

Parks & Recreation Commission

Meeting Minutes – February 27, 2019 [Approved 03-13-2019](#)

Meeting began at approx. 6:38 pm

Present: Ryan M., Ronalee P., Mike C., Lisa D., Sean T., Leigh-Anne D.

Guest: Angelica Medina

Field Use Fees

Maintenance Cost of Fields

Lisa said the DPW's intent is to hire a full-time seasonal employee to assist with field maintenance. Currently it is a 2-3 week cycle for mowing each field which is unacceptable. With a seasonal employee added, it should shorten the cycle to a more acceptable time frame. The hiring of this seasonal employee has not been determined yet as it is the decision of Neil Harrington. Lisa added that the seasonal employee would be hired to work July-October. If the DPW cannot hire a seasonal employee, it will be a 2-3-week cycle to complete the mowing of the fields. This does not account for weather. Another option would be hiring a company to mow but that may lead to union issues. Angelica said that for seasonal employees she and James Ryan have to apply for a certification from the Department of Revenue stating that the employees are seasonal. Under the law the seasonal employees cannot work more than 20 consecutive weeks. April through October is 32 weeks which could potentially allow the employee to claim unemployment which would cost the Town more money. James Ryan is looking into this for Angelica. Sean said that seasonal employees are supposed to do a job that is typically not done by other people throughout the year. Lisa replied that it isn't taking away from the 2 people that do that work; it is only assisting them in getting it done quicker. Mike replied that the fields can't be mowed when they are only a quarter inch long. It would kill the fields and waste the DPW funds. Angelica said she is working on a bid with specifications for the care and fertilization of the fields. However, there is a lack of irrigation available at the fields. Some fields do not have irrigation such as the Beach Field while others like Lions Park have not used the irrigation system in a couple of years. Mike said the irrigation system has never been winterized so the springs and the valves may be no good.

Angelica informed the Commission that the bathrooms may not be open at Lions Park. Lisa replied that the concession stands and bathrooms are out of commission and will be until the pump station is fixed. It is not operational right now. There are 2 issues with it. First is that there is a blockage in one of the water feeds that is backing up into the electrical conduit. The second is one of the pumps is not functional, and the pump station runs on a dual pump system. Angelica said the pump station just services Lions Park, and was put there for the park use. She went on to say that repairs be paid for out of the sewer enterprise fund. Lisa said the concession stand will be out of commission until it is fixed but that port-a-potties will be rented for bathroom accessibility if needed. Angelica said that the parking lot may have to be dug up as well depending how far the leak goes. Mike then asked if the plumbing was winterized each year and Angelica replied that Cote Plumbing does winterize the bathrooms at Lions Park and the comfort station.

Partridge Brook Park Concession Stand – Ronalee said that Lisa Pearson would like to know how much should be charged for usage of the concession stand. Angelica replied that the fees may have to be revisited after the Partridge Brook Park is fully operational. There will be more costs for electricity and water usage. Lisa DeMeo reminded the Commission that Lisa Pearson suggested having a group rent the facilities for the season. The renters would man the concession stand for each of the practices and games. The Commission members did not agree with this idea. Sean stated that he does not like the idea of a concession stand where there was no grill. Telling a sports team manager that they could not cook and could only sell bagged goods and owe for the use of the stand seems ridiculous. Ronalee saw an outdoor grill in another town that was beautiful but has been told by Jack Morris, Health Inspector, that it would not be allowed at Partridge Brook Park. The Concession stand will not have a grease trap so the grill is not allowed because it is designed for normal waste, not fats and grease. There will be a grinder pump to handle the sewerage because of where the concession stand will be located. Lisa said that the Town could build a concession stand with all the components to serve hot food. It would have to contain 3 sinks and grease trap for the waste but the Commission would be looking at a lot more regulations from Jack Morris. It is not worth it for the expense of building it and maintaining it. The decision was already made to have a smaller stand. Ronalee suggested scrapping the concession stand, and putting vending machines out there with bathroom facilities and storage areas. Mike said having the

concession stand out there and not being about the barbeque or cook will make teams leave. Angelica replied that in the field use policy it states that no grilling is allowed. The Town insurance does not cover it so if a team burns down the field, then the Town will go after the team's insurance policy for repairs. Sean said the Commission could get a couple of vending machines. Ryan responded that he is worried that they will get smashed. Angelica said there would be cameras but Ryan replied that he did not think that would stop them. Mike suggested putting all the necessary items into the stand to be used at a later date once Jack Morris agrees. Ronalee mentioned that there is a \$225,000 grant, most of which is supposed to go to the concession stand. Perhaps 3 sinks could be put in there at the beginning. She then went on to say that Lisa Pearson wants to model the concession stand off of the one at the Peabody High School which has an outdoor grill. Mike thinks if the concession stand were better equipped; it would entice more people to rent from the Commission. For certified servers, the Commission could look toward the Boys & Girls Club, PTA, and Leos. Ronalee is concerned that the Commission would then have to be policing the organizations using the concession stand. Mike does not want to pull away from the original idea of the concession stand. Even if there is not a cooking facility, everything should be retro-fitted so it is ready to go when the opportunity arises. The grease trap could be placed 10 feet from the building now and if the 3 sinks cannot be added at this point, at least put in the plumbing. The sinks can be added later. Lisa replied that the building is not big enough for the 3 sinks to be put in place. A bigger building would have to be purchased now rather than later. Mike said that a grease trap is about \$1,000 to purchase and place before the pump. Lisa D. thought it was between \$3,000 and \$5,000. Mike said if it is put in place now, it would be cheaper than trying to place it after the building is finished.

The only other items left are the cameras and irrigation systems to be put in place according to Lisa. Mike replied that if the lawn was not mowed properly then don't worry about the irrigation because the lawn will be ruined. If you cut more than 1/3rd of your grass, you are shocking it.

Leigh-Anne told the Commission that the following field use applications have been received: Triton Youth Lacrosse, Triton Youth Soccer, Rage Softball, and Flag Football, along with the request for the Northeast Hurricanes Softball. She also mentioned that there may be an issue because 2 of the teams want to use the field on the same day. Ronalee suggested that the representatives of the soccer and lacrosse attend the next meeting so that the Commission can figure out how to have both teams on the fields on Sundays. Lisa told the Commission that there is a church that uses the parking lot on Sunday mornings so parking would be an issue for the sports teams. Mike asked why the sports leagues could not use the Town parking lot, which is to the right as vehicles pull into the school. Lisa informed the Commission that the church uses all the parking available at the school including the Town parking lot. Mike will be contacting Chris Walsh regarding this situation. Leigh-Anne then mentioned that Jim Shorey of the lacrosse league wanted to know if there was any other parking available and if the fields were going to be enlarged. Ronalee responded by saying that they were allowed to use the softball field below as parking. Ryan added that eventually the fields would be enlarged. Leigh-Anne said that she would ask Jim Shorey to attend the next meeting so that his questions could be answered by the Commission.

Angelica asked about the rosters for the teams. Ronalee said that the fields cannot be used until we have the rosters.

Angelica asked when Phase I would be done for the tot lot at Partridge Brook Park. Lisa Pearson had been working on it. Ronalee replied that May 16th was the build in day.

Field Use Fees from Surrounding Towns

Ronalee pointed out surrounding towns are charging a great deal for field use. She suggested that Salisbury keep the fees reasonable. The goal is to have the fields used.

Tier System Revamp

Angelica referred to page two of the field use policy. She said that in the past, some of the sports organizations have argued that they are Salisbury based because they are located in Salisbury, such as the Northeast Hurricanes. Ronalee replied that the participants have to be Salisbury based, not the organization. Angelica suggested that the Tier 3 and Tier 4 organization requests reserve the hours wanted, then regardless of whether the team uses the field or not, the organization will be charged for those hours. There will be no policing needed. She said that it will be easier once the cameras are placed as well.

Removing In-Kind Services

Angelica stated that Lisa Pearson has informed the Commission that the Town must charge fees for field use. Lisa Pearson had said the reason for this is when applying for grants; the grantors want to see that the Towns receiving the grants have some skin in the game as well so the Town is not relying on them to solely fund the organization. Ronalee asked if the Commission could have an "in-lieu of fee" to which Angelica replied that does not work. Mike agreed that the in-lieu of system stopped working about 2 or 3 years ago. This has been an issue with people not holding up to their end of the deal. If it is allowed to continue then the Commission would have to track the in-lieu of services to ensure the actions are being accomplished. However, if the actions are not being done then the organization using the field would have to pay instead. Angelica said that the Commission is still waiting for an electronic score board which the Salisbury Youth Softball/Baseball League was going to donate.

Raising the Field Use Fees

Lisa said that all other towns are either charging per hour or per participant. Angelica thought that if the organization had a hardship, they could come to a meeting and the Commission could address it on a case by case basis. Sean said that in the past, Salisbury Youth Baseball was not charged because not many children play. Ronalee added that the children also come from lower income households. Sean asked how much flag football was charged and Angelica answered that they pay \$5 per participant/per field/per season. Sean remarked that he has no problem charging everyone \$10 per participant but that the only group that would complain would be youth baseball which the Commission would have to find a way to make it work. The only other way to do it would be to charge \$5 per participant for any organization that is 90% Salisbury youth and \$10 per participant such as Triton Youth sports. This would be the easiest way to differentiate.

Sean said that "per participant" is a loose term. What does it mean? Is it per participant playing of the field or the amount of players in the league. Lisa said that the total should be from the roster. Angelica would like to get rid of Tier 1 and Tier 2. Every time the sports organizations try to get out of it. They would tell Angelica that there are a smaller number playing when in fact there are more. The sports organizations will have either a different amount on the roster than stated on the application or they do not give the roster when applying. Could a flat rate work better? Ronalee said it could be stipulated that the sports teams would not be allowed on the field unless their roster has already been received. Sean added that scenario that if Triton Youth Soccer had 100 kids in the league but only 30 play on the field, would they pay on the 100 participants or 30 participants? Lisa replied that if they have 2 teams on the field then the cost of using the field would be based off of the number of participants per team. Ronalee said the flag football uses 3 fields with roughly 20 players per field. If they play for 1 hour at a time and have the field from 8am to 3pm, then it would be roughly \$420 that would be owed for the field use. Sean said there could be a separate fee structure for Partridge Brook Park too.

Angelica reviewed the field use policy and said that Salisbury Youth Softball/Baseball League would be charged for the use of 2 fields per participant since they use both the softball and baseball fields at Lions Park. Sean said that it should be changed. Only for the Salisbury Youth Softball/Baseball League, the cost would be per participant for the use of Lions Park. Angelica said that the Knuckleheads baseball use Memorial Field. Leigh-Anne added that the lacrosse league was looking into using memorial field and/or beach field for their practices..

Ryan asked if the flag football league was the only organization that was pushing back on the cost of using the fields. Mike answered that he believes the organization does not want to pay for all the participants but only the ones using the fields. Ronalee said that youth lacrosse may also push back because they will be using Manters Field as well as our fields. Sean asked what field the flag football league uses. Angelica said it is the multipurpose field which he converts into 3 separate fields. It is 160 feet by 360 feet.

Ronalee said that the purpose of raising the field use fees is to stay ahead. There are more teams coming into the town that want to use the fields. With the higher fees, the Commission would be ready for more sports teams coming to use the fields, the concession stand being constructed and being able to maintain the fields with the added use. This is all preemptive. Mike said that the Commission should come up with a goal on how much they want to put away every year for future field needs. Mike said that the fees should depend on the teams. A tournament team will be taking in a lot more money than a local team.

Sean suggested that Salisbury Youth Softball/Baseball be charged \$5 per participant and Triton Youth based sport teams would be charged \$10 per participant. Ronalee added the defensible position that Salisbury youth are already paying taxes for DPW to maintain the fields so that is why they pay less.

Ronalee and Mike both said the Commission should not charge too much so that teams will use the fields but not too much so they do not come and use our fields. Ronalee gave the example of Manters Field.

Mike asked what should be done if there is already a team on the field when the next team is scheduled to play. Angelica said the arriving team can call the police to have the team on the field removed. Mike said the arriving teams will not do that. Instead they go on Facebook to complain.

Allocation of Fees Received

Mike asked what the higher fees would be going toward. Would the extra funds go to future upkeep? Ronalee said that the Parks and Rec Commission would be paying for opening and closing of fields and the DPW would be handling the maintenance. Lisa said that maintenance for the DPW is mowing. Ronalee said that the extra funds would go to upkeep. As things break down, they can be replaced or repaired. Items such as the mulch for the playground could be purchased with the funds as well.

Meeting ended at approximately 8:10 p.m.