

**MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION  
MAY 26 MEETING MINUTES  
MAY 26, 2021 @ 5:30 PM  
VIA ZOOM WEBINAR LINK AND PHONE NUMBER:**

**N O T I C E**

**MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION  
OPEN PUBLIC MEETING ACT, CHAPTER 231, P.L. 1975**

**\*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 **MAY 2021 PUBLIC MEETING** on **Wednesday, May 26, 2021; 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. (The Meeting link and meeting information may also be accessed on our website at [www.mercercountyparks.org](http://www.mercercountyparks.org))

- **When:** May 26, 2021 05:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
- **Topic:** May 26, 2021 Mercer County Park Commission Public Meeting Zoom Webinar
  
- **Please click the link below to join the webinar:**  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86150503625?pwd=UnNVQ2dReGRoN0dRU05Nd0lES3hKQT09>
  
- **Webinar ID:** 861 5050 3625
- **Passcode:** 879996

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**AGENDA**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Commissioner Schulz called the May 26, 2021 meeting of the Mercer County Park Commission to order at 5:30 pm, via Zoom Webinar platform.

**ROLL CALL:**

**The following Commissioners answered the Roll Call of the Secretary:**

- Caton, Davis, Gardner, Martinez, Mooij, Schulz and Smith.
- Commissioner Forrester joined the meeting at 5:38 pm.

**The following Commissioners were absent:** None.

**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, TRENTONIAN, AND POSTED TO THE MERCER COUNTY WEBSITE AND MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION WEBSITE; AND SENT VIA EMAIL BLAST THROUGH THE COUNTY OF MERCER AND MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION NOTIFICATION SYSTEM.

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.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FROM THE APRIL 28, 2021 PARK COMMISSION PUBLIC MEETING:**

- On Motion by Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Gardner; by voice vote, the April 28, 2021 Mercer County Park Commission Meeting Minutes were approved as presented.
- **Ayes:** Caton, Davis, Gardner, Martinez, Mooij, Schulz and Smith.
- **Nays:** None. **Abstain** None. **Absent:** Forrester.

**APPROVAL OF THE MAY 2021 MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION BILLS:**

- On Motion by Commissioner Gardner, seconded by Commissioner Martinez; by voice vote, the May 2021 Mercer County Park Commission Bills were approved for payment as presented.
- **Ayes:** Caton, Davis, Gardner, Martinez, Mooij, Schulz and Smith.
- **Nays:** None. **Abstain** None. **Absent:** Forrester.

**APPROVAL OF APRIL 2021 MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION REVENUE REPORTS:**

- On Motion by Commissioner Schulz, seconded by Commissioner Gardner, by voice vote, the April 2021 Mercer County Park Commission Revenue Reports were approved as presented.
- **Ayes:** Caton, Davis, Gardner, Martinez, Mooij, Schulz and Smith.
- **Nays:** None. **Abstain** None. **Absent:** Forrester.

**EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH** *(Presented by Executive Director, Aaron T. Watson)*

This month's Employee of the Month is Nicholas DeNero, Mr. De Nero is a Laborer for Park Maintenance. He began his employment with the Park Commission in August of 2019.

**COMMUNICATIONS** *(Presented by Executive Director, Aaron T. Watson)*

- **C-1: 2020-21 Deer Management Report:**
  - o Our deer management report for the 2020-21 season is completed and has been provided for your review.
  - o This year, a total of 361 deer were harvested over a total of 3,977 acres within our park system.
  - o The harvest goals for both Baldpate and Mercer Meadows were met and exceeded.
  - o 77 deer were donated, bringing our total venison donation to 285 deer or 42,180 servings since beginning the donation program.
  - o We are very excited to learn that our deer population inside of the Mercer County Park has dropped to 32 deer per square mile. In 2018, the population was at 70 deer per square mile.
- **C-2 2020 Wildlife Center Journal**

**OLD BUSINESS** *(Presented by Joe Pizza, Deputy Director)*- **In House Staff Operations:**

Masons have Installation of concrete pavers at various Park Commission facilities

**Park Commission Capital Projects:**

- **Paving Project in the Mercer County Park (Rink area and walking trails)**-This project has been completed.
  - **Sewer upgrade at the West Pump Station (Mercer County Park)**-This project is on-going, and completion is anticipated in the coming weeks.
  - **Raptor Flight Cage at the Mercer Count Wildlife Center**-This project is on schedule to be substantially completed within the coming week.
  - **Drainage Upgrades at Princeton Country Club**-Drainage upgrades have been completed at holes 7,8 and 15.
  - **Curbing Upgrades at Mercer Oaks East**-Curbing upgrades have been completed.
- **Hopewell Valley Golf Course**-A modified opening is anticipated for early July; with the pool opening first; followed by the Course upon completion of all upgrades; pending receipt of all permitting.
- **In-house-**
- Clubhouse renovations have been completed.
- **Capital Upgrades:**
- **Bridge Replacement:** Bridge delivery is on schedule; anticipated to be delivered in June.
  - **Potable Well Drilling-**The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) is performing water quality testing at the site of the new well.
  - **Septic System Repairs-**The current T-1 Permit has been found acceptable; which will reduce the timeframe required for repairs.
  - **Cart Path Upgrades-**Paving operations are currently underway; with completion anticipated in the coming weeks.

**NEW BUSINESS****RESOLUTIONS:**

R-1. MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES THE ACCEPTANCE OF DONATED FUNDS FROM NED BROERSMA, BOY SCOUT TROOP 333; FOR THE PURPOSE OF ASSISTING IN THE ACQUISITION OF NATIVE TREES AND SHRUBS FOR HABITAT RESTORATION IN THE MERCER COUNTY PARK SYSTEM. NED BROERSMA, BOY SCOUT TROOP 333 AMOUNT: \$500.00. PARK COMMISSION COST: \$0

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

- R-2. THE MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING AGREEMENT WITH D&R GREENWAY LAND TRUST FOR THE PURPOSE OF SUPPORTING A 2021 WATERSHED FELLOWSHIP AT THE TULPEHAKING NATURE CENTER. D&R GREENWAY LAND TRUST AMOUNT: UP TO, BUT NOT TO EXCEED \$13,973.00. PARK COMMISSION COST: \$0. PERIOD: JUNE 1, 2021 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 1, 2021
- On Motion by Commissioner Schulz, seconded by Commissioner Mooij.
  - **Ayes:** Caton, Davis, Forrester, Gardner, Martinez, Mooij, Schulz and Smith. **Nays:** None. **Abstain** None. **Absent:** None.
- R-3. MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES COMPETITIVE CONTRACTING FOR WATER QUALITY MONITORING AND LAKE MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION WATERBODIES AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS
- On Motion by Commissioner Forrester, seconded by Commissioner Mooij.
  - **Ayes:** Caton, Davis, Forrester, Gardner, Martinez, Mooij, Schulz and Smith. **Nays:** None. **Abstain** None. **Absent:** None.
- R-4. MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES NEGOTIATIONS FOR PINE SHAVINGS FOR A PERIOD OF SIX (6) MONTHS WITH THE OPTION TO EXTEND SIX (6) MONTHS FOR THE MERCER COUNTY STABLES (AB2021-11B)
- On Motion by Commissioner Gardner, seconded by Commissioner Forrester.
  - **Ayes:** Caton, Davis, Forrester, Gardner, Martinez, Mooij, Schulz and Smith. **Nays:** None. **Abstain** None. **Absent:** None.
- R-5. RESCIND RESOLUTION NO. 2021-59, ADOPTED APRIL 28, 2021; FOR THE AWARD OF BID RECEIVED APRIL 23, 2021, TO TOTAL TURF GOLF SERVICES, INC. FOR GOLF COURSE CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATIONS SERVICES AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS FOR THE MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION; FOR THE PERIOD OF ONE (1) YEAR FROM NOTICE TO PROCEED; IN THE TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED: \$489,876.95 (AB2021-20)
- On Motion by Commissioner Schulz, seconded by Commissioner Gardner.
  - **Ayes:** Caton, Davis, Forrester, Gardner, Martinez, Mooij, Schulz and Smith. **Nays:** None. **Abstain** None. **Absent:** None.
- R-6. AWARD OF BID RECEIVED APRIL 23, 2021, TO TOTAL TURF GOLF SERVICES, INC. FOR GOLF COURSE CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATIONS SERVICES AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS FOR THE MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION. PERIOD: ONE (1) YEAR FROM NOTICE TO PROCEED. TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED: \$175,000.00 (AB2021-20)
- On Motion by Commissioner Schulz, seconded by Commissioner Forrester.
  - **Ayes:** Caton, Davis, Forrester, Gardner, Martinez, Mooij, Schulz and Smith. **Nays:** None. **Abstain** None. **Absent:** None.

- R-7. AWARD OF BID RECEIVED APRIL 13, 2021, TO GIACORP CONTRACTING, INC. FOR INSTALLATION OF DEER FENCE AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS FOR THE MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION. PERIOD: TWO (2) YEARS FROM NOTICE TO PROCEED. TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED: \$153,000.00 (AB2021-14)
- On Motion by Commissioner Forrester, seconded by Commissioner Schulz.
  - **Ayes:** Caton, Davis, Forrester, Gardner, Martinez, Mooij, Schulz and Smith. **Nays:** None. **Abstain** None. **Absent:** None.
- R-8. MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE A COMPETITIVE CONTRACT WITH ULTRA ARTISTS, LLC FOR CONCERT SERIES ENTERTAINMENT PROCUREMENT SERVICES FOR THE MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION. PERIOD: MAY 3, 2021 THROUGH MAY 2, 2022; WITH AN OPTION TO EXTEND THE ORIGINAL CONTRACT PERIOD FOR FOUR (4) ADDITIONAL ONE (1) YEAR PERIODS. TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED: \$109,500.00; WITH OPTION YEAR AMOUNTS TO BE DETERMINED (CC-2021-01B)
- On Motion by Commissioner Gardner, seconded by Commissioner Martinez.
  - **Ayes:** Caton, Davis, Forrester, Gardner, Martinez, Mooij, Schulz and Smith. **Nays:** None. **Abstain** None. **Absent:** None.
- R-9. MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE A WINDOW CONTRACT WITH SOUNDTRACKS PRODUCTION SERVICES, LLC FOR SOUND AND LIGHTING PRODUCTION SERVICES FOR 2021 CONCERTS SERIES EVENTS FOR THE MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION. TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED: \$34,900.00
- On Motion by Commissioner Forrester, seconded by Commissioner Gardner.
  - **Ayes:** Caton, Davis, Forrester, Gardner, Martinez, Mooij, Schulz and Smith. **Nays:** None. **Abstain** None. **Absent:** None.
- R-10. MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH AULT CLARK AND ASSOCIATES (AWARDED THROUGH A NON-FAIR AND OPEN PROCESS) FOR IRRIGATION SYSTEM DESIGN SERVICES FOR THE HOPEWELL VALLEY GOLF COURSE, TOWNSHIP OF HOPEWELL. AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED: \$31,900.00. PERIOD: JUNE 1, 2021 THROUGH MAY 31, 202
- On Motion by Commissioner Mooij, seconded by Commissioner Gardner.
  - **Ayes:** Caton, Davis, Forrester, Gardner, Martinez, Mooij, Schulz and Smith. **Nays:** None. **Abstain** None. **Absent:** None.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT** *(Presented by Executive Director, Aaron T. Watson)***Update on Governor's Executive Order:**

- **INDOOR MASKS:** The Governor is removing the statewide indoor mask mandate effective May 28th. Businesses and entities overseeing indoor spaces may continue requiring individuals to wear a face mask. The Governor is strongly encouraging unvaccinated individuals to continue wearing a face mask in any indoor public setting.
  - **SOCIAL DISTANCING:** The Governor is removing the requirement that individuals maintain six feet of social distancing in indoor and outdoor settings effective May 28th. Businesses may continue requiring individuals to maintain six feet of social distancing.
  - **DANCE FLOORS, BARS, AND RESTAURANTS:** The Governor is removing all prohibitions from dance floors and bars and restaurants and from ordering food and drinks while standing at bars and restaurants; effective May 28th.
  - **INDOOR GATHERINGS:** The Governor is removing all capacity restrictions on indoor gatherings; effective June 4th.
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- **NJ Recreation and Parks Association award for Stony Brook Pedestrian Bridge Project-**This month, the Park Commission, Planning Department and engineering firm, Engineering & Land Planning received an award from the NJRPA for excellence in design for the Stony Brook Bridge. The bridge provides an important final connection to the Lawrence Hopewell Trail (LHT) in Mercer Meadows.
  - **Capital City Farm:**
    - o Trenton City Council officially approved the management agreement assigning management of Capital City Farm to the Park Commission.
    - o Farming under PC Manager Logan Davis is now underway, soon with the assistance of one (1) seasonal laborer.
    - o The Strawbale Garden is already producing lettuce, kale, spinach, parsley, cilantro, scallions and green garlic for the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen (TASK).
    - o CCF will host a "Meet & Greet" event for partners and supporters of the Strawbale Garden on May 27 from 6:00-8:00 pm.
  - **Moore's Station Quarry Master Plan:**
    - o The third public meeting in the Moore's Station Quarry Master Plan process took place on May 19. A draft plan was presented for public review and input.
    - o The Robbinsville, Ewing, Trenton and Hopewell Valley school districts participated in a Zoom meeting with Simone Collins to share students' ideas for the Moore's Station Quarry Master Plan.
  - **Miry Run Ponds (DS21)-** A final schematic design and summary of permitting requirements for Phase I improvements is due from the Contracted Consultant, Van Note Harvey Associates, in June.

- **Trenton Fishing Wharf-** Contracted Consulting firm, Stantec has developed a park concept plan for the Trenton Fishing Wharf to complement and enhance the flood control project to be constructed at the site by NJDOT.
- **Openings:**
  - o **Marina-**Opened on May 24 [Weekends only from Memorial Day to June 15.
  - o **Splash Park-**Opened on May 24 [Weekends only from Memorial Day to June 15; and then will be open Tuesday thru Sunday (closed Mondays) from June 15 through Labor Day].

#### **GOLF OPERATIONS:**

- Golf continues to have record numbers of participation; this month's numbers were 4,000 participants. We have also had our county high schools using our courses for practice and matches.

#### **TENNIS OPERATIONS:**

- **Summer League-**Over 662 players have registered to date.
- **2021 Summer Junior Tennis Camp-**Registration is on-going. Over 246 spots have been sold.
- **Tennis/Pickleball** –Over 1,146 Tennis and Pickleball ID cards have been sold since January 1, 2021.
- **Indoor Seasonal Courts-**Registration for 2021-22 Indoor Seasonal Courts is on-going. Over ninety-six 96 courts have been sold to date.

#### **RECREATION AND EVENTS:**

- **Bike Share Program with Verve S-**We are currently coordinating with Verve S for delivery of bikes to the Park Commission within the coming weeks.

#### **MARKETING AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH:**

- **Juneteenth Celebration Activities**—A variety of events and activities are being planned for the upcoming Juneteenth celebration. The Mercer Stables Juneteenth event will include a riding demonstration by the Crazy Faith Riders, and historical information about Black cowboys; which is currently being researched and written by the Outdoor Equity Alliance.
- **Baldpate Nature Camp**—Thanks to scholarship donations raised to support our diversity and inclusion efforts, the Center for Child and Family Achievement (CFFA) will send five (5) of their rising seventh-grade students to Baldpate Nature Camp in July.
- **Swim-to-Row Program**— The Park Commission assisted the Capital Area Y with transportation for Swim-to-Row students this month. Students who participated in this month's program learned swimming stroke techniques.

#### **STEWARDSHIP:**

- **Ash Loss/ Reforestation Efforts**— Sourland Conservancy interns have begun planting select trees and shrubs in the forest adjacent to the Summit Trail and Ridge Trail at Baldpate to fill canopy gaps created by dying ash trees.
- **Rosedale Lake Harmful Algal Bloom Grant:** Our project partner, the Watershed Institute, deployed 1,000 sq. ft. of constructed floating wetlands in Rosedale Lake this past Friday as part of the measures being taken to control Harmful Algal Blooms in the waterbody.

**ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION**

- **Baldpate Summer Camp:**
  - o Camp capacity has increased to ten (10) per session due to improving COVID restrictions.
  - o We have added a camp program in July that will serve children entering grades 7-9.
  - o Advertisement for additional camp openings has been sent through County email blast.
- **Stormwater Walk**-We held our first ever Stormwater Walk at the nature center. Attendance was very positive, with interest shown by adults and children alike.

**HOWELL FARM:**

- **Recent Public Programs**-Our "Corn Planting" program had an attendance of 257 visitors; bringing 2021 overall Saturday Farm attendance to over 6,612.
- **Upcoming Public Programs:**
  - o June 5: Old Time Baseball
  - o June 12: Dairying
  - o June 19: Pleasant Valley House Tours; Juneteenth Participation
  - o June 26: Wheat Harvest & Wheat Weaving
  - o July 3: Ice Cream Party

**MERCER COUNTY STABLES:****New Initiatives:**

- **Power Tools for Living Program**- Oaks Integrated Care Mercer House was the first organization to commit to the program; the Center for Child and Family Achievement provided a subsequent commitment to the program.
- **Summer programs** - This summer, Mercer Stables will offer lessons, adaptive riding, and a menu of day-programs. On-line registration will open on June 1.

**Some of the programs scheduled are :**

- o Groom, Tack, and Ride
- o Family Ride Time
- o Pony Ride Days
- o Pony Partners, Horse Partners
- o Adopt-A-Horse
- o Read to the Horses
- o Mommy & Me, Daddy & Me

**WILDLIFE CENTER**

- **Interns**-New volunteer summer college interns continue to arrive at the Wildlife Center. For twelve (12) weeks, there will be eighteen (18) total scheduled interns.
- The Spring season has arrived with an influx of young animals, including: Common Raccoons, Eastern Screech Owls, and Mallards.
- **Outdoor Education Environment**-Self-guided tours are seeing significant foot traffic. Hours of operation are now: Wednesday-Sunday; from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.



**PUBLIC SESSION:**

- **The following Members of the Public Addressed the Commission:**
  - o **Nora Schuda (Ewing Township)**
  - o **Don Nociolo (Hopewell Township)**
  
- The Mercer County Park Commission welcomes the public’s participation and comments. If you wish to participate in the public comment section of our meeting you may do so via the Zoom messaging/chat feature or by the, “hand-raising” feature, where you will be prompted to speak to provide your public comment.
  
- The rules and guidelines for public comment may be found on the Commission’s website. Please be aware that individuals are limited to a maximum of three (3) minutes during their comment. However, the Commission may, at its option, extend time for certain individuals during the public comment period.
  
- Each member of the public who wishes to speak during the public comment period shall give the speaker’s full name, organization name (if applicable) and Municipality of Residence.
  
- Individuals may provide comments, or materials, by regular mail to the Mercer County Park Commission headquarters or via email to [Hmauro@mercercounty.org](mailto:Hmauro@mercercounty.org)

**JUNE 30, 2021 PARK COMMISSION MEETING (ANNUAL MEETING):**

- Via Zoom Webinar Link; to take place at 5:30 pm.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On motion by Commissioner Gardner, Adjournment took place at 6:29pm

Heather Mauro

*Heather Mauro*

Executive Secretary

Secretary to the Mercer County Park Commission