

PHYSICAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING
40 Gleneida Avenue Room #318
Carmel, NY 10512

Committee Members: Chairman Ellner, Legislators Castellano & Crowley

Monday

December 16, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 6:30p.m. by Chairman Ellner who requested Legislator Castellano lead in the Pledge of Allegiance. Upon roll call, Legislator Castellano was present. Legislator Crowley was absent.

Item #3 - Acceptance/ Physical Services Meeting Minutes/ October 9, 2024

Chairman Ellner stated the minutes were accepted as submitted.

Item #4 - Approval/ Budgetary Amendment 24A122/ Guardrail Damage Compensation/ Insurance Recoveries/ Vehicle Accident which Resulted in Guardrail Damage on Crane Road/ Risk Manager Mat Bruno

Chairman Ellner made a motion to Approve Budgetary Amendment 24A122/ Guardrail Damage Compensation/ Insurance Recoveries/ Vehicle Accident which Resulted in Guardrail Damage on Crane Road; Seconded by Legislator Castellano. All in favor.

Item #5 - Approval/ 2025 Proposed Parks Fee Schedule/ Commissioner Department of Public Works Thomas Feighery

Chairman Ellner stated Park Superintendent Chris Ruthven was present to speak to this item.

Park Superintendent Chris Ruthven stated the Park Advisory Board has not met much since COVID, until this year. He stated they wanted to amend the Putnam County Parks Fee so that it would be more in-line with those of surrounding Counties. He stated the goal is not to make money off these fees. He stated one of the amendments was to set a fee scale schedule for the groups who rent space in the park. He stated currently the price of a small family reunion is the same as a large event with 200 attendees. He stated the size of the group does have an effect on the amount of time it takes for the County employees to set up for the event and then clean up after the event. He stated also the County will start charging for the use of certain equipment that in the past the County did not charge for. He stated some of the examples of said equipment would be the stage trailer, light tower. He stated they always had a maintenance fee of \$25.00 per hour, which has been increased to \$35.00 per hour, because the \$25.00 rate was not covering the cost. He stated they did not change any fees related to the Community Garden at Tilly Foster.

Legislator Castellano questioned if a person has to pay, if they walk into the park or drive and they just want to hang out for the day.

Park Superintendent Chris Ruthven stated there is no fee for walk-in or bicyclists. There is always a parking fee. He stated currently the fee is \$8.00 for a day pass. He stated it has been troubling in terms of having to make change with the \$8.00 fee. He stated that has been amended to \$10.00 for a day pass. He stated also there is an annual permit available at \$40.00.

Legislator Castellano questioned what the rate is for a County Employee.

Park Superintendent Chris Ruthven stated the only discount is on the annual permit amount which would be \$20.00 for a County Employee.

Legislator Montgomery requested if the Park Advisory Board would consider giving a discount to First Responders and Senior Citizens.

Park Superintendent Chris Ruthven stated a request for consideration can be sent to the Park Advisory Board, at any time. He stated they have been waiting on taking any reservations for the last couple of months of 2024. He explained they have communicated to the potential customers that the Park Advisory Board was working on something that needed to go through the Legislature. He stated they are hoping that this will get passed at the January 2025 Legislature's meeting, and they will then call the list of people that were put on hold.

Chairman Ellner facilitated further discussion of possible amendments.

Park Superintendent Chris Ruthven stated the Park Advisory Board does not meet again until March.

Legislator Castellano stated he believes these proposed prices are very fair. He stated he is very glad and in support of the discounts for the Putnam County Employees, Seniors, and First Responders.

Park Superintendent Chris Ruthven stated there is a new addition to the County Park, it is the Putnam County Guardian Canine Complex Public Dog Park. He stated the Dog Park requires an Annual Permit which costs \$25.00. He stated the fee will help cover the costs associated with the maintenance of the Dog Park.

Legislator Montgomery questioned if there is something in place to make sure that the dogs that come to said park are vaccinated.

Park Superintendent Chris Ruthven stated they reached out to other places who have Dog Parks and reviewed their process and compiled a plan for the Putnam County Dog Park. He stated the County requires all dogs that come to use the Dog Park have the required vaccination, license etc. He stated they worked with the County's Risk Office and the Law Department, and they have approved the final plan. He stated there are plans in the works to have a grand opening for the Dog Park sometime in March or April 2025.

Chairman Ellner requested Park Superintendent Chris Ruthven please bring Legislator Montgomery’s comments and suggestions back to the Park Advisory Board. He also requested that an amendment be made to the wording regarding the Overnight Camping fee. He stated his understanding is that provision the Overnight Camping refers to Tents or RVs that are kept on the property that are related to an event that will be held at the Park.

Park Superintendent Chris Ruthven stated that is correct. He stated the County Park is not a public campground. He stated the County allows overnight stays for people who are holding multiple day events.

Chairman Ellner made a motion to Approve pending the Amendment to the wording of the “Overnight Camping” - 2025 Proposed Parks Fee Schedule; Seconded by Legislator Castellano. All in favor.

Item #6 - Discussion/Approval/ Agricultural District Application:

Chairman Ellner made a motion to Waive the Rules and Accept the Additional; Seconded by Legislator Castellano. All in favor.

- a. Legislature is to be the Lead Agency for All SEQRA Reviews of Agricultural District Applications**
- b. Amend the Agricultural District Application to Require Submission of a Site Plan, a Stormwater Protection Plan and a Soil Survey for Each Parcel**

Chairman Ellner invited Interim Director of Soil & Water and Secretary to the Agriculture & Farmland Protection Board (Ag Board) Neal Tomann to speak to these agenda items.

Interim Director of Soil & Water and Secretary to the Agriculture & Farmland Protection Board (Ag Board) Neal Tomann stated his appreciation to Legislator Crowley, Legislative Counsel Firriolo and Commissioner Barosa and Director of Real Property McLoughlin for their assistance in working on this matter.

Chairman Ellner stated this matter is being brought forward at the suggestion of Legislator Crowley.

Interim Director of Soil & Water and Secretary to the Ag Board Neal Tomann stated the resolution they have brought forward for consideration for approval would help to flush out the SEQRA process for the Agricultural District inclusion. He stated that it is believed that there is more information needed to move the SEQRA process along. He stated they are proposing that when an applicant makes a submission to be considered to be in the Agriculture District of Putnam County that they include: site plan, stormwater protection plan, and a soil survey for each parcel the applicant would like considered for approval in the Agricultural District. He stated since this proposed resolution was written there has been additional discussion and recommendation that the requirement of a letter from the Town Code Enforcement Officer stating that said parcel has no outstanding code violations and that all current uses of the parcel

have been approved by the Town be provided. He stated there is also a recommendation that the Towns show the County that all the surrounding neighbors, via an abutters list, have been notified of the application for inclusion to the Agriculture District of their neighbor. He stated he would work on adding these additional items to the proposed Resolution and send it to Legislative Counsel Firriolo for approval by the end of the day tomorrow, so it can be ready for the Year End Meeting, for consideration/approval.

Legislator Castellano stated he believes that is a good addition. He stated he was a member of the Town of Southeast Zoning Board. He stated his total agreement with giving notice to the neighbors. He stated that he also agrees with involving the Town and making them part of the process.

Legislator Montgomery questioned if this was presented to the Advisory Committee.

Interim Director of Soil & Water and Secretary to the Ag Board Neal Tomann stated it was not.

Legislator Montgomery stated her opinion that it was unfortunate that the members of the Advisory Committee were not made aware of this. She stated there is a reason the County has an Agricultural Advisory Committee and it is for this very purpose. She stated those members know a lot more about farming than the members of this committee. She questioned if an opinion on these proposed changes was obtained from the New York State Agricultural Board.

Chairman Ellner stated he has been working with the Law Department on this matter. He stated the Ag Board's function is to review applications, they are not to set policy, that is a County function. He stated there is an Agricultural District (Ag District) because Putnam County has elected to put legislation/code/law, all-encompassing, to create an Ag District under these criteria. He stated if criteria is being set, it comes from the County.

Legislator Montgomery stated if this is enacted by the Putnam County Legislature on Thursday, which she is confident will happen. She noted there is not even a final copy available at this meeting tonight. She stated in her opinion that the passing of this will diminish the whole purpose of an Ag District.

Chairman Ellner stated he respectfully disagreed. He stated the purpose of the Ag District is to protect existing farms. He stated during the review process of the applicants for consideration to be approved into the 2025 Ag District many issues arose, which by making the suggested amendments, would be avoided in the future.

Legislator Montgomery stated the additional information is what New York State tried to eliminate for Farmers, not only to protect Farmers and existing Farms, and to meet the purpose of Ag Districts which is to encourage Farming.

Chairman Ellner stated he disagrees with Legislator Montgomery. He stated the purpose of the Ag District is to protect the existing Farms from unreasonable laws put on them by Towns.

Chairman Ellner made a motion to Approve in concept Resolution – Amending the Agriculture District Inclusion Application Process; Seconded by Legislator Castellano. All in favor.

Item #7 - Other Business - None

Item #15 - Adjournment

There being no further business at 6:55 P.M. Chairman Ellner made a motion to adjourn; Seconded by Legislator Castellano. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Deputy Clerk Diane Trabulsy.