

**MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION
AUGUST MEETING
AUGUST 19, 2020**

Local Operational Guidance - COVID 19

N.J.S.A 10:4-8(b) authorizes local units to conduct public meetings through use of streaming services and other online meeting platforms.

NOTICE is hereby given that the Mercer County Park Commission will hold their AUGUST MEETING on Wednesday, August 19, 2020; to begin at 5:30 pm via Zoom Webinar. To encourage full public participation of the public meeting, please use the meeting access information below:

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

- **Webinar ID: 826 3208 8220**
- **Passcode: 773039**

- **<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82632088220?pwd=UUN5Q0s1c3Z0Z3VBREF13WHE1NHZEdz09>**

- **Telephone: Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):
US: +1 312 626 6799 or +1 929 436 2866 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 346 248 7799 or
+1 669 900 6833 or +1 253 215 8782**

- **Public Comment shall take place as indicated on the August 19, 2020 Agenda. Kindly provide public comment when prompted during the meeting via the messaging/chat feature or by the, ‘hand-raising’ feature, where you will be prompted to speak to provide public comment.**

CALL TO ORDER:

- **Commissioner Schulz called the August 19, 2020 meeting of the Mercer County Park Commission to order at 5:39 pm, via Zoom Webinar platform.**

ROLL CALL:

- **The following Commissioners answered the Roll Call of the Secretary:**
 - **Commissioners: Davis, Forrester, Mooij, Schulz**
 - **Commissioner Gardner joined the meeting at 5:55 pm**

- **The following Commissioners were absent:**
 - **Commissioner Longo**
 - **Commissioner Smith**

Commissioner Schulz led the Pledge of Allegiance and the Salute to the Flag.

NOTICE OF MEETING:

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SUNSHINE LAW (OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT CHAPTER 231, P.L. 1975), ADEQUATE NOTICE OF THIS MEETING HAS BEEN PROVIDED IN THAT NOTIFICATION WAS GIVEN AS FOLLOWS: EMAILED TO THE TIMES, AND THE TRENTONIAN AND POSTED ON THE MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION WEBSITE

LOCAL OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE - COVID 19
N.J.S.A 10:4-8(B) AUTHORIZES LOCAL UNITS TO CONDUCT PUBLIC MEETINGS THROUGH USE OF STREAMING SERVICES AND OTHER ONLINE MEETING PLATFORMS.

Commissioner Schulz requested for the Executive Director to provide the Commission a synopsis of the July revenue report as presented.

Executive Director Watson provided the Commission with an overview and analysis of the July Revenue Report.

EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH:

(Presented by: Executive Director Aaron T. Watson; Deputy Director, Joe Pizza and Wildlife Center Director, Diane Nickerson)

- This Month’s Employees of the Month are the Mercer County Wildlife Center Staff and Seasonal Staff. Staff was recognized by the Executive Director, Deputy Director and Director of the Wildlife Center for their tireless efforts and commitment to the care of injured and ill wildlife. The Wildlife Center staff; along with seasonal staff have performed full-time, emergency operations throughout the current closure of facilities and operations due to the pandemic.

COMMUNICATIONS

(Presented by Executive Director Aaron T. Watson)

- **Rutgers University Equine Quarterly**
Featuring the article, ‘Meet the Whoa and Go Horse Club: How A 4-H Horse Club from Mercer County is Staying Engaged’.
- **LHT Trail Usage at Mercer Meadows**
Using the trail counter installed at Keefe Road, the LHT shared some interesting data. On the increase in trail usage at Mercer Meadows this summer, compared with the average use during the same period over the past five (5) years; this summer's usage is up by 158%.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Staff Operations**-Staff has been performing operational duties at approximately 95% during the past several months under the current regulations.
- **Golf Courses**-Golf Courses have been fully operational under current COVID Guidelines. Golf Operations are very busy and are at full staff .Revenue generation can be seen in financial reporting from these facilities.
- **In-House Operations:**
 - **Masons**-Installation of sidewalk at the War Memorial and ball fields.
 - **Carpenters**-Installation of fence at the Arm & Hammer Park and repairs to stalls at the Mercer County Stables.
 - **Plumbers**-Preparations being performed for utilization of Mercer County Skating Center.
 - **Painters**-Painting pavilion Areas and Basketball Court Areas.
- **Splash Park**-The Splash Park Project is substantially completed. Punchlist items include fencing and paint. Planning soft opening in September.
- **Mercer County Stables**-Renovation of office and restrooms progressing. The project is on-schedule with the Contractor.
- **Boathouse Facility**-New flooring installed in the Boathouse facility.
- **Remote Solar Security Camera Installation**-New remote solar security camera systems have been installed at various park locations.
- **Hopewell Valley Golf Course**-A maintenance Agreement has been executed with the County of Mercer; which allows for the Park Commission to access the property to begin maintenance, irrigation and seeding operations in preparation for an anticipated spring of 2021 opening.

Commissioner Schulz asked Deputy Director Pizza to provide a preliminary assessment of the property conditions and facilities therein.

Deputy Director Pizza reported that the property is in fair to good condition; pending the results of a building assessment report from a contracted Consulting firm.

COMMISSIONER GARDNER JOINED THE MEETING AT 5:55 PM TO COMPLETE A QUORUM AND PROCEED WITH VOTING ON AGENDA ITEMS.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FROM THE JULY 29, 2020 PARK COMMISSION PUBLIC MEETING:

- In voice vote, the July 29, 2020 the Park Commission Public Meeting minutes were approved a presented.
- **Ayes** – Davis, Forrester, Gardner, Mooij, and Schulz. **Nays-** None. **Abstain-**None. **Absent:** Longo and Smith

APPROVAL OF AUGUST 2020 MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION BILLS:

- In voice vote, the August 2020 Mercer County Park Commission bills were approved for payment as presented.
- **Ayes** – Davis, Forrester, Gardner, Mooij, and Schulz. **Nays-** None. **Abstain-**None. **Absent:** Longo and Smith

APPROVAL OF JULY 2020 MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION REVENUE REPORTS:

- In voice vote, the July Mercer County Park Commission Revenue Reports were approved as presented.
- **Ayes** – Davis, Forrester, Gardner, Mooij, and Schulz. **Nays-** None. **Abstain-**None. **Absent:** Longo and Smith

NEW BUSINESS:

RESOLUTIONS:

~~R-1. MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE A REAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT WITH THE TOWNSHIP OF ROBBINSVILLE FOR THE PURPOSE OF SETTING FORTH THE PARTIES' UNDERSTANDING AND AGREEMENT WITH RESPECT TO THE MANAGEMENT OF PROJECT SITES LOCATED ON TOWNSHIP OWNED AND MAINTAINED REAL PROPERTY; IDENTIFIED BY THE MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A LAWN-TO-MEADOW CONVERSION PROJECT~~

Counsel requested a vote by the Commission to remove Agenda item R-1 due to the fact that the Agreement was tabled by the Township of Robbinsville; therefore, would not be proceeding with the partnership to implement a Lawn-to-Meadow Conversion project with the Park Commission at the present time.

- On Motion to remove Agenda item R-1 by Commissioner Mooij seconded by Commissioner Davis.
 - **Ayes** – Davis, Forrester, Gardner, Mooij, and Schulz. **Nays-** None. **Abstain-**None. **Absent:** Longo and Smith
- R-2. MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES COMPETITIVE CONTRACTING FOR SKATING DIRECTOR SERVICES AT THE MERCER COUNTY SKATING CENTER FACILITY
- On Motion by Commissioner Davis seconded by Commissioner Schulz.
 - **Ayes** – Davis, Forrester, Gardner, Mooij, and Schulz. **Nays-** None. **Abstain-**None. **Absent:** Longo and Smith
- R-3. MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES PAYMENT TO UNITED SITE SERVICES/DBA ROYAL FLUSH FOR PORTABLE RESTROOMS TRAILERS [ADA PLUS TWO (2) ELITE COACHES; ALONG WITH DELIVERY AND REMOVAL OF SAID EQUIPMENT] FOR PATRON USE DURING DEMOLITION AND RENOVATION OF THE EXISTING RESTROOMS AT THE MERCER OAKS GOLF COURSE FACILITY (AB2017-11B) UNTIL SUBSTANTIAL COMPLETION OF THE PROJECT. TOTAL AMOUNT: \$35,525.84
- On Motion by Commissioner Gardner seconded by Commissioner Schulz.
 - **Ayes** – Davis, Forrester, Gardner, Mooij, and Schulz. **Nays-** None. **Abstain-**None. **Absent:** Longo and Smith
- R-4. AMEND RESOLUTION 2018-80, ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 26, 2018 AND AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE AN AMENDMENT (AMENDMENT NO. 2) TO THE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT (AWARDED THROUGH A NON-FAIR AND OPEN PROCESS) WITH ENGINEERING AND LAND PLANNING FOR PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO COMPROMISED TRAIL SECTIONS THROUGHOUT MERCER MEADOWS, TOWNSHIP OF HOPEWELL. AMEND RESOLUTION TO EXPAND THE PROJECT SCOPE AND INCREASE THE CONTRACT AMOUNT BY AN ADDITIONAL: \$12,500.00; RESULTING IN A REVISED CONTRACT AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED: \$56,200.00 (+\$47.12%). CONTRACT PERIOD REMAINS THE SAME
- On Motion by Commissioner Gardner seconded by Commissioner Schulz.
 - **Ayes** – Davis, Forrester, Gardner, Mooij, and Schulz. **Nays-** None. **Abstain-**None. **Absent:** Longo and Smith

R-5 AMEND RESOLUTION NO. 93-407, ADOPTED AUGUST 23, 1993 AND THE MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE AN AMENDMENT (AMENDMENT NO. 3) TO THE LEASE WITH GARDEN STATE BASEBALL, L.P. AMEND RESOLUTION TO ALLOW FOR AN ANNUAL RENTAL FEE TIME PERIOD EXTENSION; DUE TO THE CLOSURE OF THE ARM AND HAMMER FACILITY UNDER THE GOVERNOR’S EXECUTIVE ORDER, IN RESPONSE TO THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC. GARDEN STATE BASEBALL RENTAL FEE OBLIGATION EXTENSION PERIOD: JANUARY 1, 2020 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2021. RENTAL FEE OBLIGATION TO RESUME: JANUARY 1, 2022; WITH AN ADDITIONAL ANNUAL AMOUNT OF: \$50,000.00; TO BE PAID FOR THE FIVE (5) YEAR PERIOD OF JANUARY 1, 2022 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2026; TO SATISFY OUTSTANDING RENTAL FEE AMOUNT ACCRUED UNDER THE TIME PERIOD EXTENSION; IN THE AMOUNT OF: \$250,000.00. ALL OTHER TERMS REMAIN IN FULL FORCE AND EFFECT

- On Motion by Commissioner Schulz seconded by Commissioner Davis
- **Ayes** – Davis, Forrester, Gardner, Mooij, and Schulz. **Nays-** None. **Abstain-**None. **Absent:** Longo and Smith

LATE STARTER

- On Motion to add a Late Starter New Business Agenda Item by Commissioner Davis seconded by Commissioner Schulz.
- **Ayes** – Davis, Forrester, Gardner, Mooij, and Schulz. **Nays-** None. **Abstain-**None. **Absent:** Longo and Smith

L-S1 REJECTION OF BID FROM EASTER IRRIGATION CO.; RECEIVED JULY 22, 2020 FOR THE REBID OF PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR OF IRRIGATION SYSTEMS, FOUNTAINS AND PUMP HOUSES FOR THE MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION FOR A PERIOD OF TWO (2) YEARS (AB2020-26B)

- On Motion by Commissioner Davis seconded by Commissioner Schulz.
- **Ayes** – Davis, Forrester, Gardner, Mooij, and Schulz. **Nays-** None. **Abstain-**None. **Absent:** Longo and Smith

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Presented by Executive Director Aaron T. Watson

– **Catering MOU Agreements**

All Six (6) MOU's have been executed by the Caterers; with the final in preparation for return; for the interim monthly fee Adjustment due to the Pandemic.

– **Outdoor Dining Services**

Golf course caterers are providing outdoor dining service. Social distancing guidelines are being followed in adherence to the Governor's Executive Order.

GOLF

- All courses continue to see record attendance.
- Maintenance has begun at HVGC; cutting grass, aeration, and transfer of equipment.

TENNIS:

- **Both programs below are running concurrently during the month of August:**
- Mercer County Fall Tennis League-343 players
- Summer Tennis League playoffs-90 qualifiers
- **Court Resurfacing-Twenty (20) outdoor courts and six (6) indoor courts have been resurfaced.**

RECREATION AND EVENTS:

- **Sports Tournaments Held since the Executive Order allowing the Resumption of Athletics** (Summer Softball Leagues will continue an extra few weeks into the Fall weather permitting):
 - Baseball-2
 - Softball-3
 - Lacrosse-1
- **Mercer County Men's Summer Soccer League**-The NCAA is suspending many Fall sports to the spring and a process has begun to form a Fall Soccer Collegiate/U23 league for players locally and throughout the state. They intend to use Mercer County Park for some of these matches.
- **Picnics and Campsite Rentals**- Back to normal operations.
- **Inter-Departmental Assistance**-Assisting the MCDOT and the Airport with generating signage for current projects.
- **Upcoming Events:**
 - 9/5: Best of the Eagles/The Amish Outlaws
 - 9/12: Kombo Latino (TBD)
 - 9/19: The Sensational Soul Cruisers/Ernie White
 - 9/25: Sounds of Sandstorm/Instant Funk
 - 10/3: Superunknown /Into the Floyd

COMMUNITY OUTREACH:

- **Trenton River Days Fair:**
 - This event is scheduled for September 12 at South Riverwalk Park. Due to public health concerns this will be a ‘grab-and-go’ event which will consist of approximately four (4) stations where attendees can pick up hand sanitizer, masks; an arts and crafts activity; lunch and fresh produce provided by Howell Farm and Capital City Farm.
 - Programs will include self-guided tour information about South Riverwalk Park and the historic Riverview Cemetery; burial place of the Abbott Marshland namesake Charles Abbott, and Civil War veterans; including members of the US Colored Troops.
- **African Americans in the Pleasant Valley District:**
 - The objective of this project is to develop educational programming on the African American experience in the Hopewell Valley over the past 200 years. Our office is in the process of meeting with historians to develop information for interpretive signage and educational programs, such as the story of Jacob Francis, a Black Revolutionary War veteran buried in the area.
- **Swimming to Rowing**
 - A Zoom meeting with partners is scheduled for August 27 to discuss reopening possibilities. We are dependent on the availability of the Hamilton YMCA pool and locker rooms.

STEWARDSHIP DEPARTMENT

- **Rosedale Lake HAB Project**
 - The Quality Assurance and Control Plan (QAPP) for the project has been reviewed by NJDEP. Next steps include design and permitting for the improvements to Rosedale Lake which are intended to reduce the conditions that lead to algae blooms.
- **Wetland Restoration @ Roebbling Park**
 - Princeton Hydro and the Stewardship Department provided an update on the restoration of the Abbott Marsh to the Friends of the Marsh and Marsh Council earlier today. A larger public presentation on the multi-year restoration project is planned for the Fall.
- **Spotted Lanternfly**
 - We are continuing to educate the public on this invasive insect and the Park Commission’s response to it, and what Mercer County residents can do at home to help. Eradication of the host tree, the Tree of heaven, is on-going at our parks; and we are adding the Wildlife Center and Howell Farm to this month’s treatment.
- **Meadow Restorations**

- Site prep for the various meadow restorations/lawn conversions planned for this year will begin later this month throughout the County.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION:

- The Environmental Education Department has created a wide selection of Self-guided programs, Online programs, and in-person programs since the pandemic started.
- **Notable Programs to Date:**
 - **Wildlife Lecture Series** –538 participants(from Mercer County, Australia, India, and other locations around the world)
 - **Virtual Summer Camp** – 397 children
 - **In Person Family Field Trips** – 96 participants
 - **Kayak Nature Tours** –75 participants
 - **Trenton Library Nature Story series** – 37 children
- **Full Fall schedule; to be released Sept. 1**
 - **River Days** – Sept. 12
 - **Camp Out** at MCP Campground – Oct. 10-11
 - Trenton Youth Fishing Derby – Oct. 17
 - **REI Opt-outside events** – Nov. 27

MERCER STABLES:

- **Mercer Stables is currently running the following programs:**
 - Riding Lessons
 - Adaptive riding
 - Equine assisted therapy
 - Pony rides
- **Trail Riding-** Will pick back up by October (weather and staff permitting).

HOWELL FARM:

- **Howell Farm recently provided its 10,000th contribution to Mercer County food banks and pantries:**
 - 6,875 2-lb. bags of flour
 - 1,440 2-lb. bags of fresh vegetables
 - 550 5-lb. bags of potatoes
 - 1,190 cartons of eggs
- **Share the Harvest Tours-** By the end of August, more than 1,000 residents will have participated in the “Share the Harvest Tours”. Tours take visitors to each production area to learn about farming, the environment, and the needs of food security and equity.
- **Rosedale Lake Algae Remediation-**During fall plowing and planting programs, we are introducing barley into the crop rotation for organic use in pond algae remediation conducted by our Stewardship Department.

WILDLIFE CENTER :

- To date, **2,140 new Patients** have been admitted for care.
- Staff is still working in two (2) teams, covering Seven (7) days per week since March.

MOORES STATION QUARRY MASTER PLAN :

- A team of consultants led by Simone Collins has begun research and field survey work at the Quarry. Engineers are reviewing Trap Rock Industry’s quarry reclamation plan and are assessing potential options for re-use of the quarry site.

- Public engagement meetings to solicit ideas for reuse of the quarry will begin later in the year, after preliminary briefing meetings occur with local and state government agencies.

PUBLIC SESSION:

The Following Members of the Public addressed the Commission during the Public Comment Period of the Meeting:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Kevin Pappas
100 Cole Lane
Lawrence Township, NJ 08648 | 2. Nora Shuda
424 Hazel Avenue
Ewing NJ 08638 |
|---|---|

ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSEQUENT PUBLIC MEETING:

- The September 2020 Mercer County Park Commission Public Meeting is scheduled to take place on September 30, 2020; at a location to be determined.

ADJOURNMENT:

- On motion by Commissioner Gardner, seconded by Commissioner Davis, Adjournment took place at 6:31 pm

Heather Mauro

Heather Mauro

Executive Secretary

Secretary to the Commission