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THE MORRIS COUNTY PARK COMMISSION
DISTRIBUTION OF PARK COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
WORKSHOP
APRIL 8, 2014

1. President Betty-Cass Schmidt
2. Vice President Barbara Shepard
3. Commissioner Julie C. Baron
4. Commissioner Stuart Lasser
5. Commissioner Ed McCarthy
6. Commissioner Philip T. Santiago
7. Commissioner Judith Schleicher
8. Commissioner Richard Seabury, III
9. Commissioner Kim M. Wentworth
10. Executive Director David D. Helmer
11. Freeholder Liaison Douglas R. Cabana
12. File – 2

THE MORRIS COUNTY PARK COMMISSION

300 Mendham Road

Morristown, New Jersey

President Cass-Schmidt called to order the eight hundredth and first meeting of the Morris County Park Commission at 9:30 a.m. on April 8, 2014, at the Cultural Center, 300 Mendham Road, Morristown, New Jersey 07960.

Executive Director Helmer then read the following notice: PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., adequate notice of this meeting held at 9:30 a.m. on the 8th day of April 2014, has been provided by publication in the *Daily Record* and *The Star-Ledger*, by posting of said notice in the Administration Building of the Morris County Park Commission, on the Morris County Park Commission website, and at the County Courthouse, and by filing a copy of the same with the Morris County Clerk.

ROLL CALL

The following were present:

President Betty Cass-Schmidt	Commissioner Julie C. Baron
Vice President Barbara Shepard	Commissioner Stuart Lasser
Executive Director David D. Helmer	Commissioner Ed McCarthy
Deputy Executive Director Rich Vitale	Commissioner Judith Schleicher
Park Counsel John Suminski	Commissioner Kim Wentworth

Also in attendance were the following staff:

Assistant Deputy Director of Cultural & Environmental Resources, Assistant Deputy Director/Development Lanza, Park Police Chief Doyle, Director of Engineering Services Vitale, Director of Park Operations Holster, Director of Personnel & Safety Vath, Director of Recreation Fauci, Manager of Recreation Biase, Park Police Lieutenant DiPietro, Assistant Director of Historic Sites Laffey, Manager of Marketing & Communications Wnek, Superintendent of Natural Resources Management Kovacevic, Foreman of Natural Resources Management Trump and Robert O'Rourke from Billy Casper Golf.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

President Cass-Schmidt led those present in the salute to the flag.

HEARING OF CITIZENS

There were no citizens in attendance.

FINANCE AND BUDGET COMMITTEE

Commissioner Barbara Shepard, Chair

Deputy Executive Director Vitale introduced Robert O'Rourke Regional Manager for Billy Casper Golf who oversees the Park Commission's four golf courses. Berkshire Valley G.C. received a Billy Casper Golf award in February. Regional Manager O'Rourke explained to the Commission that Berkshire Valley Golf Course received a number of awards including; Top Performer, Most Improved Facility, Most Improved Food and Beverage Operation, and also Facility of the Year. There were approximately 50 golf courses in this competition between the Northeast and the South Atlantic states that make up the regions of competitors within these categories.

Berkshire Valley Golf Course won the Facility of the Year Award which is the top award in Billy Casper Golf. Historically this award has only been given to BCG owned properties, not managed properties. As an example Royce Brook Golf Course in Hillsboro, New Jersey is a 36 hole, owned facility that won Facility of the Year in 2012, whereas Berkshire Valley Golf Course won Facility of the Year in 2013 which was the first year it was won by a managed Golf Course. This is a very prestigious award for the Park Commission, County, and the residents of the County. Billy Casper Golf and the staff members at Berkshire Valley are very excited that they won and they are looking forward to this year's golf season.

Regional Manager O'Rourke provided an update on recent activities at the courses, a new reservation system has been installed, and a new website is live. The golf courses are open and they are very busy registering golfers. Golf play started late this year, the last weekend in March. Over the last week, of the 23 clubs that are managed by Billy Casper Golf, the Morris County Park Commission Golf Courses make up about 10% of the portfolio that we manage and provide 25% of the revenue.

Commissioner Wentworth inquired as to who votes on the recipient of the awards and Regional Manager O'Rourke, responded that it is the Executive Staff of BCG, Peter Hill, Bob Morris, and the Regional Directors throughout the Country, they go over financial results, customer satisfaction surveys that are received, and overall performance after which they meet and judge the facilities within that region.

Commissioner McCarthy inquired as to how they were planning on advertising the receipt of the award. Regional Manager O'Rourke responded that they posted it on their websites and used their press wing, Buffalo Communications, with Billy Casper Golf to submit a press release to local papers. Also, Billy Casper Golf will contact Golf Digest and they will have the award on display at Berkshire Valley Golf Course.

Commissioner Lasser asked if there were any other prestigious awards that we should be looking at similar to the J. D. Powers Award. Manager O'Rourke responded that he feels that we should look at those companies and publications, like the Golf Digests of the world, to get the word out to them. Their writers will be invited out to play the course, and shown what the facility is like. We do the mystery shoppers to hone our customer service and guest experience and throughout the year and we will be inviting those agencies out to come visit the course and grade the experience.

Regional Manager O'Rourke reported that the courses have new logos, which were reviewed and approved by Park Commission staff, the new technology that is being used on the website fits to any format, tablet, android, etc.

Golfers are starting to use the call center telephone system for reserving tee times. It is an auto attendant that goes right to a reservation center where a person picks up the phone identifies the golf course just as if the operator was on site. As for same day bookings, callers push two on the keypad and they will get someone in the pro shop.

Another change for 2014 is the tee time booking timeframe. In the past a resident registered golfer could book a tee time seven days in advance of a tee time, this year it has been moved to ten days in advance for registered residents. Golfers who do not have the County resident registration card can book seven days in advance so there is a definite advantage to registering. Registrations got off to a slow start because of the delay in installing the new computer system which was activated the last week in March. To date 4,100 golfers have registered. It was asked how the registration numbers compared to last year and Deputy Executive Director Vitale explained that in the past the golf shops opened February 1st or golfers could register throughout the winter at Pinch Brook.

Manager O'Rourke explained that a new registration card system has replaced the old cards. There will now be a green card for the full privilege resident, yellow for out of county, and red for Warren and Sussex county golfers. Players will register and obtain their cards, which will have the golf course ID numbers on them, so they can call in and make a tee time at the reservation center or golf shop.

Deputy Executive Vitale stated that registration card sales have declined in different areas according to registration types, significantly since 2008. The full privilege card used to be a higher fee, but recently when we raised the fee registrations for that type of card decreased dramatically. Last year the fee was reduced and registrations improved. The senior nonresident full-privilege card was lower last year and the fee was increased for this season but the response to the increase has not been negative. It seems to be that golfer retention is starting to build back.

Commissioner Lasser inquired if in BCG's business model was there a number of golf registration cards that they hoped to achieve. Manager O'Rourke responded that they are looking to sell 10,000 to 12,000 and that they are almost halfway there.

Executive Director Helmer pointed out that if you have fewer registered golfers, but you still have the same rounds of golf, your revenue stream would be higher because those golfers are paying a higher tee time rate.

Commissioner McCarthy asked what happens if a golfer reserves a time and then doesn't show up. Manager O'Rourke responded that the penalty for a no-show hasn't really affected a change in attitude. What happens is that some courses have charged a no-show fee and then

the customer disputes it with their credit card company and we end up not getting the money anyway. What Billy Casper has done is to track people that no-show and people that short showed, people who came with a group less that they said would play, at the end of the day we check the tee sheet and make telephone calls to these individuals. A short show is the single golfer who can't get a tee time so they book for more than one golfer and show up with less than they booked. Commissioner Schleicher asked if there are foursomes times left open every hour for singles. Manager O'Rourke responded that there is no time left open for singles, what they do is people will call in and they will be paired up with players. The starters are also able pair people up.

Executive Director Helmer stated that this practice is dramatically different from the way the Park Commission operated. Park Commission policies have been very strict so a no-show would have to pay the fee, the second no-show you would get your privileges taken away. At Berkshire Valley G.C. we would have a four-some once every hour for walk-ons and we were finding that we were losing that slot since there weren't a lot of walk-ons so we took those foursomes away and began booking those times.

President Cass-Schmidt noted that she had received a magazine which had an article that covered Reader's Choice Award of 2014. There was a three way tie for the favorite golf course, and Sunset Valley was one of the choices. The other two golf clubs were privately owned and it is an accomplishment for us to have been chosen as one of the winners along with these private clubs.

Deputy Executive Director Vitale reported that the Capital Plan for 2014 was introduced in March and will be approved on April 9, 2014 at the Freeholder meeting. The Park Commission will have to provide the County with a schedule for funding projects/purchases. We have asked that our equipment be funded by the end of April, and the introduction for the equipment for \$750,000.00 will be April 23, which will be the earliest introduction and the Park Commission will have a resolution for purchases at the April 28th Commission meeting. The way the Park Commission purchases its equipment is that we do a bid for items that are not covered through a State or County Co-Op. A number of items will be purchased through the State/County Co-ops and at this time it is expected that we will be about \$20,000.00 under budgeted estimates.

Capital funding for paving projects should be available by the middle of June to early July.

President Cass-Schmidt inquired as to the amount that was requested for paving which is \$300,000.00. Executive Director Helmer also pointed out that we have Park Improvement Trust funding for paving also since Capital funding was reduced and we are trying to balance out our normal Capital request with our Park Improvement Trust.

Deputy Executive Director Vitale explained that when he first began with the Park Commission, the County maintained all of the Park Improvement Trust accounts ledger activity. One of his goals was to automate the Park Commission's financial reporting and maintain the trust

accounts and put them under Park Commission control to reduce such a heavy reliance on the County.

Since then we have brought on other fund accounts such as the Grant funds. Last year we started to oversee the Caroline Foster Trust, this money was bequeathed to the Park Commission and at the time of the receipt of funds there was no means for the Park Commission to oversee that funding. In the Caroline Foster Trust Acct. there is a \$200,000.00 principle balance and interest from the principle is used for projects and initiatives at Fosterfields Living Historical Farm.

Executive Director Helmer pointed out that in the case of the Frelinghuysen Trust those funds were derived from Matilda Frelinghuysen's sale of 5-10-acres of the original Frelinghuysen property. Those dollars are not restricted in any way related to maintaining the principle balance as opposed to the Foster Trust, which in Miss Foster's will specified that the \$200,000.00 principal remain. We would like the Ad Hoc Development Committee at the next meeting to take a look at these accounts and some of the Park Trust Accts. and develop a strategy to restrict principal balances and develop a policy for future donations to existing and new Park Trust accounts. In the future maybe portions of new donations will get added to the principal to increase the principal balances and some of the funds be utilized for annual needs. This would be in keeping with how the Tubbs Trust is maintained and how the Willowood Foundation manages its funds.

Commissioner Lasser inquired as to the number of current Trust Accounts, Executive Director Helmer responded that the Park Commission in addition to the Caroline Foster Trust and the Frelinghuysen Trust there are about 25 accounts of various amounts. Deputy Executive Director Vitale explained that towards the close of 2013 we added a few more accounts such as the Snow Trust, and the Accumulated Asset Trust.

Commissioner Baron inquired if we were restricted in how we invest, Deputy Executive Vitale responded we are not restricted as far as that is concerned and we were planning on going with CD's or whatever provides the safest and best interest return.

Executive Director Helmer pointed out that one of the trusts that we established was from the PSE&G Powerline Enhancement project. These were funds we received for to enhance the public's access and use of Park Commission properties.

The Columbia Gas Line Transmission Company donated the land that the Columbia Trail was constructed on and every so of the Park Commission receives an unsolicited \$2,000.00 check from the Columbia Transmission Company; there is no specific restrictions to the funds but the Park Commission uses the money for Columbia Trail for improvement projects.

Executive Director Helmer commented that when the Park Commission receives a donation for memorial benches/tree a determination is made whether funds are placed with The Park

Alliance or the Park Trust Memorial Bench Account. Unsolicited funds typically go the Park Trust Account Memorial Bench Account.

Commissioner McCarthy asked if Deputy Executive Director Vitale feels that if you link the funds together with one of the larger investment houses would you get a higher interest rate or lower bank charge.

Deputy Executive Director Vitale responded that a few years ago we actually had to move funds from certain banks. Most of the Park Commission accounts are now with Bank of America. Treasure Roe would often evaluate how to invest accounts most notably the Park Improvement Trust Fund.

Promotion and Business Activities Committee
Commissioner Stuart Lasser, Chair

Manager of Marketing & Communications Wnek reported on Social Media initiatives mostly through Facebook and Twitter, noting that the Park Commission has now formally entered the world of Social Media. The benefit of this is that it gives the Park Commission the opportunity to correspond with the public in real time about current activities. The Park Commission has taken a slow, cautious, and conservative approach and we are happy with the responses that we have received to date. The use of social media has afforded the Park Commission opportunities to put on critical timely information, such as; the parking lot emergency that happened at Mennen Arena along with the ability to promote programs, or communicate other vital information.

The messaging that is put on Facebook is also sent out on Twitter, this way there is a consistency through branding and messaging and we are able to track what is being promoted to the public more efficiently. The 5% day with WholeFoods Market was put up on Facebook and Manager Wnek was able to see how many people saw the notice.

Manager Wnek acknowledged that she was able to post an announcement regarding the controlled burn that was going to take place, in addition to putting on our new Headquarter change, Pathways was put up on Facebook and Twitter and over 250 people viewed through those mechanisms. Since we have launched Facebook and Twitter we are putting the notice everywhere we can, on the bottom of our electronic signatures to emails, and on all of our brochures as we print new ones, and on all our flyers.

Manager Wnek explained what Throw Back Thursdays are and posted the notice on Facebook for the Luck O'the Farm, along with the notice they posted historic pictures promoting the event. The Marketing Department will be working with Lynn Laffey to find some old historic photos and see if they can tie them in to promoting current programs or our sites, on Throw Back Thursday.

The Marketing Department has also promoted Tackle the Trail and it was suggested to Manager Biase that possibly they can do an album with some of the photos that were taken at the event and people who were at the event and go on our Facebook site could tag their photos and hopefully that may get more people interested in some of our events. Facebook is also enabling the Park Commission to let people know when events are sold out.

President Cass-Schmidt inquired what the policy was on comments. Manager Wnek is able to monitor the comments that come in and is able to review all of them. On the top of our home page people can click in and see our policy. If there is anything that is offensive in any way we are able to take it down. We have received no negative comments and nothing has had to be removed.

President Cass-Schmidt inquired if there was any concern with regards to posting photos of children on Facebook without permission. Manager Wnek said that at this time there is no consensus regarding that, however; we do have a policy stating that if you are in a public park we reserve the right to take and use a photo. However, knowing how some parents are more concerned about it than others, we are very sensitive about that so when we are at an event like National Night Out, and we take photos, we always ask if it is all right if we use it next year to promote the event. Sometimes you have people who say yes and other times you have people who say no.

Commissioner Schleicher commented that on the way here she passed a banner by Fosterfields and felt that there was too much information on it. Manager Wnek responded that the banner was for the Winter Farmer's Market, and the people who were running the activity required all that information even though it was designed by the Marketing Department.

Manager Biase reported on Opening Weekend of the Central Park of Morris County artificial turf fields. The final walk through with Land Tech was done on March 25th and the fields are being used. The Recreation Department has been taking reservations for the fields since last November, and they have been working on an entire year's scheduling for the fields. The schedule runs from March 1 to the end of December and it is basically completely booked during peak use time.

Every weekend is full starting at 8 a.m., through 8 p.m. on Saturdays and on Sundays. Weekdays during the Spring and Fall the hours of 4 p.m. until 11:30 p.m. are mostly booked except for Fridays.

The fields opened on Saturday, March 29th.

Manager Biase reported that the department receives about 10 to 15 calls a day asking for turf time. They all want Monday through Friday 5:30 to 7:30, however they are all booked. The three partnering groups, Morris United Soccer Club, Parsippany Soccer Club, and Morris Plains Recreation are pleased with their allocations which are contracted for 5 and 10 year allocations.

Commissioner Wentworth inquired what the use expectancy of the fields are and Manager Biase explained if they are maintained properly they will last approximately 10+ years, Executive Director Helmer pointed out that we do have a warranty on the fields for 10 years. Staff is also developing a sponsorship plan for the fields including banners those monies will be dedicated to the replacement of the fields.

Manager Biase reported that we have approximately 23 to 25 groups that have permits for soccer, ruby, lacrosse, football.

Manager Biase explained that out of County organizations pay \$240 per hour, and in County organization pay \$120.00 per hour. Not-for-Profits, pay \$60.00 an hour and government agencies pay \$50.00.

The grandfather partner groups, Morris United, Parsippany Soccer Club & Morris Plains Borough, pay \$30.00 per hour for their base rental allocations and if they want more than their allotted allocation they pay the same rate as any other user. The group's initial allotment of time based on their annual contribution of \$20,000.00, provides them with 666 hours of field use time.

Fees for the athletic field lighting run an additional \$30.00 per hour and every group has the ability to turn the lights off if they finish early. If it rains the fields are still open, but , some groups choose not to play in the rain however they still are charged but they have the option to turn the lights off and that way they don't get charged for lighting .

Commissioner McCarthy asked how the cost of the lights per hour had been determined and Manager Biase responded that it costs approximately \$18.00 at low level and about \$24.00 for high. Right now the lights are only being used at the low level. These lights are all controllable and Manager Biase is able to turn them on via her phone, by a phone call, and by website.

Manager Biase reported that we are in the mid-range of fees, in Montville the charge is \$200.00, Delbarton is \$150.00. The Recreation Department researched fees to determine what the mean average was.

Executive Director Helmer explained that we modeled the Field Use Policy similar to the Mennen Sports Arena policy meaning that when the rink was first constructed there were five grandfathered groups, and they maintain the same number of hours for usage.

Director of Recreation Fauci explained that they had set up the policy and that it covered all aspects of ice skating we had someone who represented high school hockey, someone who represented travel hockey and representative of two skating clubs. Each one was a non-profit organization and we divided the ice among those groups, putting first our public session and lessons, if they leave the rink they lose the allocation.

Commissioner Lasser inquired if part of the money we are receiving for field use permits is going towards future Capital Improvements for the turf fields. Executive Director Helmer responded that not this revenue stream but the revenue stream we receive from sponsorships opportunities that will be on-site as well as the restroom/snack bar area, which is under construction, and which we will charge a rental fee for, will be dedicated to replacement costs. The idea is to match our Park Improvement Trust so that every year we will dedicate a certain dollar amount to the Central Park Account, so that we won't have to raise \$1,000,000.00 in ten years.

Commissioner Schleicher remarked that Matilda's Café has opened and was wondering how a concession similar to Matilda's would succeed at Central Park with all the activity. Executive Director Helmer responded that we have the local pizzeria Lovey's which is located a short distance from Central Park is interested in providing some type of food concession activity on the site possibly a pizza truck. We now have to figure out what the value would be for that permit and if it would be different from the ice cream truck that just drives around from park to park.

Parsippany Soccer Club has a major Columbus Day Tournament, and Morris United has a major Labor Day Tournament, you have an economic factor here where they have 500 soccer teams playing on 20 fields in Parsippany and Central Park will be their feature location.

Manager Biase point out that there will also be Rugby Tournaments and next year we will be having four Rugby Tournaments at Central Park.

Commissioner McCarthy asked if we allow for-profit camps and Manager Biase responded that we presently have a group called Patriots LAX, they are a Lacrosse Camp and they pay \$240 an hour. They have requested a couple weeks in August and fortunately it is a time that hasn't been rented by anyone else so we did allow this. We do have a policy on who has access for usage.

President Cass-Schmidt asked if Parsippany was gifted land or fields. Executive Director Helmer stated that they have an agreement with the County for property on Old Dover Road, which is a large fielded track that is part of Central Park, they have 3 five-year agreements to potentially use that area for ball fields. Years ago Parsippany was going to build fields there. Within the last five years even though Parsippany has the agreement they did some preliminary estimates on building fields in that space and for the amount of money it would cost to move the earth, and they could only get two fields out of it, and it is off the table for them. They still mow fields once a year.

President Cass-Schmidt stated that this is an area where we should definitely hit our revenue forecast, Executive Director Helmer stated that we had already hit it.

Manager Biase reported on the Valerie Fund, a group that was requesting to collect money on-site for admission as well as tickets for door prizes, plus a game truck. The game truck comes in

to the event and has different video games on it, the truck also charges admission to get on the truck and play the games. Giving permission to the Valerie Fund to collect money on site needs Park Commission approval, giving permission to one event may set a precedent to allow other groups collect money on site.

Executive Director Helmer explained that the Valerie Fund's request to collect money is less of an issue the bigger issue is the gaming truck which collects a separate fee from the day's participants.

Manager Biase stated that the Valerie Fund started the permit process last August and we have been asking them to finalize their application. In December they sent us a second application, still missing some of the information. We finally received the final application last week. The Special Event policy states that you have to have the application completed 90 days before the event but since they have been with us before we have been trying to work with them. When speaking with the game truck company to get their insurance information they mentioned that they were collecting fees. The Valerie Fund had not previously mentioned this.

Executive Director Helmer pointed out that the gaming truck is for profit, and the point is not that the truck is collecting money to give to the Valerie Fund, they are a separate business. This is the reason for Park Commission's policy.

Executive Director Helmer stated that the Valerie Fund is fine on the Benefit Policy requirements, since they are not collecting an admission on site, it's the game truck that is an issue.

Commissioner McCarthy pointed out that in one of our policies it states that individuals cannot be charged for entrance into the park. In their application they state this three different ways.

Executive Director Helmer noted that the entrance to the park is not being booked and the Valerie Fund is confusing their own language, they are reserving the picnic area not the park.

When a group goes past that 90, 60 or a 30 day period you have basically eliminated that area to be rented out by another group, because groups are making decision much earlier, we try and work with non-profits. This group has not been above board, by bringing in a for-profit game truck, they probably feel that this will attract more children and they most likely are to receive more donations, but now you have a private sector entity making profit on public property without the Park Commission getting any fees.

President Cass-Schmidt asked if they actually need the game truck. Executive Director Helmer felt that we should collect the 15% commission identified in our Merchandise Sale Policy or not allow them to bring the game truck in, especially since it was a last minute request.

Commissioner Lasser asked how you would prevent other park patrons from using the truck. It was pointed out that they have reserved a specific picnic area and that they are paying all the appropriate fees, for the use of the park area.

Commissioner McCarthy inquired if there were any deed restrictions at some of our facilities regarding this, and Executive Director Helmer pointed out that at Fosterfields you are not allowed to do concessions, however there are very few other restrictions.

Commissioner Schleicher feels that if we charge them 15% they must have their own accounting system to track their cash and we should get a copy of that. Executive Director Helmer pointed out that that was the reason for the policy.

President Cass Schmidt feels that they should abide by the policy and she would be interested in getting information from the Valerie Fund on what their anticipated attendance is, so that we can gauge how many people might use the game truck.

Commissioner McCarthy questioned whether there would be a staff person on site; Manager Biase said that we are charging them for a staff person. And there will also be one Park Police officer for 6 hours. There is a set fee for an officer in the Fee Schedule, which is \$70.00 per hour.

Executive Director Helmer reviewed a matter related to an athletic field user group last year, New Jersey Co-Ed Sports. The group felt they were not receiving fair access to the volleyball courts and Challenger League Field at Central Park of Morris County. Manager Biase explained that NJ Co-Ed Sports was one of the first three groups that they had opened the artificial turf fields up to, after the partnering groups were allocated time. In early March all groups were notified that we weren't able to open the fields because there was still four feet of snow on the turf, they were informed that they would not be able to use the field until April.

At that point in time they should have let us know that they were returning time since his soccer league season was 8 weeks long, and there would be only six weeks left in his permit allocation, the group chose to wait until the beginning of April to let staff know that he wanted to give back all his time. The original payment was due on February 15th which they had not yet paid, he said that he was unable to make his payment. We offered a payment plan, at that time there was no mention of him returning any field allocation time. The policy for field reservations is within 30 days of your event you can cancel but there are no refunds. Staff had a meeting with the group and they ended up returning \$6,000 hours worth of time just in the Spring alone. He was charged a cancellation fee of half of his rental rate, if the field can be rented the cancellation fee will be returned but that if fields could not be booked the group would not get any money back. Manager Biase provided NJ Co-Ed Sports with a copy of the Fee Schedule, and Rules which they had acknowledge by signing them.

Executive Director Helmer stated that this is one of the reasons that we have policies. What could still happen is that Manager Biase may not get a private user at \$120.00 per hour and

may only get one for \$50.00 or \$60.00 per hour. This is also another reason for wanting the payment to be received 90 days in advance because people do cancel and this gives you the opportunity to rebook. We will probably be able to rebook the fields but probably at \$60.00 and not at \$120.00.

Commissioner Lasser inquired that if payment was due in February why he wasn't put on notice at that time that he had not paid and that time was going to be offered to other people. Manager Biase stated that since the group has worked with the Park Commission before staff had tried to work with them. Manager Biase also stated that on their newest invoices for the summer and fall it states to review their invoice and the last date to drop any time is noted.

Commissioner Schleicher, inquired that if it is a \$120.00 rate, and it is rebooked at \$60.00 do they get charged the \$60.00. Manager Biase said that at this time they do not, we have a general policy and now we will now have to go into the policy in more depth. With the newer groups coming in you will have to have everything on paper for them to be fully aware of all the regulations.

Cultural & Educational Committee
Commissioner Judith Schleicher, Chair

Natural Resources

Superintendent of Natural Resources Kovacevic presented an over view of the results of the 2013-2014 Deer Management Program.

17 areas that were open to hunting, 12 were for bow hunting only, 3 for firearm only and 2 parks were open for both bow and firearm. The results were a total of 8,512 of our 18,799 acres of land which is equal to 45% of our stewardship responsibility.

Last year we suspended the bow program at Pyramid Mountain and at Schooley's Mountain County Park and there was a shortened season at Central Park, by eliminating the fall bow season, due to some concerns and conflicts with recreational users. We expanded the season at James Andrews County Park and The Frelinghuysen Arboretum. At The Frelinghuysen Arboretum we had a one-day special shot gun hunt there we also added additional firearm days at Black River, Lewis Morris County Park, Pyramid Mountain and Schooley's Mountain County Park.

There was a change at one of the hunting areas at Pyramid Mountain, the Montville Township property was taken out of the program due to some unresolvable differences. A major change was that we allowed Muzzle Loaders for the first time, and we suspended the antlerless deer quota which was put in place in 2011, which basically stated that each hunter had to take two antlerless deer for every antlered deer.

Last year we had 348 registered hunters, slightly up from the previous year where we had 340. We issued 519 access permits again slightly up from the previous year where we had 492 permits distributed we had 316 bow permits and 203 fire arm permits total distributed. Sixty-one percent of the hunters were Morris County residents, and that was up slightly from the previous year. Permit fees remained the same as the previous year, \$40.00 for Morris County residents, and \$60.00 for out of County residents.

In the 2012 harvest incentive program that we put in place was also in place for this year a \$5.00 credit was issued for each antlerless deer that was harvested up to a limit of \$30.00 per permit and so 162 hunters used \$1,780.00 in credit towards the purchase of this year's permits.

We had 490 of 519 surveys returned a rate of 94%, slightly down from last year, 48 of the surveys were for unused permits, 9.8% which is not bad that was a decrease from 11% the previous year. We had a result of 338 deer that was harvested that was 281 antlerless deer and 57 antlered deer. This was a 23% decrease from last year where there was 441 total deer taken which is a pretty substantial decrease. The decrease was our antlerless deer rate which was 90% last year and this year it's down to 83% and I think that some hunters might have interpreted that since we got rid of the antlerless deer quota that they could take whatever they want, when we clearly said we now have the freedom of eliminating them from the program if they don't meet our goal, and we will look at this later in the year.

Exactly 50% of the hunters harvested at least one deer. We had one hunter harvest 11 deer so there was a big range but we still had 50 % of hunters not accomplishing anything.

The results compared to 2012 there were decreases in the number of deer taken in most of the parks, the largest decreases were in Central Park, it might be due to the shortened season, there also was a large decrease at Mahlon Dickerson Reservation, and Lewis Morris County Park. There were some increases at Frelinghuysen Arboretum and the shot gun hunt took a lot of deer. Another increase was at Jonathan's Woods and Old Troy County Park.

This year each hunter was asked what type of weapon was used. This question came up during last year's review and we found some interesting results. We looked at fire arm hunting separate from bow hunting, we found that 151 of the fire arm hunters used a shot gun, 17 used a muzzle loader, clearly most of the fire arm hunters are using shot guns, last year was the first time muzzle loaders were allowed however there are less days available for muzzle loaders for hunting than shot gun. The shot gun hunters took 107 deer harvested with a fire arm, and only three were taken with a muzzle loader.

Looking at the bow hunters clearly most people are still using a compound bow. We just started allowing cross bows two years ago, we had 212 compound bow users, 89 cross bow users, and four using a primitive bow, 70% of 100 taken were with compound bows. They took most of the 129 deer, compared to cross bow users which took 98 deer, when you look at the success rate we calculated that by the actual number of people who took a deer, divided by the number of people who used that weapon cross bow hunters are more successful a 54% success rate for

crossbow and only a 37% for the compound bow, 40% for shot gun compared to 18% for muzzle loader.

Superintendent Kovacevic does keep track of the negative incidents that happen during the program. This year we had nine permits revoked, most were actually for State violations, we have had Conservation Officers present at a lot of the hunts, we had 6 permits revoked at Lewis Morris County Park, two at Black River and one at Mahlon Dickerson Reservation. Many of these were for not having the proper zone permit, which is a State offense. There were also hunters taking antlered deer out of season, and taking antlers off the deer, to hide the fact that they had taken an antlered deer and that is a pretty big offense, there were also some safety zone violations in there as well and one hunter at Mahlon Dickerson Reservation was hunting out of season.

Most of those hunters were issued citations by the Conservation Officer, and we will be looking at all of those cases later in the year. Some hunters received warnings such as crossing through private property to access the park, hunting within 450 feet of structure, non-designated hunting areas, and people who do not mark their tree stands. Staff removed 26 stands from the parks which was a pretty good number.

Illegal hunting was reported at some of the parks. We have hunters that are still being observed without their arm bands, it could be people that are poaching, firearm activity was observed at Mahlon Dickerson Reservation which is usually a problem up there since we only allow bow hunting. There were some baiting issues, we found some automatic feeders which are also prohibited by the rules, and some hunters using mineral supplements, which is also not allowed, there were vehicles without parking tags, issues with other hunters and there was an altercation between two hunters, another hunter was found tampering with another hunter's bait pile. There was someone leaving letters on cars in Lewis Morris County Park north on multiple days. Hunters in the park when it is closed and unleashed dogs has always been an issue, and off trail use by hikers, bikers, ATV's and Dirt bikes.

We always ask for the hunters ratings of the program, 318 hunters responded, most people are satisfied with the program. The rating of excellent was up 32.6% from last year. The questionnaire is also used to gauge how people feel about certain aspects of the program, this year we were interested in baiting practices, and asked hunters if they used baiting in the parks, 321 people responded. It was pretty much split down the middle, about 47% used bait, and 53% don't. We also asked if they thought our rules on baiting were too restrictive, and basically we only allow 5 gallons of natural base food substances, to be brought in. They cannot use feeders or mineral supplements 201 people responded to that, and 58% actually feel that our rules are appropriate and 42% felt they were too restrictive. Some of the recommendations are to allow feeders, allow the supplemental material, remove all baiting restrictions and allow what the state allows and some people felt that we should not allow baiting at all.

President Cass-Schmidt asked what was the reasoning behind not allowing baiting. Superintendent Kovacevic replied that we based our rules at the beginning of our hunt, off of

Monmouth County rules, and their reasoning behind that was that they felt there was too much stuff in the woods. We also have an issue with bears and most of our baiting hunters do attract quite a few bears. The other side of the issue is that maybe it is more efficient to allow feeders but if only 50% of the hunters say they would use it it might not be worth it.

We asked for recommendations on how to improve the program, and most of the responses were to allow Saturday and Sunday hunting, more parking, people would like to see the early bow season back at Central Park. Starting the bow season at Alamatong Well Field, which is up to the MUA to decide. Allow cross bow hunting from the ground. We currently only allow it from tree stands, allow firearm hunters to carry weapons while driving deer, which was a change we made to last year's rules to prohibit that. People would like to see bow hunting back at Schooley's Mountain County Park, and Pyramid Mountain again. Allowing ATV access and vehicle access on unpaved roads at Lewis Morris County Park. Reduce permit fees, and a number of people would like to see bear and coyote hunting also.

Commissioner Wentworth inquired what was the Alamatong Well Field. Superintendent Kovacevic explained that this was a parcel of land that is owned by the MCMUA in Randolph Township, but that the Park Commission was asked by the MCMUA to administer the program on their property.

Superintendent Kovacevic explained how we know that the program is working and while we strayed away from the days of actually counting deer, which isn't really the most effective way, but we do have some tools that we use to actually gauge what is happening in the parks the one methods we have is the bow hunter observation reports on the survey which was put into place in 2008, each year we ask hunters to keep track of the number of hours they spend in the park and the number of deer that they see. We use this to calculate an index, which is an index of relevant abundance the number of deer divided by the total number of observation hours. This doesn't tell us how many deer are in the park, but over time it should tell us if the population is going down or up. This year we had 154 hunters return their log, logging a total of 6,324 hours in over 1600 individual outings. In 2008 we started the program at James Andrews County Park, and the number has actually gotten lower since the start of the program.

Mahlon Dickerson Reservation has also seen a decrease. The program was started there in 2009, Central Park has also seen a steady decrease, Jonathan's Woods and Mount Paul, a decrease since 2011.

Executive Director Helmer pointed out that there are a number of communities around the parks running programs, however the National Park has now delayed their plan to begin a program because they want to fully verify the impact of the invasive plant species as they deal with wildlife management. Is Lewis Morris County Park being affected by not doing anything at Jockey Hollow.

The Natural Resources Department has implemented some forest health surveys, these are methods that are used throughout the State. The protocols were developed by a consulting

company called Ecological Solutions, which is headed by Michael Van Cluck, this is another way to calculate indices that we can compare over time is the program working and in between other areas of the State.

The first was the Sentinel Seedlings Survey which allows for a rapid assessment of the potential of forest regeneration, and to evaluate the effectiveness of your deer management program.

Randomly selected plots in four parks were selected. The plots get planted with ten red oak seedlings in late autumn, then the plots are revisited again in the summer to evaluate the seedlings for deer browse. The number of end bud clusters on each seedling is counted, each seedling is flagged, and then return in the summer to see where those seedlings were browsed by deer.

The second survey is called the Forest Secchi Survey which takes a measure of existing shrubs, and sapling cover in forest habitat this gives you an assessment of your existing condition and forest health. You use the same plots as the forest seedlings, we have a square of poster board that has been divided into 16 cells, someone stands in the center of the sentinel seedling plot then the person with the board goes out about 10 meters, from the center, in four directions while the person in the middle determines how many of the cells have been obstructed by vegetation.

The State average of deer browse is 51, we are below that at three of the sites, but higher than that at the Tourne, this doesn't tell you how many deer you have per square mile but in previous surveys they actually correlated the results with the number of deer they had per square mile, they saw 50% browse at sites with 90 deer per square mile and 15% at sites with 20 per square mile. Both of those sites had no regeneration really occurring so it is thought that we need a level less than ten or 5% to see any type of forest recovery. We are clearly much higher than that number, there are other sites that have that high level of browse for example South Mountain in Essex County. In 2007 they had a number of 82% browse but in 2012 after their program their number dropped to 35. Schiff is similar in that they had a 75 in 2008 they adopted an aggressive deer management program, and that number dropped to 32 in 2012. We will be able to look at these plots again in a couple years to see what is happening.

The state average for native vegetation is 18 and we are higher than that but we are not nearly as high as we should be we should have a value of over 70% of native vegetation which would indicate a healthy forest so we still have a long way to go.

Non-native cover was the highest at Black River Park, and Lewis Morris County Park which goes along with what we observe in the field.

The complete report will be posted on our website shortly. The recommendations for what we should do next year still have to be reviewed with staff, and all the divisions, but the thought is that we would have two new programs a Silas Condict bow program and we will be looking at the Waughaw Mountain Greenway Property to see if there is potential for a fire arm and bow program, putting the Schooley's Mountain and Pyramid Mountain bow program back in place,

reinstating the Loantaka Brook Reservation bow program, expanding the programs at Jonathan's Woods and Central Park to allow earlier season starts and Saturday hunting. Both parks we have major investments in forest health. At Jonathan's Woods the Pine Tree regeneration project, and Central Park we have put a lot of money into planting in different areas of that park so we don't want to see too many deer in those areas, changing the season slightly at Pyramid and Schooley's Mountain to evaluate potential for one to two Saturdays during the firearm season, we continue to see the number of hunters drop off in those two parks and the number of deer that are being taken drop. Since the hunters say that they will hunt on Saturdays if it was allowed we will try it this year to see if that really is the case. Adding the west slope property at Schooley's Mountain County Park, while we also have to discuss proposed changes to the rules and the issue of hunter expulsion. We have some of the people who were expelled this year asking to come back, and some people that were expelled in previous years also asking to come back.

Commissioner McCarthy asked what the buffer is for gun and bow. Superintendent Kovacevic stated that the state regulation is 450 for gun and 150 for bow hunting. The Park Commission still uses 450 for bow, to maintain relationships with neighbors. Commissioner McCarthy also inquired why the state backed off of a doe first. Superintendent Kovacevic explained that it wasn't doe first it was that they had to take two antlerless deer for every antlered deer. The Park Commission was clear that they could take it in any order but if they took a buck first they had to take the other two. It started to get complicated to enforce it and there were a lot of gray areas so it was easier to take that off the table but we can still look at people who are clearly taking bucks.

Commissioner McCarthy asked what was a healthy number of deer per square mile. Superintendent Kovacevic responded that the original recommendation was 15 to 20 deer per square mile but now most experts in the state feel that it should be much lower, actually 5 to 10 to allow the forest to rebound. We don't know where we are in the parks because it is such a difficult number to measure. We have tried many other surveys and that is why we are looking at the forest health surveys now because that is the entire goal of the program to see if the forest can recover and we are seeing that we really need a deer management program.

Six years ago was the last infrared survey done and we were at 52 deer per square mile.

Commissioner McCarthy explained that baiting definitely helps and inquired as to how far in advance are you allowed to do this. Superintendent Kovacevic stated that you are allowed to bait two weeks before the season starts in a specific park.

Superintendent Kovacevic does feel that there is some impact with Jockey Hollow not allowing hunting.

Assistant Deputy Director of Horticultural Activities and Natural Resources Zafonte explained that we started the deer management program back in the 1980's and all of the effort that the Park Commission has put in with empaneling two Wildlife Advisory Committees, how do we

count the deer, how do we know how many are out there, the aerial infrareds, we had a group of volunteers and we walked across Lewis Morris County Park with counters and spotters and Assistant Deputy Director Zafonte hopes we don't lose sight of the fact that our goal is to manage the biodiversity of the forests which should be our primary goal. He acknowledges that we have struggled over the years and we keep trying to do the best we can.

The sentinel seedlings survey and the forest secchi survey are relative indexes and we need to have some sort of data. We have reports from the early days and if anyone is interested in reading them we can make them available. We did immunocontraception at The Frelinghuysen Arboretum for 4 years before the Humane Society realized that it just wasn't practical. We have really looked at all options.

Commissioner Lasser asked if we thought that there are more deer now than there was five years ago.

Executive Director Helmer pointed out that the deer per population per square mile, part of the analysis that was done years ago wasn't considering the development that surrounded the open spaces. The impactful component is that it is ok to have X number of deer per square mile, around Lewis Morris County Park until all of this high density development happened around here pushing the animals and not just deer into smaller and smaller tracks of land and it goes back to the public perspective that they should be pleased that the County spends money on open space, and that there are a number of parks exceeding 1,000 acres because can you imagine the increased damage to peoples gardens and areas if you didn't have these larger tracts of properties. A few years ago Mountain Lakes analyzed traffic incidents, crashes with animals, they surveyed local residents on impacts to their properties, it all came full circle. The scary thing is that most communities now allow hunting and the ones that didn't and everyone else now but we are not really seeing a change into the effect of our natural lands. We had a hard decision to fence in The Frelinghuysen Arboretum but the impact on the gardens of Frelinghuysen was dramatic staff was spending more time protecting what plant material was left, then planting. At the farm, we had crop damage, the crops at the farm help support programming and we had to do some dramatic things lately as related to the hunting program. We only started with Black River and Lewis Morris and now we are hunting across the County. We need to know how our forest health is, it's a responsibility as a Park Commission, the public wants to see these natural areas, there has been dramatic hunting in the reason and we are just not seeing change.

Commissioner McCarthy inquired if we have ever considered the professional hunting groups. Executive Director Helmer stated that we had tried that in the early days of the hunt, you need to speak to the integrity of the program and the cost. The mechanisms that some of the entities use, such as trap and bolt, hunting still seems to be the best mechanism because you get the most people.

Contrary to what people believe there are people who use the parks in the winter time. If we could hunt in September on a Saturday we could do a better job, but there are so many people who use the park on a beautiful fall day.

Commissioner Wentworth asked if we could vary the hours on a Saturday, but Superintendent Kovacevic responded that we had tried that but the hunters had to leave at a certain time and they were just really getting ready and so it really didn't work. Superintendent Kovacevic also stated that we have received very few calls from people regarding hunting in the parks and she believes that many people have gotten comfortable with people hunting in the parks, and hunting as a whole.

Superintendent Kovacevic received a request from Fish and Wildlife that they would like to use our property to conduct some of their bear trapping work, and right now we are in the process of developing an access policy that we would give to these groups that ask to use Park Commission property for their different research needs. We will bring the policy we are it before the Park Commission, for review and approval. Fish and Wildlife have been doing these surveys throughout the state, and we already allow them to access our property to access dens, during the winter when they are visiting the dens to do some of their research, this will allow actual trapping of bears during the spring and fall season, and placing snares in certain parts of the parks and then they capture the adult bears and do various tests and evaluations.

The Park Commission was in total agreement with the proposal.

Commissioner Lasser is concerned that it would be tragic if someone did get injured during one of the hunts.

Executive Director Helmer did state that we are more conservative when it comes to buffers and we take those additional precautions because we know our residents stray off their property into park lands. Hopefully we monitor a good program and when you receive complaints for example doing tree stands only we do those kinds of things to minimize the potential risk. We always have to be stringent with the rules, if someone does get hurt it will be on the Park Commission.

Assistant Deputy Director Zafonte gave a brief overview of the project at Jonathan's Wood. The contractor Downs Tree Service, started the project on February 25, and has been there consistently since that date. They are cutting down trees and making wood chips. Originally, the plan was to chip directly into tractor trailers but now he is making large wood chip piles and he will tractor trailer them out hopefully starting the end of this week, or next week. The deadline of March 31 for getting all the trees down has been met, due to the regulation regarding the Indiana Bat and the cutting of trees which had to be done by March 31. The issue we have now is that the entire project had to be done by March 31, and we had a \$200.00 per day penalty in the contract for work that went past March 31. The contractor is thinking he should be done in about another two weeks, he is hoping that it will be sooner. The forester consultant on the job has no complaints about the contractor.

Park Development

Commissioner Julie Baron, Chair

Director of Engineering Vitale updated the Commission on Leddell's Pond Dam Out of the 14 dams in the Park Commission five of them are classified as a significant hazard. So far we have rehabilitated 3 of them and this is the next one in line, the remainder of the dams are all low hazard as classified by the State except for one, which hasn't been classified yet.

The dam is located on Tempe Wick Road, and the adjacent property is owned by Dr. Antonucci. Through the efforts of Counsel Suminski the Park Commission was able to secure the 25% of land that was owned by Dr. Antonucci.

The dam has been there prior to the revolution and we have reports in our files that state that George Washington's troops were located around it during their stay in Morristown.

The Ledell's Pond Dam was judged to be in an unsafe condition and the Park Commission entered into an agreement with the DEP to rebuild the dam. We have had some interim work done on it, in order to keep some fines away. What we are beginning to do now is to take the dam out in its entirety and by doing so we will be protecting the mill, and also constructing a new concrete dam. We were required to obtain five permits one of which was from the State Historic Preservation Office. During this construction we will be saving the fabric that is over the dam. We will have an archaeologist present at the site, while digging, and in addition to that we will have to consider the traffic on Tempe Wick Road during commuter hours.

This is the biggest Capital Project that we have going on right now, the cost will be approximately 1.4 million dollars. We do have a contingency reserved .

Schedule wise construction should be done by the end of 2014. The paperwork will take a little longer to finish up since the State must review their inspection , etc.

Director of Engineering Vitale, reported that the contractor has already started moving some of the equipment to the site.

Commissioner Lasser inquired how much would it have been without the historic requirements. Director of Engineering Vitale did report that there would be very little difference between the two.

Commissioner McCarthy asked how far down the pond will have to be drained, and Director of Engineering Services Vitale stated that the pond is 14 feet deep and it has to be drained all the way down. There are also stringent provisions in all the permits so we have to prevent the silt from going down stream.

Commissioner McCarthy inquired how far down will it affect the fish and the water temperatures. Director of Engineering Services Vitale stated that within the next few weeks there will be fish relocation. This is done by a boat with an electric generator. They electrically charge the water and it puts the fish in a state that allows them to be scooped up. The fish will be relocated to Sunrise Lake, and after it is done, it will be restocked.

Executive Director Helmer reminded everyone about the Whole Foods 5% Event, and Tackle the Trail at Central Park of Morris County also is being held this month.

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Executive Director Helmer spoke about the State moving forward with the remediation and demolition of the buildings at Greystone Park. This is inclusive of all the structures, the Preserve Greystone groups are still looking for ways to preserve some of the buildings. The County has no interest in dealing with any of the structures that remain on the property. We can further discuss this at the April meeting in more detail, and hopefully will have some additional information.

Executive Director Helmer is hoping to make some improvements around the Cultural Center, such as, roadway improvement, resurfacing, striping, low level lighting, some screening of some of the areas where we keep equipment and recycling and trash areas.

The electrical work at The Frelinghuysen Arboretum has begun.

Executive Director Helmer discussed Resolution No. 53-14 for the purchase and installation of a new Reservation System and a Park Maintenance tracking system. The funding for this came from the PSE&G project. Manager Silverman and Manager Biase have worked on the RFP for this project.

Commissioner Lasser commented on the film "Open Spaces in Historic Places in Morris County" and how well done it was.

Commissioner Wentworth also stated that the film will be shown on May 7 and two other dates, and commended the Kirby's dedication to Open Space.

Executive Director Helmer is hoping that possibly the Freeholder Board will be able to view this Film. The film does tie in with the analysis that is being performed on the County Open Space Fund Fund as it relates to the economic impact of Open Space on Morris County.

An email will be sent out listing all the future dates and time that the film will be airing. NJTV

will show the film on Wednesday, May 7, at 8 p.m., Friday May 9 at 2 a.m., and Sunday May 11 at 11 a.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

President Cass-Schmidt moved to adopt Resolution No. 52-14 (Attachment No. 1) placing the Commission meeting into Executive Session pursuant to provisions of N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 (5), (6), (7) and (8), the pertinent provisions of the "Open Public Meetings Act." The motion was seconded by Commissioner Baron and unanimously adopted by roll call vote.

Since there were not matters to be discussed in closed session the Park Commission spent time discussing in open session activities related to Park Police and the Freeholder Law Enforcement Study Committee.

President Cass-Schmidt, presented a draft information sheet on the Park Police. Since over the years there have been different studies performed on the role of the Park Police since the 80's she felt it would be beneficial for the Commissioners to have one clear document that tries to encapsulate the history and current status of the Park Police Department. This item can be covered in Open Session because this is based on information that is available to the public and everyone should be provided with the same information, so that if there are any questions there is a chance to cover matter with the full Board. This is only a draft so it should not be distributed since there may be some refinement that will need to be done.

President Cass-Schmidt briefly gave an overview of the draft. This included the Mission Statement of the Park Police. There is also a comprehensive list that covers the functions of the Department. A key item that is being discussed by the Law Enforcement Committee is that a broader law enforcement agency is needed in order to meet the needs of the County and its communities. You can see that the work that the Park Police is doing already closely ties in with the municipalities.

The issues for the Park Commissions' consideration is the security of the 150 structures, including the 5 national historic sites that we have stewardship over. There is a table at the end of the report that shows the average size of each park. Only the Park Police by State Statute can enforce the Rules and Regulations of the Park Commission. That would mean that any other law enforcement agency would have to call the Park Police to enforce the regulations. We have 150 miles of trails throughout the over 18,000 acres of land in our stewardship responsibility.

We have done things to help stabilize the budget by introducing the Class II Officers and raising the Park Commission fines to a maximum \$100.00.

Also included, is a summary of all the studies that have been done so far. The first one was the Police Executive Research Forum and the cost of that was \$40,000.00, it was done by a professional agency that came in it looked at the services that are performed by the Morris

County Sheriff's Office, and the work that is done by the Park Police. Their findings were that the agencies are complex and that there really is no compelling reason to merge the organizations.

Two other studies that were done, one in 1984 that had only changes to our Park Police, and in 2011 recommended merging the Sheriff's non mandated duties into the Park Police.

Chief David Doyle, added when we start identifying each of the tasks that the Park Police do, it might paint a different picture for all to see. The Park Police actually help out the towns, and they fill that capacity very well, we do have the support of the towns because of the relationship we have established with them, and we would like to continue that.

Also included in the report, is information on the Camden County Police System. There actually is nothing in common with the Camden County Park System and the Morris County Park System, and along with this report is a table with the comparisons of two entities. There is also some information on various websites about this Camden County Police Department.

Some history is also included, which describes the time the Park Police was established to the present, along with some of the statistics.

In Long Island there is legislation proposed to move their Park Police into their County Department. There is a significant difference here in that they have had a County Police Department here since 1960, unlike Morris County where in each municipality you have a police department they have precincts set up throughout.

President Cass-Schmidt wants to make sure that each Commissioner is on the same page with the correct facts and information. This way we will be prepared for the next meeting with the Freeholders on April 28th.

Executive Director Helmer pointed out that the Senior Staff should understand the impacts of the proposal to transfer the Park Police to a County Police Force. Currently the premise has been up until now is that there has only been one component of enforcement that the County would be interested in doing that the Park Police can't do by law, and part of that is to supply weigh stations on County Roads.

The idea with the weigh stations is that a revenue stream could be generated and greater monitoring of the County's roads and bridges by having the County roads patrolled with a weigh station unit. Bergen County is authorized to have a weigh station system and they bring in 3 million dollars in revenue a year. This would be an opportunity for Morris County to provide another stream of revenue thereby potentially supporting the Park Police operations also under the guise that the infrastructure improvements would be better protected. Trucks that are on roads that shouldn't be on roads, trucks that are overloaded and you would have this enforcement mechanism to ensure that the proper vehicles are on the proper roads.

The Park Police cannot do that under current legislation, the other guise is that then you would support municipalities by having County Police more vigilant on County roads, thereby supporting your local police department.

The Park Police have responded before they are asked to do things. A good example is the Class II Officer. This is based on one Class II Officer for every seven officers, and based upon our current department force you can only get three Class II's. Even with the use of seasonal and part time law enforcement officers can only go so far. The shore areas have a special dispensation, they are allowed to have more Class II's per department.

We have had certain individuals suggest that we have a volunteer law enforcement staff, but you have to understand that we have a park system that attracts people from all over the area not just Morris County residents and the idea that you may not need a Park Police department because nothing happens in the parks, our perspective is that maybe the reasons we have few incidents is that we have the visibility of our Park Police officers.

Staff needs to be cognizant of how the department works and the force that is out there. Chief Doyle is also working with the Commissioners on a concept that may include a task force approach to one of the issues that the Freeholders have raised as it relates to weigh stations.

The concept of going into a regional County Police force is not a bad idea but what is the goal, what is the approach, and as our officers leave a non-civil service environment, to a civil service environment they lose all of their protection. Currently if there was a consolidation with the Sheriff's Department, the officers would be protected by specific legislation, there would be no layoffs, and there would be bumping of senior officers down to the level of sergeant.

In the end if you deplete the police department your programs and operations will be significantly affected.

We have pushed to establish a shared court for the Park Police whereby some of the fines would be returned to the Park Commission to help sustain the department. That does take legislation to happen. We even went as far as having a couple of communities who were willing to share a court with the Park Commission.

We should be aware that the Sheriff's department is basically an 8 hour day, Monday through Friday, 9-5, the Park Police have a 10-3/4 hour work shift, we have already worked with our officers over the years evolving out of that shift and this has reduced overtime. Changes have been made in the way in which we monitor some facilities to lessen our presence since we have reduced the Departments headcount over the years. Staff needs to be aware of the potential effects of change that could occur and the implication to your programming and what we will be able to provide to the public.

All things change and evolve and you try to evolve for the good and not the negative and my fear is that a quick change to the way in which law enforcement is provided to the park system will have a long-term damaging effect and will take us longer to get out of to fix. At this point we have yet to see a plan and we do not know what the final goal is, other than more patrols of County roads, and we can do that now, we currently impose on Park Police not to exceed an 8 or 9 percent out of the Park System activity since their primary role is to ensure that the parks and its visitors are protected. So far nothing has been said about how we protect what we have been responsible for.

It was offensive to make any comparison with Morris County Park Police and Camden County. Just because we may be the only one, we may just be running it correctly. We will have to see what transpires at the Commission meeting on April 28. There may be quite a bit of pressure at the Freeholder meeting there have been emails going around to have the general public in attendance.

Executive Director Helmer feels that the Commissioners and staff should not think that the individuals coming to the Freeholder Meetings have anything to do with whether the Park Police is important or not. There are two separate issues happening here. One tract is no one told us you were looking to start a County Police. Not in any of the conversations has there been any discussion as to who would be the County Police and what happens to the parks after that occurs. Although there is a great show of support from the Chiefs of Police around the County, and quite a few Mayors, a lot of that may be dealing with how this issue could affect their own municipal department and not our specific needs, not necessarily what is best for the Park Commission.

President Cass-Schmidt wondered if it were possible for us to be a little more proactive as far as shared services go and asked the Chief to give some thought to this so that after the April 28 meeting.

Executive Director Helmer pointed out that we have had Mayors come to us seeking law enforcement support over the years, such as Victory Gardens, I think what happens during the next few weeks will set the tone and allow the Park Commission to allow the Park Police to be more pro-active in a role with the local communities.

At the Freeholder meeting the Freeholder Director felt that one of the reasons for this County Police force was the heroin epidemic.

Chief Doyle stated that over the years he has seen the many land acquisitions that the Park Commission has taken over properties that were infested with drug activity and off road activity, and over the years we as a Park Police Department are introduced into those locations and short-term less than a year we have eradicated drug activity. Areas in Morristown such as Speedwell Lake that was a known heroin drug hang out for decades, we were introduced and it was cleaned up to the point that you would feel comfortable bringing your family have a day of fishing, picnicking or whatever comforting in the knowledge that you are safe. To speak on that

point just in the lack of volume of calls we have from people being accosted on the trails, lewdness, sexual complaints, drug activity have dwindled during the past few years. That is because of our presence, and our due diligence of our officers going in and maintaining that quality of life that everyone is comfortable with. Some people have lost the vision as to how we have come to that. We need to have the influence of the Park Police knowing the parks, and vice versa and everyone knowing that the Park Police are in the parks.

Executive Director Helmer also explained that the Prosecutor was not involved with any of the discussions and filed a letter with the Freeholder Board stating that how could they be discussing this when he is the Chief Law Enforcement Officer in the County and he had no knowledge about this. There are all levels of dialogue that should be happening before any of this is final.

Commissioner McCarthy inquired if the State had a Division of Weights and Measures, Executive Director Helmer responded that the County has a Weights and Measures Division, and from a statutory procedure only the State Police and certain municipalities are allowed to man them. Utilizing all of the agencies from the local on up as a team and not depleting the resources.

Commissioner McCarthy inquired if the NJDEP controls Lake Hopatcong, Executive Director Helmer responded that what has happened recently on the Lake is that the Lake Hopatcong Foundation, a non-profit, has provided funding to pay for a State Police Officer, a State Police Boat, and one officer from the Sheriff's Department to provide additional patrols on the lake.

This organization cares about this body of water since mostly all of the State Police and Marine Police have been moved to down to Newark Bay, they have actually funded in the summer time, certain hours, certain days of the week on their own having the officers come out. Recently at a meeting the local legislators were going to see if the State wouldn't charge them for the use of the boat, since the boat was \$90.00 per hour, plus the Officer cost.

President Cass-Schmidt asked everyone to look over the report and if they had any questions or additions to please get back to Executive Director Helmer.

Executive Director Helmer said that the next step regarding the Park Police will be that the Freeholder Law Enforcement Committee will be at the April 28, 2014 meeting to at least inform the Commission as a whole what has been transpiring. He is anticipating that this part of the meeting will be in closed session because there are issues related to labor contracts and negotiations that have currently been on hold.

President Cass-Schmidt inquired if Executive Director Helmer would be attending the April Freeholder meeting. He will not be attending this meeting because the Freeholder Law Enforcement Committee will be attending the Park Commission's April 28th meeting and he felt it was best for him as Executive Director to not make any additional public comments until the Committee spoke to the Park Commission. He was appreciative of the Commissioners

attendance at the Freeholder meetings and was very aware of the Morris County Chiefs of Police Associations support of the Park Police.

CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTIONS

Commissioner Baron moved to adopt Resolution No. 52 -14 (Attachment No. 2). The motion was seconded by Commissioner McCarthy and unanimously approved by roll call.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, President Cass-Schmidt adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m. on the motion of Commissioner Wentworth and was seconded by Commissioner McCarthy and unanimously approved by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

ORIGINAL SIGNATURE ON FILE

David D. Helmer
Executive Director

ORIGINAL SIGNATURE ON FILE

Katherine Petro
Office Manager

MORRIS COUNTY PARK COMMISSION
RESOLUTION NO. 52-14

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Morris County Park Commission on this 8th day of April, 2014 that:

1. Prior to the conclusion of this regular meeting of the Morris County Park Commission, which regular meeting has been opened to the public, the Morris County Park Commission shall meet in Executive Session, from which the public shall be excluded, to discuss personnel matters, land acquisition, and report of counsel, as permitted pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 (5), (6), (7), and (8), the pertinent provisions of the "Open Public Meetings Act."
2. The time when the matters discussed pursuant to paragraph #1 hereof can be disclosed to the public is as soon as practicable after the final resolution of the aforesaid matters.

April 8, 2014

MORRIS COUNTY PARK COMMISSION

Betty Cass-Schmidt
President

_____, I, David D. Helmer, Executive Director of the Morris County Park Commission, do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Morris County Park Commission at a meeting held on April 8, 2014, at the Park Commission offices, 300 Mendham Road, Morristown, New Jersey.

[ORIGINAL SIGNATURE ON FILE]

MORRIS COUNTY PARK COMMISSION
RESOLUTION NO. 53-14

WHEREAS, the Morris County Park Commission has determined that it is advisable and in the public interest to use a software solution that will enable Morris County Park Commission staff to provide excellent customer service and enhance internal operations including, but not limited to, the daily administration of programs and registrations, facility and field reservations, league scheduling, point of sale, inventory management for equipment rentals and sales, event management, community programs, payment processing compliance, maintenance management, and customized reporting, and

WHEREAS, proposals were received on Thursday, March 13, 2014 at 10:00 a.m. prevailing time for these services to be awarded on a fair and open process, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq., the Local Public Contracts Law, and

WHEREAS, Park Commission staff has reviewed the proposal documents submitted by Vermont Systems, Inc. of Essex Junction, Vermont and found them to be in order and acceptable, and

WHEREAS, Park Commission staff has determined that the proposal submitted by Vermont Systems, Inc. of Essex Junction, Vermont in the amount not to exceed of \$94,811.00 which best addresses the scope of work outlined in their proposal dated March 5, 2013, and

WHEREAS, the Director of Finance and the Treasurer have certified the availability of funds in the Park Trust Account No. 68-290-56-RECPRO-888, **NOW THEREFORE**

BE IT RESOLVED by the Morris County Park Commission on this 24th day of March, 2014 as follows:

1. That the contract be and is hereby is awarded on a fair and open basis pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq. to Vermont Systems, Inc. of Essex Junction, Vermont to provide a software solution to provide excellent customer service and enhance internal operations including, but not limited to, the daily administration of programs and registrations, facility and field reservations, league scheduling, point of sale, inventory management for equipment rentals and sales, event management, community programs, payment processing compliance, maintenance management, and customized reporting for a fee not to exceed of \$94,811.00, as more fully specified in their proposal dated March 5, 2014.
2. That funding for this project will be available through the Park Trust Account No. 68-290-56-RECPRO-888.
3. That this Resolution take effect immediately.

April 8, 2014

MORRIS COUNTY PARK COMMISSION

Betty Cass-Schmidt
President

_____, I, David D. Helmer, Executive Director of the Morris County Park Commission, do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Morris County Park Commission at a meeting held on April 8, 2014, at the Park Commission offices, 353 East Hanover Avenue, Morris Township, New Jersey.

[ORIGINAL SIGNATURE ON FILE]