Recreation Committee

Date of Meeting: Friday, May 23, 2025 at 10:00AM at Cole Hall and remotely via Zoom

Members Present: Deena Ruege (chair), Sarah Costin, Tony D'Onofrio, and Marie Watson. Also present: operations manager Jen Holley, and members of the public: Sarah Beebe and Julie Robertson, A.J. Labate and Ann Schramm

1. Call to Order and review minutes:
   The meeting came to order at 10:00 a.m. The committee reviewed the minutes from April 25: accepted as is by Sarah and seconded by Marie.

2. Conflict of Interest Statement
   None

3. Announcements
   None

4. Public Comments

- Sarah Beebe and Julie Robertson. These women represent a group that will be donating a bench to Howard Park in memory of their friend, Laura Cavanaugh. They will be chosing a 4' West Chester Bench #420 or English Garden Bench #940 from *Creative Custom Woodcraft* located at 5045 State Rte. 7, Hoosick Falls, NY). The picture of the benches are in their Modern Outdoor Furniture catalog on pg.38. Information on engraving the bench is on pg. 52. Questions were raised concerning installation of the bench: cement foundation, chain to tree? There is an intersection along Tilgner Trail that is level for possible placement. Some of the committee will check it out for our next meeting in June 27. The committee was unanimous in the choice of memorial bench and color (brown).
- AJ Labate and Ann Schramm: They wanted information on how the refurbishing of the tennis courts was going. Paula Iken caught all of us up to date: waiting for a second bid and two more estimates to come in. We have $7000 in grant money (matching grant) and bids are coming in at a little over $8000. The money will be used to resurface the courts, reline two tennis courts, line four pickle ball courts, construct a backboard in the tennis courts, and purchase new tennis nets. We would like a shed in there! Ann suggested portable pickle ball nets that can be rolled to the side when not in use. She will get us information. Windbreaks around the tennis courts would be helpful for players. They would also stop rocks from flying into the courts! It would be more convenient to have the porta potty chained to the fence. It's a long walk from the courts to where the porta potty has been placed near the bathrooms. AJ said that we could reach out to her anytime for help at the park.

5. Updates

- Green Up Day: The GUD report was sent in to the State by Paula using the information that Sarah and I provided to her. The extra bags and clip board were stored at Cole Hall.
- Park Security Cameras: Jen is investigating security cameras. She sent a link to Paula about a system that uses solar panels and does not require batteries or Wi-Fi. On sale, the unit is $249 and $20/month. Hopefully we will have everything in place to order by the time the new fiscal year begins, July 1. Jen will work up a proposal.
- Message Board: The board has arrived. I need to contact DPW to assemble it. We are reluctant to install anything new at the park without security cameras in place.
- Howard Park sign: The garden club will be contacted about planting flowers near/around the HP sign. Rick Bennett is the one to contact about this. Memorial benches around HP are a great idea. We need bids for benches
- Loose ends: Is bathroom roof done? Mike Becker was going to take care of it. Soccer and basketball nets are up. Tony needs to repair one of the soccer nets with a long pipe to hold the net to the ground. Has Mike Y. taken care of adding new mulch to the children's playground? Has the clear coating of the HP sign been able to be done?
- Other items: A plaque in memory of Barb Marino would be appropriate on the Art in the Park gallery board. Written on the metal plaque: Art Gallery in memory of Barb Marino. The plaque would be placed in the middle of the gallery board. I3 Imaging and GVH make metal signs. Deena will look online for memorial plaques.

6. New Business

- Dog park posts: Sarah will meet with Marcus next week to look at the posts. Second dog park in the upper field?? Add on for big dog/little dog park.
- Peckham: We need to do something for the folks at Peckham to show our appreciation for the replacement sign that they created for Howard Park. Ideas: card and lunch…pizza delivery, gift certificate for lunch.
- Abandoned ball field at the upper end of the soccer fields: There is a backstop and home plate visible. It's a beautiful level field that is not being utilized. Tony proposes using the ball field for a girl's travel softball team that he is starting. The "Bennington Bandits" are a group of girls 14 years old and under who love the game. Tony will contact Pete Genellis who maintains the middle and high school fields, to clean up the field for softball. Grass will be taken out and clay will be brought in. The field will be regulation size.
- Parking; As activity and usage of the park increases, parking will become an issue. We may need to expand the parking lot in the upper field.

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned: 11:06 a.m.

The next meeting: June 27 at 10 a.m. at Cole Hall

Respectfully submitted: Deena Ruege