

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 DECEMBER PUBLIC MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2023; TO BEGIN AT 5:30 PM; AT THE MERCER COUNTY STABLES, 431 FEDERAL CITY ROAD #B, PENNINGTON, NEW JERSEY 08534

THE COMMISSION RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION REGARDING THE DISCLOSURE OF MATERIALS, REPORTS, AND RECORDS OF PERSONNEL, IN PARTICULAR, DISCLOSURE AND DISSEMINATION OF MATERIALS OF PUBLIC CONCERN, INVESTIGATIONS, MATTERS INVOLVING CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT AND POSSIBLE VIOLATION OF LAW

AGENDA

➤ **ROLL CALL:**

The following Commissioners answered the Roll Call of the Secretary:

- Davis, Horne, Koontz, Schulz and Smith.
- Commissioner Davis joined the meeting via phone conference
- Commissioner Mooij joined the meeting at 5:41pm.

The following Commissioners were absent:

- Gardner, Horne and Martinez.

➤ **CALL TO ORDER:**

- Chair Forrester called the December 20, 2023 meeting of the Mercer County Park Commission to order at 5:38 pm at the Mercer County Stables, 431 Federal City Road, #B, Pennington, New Jersey 08534

➤ **FLAG SALUTE:**

- Commissioner Forrester led the Pledge of Allegiance and the Salute to the Flag.

➤ **NOTICE OF MEETING:** *Board Secretary Mauro*

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.

➤ **APPROVAL OF REGULAR MINUTES FROM THE NOVEMBER 20, 2023 MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION MEETING:**

- On Motion by Commissioner Schulz and seconded by Commissioner Koontz, by voice vote, the November 20, 2023 Mercer County Park Commission Meeting Minutes were approved as presented.
- **Ayes:** Davis, Forrester, Koontz, Schulz and Smith. **Nays:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Horne, Gardner, Martinez and Mooij.

➤ **APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2023 MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION BILLS:**

- On Motion by Commissioner Schulz and seconded by Commissioner Koontz, by voice vote, the November/December bills of the Mercer County Park Commission were approved as presented.
- **Ayes:** Davis, Forrester, Koontz, Schulz and Smith. **Nays:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Horne, Gardner, Martinez and Mooij.

➤ **NOVEMBER 2023 REVENUE REPORT** (*Executive Director, Aaron T. Watson, provided a synopsis of the November 2023 Park Commission Revenue Report*)

Commissioner Koontz asked for additional background on the Concert Ticket Sales line item

Executive Director Watson replied that the Park Commission has not received the return expected for Concert Ticket sales and are continuing to search to find the right entertainment fit for the venue.

- On Motion by Commissioner Forrester and seconded by Commissioner Schulz, by voice vote, the November 2023 Park Commission Revenue Reports were approved as presented.
- **Ayes:** Davis, Forrester, Koontz, Mooij, Schulz and Smith. **Nays:** None. **Abstain:** None. **Absent:** Horne, Gardner, Martinez.

➤ **OLD BUSINESS:** (*Deputy Director, J. Pizza*)

Maintenance:

- 4000 Sq. Ft of Sod Installation
- On-Going Tree Removal
- Accessing Moores Station Quarry 2x per week for on-going maintenance

Golf:

- 700k in Gift Card sales reported for 2023.

Commissioner Schulz asked for the current list of 2024 winter projects for the MCPC

Deputy Director Pizza stated that the list is in-progress and will finalize in the coming weeks.

➤ **NEW BUSINESS:**

- RESOLUTIONS:

R-1 MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION APPROVES THE 2024 PARK COMMISSION FACILITY RATES AND FEES SCHEDULE; EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2024

Commissioner Schulz stated that golf cart fees are currently included at \$17.00 and comparable courses' fees are between \$27-\$32; which presents as an opportunity for a revenue position.

Deputy Director Pizza stated that the County's Courses are, Mid-Range in pricing structure.

Executive Director Watson stated that the County does offer discounted Senior fees.

Commissioner Schulz asked what our partnership with the First Tee of Greater Trenton yields regarding access to programs.

Commissioner Mooij stated that she was glad that there had been an analysis of our Rates and Fees in comparison to other similar programs and that we were using the information to help guide our fees.

Commissioner Davis asked for additional programs as well as appropriate fees to ensure everyone in the public could utilize our parks, regardless of income.

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

R-2 MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES THE 2024 REGULAR MEETING SCHEDULE OF THE PUBLIC BODY OF THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

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

R-3 MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE AND SUBMIT A FORMAL MERCER MEADOWS FOREST STEWARDSHIP PLAN TO THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FOR APPROVAL. PERIOD: TEN (10) YEARS FROM APPROVAL BY THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION. NO COST TO PARK COMMISSION

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

R-4 MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE A MARKETING AGREEMENT WITH GARDEN STATE BASEBALL, INC. FOR THE EXCHANGE OF EQUIVALENTLY VALUED GOLF SERVICES FOR ADVERTISING SERVICES AT THE TRENTON THUNDER BASEBALL STADIUM. PERIOD: MARCH 1, 2024 THROUGH FEBRUARY 28, 2025

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

R-5 MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH SHUSTER EQUINE, LLC (AWARDED THROUGH A NON-FAIR AND OPEN PROCESS) FOR ON-CALL VETERINARY SERVICES FOR THE MERCER COUNTY STABLES. PERIOD: JANUARY 1, 2024 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2024. AMOUNT UP TO, BUT NOT TO EXCEED: \$8,000.00

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

R-6 MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE A BLANKET PURCHASE AGREEMENT WITH MULTIPLE VENDORS FOR THE ON-CALL PURCHASE AND DELIVERY OF PERISHABLE FOOD, BASED ON MARKET PRICING, FOR THE MERCER COUNTY STABLES, HOWELL LIVING HISTORY FARM AND MERCER COUNTY WILDLIFE CENTER. PERIOD: JANUARY 1, 2024 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2024. TOTAL AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED: \$101,500.00

MERCER COUNTY STABLES: \$39,000.00

HOWELL LIVING HISTORY FARM: \$18,000.00

MERCER COUNTY WILDLIFE CENTER: \$44,500.00

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

Counsel, R. D. Blake, Esq. entered the Late Starter on the Regular Agenda

LATE STARTER:

R-7 MERCER COUNTY PARK COMMISSION AUTHORIZES THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT (AWARDED THROUGH A NON-FAIR AND OPEN PROCESS) WITH CLARKE CATON HINTZ, TO PROVIDE PROFESSIONAL ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR PHASE I UPGRADES TO MERCER COUNTY WATERFRONT PARK, CITY OF TRENTON, COUNTY OF MERCER. PERIOD: THROUGH COMPLETION OF PROJECT. AMOUNT: \$250,000.00

Commissioner Koontz asked for additional background

Executive Director Watson stated that this Agreement will be the design Contract for Phase I Construction upgrades at the Trenton Thunder Ballpark. Funding for this design phase is through a County American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) federal grant.

Executive Director Watson stated that funds for construction and further design will be through a pending \$5M congressional earmark legislated by Assemblyman Verrilli.

Commissioner Koontz asked how many design and how many construction phases are planned

Deputy Director Pizza stated that there will be additional phases for both; which are in the planning process and are anticipated to have a total project cost at approximate \$25M.

Executive Director Watson stated that in order for the Lessee of the Stadium, Garden State Baseball, to engage a Major League Baseball team, the stadium must be brought up to MLB standards.

Commissioner Forrester asked how often MLB standards change.

Commissioner Schulz stated that if changes are not updated, the facility will not be able to house a MLB-associated team.

Commissioner Koontz asked what the plan is proposing

Executive Director Watson stated that we are not in receipt of the proposal or estimate for larger phase of work from the Consultant.

Commissioner Schulz stated that the plan would include a complete overhaul of the field; which will require a large amount of funds.

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

➤ **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT** (*Presented by Executive Director, Aaron T. Watson*)
Executive Director Aaron T. Watson reported on the 2023 Park Commission Annual Report and provided Board Members with a copy for their use.

➤ **PUBLIC SESSION:**

- 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.
- **Public Comment:**
No Public Comment was received.

➤ **JANUARY 31, 2024 PARK COMMISSION MEETING; TO TAKE PLACE AT 5:30PM AT:**
Historic Hunt Barn
197 Blackwell Road
Pennington, NJ 08534

➤ **ADJOURNMENT:**

- On motion by Commissioner Koontz and seconded by Commissioner Horne, by affirmative voice vote, Adjournment took place at 6:31 pm.

Heather B. Mauro

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Executive Secretary

Secretary to the Board

Mercer County Park Commission