

Delaware Township Recreation Commission Minutes – June 7, 2021 via Zoom
Chairperson Brian Sulewski called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Notice Statement – The Notice Requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act have been satisfied by notification to the Hunterdon County Democrat and by posting with the Township Clerk and on the Delaware Township bulletin board on January 12, 2021.

Flag Salute – Members recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Present: Judy Allen, Rebecca Burns, Charles Herman Tyler Kadezabek, Heather Opdyke, Steve Smotrich Tim Soltis, Brian Sulewski, Linda Ubry
Absent: Joe Benincasa, Tim Drew, Julie Luster-Roell,

Approval of Minutes from the Meeting of May 3, 2021 – Linda moved to approve the minutes from the meeting of May 3, 2021, and Rebecca seconded motion. Brian noted a correction. Possible grant funding from the State that the Township might use toward the Dilts Farm Park totals \$2 million State-wide. Members present approved the minutes as corrected with abstentions by Steve and Charlie.

REPORTS

Teen Report

Tyler reported that a lot of people attended the White Oak Trail hike on May 16th. Refreshments were served. Brian asked whether Tyler would want to run this event again, and Tyler replied yes. Brian asked him to submit a receipt for the snacks for reimbursement. Tyler suggested a movie night after school ends. Brian explained the copyright issues with a public movie viewing. The license is quite expensive. Judy asked whether teens would be interested in pick-up basketball games this summer at the Dilts Park. Brian asked Tyler to email his group and request ideas for this fall.

Board of Education

Rebecca reported that the School resumed full instruction days at the end of April. A summer program will be offered to invited students in grades K-7 beginning the first week of July and will run for three weeks. It will be funded through the State Cares program and remaining DTS funds. Bussing will not be provided. The Board hired a new Principal, Scott Lipson.

Brian asked whether Recreation Commission adult and teen activities at DTS could restart this fall. Rebecca said the Commission should submit a Facilities Use Request.

Linda asked about the promotion ceremonies. Rebecca said there will be an outdoor celebration parade of vehicles from the Dilts Park to the School on June 17th followed by the outdoor promotion ceremony.

Tim thanked Rebecca and the Board for addressing a challenging school year due to Covid 19.

DTAA

Closing ceremonies will be held on June 18th at the Dilts Park.

Open Space

Steve reported that the Township is in the process of hiring an Open Space Coordinator. He said the Curtis Farm in Rosemont is now preserved with funding from the New Jersey Conservation Foundation and the SADC. No Township funds were required. Hunterdon County is holding the easement.

APPROVAL OF DILTS FARM PARK APPLICATIONS

Dilts Park Facility Use Application

Brant Switzler joined the meeting via Zoom. He has not yet submitted an application for facility use at the Dilts Park, and he said there is no spot on that application for a tennis court use fee. He described his proposal to conduct tennis lessons on the courts during warm months. He said there is the potential to start a tennis recreation program. He proposed holding lessons six or seven hours per day for five or six days per week, but that is flexible. His company can provide an insurance certificate to the Township. The program could begin this summer or next summer.

Charlie suggested Mr. Switzler submit an application accompanied by a letter detailing his request. The Township Attorney would have to review it.

Judy said the Commission used to sponsor a youth summer tennis program coordinated by Laura Darby.

DILTS PARK

Brian said there is a \$2 million State-wide grant available for possible use at the Park to develop a Park Master Plan. The application is due at the end of May. The funds could help with tennis and basketball court repairs. He did not know how much professional fees would cost for the application. The Township received \$400,000 in Covid relief funding. Charlie said the Township is planning to repair both the basketball and tennis courts over the next two years. The tennis courts will be repaired first with quotes solicited this year. If the Township receives sufficient funding, the basketball court will also be repaired. The tennis courts will be ground and resurfaced.

Members repeated their desire to create a Park Master Plan to review existing facilities and to prepare a plan for the best future use of the Park. A professional planner will be needed.

REIMER WALKING TRAIL

Steve Wilbur joined the meeting via Zoom. He said the new walking trail on the Reimer Tract is only 160 feet off his back deck. The appearance of the trail was a complete shock to adjoining property owners. No advance notice was provided. He thought there is a way to adequately protect surrounding properties by altering the current layout.

Diana Garibaldi joined the meeting via Zoom. She said the current trail location is not acceptable. Walkers can look directly at their house. She thought the trail could be moved away from their property line.

Bruce Katsiff joined the meeting via Zoom. He thought a walking trail is a reasonable use of the tract, but he questioned why it is located so close to the property line. It could be modified so that it does not infringe on adjoining properties.

Steve said the location was chosen to least impact the property that is still being farmed. Bruce Katsiff asked what is the priority – farming or neighbors.

Brian said there can certainly be a dialogue. The trail was created as an additional use of the Park that has seen increased use during the Covid pandemic. It was never the intention of the Commission to infringe on adjoining properties.

All agreed there should be a trail walk by some Commission members and neighbors and possibly include the farmer prior to the next Commission meeting on July 5th. This discussion will continue on that date.

Valerie Tucci joined the meeting via Zoom. She is interested in Park uses because of increased traffic it generates on her road. She said Brant Switzler has a pending application before the Board of Adjustment for a tennis facility on Sandy Ridge Road. Brian said that is not a Recreation Commission matter.

DILTS PARK CONTINUED DISCUSSION

Brian noted that the deep crack on the basketball court has been patched by Public Works. He explained to Charlie why a parking lot expansion is needed. At certain Park events parking is insufficient. He said there is currently a single lane of traffic that should be widened, and speed bumps should be installed. Charlie said the Township can work with the Department of Public Works. Perhaps there should be a one-way entrance and exit. He said the Township Committee could explore the option of a Park planner.

Linda volunteered to work with the DPW and Township Committee on Park repairs. She listed several areas that need to be addressed including trail weed control, the Makara Field, the former spring house and nearby concrete abutment, and trees by the playground with no leaves. Charlie said the Shade Tree Commission is working on trees.

COMMITTEES:

Yard Sale – Judy said the May 15th Yard Sale was successful. There were about forty registrants. The sale was advertised in the Democrat and on the Township website.

Plant Swap – Jes Stahl organized the Plant Swap on May 23rd at the Dilts Park.

Fishing Derby – Tim Soltis said the Copeland Family graciously agreed to host a Fishing Derby on July 17th (raindate 7/18). Maeghan Harrington is co-chairing this event with him. Shop Rite will donate a breakfast bag for participants. Skip and Mary Jo Opdyke have asked what is needed to run this event, and they will help. There will be prizes for this first fish caught, most fish, biggest fish, and best fish of show. He ordered tee-shirts. Steve will coordinate parking. There will be two registration tents where people will obtain a tally sheet with a fish ruler. The Copeland Pond will be heavily stocked with blue gills. Insurance and port-a-potties will be arranged. There will be a board with sponsors listed.

Fall Fun Fireworks at Dilts Park – September 11th – Members agreed there will be no band or food trucks this year. There will be a commemoration of the tragic events that day in 2001.

Community Day/Block Party – Will be held on Saturday October 2nd at the Sergeantsville Green. Details will be discussed.

Halloween Activity – Will be discussed.

Holiday Decorating Contest/Holiday Lighting – Will be discussed.

Adult and Teen Recreation at DTS – These uses will be requested for this fall/winter/spring, 2021-2022.

Scavenger Hunt – Brian will talk with Rebecca about repeating this event this summer.

Baseball Trip – Will be considered for a future activity.

Food Trucks – Will be considered for a future activity.

OLD BUSINESS –

Budget – Brian said the Commission has sufficient funds to run its events this year. There is \$14,000 in the Recreation Trust plus money budgeted this year.

NEXT MEETING

Charlie said renovations to the downstairs of the Township Building are not yet completed. Members agreed to next meet on July 5th at 7:30 p.m. in person upstairs at the Township Building. There will be no Zoom opportunity.

TOWNSHIP WEBSITE

Charlie said the Township will launch its new website in late June.

NEW BUSINESS

Steve thought the Commission should start considering improvements to the Sergeantsville Green. An electrical power source is needed. Improvements might include a gazebo, a memorial bench, and additional trees.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:09 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: July 5, 2021 at 7:30 p.m. IN PERSON