

**Meeting of the  
Parks, Recreation and Conservation Board  
PRC Headquarters  
January 16, 2020  
4:00 PM**

**PRC BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

J. Henry Neale, Jr., Chairman  
Debra Clay  
Sobeida Cruz  
Pamela Dubitsky  
Charlene Indelicato  
Martin Kamarck

**PRC BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT**

Richard Greco, Jr., Vice Chairman  
Anthony Markus  
Catherine Parker, Ex-Officio

**MEMBERS EMERITI**

**MEMBERS EMERITI ABSENT**

Lorraine Palais  
Larry Wilson

**EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT**

**EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT**

Norma Drummond, Commissioner  
Planning Department  
Hugh Greechan, Commissioner  
DPW & Transportation

**PRC STAFF PRESENT**

Kathleen O'Connor, Commissioner  
Peter Tartaglia, First Deputy  
Judith Allen, Administrative Aide

**PRC STAFF ABSENT**

Regina Birkenstock, Assistant to  
Commissioner

**GUESTS**

Aviva Meyer, Liaison  
Bob Candrea, President of Kensico  
Little League  
Gregory Casciato, Director of Budgetary  
Affairs  
Laura Centi, Valhalla Resident  
Christopher Feldman, Town of Mount  
Pleasant Attorney  
Carl Fulgenzi, Supervisor of the Town of  
Mount Pleasant  
David Kulis, Musco Sports Lighting  
Kelly Rizzi, superintendent of Parks& Recreation  
for Town of Mount Pleasant  
Thomas Sialiano, Councilman for Town  
of Mount Pleasant

Laurie Smalley, Councilwoman for Town  
of Mount Pleasant  
Mark Stefanov, Resident of Valhalla

### **ITEM NO. 1 – APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Upon motion by Martin Kamarck and seconded by Pamela Dubitsky the Parks, Recreation and Conservation Board unanimously approved the minutes of December 19, 2019.

### **ITEM NO. 2 – CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Chairman Neale opened the meeting and asked the Parks, Recreation and Conservation Board members to listen to the guests who were there to express their views, either for or against, the installation of lights on Pat Henry Field where the Kensico Little League plays. (See Information Item)

Chairman Neale visited the Valhalla ballfield located at the end of a dead-end street. In order for him to reach it, he had to go down a very narrow street that has not been well maintained. There is no signage acknowledging that Pat Henry Field is owned by the County of Westchester and is opened to the public for rental. Chairman Neale is quite concerned for the safety of the public and wants to know if it is smart to have 7, 8, and 9 year old children playing baseball at 9 o'clock at night.

Also, Chairman Neale strongly feels if Pat Henry Field is a public park that it should be open to all residents of Westchester County and not only for the use of the Kensico Little League baseball.

Chairman Neale noted that the Parks Board is a volunteer board whose members can be removed by cause but the board has potential influence. However, the board is not in existence to be a rubber stamp for issues that come before them for consideration.

Mr. Neale mentioned that he attended Winter Wonderland and found the circus acts to be terrific and the magicians to be fabulous.

### **ITEM NO. 3 – COMMISSIONER'S REPORT**

Commissioner O'Connor reported on Winter Wonderland which concluded on January 4<sup>th</sup> with a few weather closures. The circus was a homerun and Santa Claus was a big hit. Over 30,000 patrons attended the program. On New Year's Eve, the County Executive counted down to the New Year with a crystal ball and it was a major success.

The annual staff conference is quickly approaching on February 4<sup>th</sup>. The Westchester County Parks Foundation pays for all personal development sessions. The County Executive will kick off the conference with a short speech follow by a recap of the Parks Department in 2019 and where the Parks Department is moving forward in 2020.

Jessica Schuler the new Natural Resource Manager, at Lasdon Park and Arboretum started working for us on Tuesday January 14<sup>th</sup>. Jessica comes to us from the Botanical Gardens with a tremendous knowledge in horticulture.

The County Center is doing well with the Westchester Knicks, concerts and trade shows.

The golf courses closed on January 5<sup>th</sup> for maintenance and repairs on the greens. Golf courses are expected to reopen March 11<sup>th</sup> weather permitting.

Mary Calvi presented her book titled Dear George, Dear Mary at the Miller house on Saturday afternoon, January 11<sup>th</sup>. Her book was well received by the guests who attended.

North County Trail rehabilitation is expected to be completed in mid-2020. Rehab of the South County Trail will begin soon and is expected to be finished in 2022.

George's Island Park, a 208-acre waterfront park will be reopening this season.

The budget has been approved and non-represented staff was given a raise.

Playland first job fair was held on January 12<sup>th</sup>. The pay scale is going up from \$12.00 to \$13.00 an hour. We are looking for lifeguards and ride operators.

The Parks Department is in the process of hiring an assistant farm manager for Muscoot.

We will be hiring three new curators this season; our nature centers will be open seven days a week.

We are currently working with DPW to chip away at the back log of capital projects. The capital projects underway includes Scarsdale to Hartsdale trails; the seawall at Glen Island which is almost completed; and replacement of artificial fields at Saxon Woods and Tibbetts Brook Park.

The USGA is hosting the 120<sup>th</sup> U.S. Open Championship from June 15-21, 2020 at Winged Foot Golf Club in Mamaroneck, NY. Additional parking will be available at Playland and Saxon Woods. We hope to get one of the pros to visit one of our courses to do a demonstration.

Anthony Amiano term of office has expired, thus leaving a vacancy on the board. Parks Board members were asked to forward the resume of anyone they know that would like to serve on the board.

**ITEM NO. 4 – INFORMATION ITEMS****A. Discussion on Pat Henry Field**

Commissioner O'Connor pointed out the County has an IMA (Intermunicipal agreement) with the Town of Mount Pleasant for the operation of Pat Henry Field, located in Valhalla of the Bronx River Parkway Reservation. Kensico Little League wants to add lights on the baseball field in order to play night games. They are asking permission from the County of Westchester for their approval of lights.

Although a decision has not been made, Commissioner O'Connor felt it was important for each side to explain why or why not Pat Henry Field should have lighting. Parks Board Chairman; J. Henry Neale allotted representatives from each side to state their position on the issue of lighting.

Mark Stefanov, a resident of South Kensico Avenue in Valhalla spoke on behalf of the community who opposes the lighting. Mr. Stefanov feels that the town intentions are not true and they want to put on the baseball games at the most dangerous time of evening; during rush hour. Mr. Stefanov contacted the Mount Pleasant Police department and they confirmed that at the hours between five and seven will increase traffic congestion. Also, he feels that the lighting would provide a distraction to drivers going around the bend of the Bronx River Parkway. He is concerned for the pedestrians crossing the railroad tracks and about the noise pollution that would be generated by the night games. Mr. Stefanov offered Virginia Road Field as an alternative field for night games since it wouldn't impact the residential neighborhood and would be easy for drivers to access. Most importantly, the Mr. Stefanov would like the County to consider keeping it (the BRP) an historic parkway.

Bob Candrea, President of Kensico Little League spoke on behalf of the pros. Mr. Candrea feels that the lighting will not be a hindrance to the Bronx River Parkway. He stated that the Town of Mount Pleasant has had a lease agreement since 1963 with the County and \$500,000.00 was invested in maintaining the field. Also, he stated it is about the children from age four through twelve and the little league season starts in April and ends in October. A game that starts at 7:30pm will eliminate rush hour traffic. Mr. Candrea spoke with the town and has informed them that the lights will be turned off at ten o'clock even though the ordinance states eleven o'clock. They have not been an accident at Pat Henry Field in years and the children are looking forward to playing under the lights.

Commissioner O'Connor thanks everyone for coming to express their opinions on Pat Henry Field.

**ITEM NO. 5 – ACTION ITEMS**

There were none.

**ITEM NO. 6 – OTHER BUSINESS**

There were none.

**ITEM NO. 7 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Upon motion by Sobeida Cruz and seconded by Debra Clay the Parks, Recreation and Conservation Board unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting.

The Parks, Recreation and Conservation Board will meet on February 20, 2020 at PRC Headquarters at 4:00 p.m.

Submitted by,

Judith J. Allen