the town is requiring it. Councilwoman Johnson said the state is requiring it. Chairperson Sutton stated that we paid for basketball coaches and BA Snow says it comes out of recreation commission. Commissioner Barella remembers her saying coaches, not others and will abstain in voting. Superintendent Vasile said it was customary for anyone 18 and older to be background checked and asked how long street hockey had 18-year-old players and there should be an adult street hockey team. Councilwoman Johnson stated there are kids in 12th grade who are 18 years old.

MOTION TO APPROVE ADDITIONAL MONIES FOR BACKGROUND CHECKS FOR 18-YEAR-OLD PLAYERS NOT TO EXCEED \$154:

Commissioner Ostman made a motion, Commissioner Turkington seconded the motion. Dave Barella abstained, everyone else in favor.

Track and Field

Registration ended today with 29 participants registered, an increase of 9 from last year. Superintendent Vasile said that Jefferson asked if they could tag along in the Lakeland League. Commissioner DiNapoli responded, as long as our kids come first. Councilwoman Johnson stated that Jefferson dissolved their Track and Field, where Superintendent Vasile responded that they did and Sparta did not accept them. The first meet in Sunday is at Morris Knolls High School. Chairperson Sutton requested a vote for uniforms. The vendor from last year is unable to meet deadline, therefore, will be using the vendor used for basketball ("You Name It") and will have them by end of the week. Uniforms consist of a jersey and shorts for each player. Jerseys will have a new logo dedicated to Dave Barnish.

MOTION TO APPROVE ADDITIONAL MONIES FOR TRACK AND FIELD UNIFORMS NOT TO EXCEED \$1,000:

Commissioner Ullman made a motion, Commissioner Turkington seconded the motion. All in favor.

Easter Egg Hunt

The Easter Egg Hunt was cancelled due to the weather. Superintendent Vasile proposed rescheduling to April 17th or 18th at 6:00 at the Senior Center. However, no one is available during the week to help. Councilwoman Johnson suggested that it should not be on April 18th since it's Good Friday and unable to have it on the weekend as Passover begins. Commissioner Turkington suggested reaching out to the schools in the future. Superintendent Vasile reminded everyone that a facilities request would be needed for the schools. He also suggested instead of cancelling to just have pictures with the Easter Bunny. Councilwoman Johnson proposed the Senior Center, pictures with the Easter Bunny, give out bags with eggs on Saturday the 12th, 12:00pm-2:00pm before sundown when Passover begins. Superintendent Vasile will check on availability of Senior Center. Commissioner Ostman suggested if its not a good turnout to use the candy at the Memorial Day Parade. Superintendent Vasile will shop for bags and necessities.

MOTION TO APPROVE ADDITIONAL MONIES FOR BAGS AND NECESSITIES NOT TO EXCEED \$100:

Commissioner DiNapoli made a motion, Commissioner Vinkman seconded the motion. All in favor.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairperson Sutton reminded everyone to check their emails for financial disclosures. Superintendent Vasile sent an email regarding a proposal for field fees, a new facility request form and procedures. Chairperson Sutton stated the fee includes 1 week in July and 1 week in August and would be \$1,000, or \$100 a day plus \$100 security fee. Superintendent Vasile said it could be waived, wherein, Commissioner Barella felt the fee should be kept in the event there is damage to the field. Superintendent suggested that the fee could be refundable, everyone agreed. Councilwoman Johnson asked how far in advance would they collect a usage fee. Superintendent Vasile stated according to the Scheduling Guide #5 & #5.2 it should be applied 14 days in advance. Chairperson Sutton requested a vote for the new Facility and Field Form with a line item in trust and be earmarked for use for fields and facilities. Commissioner Turkington pointed out that the kitchen at the Senior Center cannot be rented out and Superintendent Vasile will delete that verbiage.

MOTION TO APPROVE NEW FORM TO BE USED FOR FACILITIES AND FIELDS:

Commissioner Barella made a motion, Commissioner DiNapoli seconded the motion. All were in favor.

UPDATE FROM SUPERINTENDENT VASILE

- The Memorial Day Parade is back on, the wreaths have been ordered, and the ceremony will be held at Vet's Field.

- Hopatcong Days - will need help from the Recreation Commission and what needs to be ordered.
- Potential upcoming event is Miss Hopatcong on June 26/27 in the high school auditorium.
- There is a group outing to the Sussex County Miners, \$14 per ticket on August 16 at 7:00 with fireworks.
- Looking into concerts and movies at Modick Park in Summer/Fall. Councilwoman Johnson said the Alliance has a license for movies but needs to be in the auditorium or on the high school grounds. They also have projector, screen and popcorn and are willing to share with the Recreation Commission.
- Track and Field bibs will arrive by Thursday for the first meet this weekend
- Senior Olympic – June 17th at the Sussex County Fairgrounds sponsored by the Sussex County Senior Services
- Bingo – will try a night during the summer with gift cards as prizes, no cash prizes.
- Summer basketball league – kids or adults, outside, maybe one game and one practice per week, will need help to facilitate, Commission Ostman suggested 9:00am Saturdays should work.
- Free walking club – need help to facilitate walking club, 7:00am start in the parks and then possibly try trails and maybe turn into a hiking program, would like to implement at the beginning of summer.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

Commissioner Turkington made a motion to open the meeting to the public. Commissioner Vinkman seconded the motion. All were in favor.

OPENED TO THE PUBLIC:

Frank Cappello stated that he loved everything he was hearing and is willing to work with Superintendent Vasile. Yesterday was the first baseball attempt and the fields were atrocious. The Naritong Field was flooded with a drop-off in the outfield and there is no clay. Someone dropped the ball because there are pebbles, mulch, they didn't rake it in which causes run-offs. There's a dump truck of dirt that can't be leveled off by hand. Should have been cultivated the right way. His foot sank in the dirt and doesn't feel it's a playable field. Mr. Cappello would like to have someone trained on field maintenance. He will also discuss this with council and feels other teams will not come to our town to play because the fields are so bad and that are kids are getting better and better, but will go to other towns to play in the future. Chairperson Sutton stated that all the information has noted on the Field Walk Report. Hawks pay for paint and 8 hours to line fields. Baseball doesn't have machines to line and maybe its time to. Mr. Cappello suggested that there needs to be a reorganization at the town level to have separate departments to be responsible for fields and parents shouldn't be responsible for maintaining the fields. Need certified towns people. Mr. Cappello gave Superintendent Vasile photos he took of the field. Commissioner Barella asked if the town had machines and that years ago little league and the Hawks took over to line fields, and that shouldn't have happened. Chairperson Sutton stated that there was a Park and Recreation Department years ago, with Councilwoman Johnson saying there is a General DPW, Sewer and Water department. He would also like to know if there is a line item for budget. Chairperson Sutton suggested he ask Council. Commissioner Barella stated that we outsource cutting the lawns at the park. Mr. Cappello would like to know what the DPW does and went on to say, that the coach-pitch should be lined, kid-pitch should be lined and there should be a pitcher mound and wants a playable field by end of Spring or end of Fall. Councilwoman Johnson suggested Superintendent Vasile speak with BA Snow to see how to remediate. Superintendent Vasile will speak with Pat Mason. Naritong lights are there and work, but the major and minor field do not work. Lights should be controlled remotely, not by a key. Chairperson Sutton asked that Superintendent Vasile to change the lock and that he and Pat Mason will be the only ones with keys. Councilwoman Johnson asked if there is a light ordinance. Councilwoman

Johnson also stated that the DPW budget will be introduced on April 16th with the baseball field regrading and fencing. Jefferson Field is in preliminary talks to repair.

The Hawks do not want the PBA to use Vet's Field this year for Food Trucks in September. The PBA and Soccer were invited to tonight's meeting to discuss the damage that was done by the trucks. PBA representative did not attend tonight's meeting. Councilwoman Johnson suggested the Park and Ride as long as it doesn't interfere with the Market Place. Another suggestion is the State Park.

MOTION TO CLOSED THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC:

Commissioner Ostman made a motion to close the meeting to the public. Commissioner Turkington seconded the motion. All were in favor.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM MARCH 17TH MEETING:

Commissioner Vinkman made a motion to close the meeting to the public. Commissioner Ostman seconded the motion. All were in favor.

MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM MARCH 27TH MEETING:

Commissioner DiNapoli made a motion to close the meeting to the public. Commissioner Vinkman seconded the motion. All were in favor

Next meeting: May 13th at 7:00pm in council chambers at town hall

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

Commissioner Ostman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner DiNapoli seconded the motion. All were in favor.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 9:05pm

Submitted by
Nancy McCormack Boehm
Recording Secretary