

NOTICE

MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING ACT, CHAPTER 231, P.L. 1975

NOTICE is hereby given that the Mercer County Park Commission will hold their **NOVEMBER 2021 PUBLIC MEETING** on **Wednesday, November 17, 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).

- **When:** Nov 17, 2021 05:30 PM Eastern Time
- **Topic:** November 17, 2021 Mercer County Park Commission Public Meeting Zoom Webinar
- **Webinar ID:** 839 4632 2825
- **Passcode:** 879996
- **Please use the link below to join the webinar:**
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83946322825?pwd=TXNnSjBxUWNJbnNDZmwrK2VEeE5JZz09>
- **Or Telephone:** US: +1 929 436 2866 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 669 900 6833 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799

AGENDA

➤ **CALL TO ORDER:**

Commissioner Schulz called the November 17, 2021 meeting of the Mercer County Park Commission to order at 5:34 pm, via Zoom Webinar platform.

➤ **ROLL CALL:**

The following Commissioners answered the Roll Call of the Secretary:

- Caton, Forrester, Martinez, Mooij, and Schulz.

The following Commissioners were absent: Davis, Gardner, and 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, TRENTONIAN, 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 OCTOBER 27, 2021 PARK COMMISSION PUBLIC MEETING**

- On Motion by Commissioner Mooij; seconded by Commissioner Forrester, by voice vote, the October 27, 2021 Mercer County Park Commission Meeting Minutes were approved as presented.
- **Ayes:** Caton, Forrester, Martinez, Mooij, and Schulz. **Nays:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Davis, Gardner and Smith.

➤ **APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 2021 MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION BILLS:**

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

➤ **APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 2021 PARK COMMISSION REVENUE REPORTS :**

Executive Director Aaron T. Watson provided a synopsis of the October 2021 Park Commission Revenue Reports

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

➤ **NEW BUSINESS**
RESOLUTIONS:

R-1. MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES THE 2022 MONTHLY PUBLIC MEETING SCHEDULE OF THE GOVERNING BODY

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

R-2. MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE A MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT AND ACCOMPANYING MEMBER PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT WITH THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION; DIVISION OF WATER MONITORING AND STANDARDS; TO PERFORM THE ROLE OF HOST AGENCY FOR THE AMERICORPS NEW JERSEY WATERSHED AMBASSADORS PROGRAM AT THE TULPEHAKING NATURE CENTER FACILITY. PERIOD: SEPTEMBER 8, 2021 THROUGH AUGUST 31, 2022. NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, DIVISION OF WATER MONITORING AND STANDARDS AMOUNT: \$1,000

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

R-3. MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXERCISE THE OPTION TO EXTEND THE COMPETITIVE CONTRACT WITH VERVE S, FOR BIKE SHARE SERVICES AT VARIOUS MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION FACILITIES. PERIOD: FEBRUARY 1, 2022 THROUGH, JANUARY 31, 2023. NO COST TO PARK COMMISSION. ALL OTHER TERMS REMAIN THE SAME (CC2020-4B)

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

Commissioner Schulz asked if the Administration has found the services provided to be adequate?

Executive Director Watson indicated that the services have been adequate, and shall continue to be provided at no cost to the Park Commission

R-4. MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXERCISE THE OPTION TO EXTEND THE COMPETITIVE CONTRACT WITH ULTRA ARTISTS, LLC, FOR CONCERT SERIES ENTERTAINMENT PROCUREMENT SERVICES FOR THE MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION (CC2021-01B). PERIOD: MAY 3, 2022 THROUGH MAY 2, 2023. AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED: \$109,500.00. ALL OTHER TERMS REMAIN THE SAME. (CC2021-01B)

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

R-5. MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE AN EXTRAORDINARY UNSPECIFIABLE SERVICES (EUS) AGREEMENT WITH RHYTHM AND BLUES STABLES, LLC FOR FARRIER SERVICES FOR THE MERCER COUNTY STABLES FACILITY. TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED: \$50,000.00 PERIOD: JANUARY 1, 2022 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2022

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

R-6. MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH FOUNDATION EQUINE WELLNESS (AWARDED THROUGH A NON-FAIR AND OPEN PROCESS) FOR PROFESSIONAL VETERINARY SERVICES FOR THE MERCER STABLES AND HOWELL LIVING HISTORY FARM FACILITIES. AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED: \$60,000.00 [MERCER STABLES AMOUNT: \$57,000.00; HOWELL LIVING HISTORY FARM AMOUNT: \$3,000.00]. PERIOD: JANUARY 1, 2022 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2022

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

R-7. MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH ENGINEERING AND LAND PLANNING (AWARDED THROUGH A NON-FAIR AND OPEN PROCESS) FOR PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR CULVERT AND DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENTS NEAR MERCER LAKE BOAT RAMP IN THE MERCER COUNTY PARK. AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED: \$26,600.00. PERIOD: DECEMBER 1, 2021 THROUGH NOVEMBER 30, 2022

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

R-8. MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXERCISE THE OPTION TO EXTEND THE CONTRACT WITH ROSEDALE MILLS FOR THE NEGOTIATED REBID OF PINE SHAVINGS FOR A PERIOD OF SIX (6) MONTHS WITH THE OPTION TO EXTEND FOR SIX (6) MONTHS. PERIOD: JANUARY 1, 2022 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2022. AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED: \$12,000.00. ALL OTHER TERMS REMAIN THE SAME. (AB2021-11N)

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

➤ **EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH**

(Presented by Executive Director, Aaron T. Watson; Nominated by Superintendent of Parks, Anthony Cucchi)

- This month's employee of the month is Ms. Jenn Rogers, Director of Stewardship. Ms. Rogers began her employment with the Park Commission in November of 2008 as our Naturalist and became Director of Stewardship in 2019.

➤ **VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION**

(Presented by Executive Director, Aaron T. Watson; Nominated by Howell Farm Director, Pete Watson)

- Long-time student volunteer Evan Miller completed his Eagle Scout project at Howell Living History Farm on September 25th of this year. The project was to improve the farm's entrance area by building sections of historical snake fence either side of the entry gates, restoring the hedgerow affected by ash borer losses; along with providing new entrance signage. The project involved 383 hours of volunteer time, \$1,784 in donated materials, and the management of 39 scouts and scout parents.
- Due to COVID-related delays and material shortages, the project took 23 months to complete, presenting Evan with challenges well over and above those normally encountered by Eagle Scouts. Undeterred, he patiently and carefully advanced each of the project's objectives by working closely with the farm's management, fellow Scouts, and with volunteers.

➤ **COMMUNICATIONS:**

There were no formal communications for November.

➤ **OLD BUSINESS** *(Presented by Deputy Director, Joe Pizza)*

- **Golf:**
 - Golf continues to see record revenues.
 - On November 15 the Black Friday Gift Card Sales Promotion begins
 - The Princeton Country Club and Mountain View Golf Course are scheduled to host a Thanksgiving Day Shotgun
 - The Hardest Day of Golf event is scheduled for November 26, 2021
- **Maintenance:**
 - In-House staff is currently working on tree-trimming
 - Winterization of Facilities
 - Seeding and Fertilizing of Fields

➤ **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Presented by Executive Director, Aaron T. Watson

NEW INITIATIVES

- **Capital City Urban Farm:**
 - A Pizza Garden is being established at Capital City Farm and will be the focus of educational programs about urban farming; one of which is about the history and present-day popularity of Trenton's famous *tomato pies*. Garlic and winter wheat is planted and looking good.
 - Initial improvements for future programming are underway. An open-air pavilion is scheduled to be installed by in-house forces in the coming month.
- **Dam Site 21** – Princeton Hydro and Van Note Harvey Associates are advancing the next phase of permitting and design for park improvements and dredging portions of the lake. Geotechnical testing at the site will be scheduled next by the consultant team.

GOLF OPERATIONS

- **This month, golf courses continued to host successful late-fall outings and events:**
 - o Mercer Oaks held the successful Lawrence Knights of Columbus Outing. This outing helped raise \$9,000 for the organization's charities.
 - o Golf courses held the last Major Amateur Event at Mercer Oaks West, East, and Mountain View. Over sixty (60) Seniors participated in the late fall event.

TENNIS OPERATIONS

- In addition to our main tennis facility in the Mercer County Park we opened our Platform Tennis courts at HVGC this month. The har-tru courts at Hopewell will remain open for another few weeks.

RECREATION AND EVENTS

- **“Light the Night”** – The Leukemia and Lymphoma held their “Light the Night” walkathon and fireworks event in the Mercer County Park on October 30.
- **Lacrosse and Soccer Showcases** –This month, the park hosted multiple Lacrosse showcases and a Soccer College Showcase.

MARKETING AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- **Bike Drive** – The date of April 9, 2022 has been identified for the Boys & Girls Club Bike Exchange. In addition to the Nature Center, Mercer County Park and the Hunt House Barn, we will add a new location along Valley Road for the 2022 event.

STEWARDSHIP

- **Urban Stewardship** – This month, Stewardship staff hosted two (2) workshop sessions at the annual Watershed Institute conference. The topic for the sessions was “Vacant Lot Restoration” and had sixty (60) participants.
- **Roebing Park Restoration** -As part of the on-going marshland restoration efforts at Roebing Park, the Stewardship team installed 300 marsh plants in areas that have been cleared of invasive Phragmites.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

- **Youth Leader Program** – The Environmental Youth Leaders program continues to meet on a weekly basis. Most recently, these high school program participants performed a marsh clean-up at Roebing Park.

HOWELL FARM

- **2021 Corn Maze** – This year's Corn Maze attracted over 6,250 visitors.
- **Share the Harvest Operations and Programs** – Fall harvest operations have increased food bank contributions of vegetables, grain products, and eggs to over 29,600 pounds since March 26 of this year. When combined with the 7,400 pounds of vegetables grown and donated by Capital City Farm, the 2021 Park Commission total is now at approximately 18.5 tons.

MERCER COUNTY STABLES

- **Trail Riding-** The Stables received a tremendous response from recent marketing efforts. Due to the demand, Saturday trail riding was added, making trail riding available to the public seven (7) days per week.
- **Special Olympic Riders-** Mercer Stables recently hosted the Special Olympics New Jersey Area 11 Local Program. Our riders did very well, with many earning a medal. Ribbons and medals were presented via virtually on November 4th.

WILDLIFE CENTER

- Wildlife Center Director and key staff recently completed an on-line Raptor Training Certification course provided by the University of Minnesota.

➤ **GENERAL PUBLIC SESSION:**

The following Members of the Public Addressed the Commission:

- Tom Lederer (Municipality of Princeton)
- Deb Thomas (Township of Lawrence)
- Kevin Papas (Township of Lawrence)
- Hope Copeland
- 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.

➤ **DECEMBER 15, 2021 PARK COMMISSION MEETING:**

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

➤ **ADJOURNMENT**

- On motion by Commissioner Martinez, seconded by Commissioner Schulz, Adjournment took place at 6:28pm.

Heather Mauro

Heather Mauro

Executive Secretary

Secretary to the Mercer County Park Commission