

APRIL 12, 2011  
ANDOVER TOWNSHIP  
RECREATION COMMITTEE

The regular meeting of the Andover Township Recreation Committee was called to order at 7:38 pm by Vice Chairman Brian Robinson with the following members present: Mike Morel, Jodi Halteman, Maechele Alborano and Sabrina Burke. Janet Bardello and Ed Burgio were absent. Township Committee Liaison, Deputy Mayor Mike Lensak and Committeewoman Gail Phoebus were also present. Applicant for the Alternate #3 position, Bill Clark was present.

OPENING STATEMENT: The Chairman noted compliance with Chapter 231, P.L. 1975 as being met.

FLAG SALUTE

MINUTES: The approval of minutes from February 8, 2011 were made with a motion by Mike Morel and seconded by Jodi Halteman, all in favor. The approval of minutes from March 8, 2011 were made with a motion by Sabrina Burke and seconded by Maechele Alborano, all in favor.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: No one stepped forward to be recognized. Closed to the public.

CORRESPONDENCE SENT/RECEIVED:

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| 1. Elise Dondero & Bob Tanis, Tennis Instructors – Sparta Tennis | Letters requesting use of tennis courts at Hillside Park During renovation of courts At the Sparta Tennis Club |
| 2. US Sports   | Copy of the Andover 2011 Summer sports camps Schedule  |
| 3. Howard Richman, Square Dance Caller                           | Info and contract for square dance on Sept. 3 <sup>rd</sup>  |

At this time we reviewed all correspondence. The proposal for use of the public tennis courts at the park by the tennis pros from the Sparta Athletic Club was discussed. They are requesting consideration for their use of our courts since theirs will not be available due to refurbishing during the month of June. Discussion took place by the members and the consensus was that we indeed do have residents using the courts during the time period that is being requested which is 8 am to 4 pm. Also, the amount of money that we would be receiving for the use is not such a high figure that it would offset the inconvenience that our residents would have to deal with. It also sets a precedent that we might regret later on by allowing private groups to pay to use our facility which is Green Acres. The use of the courts is based on court courtesy whereby you play for an hour and then vacate if someone is waiting to use the courts. After much discussion, Mike Morel made a motion to deny the request, seconded by Brian Robinson, all in favor. The Director will contact the people and inform them that their request has been denied.

Next we reviewed the summer sports camp schedule provided by US Sports. We will distribute these schedules through the school system. We received a contract and information from Mr. Howard Richman, square dance caller to provide his services for the Family Day including a square dance, movie in the park, etc. on Labor Day weekend. We are a little hesitant to totally go forward with these plans until the budget is approved and we know exactly what our funding will be. Everyone agreed that a family square dance would be a great addition to the day and the only expense for this activity would be the caller's fee.

At this time, Jodi Halteman made a motion to file the Correspondence. Maechele Alborano seconded the motion. All in favor.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Finalize plans for Easter Egg Hunt: The Director reported that Ashley Frazzel is once again filling the plastic Easter Eggs for the hunt this coming Saturday at 12 noon. This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year that she is assisting us in this way. Maechele Alborano and her daughters have volunteered to fill the goodie bags for the children. We certainly appreciate this help. This year we are adding specials to each age group. We will put a gold or silver wrapped chocolate coin in 4 eggs in each group and if a child gets one of these special eggs they can exchange it for the chocolate bunnies that we have set aside. We also discussed who was going to dress up as the Easter Bunny. Maechele Alborano volunteered her future son-in-law for the bunny duty. Brian Robinson who was our Easter Bunny last year reminded us that the bunny's tail needs to be reattached since it was pulled off last year! We are hopeful for decent weather but if it is too inclement we can go to the next Saturday, the day before Easter. Everyone will meet at the Hillside House between 10:30 and 11:00 am. At this time, Maechele Alborano had to leave the meeting.
2. Update on Trail and Lake Iliff Access Clearing: Mike Morel who is also a member of the Open Space Committee reported that at their meeting this was discussed and Committeewoman Gail Phoebus also gave us some info on this topic. We discussed the trail and we were glad to hear that the easement to Mulford Road was now approved.

Also, we discussed how we might never get to have the trail go further down Limecrest Road toward the Borough from Hillside Park due to a couple of parcels that we would not be able to get easements on since they are owned by 2 separate families and they are not interested in having the trail run through their property. So at this time we are satisfied that the trail will go from the Hillside Park over to the area near the Rolling Hills Condos. Also, we are expecting that the Sheriff's SLAP workers would get to taking care of the brush on the trail within the near future.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discussion with Bill Clark re membership: Bill Clark introduced himself to everyone and stated that he and his family, wife Wendy and son Ryan have been residents for 12 years. Bill's family uses all of the Recreation areas in town and he has decided that he would like to give something back to the town that they enjoy living in so much. Bill was given an overview of the annual activities that the committee promotes and provides and after further discussion regarding some of the activities, all the members present voiced their support of Bill becoming a member of the Recreation Committee. The Director will send a memo to the township Clerk/Administrator recommending that Bill Clark be appointed as Alternate #3 member.
2. Any discussions brought before the Committee by members present: At this time we all discussed how successful the Andover Township Day Celebration from 2010, complete with the fireworks display was. It was a lot of work and Committeewoman Phoebus made a suggestion that we should form a subcommittee for 2012 for the next township day and in that way the work would be shared by more people. Deputy Mayor Lensak came up with the idea that maybe we should consider just having a fireworks display this summer without any of the food, rides, music or other activities that are usual for the township day celebration. We could do this in lieu of the family movie night that we were planning on for Labor Day weekend.

After further discussion it was decided that we would keep with the former plan of including fireworks only with the Bi-Annual Andover Township Day Celebration. It makes it more special and the soliciting for donations to pay for the fireworks is extensive and doing it every other year is a lot easier on our merchants! We will hone our plans for our family fun/music/square dance/movie day in September.

At this time the Director informed the members that we have recently been the appreciative recipients of a 55" projection TV donated from a resident and it has been put in the Hillside House. We can certainly make use of it during the summer rec program on a rainy day. At this time, member Jodi Halteman asked if we were going to discuss plans for the summer rec program at this time. The Director stated that since the budget hasn't been approved and we don't know for sure if we will be fully funded, it seemed a little premature to do extensive planning.

The program was inserted into the Spring/Summer Newsletter that we had hoped would be delivered to our residents well in advance of this date. Due to problems with the Sparta Post Office, unfortunately they haven't gone out yet with the explanation being that it is 3<sup>rd</sup> class mail and waits till there is time for them to process it! We will make sure that in future we will have the newsletter at the post office well in advance of the dates that we need for them to be delivered to our residents. As it is now, there are 2 activities being advertised in the newsletter that will have already taken place by the time the residents learn of them.

At this time, member Sabrina Burke asked if she could speak about some of her concerns from the summer program last year. She stated that she sent her son last summer and she felt there could be some improvements. She was asked if she had filled out the parental survey and she said yes she did but at this time she doesn't remember exactly what she said on the survey. She asked if we read the surveys and was told that we definitely do. She felt that there could be improvement with the supervision. She felt that people weren't in charge of certain kids. The Director stated that one of the suggestions from the parental surveys that we are planning on including this year is having each teen counselor be in charge of the same group of children every day so that they can become closely acquainted and the supervision would be tighter.

Sabrina had some other ideas that she gathered from her child's participation in another program such as, name tags that are either color coded or theme coded so that the children knew visually who they should be with. Having name tags for each child was a good suggestion. With the younger children sometimes if their mother's are there at the park the children have a tendency to run off to visit with Mom during the time they should be doing their craft or participating in a game. Sabrina stated that it's a catch 22 situation because if the security is lacking, the parents feel they need to stay with their kids. Further discussion took place regarding the issue of keeping the children focused and stationary with their group and not running off into the park.

Unfortunately, our budget does not allow us to increase the number of counselors that we employ each summer. Jodi Halteman brought up that when the children go into the building between Arts/Crafts and Fun/Games for snack or a program they are unsupervised. She felt that the teen counselors should be with the children inside the building and not getting crafts ready at the picnic tables. Again it was brought up that with 4 counselors involved, getting crafts ready for the next group plus staying with the children in the building is sometimes very difficult to accomplish. Jodi stated that she would help in that area as she did last year and that we should attempt to get other parents involved.

Next Sabrina stated that she recalls a child just walking by himself in the parking lot. A resident in attendance at this meeting called out that she recalls this and she got the child and brought him back without assistance from any counselors. Jodi Halteman stated that it all took place in about 10 seconds. The Director questioned why no one was made aware of this situation and again Jodi Halteman stated that it was over in less than 10 seconds and under control. Sabrina then stated that no one was helping the children doing their arts and crafts. The Director stated that once again, if the parents don't make mention of these things in their parental surveys, and then we are not aware that these are issues. Without actually having the surveys in front of us tonight, looking back to when we reviewed them last year, the Director stated that there were 1 or possibly 2 surveys out of approximately 25 that mentioned the deficiencies discussed tonight. Sabrina stated that her son did enjoy the program but as a new member with the Recreation Committee she didn't know if any discussion had taken place and wanted to voice her concerns now.

In closing, the Director summed it up by stating that in considering the issues brought up tonight, it seems that unless we can get more counselors so that the ratio of counselor to kids is better, we will have potential problems with security. Sabrina used a number of say 5 children that the counselor would have to be in control of. Our numbers of counselors to kids is more like 10 to 15 kids per counselor. Both Jodi and Sabrina said that we need to get more Mom's involved as volunteers and since they are in the local Mom's Club they could take this on. Jodi stated that it has long been her opinion that there should be a person, not necessarily the Recreation Director since she has other job responsibilities, in charge of the program at the park at all times.

The Director stated that she definitely cannot always stay at the park for the entire program since she does have multiple job duties at town hall. If it is deemed that more adult supervision is needed than we are limited with our solutions because relying on volunteers whether they be adults or teens does not insure that the situation is covered. Volunteers many times wind up having other commitments that they need to attend to and you can't count on people to just show up. You might have 10 volunteers on one day and 2 on another.

The Director asked if both Jodi and Sabrina will be able to make a commitment to being at the park during the entire program so that we can always know that we have at least 2 adult supervisors that are connected to the Recreation Department in addition to the adult Director with the Arts/Crafts and Fun/Games programs. Both ladies mentioned that they will have children attending the school's Safety Town program so it might not be possible to commit to being there the whole time. They will have to work on this and try to get some other family members involved to help with their own children.

Jodi stated that she feels that the teen counselors need to be given more responsibility and direction and they have to be more attentive with the children. If crafts need to be prepared they need to get there earlier in the day to do this and not take time away from the children during the program to get it done.

The Director asked why these issues weren't brought up during or the latest, at the conclusion of the summer program last year where they could have been addressed immediately. If parents were not satisfied or had serious issues they should have been brought to the attention of any one of the people involved with the program. Vice Chair Brian Robinson stated that in reviewing the surveys, they were so positive. Jodi stated that looking back it wasn't so bad and Sabrina stated that she feels she definitely wrote her concerns in her survey and the Director stated that she does recall that we did read about the idea of having the same counselor stay with the same children for the duration of the program in both the Arts/Crafts and Fun/Games areas. We have every intention of using her suggestion this year. Mike Morel also mentioned that he recalls a couple of minor things mentioned that needed to be improved upon.

Discussion continued and in closing, it was stated that if we are funded fully for our programs we will do our very best in planning this program and perhaps make changes. Discussion also took place re the snacks provided to the children where the problem with children's allergies came up. It was suggested that we should not offer a snack and save the money from that and have the parents send it each day.

Maybe just offering water in lieu of juice is the way to go. Bill Clark mentioned that in his child's classroom snacks and allergies is an issue that causes concern. Further discussion followed re the snack issue and we talked about adopting the school's snack policy. We just need to define the school's snack policy since two members stated that it was different in their child's classroom at the same school! Deputy Mayor Lensak mentioned that it seems that the parents should be very much on top of the snack issue if their child suffers from severe food allergies. It seems like a huge liability to be putting on summer camp counselors.

As a committee, we will address these issues and do our best to provide a safe and fun program for the kids. We will be discussing the summer program at our next meeting for sure.

At this time Jodi Halteman asked how it is determined which athletic organizations get to use the township's fields. We have historically allowed the programs that cover the main sports for our kids (Lackawanna LL, Andover Soccer, Highland Soccer, Andover Girls Softball, etc.) use the fields. She had a concern re a select girl's softball program that had kids from several towns and is not a part of the Andover Girls Softball program taking over the softball field. She was assured that we do not operate that way. As the discussion furthered, it was determined that the fields that Jodi was referring to were fields located at the schools which the town has no authority to direct usage of. If the school board allows this new team to use the school's fields then the issue lays with the school board not the township.

#### APPLICATIONS:

1. May 20<sup>th</sup> - Children's Chorus of Sussex County – Fundraiser – Fee - \$400.00
2. June 17<sup>th</sup>/18th - Bob Youngs/Melissa Kinney – Wedding – Fee - \$400.00 plus \$100.00
3. July 10<sup>th</sup> – Marianna Annunziata – Birthday Party – Fee - \$400.00
4. July 16<sup>th</sup> - Sussex County Women's Forum – Fundraiser – Fee - \$200.00

#### ADJOURNMENT:

At this time, there being no further business to discuss, Mike Morel made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 pm. It was seconded by Jodi Halteman. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Brian Robinson, Vice Chair

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Jackie Huelbig, Secretary