

RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
May 24, 2021
St. John's Playground (Chambers Street Playground)

The following committee members were present:

Dave Bond
Ann Davis
Keith Gargone
Jim Hanisak
DJ Kophazy

Absent:

Bernie Brotzman
Bobby Fulper
Vickie Mendes-Branch
Matt Scerbo
Dawn Slifer
Todd Tersigni
Tim Zagra

We did not have a quorum for the meeting. Minutes will need to be approved at our next meeting in July.

Prior to the start of our meeting, DJ Kophazy, Recreation Superintendent, held a Community Forum on the Chambers Street Playground. Residents, Sue Piazza, Andrew Willever, and Atheena Willever, attended the meeting. DJ spoke about the improvements that are scheduled to take place at the park, such as new equipment, fix fencing, blacktop which will include games like 4-square, hop-scotch, and ½ basketball court. Picnic areas will remain as well as trees being pruned and all mulch being replaced. DJ distributed a picture of what the company is recommending. Suggestions were made for different play items and DJ will discuss with the contractor. Work should begin shortly and should be completed prior to July. Cost of the project will be about \$50,000 and will serve children in the 2-5 and 5-12 age range – depending on what equipment will actually put in.

DJ talked about his monthly update. He recently had a conversation with Chuck Brady, a former Phillipsburg resident who works with the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation. They are very interested in the opportunity to partner with Phillipsburg to install a turf field at Walters Park. He sent DJ a proposal. Total cost of the project would be \$1.4 million. The proposal includes everything from the turf, to bleachers, and scoreboard (which we already have). We would

need to match ½ of the cost of the project. They will work with helping us secure sponsors. The project would take place over a couple of years.

DJ spoke about Hillcrest Triangle Park. A letter went out to residents in the area of the park. DJ did receive some responses. Residents were not very receptive. They do not want picnic areas or a walking path. They would like the azalea bushes trimmed and dog clean-up stations in the park.

DJ also showed a proposal for the playground at the new Hillcrest Park by Bentley Field would look like. The cost is in the \$557,000 range. Of course, it will not be happening this year but everyone agreed it is much needed in the area.

DJ introduced Samantha Clarke, his new assistant for the Summer. Sam talked about her roles and responsibilities. She has already started planning the Summer Playground Program as well as Movies in the Park. They conducted a poll on the Recreation Facebook page and most residents preferred Friday night movies instead of Wednesday night movies. Movies will begin on June 16th (Wednesday of that week due to Ole Towne Festival) and the movie will be "Black Panther." There is a variety of movies planned with an activity related to the movie to take place prior to the movie.

The splash pad and baby pool will be open. They will be open on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday up until construction begins on the pool. Opening day will be Friday, June 18th.

A motion was made by Keith Gargone and a second by Dave Bond to adjourn.