

REGULAR MEETING  
Chatham Joint Recreation Advisory Committee

Wednesday, September 14, 2022  
7:30 p.m., Chatham High School Media Center

Minutes

- I. **Call to Order:** Mrs. Jenks called the meeting to order. She noted the meeting was being recorded for the minutes.

II. **Roll Call:**

At roll call the following members were present:

Mr. Bill Karpowic  
Mr. Pat Grady  
Mr. Brain Hargrove  
Mrs. Sue Jenks  
Mr. Dan Flynn  
Mr. Chris Duignan  
Mr. Scott Burgo  
Mr. Tom Claps  
Mr. Chris Delsandro  
Mrs. Carolyn Dempsey  
Mr. Mark Lois  
Ms. Carol Nauta  
Mr. Larry McCann

**Members Absent:**

None

**Review and Acceptance of Agenda and Minutes:**

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of June 8, 2022

Moved: Bill Karpowic Seconded: Pat Grade

Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Abstain: 4

- Mr. Lois noted at the June meeting during a meeting between both towns' Administrators there was discussion regarding the termination of the Joint Shared Services Agreement.
- Mrs. Dempsey noted Mr. Jim Lonergan (a previous Borough Council member and previous liaison to the Recreation Committee) requested a meeting to discuss the Joint Recreation Programming. Mrs. Dempsey noted there had not been a conversation regarding termination of the Joint Shared Services Agreement nor anything approved by those present.

**Agenda of the Regular Meeting of June 8, 2022**

Moved: Bill Karpowic Seconded: Pat Grady

Ayes: 11 Nays: 0 Abstain: 0

**Public Comment:**

Club representatives Mr. Tarasca, Mr. Wyso, Mr. Ashton, Mr. Grady and Mr. Matter were present.

**Reports:****Chatham Club and Recreation Activities:****Baseball:** Mr. Jude Tarasca

- There are three Fall Travel Baseball teams sharing Shunpike 1.
- Spring Travel Tryouts will be held in October – Date TBD.
- Spring 2023 Recreation Registration will begin in December.
- Recreation registration fees will not increase.
- Shunpike 1 and 2 and possibly Nash will be laser graded. The cost is about \$8,000 per field.
- It was noted Public Works in both towns do an excellent job preparing the fields.
- Mr. Lois noted some baseball field issues brought to him: Netting at Shunpike, the batting cage bases, the ceiling of one of the dugouts at Nash, dugout shades at some fields.
- The batting cages are taken down late October.
- Mr. Grady noted he thought the netting at Shunpike turf was just replaced a few years ago. Items being hung on the netting is ripping the nets.
- Mr. Delsandro noted players should place their bags behind the backstops and off any netting/fencing.
- It was noted that due to the time and money baseball spends on their fields they post signs regarding use. Other towns have come in, unauthorized, and were asked to leave.
- Mr. Tarasca noted they purchased temporary fencing for Shepard Kollock South for the summer, but the bees appeared in the diamond and grass.
- The bees also appeared at Memorial and those fields closed. Teams were shifted to other locations.
- Mr. Lois noted the MTV Field had three treatments for the bees.

**Softball:** Mr. Brent Wyso

- Mr. Wyso discussed the need for dugout shades at Shunpike 3.
- Mr. Lois noted there were some Township resolutions approved for some field items. but they had not all been addressed as yet.
- Mr. Tarasca noted the dugout shade costs were about \$15,000.

**Wrestling:** Mr. Brett Matter

- Mr. Matter noted the club was combining with Summit and New Providence forming the Hill Valley Wrestling Club.
- There would be approximately 100 to 150 wrestlers combined in grades K-8.
- The Chatham wrestling room would be used for grades K-4 three days a week (Monday/Wednesday/Saturday).
- Grades 5-8 would practice in Summit three days a week (Tuesday/Thursday/Saturday).
- The club insurance would come through the New Providence PAL.
- Summit and Chatham have combined their High School wrestling programs.

- The Chatham wrestling room was renovated with insurance funds due to a leak in the building.
- Mr. Matter noted several years ago, Mr. John Nonnenmacher was instrumental in moving the youth wrestling program forward.

**Football: Mr. Henry Ashton**

- Mr. Ashton noted that Tackle Football and Cheer had started their season.
- Flag will begin in a week.
- Basic concepts and terminology the High School uses are utilized with the tackle teams.
- Tackle has 164 players. Grade 4 has 37 players, Gr 5 has 35, Grade 6 has 32, Grade 7 has 33 and Grade 8 has 27.
- Grade 4 was added this year after a trial run with grade 5 in 2021.
- All tackle teams practice at Lum Tuesday/Thursday and Sat.
- Cheer has their largest numbers ever. (70+)
- Mr. Ashton noted the request for hash marks on Lum were reviewed but the number of lines currently on the field were an issue that could affect other sports.
- There are 164 players registered for Flag.
- Flag now has grades 3-7. He noted Mrs. Nauta worked through the logistics for him to find space for the newly added grade 7.
- Grade 3 plays Monday, Thursday, and Saturday.
- Grade 4/5 plays Monday/Thursday and Saturday.
- Grades 6/7 play Monday and Thursday nights.

**Basketball: Mr. Pat Grady**

- Mr. Grady reported Travel Tryouts will begin the end of September.
- The Basketball Club would like to thank the Borough for their investment for the Garden Park Basketball Courts. It was much appreciated for all those in the community to utilize – youth and adult.
- He noted the Garden Park area is very impressive with the Basketball Courts, the newly renovated Tennis/Pickleball Courts, the new tennis hitting walls and the walking path.
- It was noted he understood the other 3 tennis court may be on the list for renovation in 2023 and at some point, an updated playground.

**Lights at Shunpike:**

- Mr. Tarasca discussed the current light times/days for Shunpike Field.
- Currently it has been 4-5 weeknights until 9:15 turn off.
- Originally the time was 9pm but then it was noted that with the distance to the parking lots, for safety, an extra 15 minutes was added for the 9:15 turnoff time.
- Mr. Tarasca noted there has been a neighborhood turnover since the original light schedule had been formulated and requested information regarding the town ordinance.
- Mr. Lois stated he believed it was 9:45pm, fields empty by 10pm and lights off by 10:15pm.
- Mr. Grady noted he thought the 2010 ordinance was 10pm with lights off by 10:30pm.
- Mr. Lois noted the ordinance was a hard stop time. Any adjustments to that of an earlier time would be/have been a policy change.

- Mr. Karpowic noted the current policy was set by one of the past Administrators Mr. Tom Ciccarone and then followed by past Administrator Mr. Hoffmann.
- Mr. Lois asked what Mr. Tarasca felt the policy should be
- Mr. Tarasca and others noted up to 6 nights (no Sundays) with lights off by 9:30pm.
- Mr. Tarasca noted Mrs. Nauta has been helpful with nights needing some added time to complete a game due to weather, delayed starts, etc. in order to get teams safely to the parking areas.
- Mr. Lois noted Mrs. Nauta's direction though comes from each town Administrator.
- A motion was made to extend the light times/nights at Shunpike to up to 6 nights, no Sundays and until 9:30pm lights off.
- This will be revisited and a discussion with the Township Administrator/Committee. This would also be for the Shunpike turf field.
- Mr. Tarasca noted weeknight this Fall have been difficult getting sessions in due to the late end of day school closing this year and the ability to begin practices earlier in the afternoon
- Mr. Lois noted since the township has two lighted field complexes, having lighting at Lum Turf would help with field usage.
- A motion was made to have the Borough review permanent lights at Lum.
- Mr. Ashton did note that Lum receives a lot of activity due to its location. He noted after football turns off the light's children come out of nowhere onto the field. There has been vandalism of equipment, etc.

#### **Scheduling:**

- Mr. Tarasca was asked about his baseball scheduling program.
- He noted on his baseball site he and the coaches can see where teams are practicing and playing – start/end/date/field.
- His program can send text messages to families regarding their schedules, any adjustments, cancellations, messages, etc. to the whole group or specific teams/leagues.
- Mr. Burgo noted he would like to see the availability of all fields. This was due to some soccer being played at the county fields in Parsippany when Chatham fields were open.
- Chatham United Soccer has the same process as the other Chatham clubs of allocated space. That soccer question would need to be addressed with soccer as to why/if they had open space - was it a Chatham United team looking for a change of space, was it a home or away game, was the size of the needed field potentially the issue, etc.
- Mr. Wyso from softball utilized his allocated space. His issue, like baseball, was rainouts due to the dirt diamonds.
- Mrs. Nauta worked closely with each Chatham Club lead in any movement/adjustments, etc. to get teams in to play including the schools.
- Open access to a site was discussed and the concern of doubling up, everyone trying to grab any open space, who it could be (a Chatham Club/Recreation activity, other?), etc.
- Currently all the allocated fields are on an excel spreadsheet. Adjustments are made weekends/daily as per game schedules, weather, field conditions, school needs, etc.
- Mr. Grady noted on their basketball site the coaches can view what/where each team is, send messages, etc.

- He noted that week to week space in some gyms is unpredictable due to school use for school related activities and/or High School sport practice and/or games. The High School does not post practices.
- Mr. Grady noted each week Mrs. Nauta receives updates as to what the school can allocate at the High School and Middle School. Travel Basketball Coaches email their availability for the following week's practice requests. Coaches' availability can change from week to week – work schedules, game schedules, etc. As per the club's direction teams starting at grade 8 are allocated space first going down to grade 4. If there is space left for a 2<sup>nd</sup> practice grade 8 requests are filled first moving down again to grade 4.
- As for teams getting the same practice schedule each week – Many weeks some teams can't always do the same night week due to coaches' commitments, their game schedules, available space (gym closed for vacations/school activities).
- Security at the school has been heightened over the past years. The schools are notified each week of who will be in a building at what hour.
- Teams are given specific instructions required from each school regarding gym/building use.
- Mr. Lois commented that if a space is open within 4 days of a request it could perhaps be released to another group.
- Non-typical sport off season use was discussed. Travel soccer plays fall and spring. Travel Baseball and sometimes softball also have a limited number of teams playing in the fall.
- Chatham Clubs playing multiple seasons are placed, as per the Recreation Committee, on the bottom of the pecking order for space allocations during their non-typical season.
- Due to the number of years Chatham United Soccer has been functioning they were grandfathered in for two season play. This was with the knowledge that in the spring they would fall to the bottom of the allocation list.
- A motion was made to investigate how to perhaps centralize information.

#### **Esternay Field:**

- The topic of potential improvements at Esternay was again discussed. An estimate to turf the lower field was approximately 1.3 million.
- Mr. Lois noted the fastest use for added field utilization would be lighting Lum Field. Currently Lum is only lit for football two nights a week with temporary portable generator lights.
- Lum lighting would allocate additional time for other activities and would end the need for the use of the generator units. The odor, noise and light spillage have been discussed and also noted by the Environmental Commission. The newer permanent light units would alleviate those issues.
- Currently the cost of the portable units at Lum run about \$15,000 for the fall season.
- Mr. Williams, the Chatham Borough Administrator, noted he had just received information on a potential estimate for Lum.
- A field utilization study is being done to review field needs. This is due to a decrease in the school enrollments which have also been felt within some of the Recreation and Club programs.
- The spring season is the largest season for activities to share field space.
- It was noted the grass at Esternay does not grow well.

- Esternay was closed during the fall of 2021 to rest, make repairs and rebuild the grass base due to the overlapping spring activity usage.

### III. **Recreation Coordinator:**

#### **Cross Country:**

- There are 130 participants in the Cross-Country program. Participants practice twice a week and have weekend meets. The program is open to those in grades 3-8.

#### **Women's Over 25 Volleyball:**

- There are currently 10 women playing Monday nights.

#### **Men's Over 35 Basketball:**

- There are currently 34 men playing Tuesday and Thursday nights.

#### **Men's Basketball League Teams:**

- Registration for the Men's League Teams will begin late October. Those teams will play Sundays.

### IV. **Old Business**

- Mr. Lois discussed the Colony Tennis Court repairs/renovations. Bids received had been rejected due to the costs.
- The Nash basketball court was also investigated for a coating.
- The Shunpike basketball backboards were being looked at as the rims were coming off the board at Shunpike.
- Mr. Karpowic asked Mr. Delsandro about the school referendum to renovate the fields behind the High School.
- Mr. Delsandro noted the project was shelved when the costs doubled. The area behind the High School is much larger than Esternay and would have provided many alternatives for sport usage.
- Cougar was also investigated as that would have also gained added activity field space.
- Mr. Ashton noted that on front Cougar divots appeared in the field due to some of the Cross-Country events.
- High School field space does become an issue with all their sport teams both at Cougar and Haas – hence the usage needs sometimes of the town fields.

#### **Shunpike Turf:**

- Mr. Grady asked if there had been any further updates on a replacement of the Shunpike turf. It was felt the base areas were very thin. The current turf is about 10 years old.
- Lum was renovated a few years ago and both diamonds were redone a few years before that.
- Mr. Lois noted the turf would be a Capital item to discuss with the township.
- It seems some activities like the shorter turf.
- Mr. Grady asked that the activities using the field be contacted regarding its playability versus the new install at Lum.
- The first Shunpike turf installation was funded by the Borough, the Township, and the Chatham Athletic Foundation.

- Mr. Lois mentioned he understood there had been a possible lawsuit due to an injury on Shunpike turf. Mr. Grady noted he thought the possible suit was due to an issue with the installation.
- Mr. Karpowic noted the yellow tubing on the outfield fencing was helpful.

V. **New Business:**

- Mr. Lois noted the committee should prioritize a plan of goals and responsibilities.
- The borough had good direction regarding its complex at Garden Park.
- Mr. Karpowic proposed a subcommittee be formed – what is needed at each facility, what needs to be attended to at each, where does a lighting policy fall with those goals - lights, turf improvements/renovations,
- The Recreation Advisory Committee could make a prioritized list of recommendations to the specific town.
- The metrics from the field study could justify perhaps another turf field, the need for added lighting, etc.
- Mr. Lois is looking for guidance as to what can be done quickly.

VI. **Motions:**

- A motion was made by Scott Burgo for the recreation coordinators to investigate centralization software for recreation scheduling to be considered in the 2023 recreation budget.  
Seconded: Dan Flynn  
Ayes: 11 Nays: 0 Abstain: 0
- A motion was made by Suzanne Jenks to install dugout shades at Shunpike 1/3/4 and Nash 1 as well as any needed netting replacement around the Shunpike 1 and 2 field.  
Seconded: Tom Claps  
Ayes: 11 Nays: 0 Abstain: 0
- A motion was made by Tom Claps to install dugout shades at Shunpike 1/3/4 and Nash 1 as well as any needed netting replacement around the Shunpike 1 and 2 field.  
Seconded: Bill Karpowic  
Ayes: 11 Nays: 0 Abstain: 0
- A motion was made by Tom Claps that the field lights would be left on until 9:30pm/6 days a week.  
Seconded: Pat Grady  
Ayes: 11 Nays: 0 Abstain: 0

VI. **November meeting:** November 9th

- There was discussion regarding a change of date due to Nov 9 being the start of the Teacher Convention weekend.
- Members will be contacted.

VII. **Adjournment**

**NEXT MEETING – Wednesday, November 2nd**