

**NEW JERSEY RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION
PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
MEETING NOTES
MARCH 16, 2022**

Present: Denise Lanza, Bill Foelsch, Dina Trunzo, Don Bogardus, Tim Roetman, Frank Masini, Kevin Dunn, Ryan Horne, Rick Wright, Kathleen Avitt, Lenny Celluro, Mary Beth Wheeler, Debbie Oliver.

Review of Bills:

A644 – Requires use of design-bid-build or design-build delivery system for certain local government construction projects. Refers to projects undertaken by a county improvement authority or local redevelopment organization. **Support**

A727 – Establishes immunity for youth sports leagues and senior planned real estate development associations relating to COVID-19. Refers to immunity for civil damages alleging exposure to the virus as a youth sports event, in the course of managing or maintaining facilities of the sports league or common areas of the age restricted planned senior community. **Support**

A786 – Permits boards of education to employ certain veterans in coaching positions in school district's interscholastic athletic program. Permits hiring eligible veteran for full or part time coaching position without a teaching certificate or substitute credentials. **Support**

A847 – Appropriates \$54.5M from CBT revenues for recreation and conservation purposes to DEP for State capital and park development projects. **Signed into law** prior to the meeting.

A1003 – Makes supplemental appropriation of \$1B for After School Recreation in Urban Areas. Grants to be allocated by Commissioner of Education for improving, retrofitting and rebuilding playgrounds, pools, and other recreational infrastructure, reopening long dormant parks, mentorship programs, after school and summer educational programs. **Support Active**

A1047 – Requires DEP to provide public access for boats to certain State-owned lakes, appropriates \$1M. Provides for the State to contract with private marinas to provide for public access. Appropriation would provide for the access required. **Monitor**

A1115 – Requires DEP to prioritize funding for environmental infrastructure projects for applicants with established program to employ, at project or related facilities, local residents or residents of nearby urban aid qualifying municipalities. **Drop**

A1261 – Requires municipality to provide free beach access to certain veterans. Prohibits communities from charging for access and use of beaches, bathing and recreational grounds by veterans who have served in any of the Armed Forces, discharged under other than dishonorable, and who served at least 90 days active duty, or who were discharged due to a service incurred injury or disability. The committee is always concerned with the loss of revenue to communities when free admission is mandated. **Monitor**

A1333/S2102 – Requires installation of grab bars in certain public restrooms. Would require a minimum number of toilet stalls to be equipped with grab bars during renovation or new construction. Also requires posting of the universal access symbol on such stalls. The committee referred to the ADA requirements applicable to restroom construction and renovation. They also noted that simply installing grab bars does not necessarily make the stalls accessible, thereby mislabeling with the access symbol.

Monitor

A1383 – Waives the physical examination requirement for certain student-athletes who participate in school-sponsored athletic activities during the 2020-2021 school year. Although noting the expired school term, the committee was concerned about the safety of student athletes, especially considering recent deaths of student athletes with previously undiagnosed health issues. **Oppose**

A1623 – Establishes the Jersey Shore Safety and Economy Task Force. Task Force is to develop safety standards and protocols to ensure safe working and operating conditions, consistent with public health efforts, in businesses that rely heavily on summer tourism. The committee also noted what is likely a typo that requires the task force to provide recommendations 30 days after passage of the bill. **Monitor**

A1662/S894 – Allows shore municipalities to provide spouse and dependent children of veterans free or reduced cost access to beaches. Committee noted that this is permissive at the option of the community. **Monitor**

A2086 – Expands exemption to wage and hour requirements for certain summer camp workers. Expands the exemption of summer camp workers at nonprofit and religious summer camps to private summer camp employees, age 22 or under, and enrolled in school or vocational training, for purposes of compensation for overtime work. **Monitor**

A2445/S962 – Authorizes municipalities to adopt ordinances requiring maintenance and repair of certain wharves, docks, piers and bulkheads. Refers to navigable waterways within a municipality. Assigns development of standards to DEP. Sets maximum penalties to be assessed. **Monitor**

A2571/S1302 – Amends the “Law of Discrimination” to provide every person engaged in raising a dog for guide or service to right of access to public facilities. Under current law, professional trainers can access public facilities. However, some trainers are volunteers. The bill extends access to volunteers.

Support

A2903/S226 – Dedicates \$500,000 annually in revenues from vessel registration and renewal fees to Greenwood Lake Fund. Bill would establish the NJ Greenwood Lake Fund as a non-lapsing, revolving fund in DEP, annually credited with \$500,000 for protection, restoration, maintenance, management and enhancement of the lake. (Post meeting note – Lake Hopatcong currently receives \$500,000 annually). **Monitor**, seek DEP opinion.

A3154 – Establishes a user fee on water consumption and diversion, utilizes fee revenue for water quality, supply and infrastructure projects. Establishes the Water resources Protection Trust Fund

administered by the DEP. Establishes a fee (tax) to be assessed per water used or diverted. Establishes exempt entities and uses, as well as the uses permissible with funds from the Trust. **Monitor**, seek DEP opinion.

A3180, A3188 – Requires State parks, forests, beaches, and MVC offices to remain open if emergency is declared due to failure to enact general appropriation as set by law. (A3188 – remain open for seven days). **Support**

A3443 – Transfers NJ Forestry Services to the Department of Agriculture. Moves Forestry Service and other related entities. **Oppose**

A3501 – Establishes requirements for certain nonprofit youth serving organizations. Requires certain financial reporting requirements of athletic organizations such as Little League, Babe Ruth, PAL, Pop Warner, excluding public and non-public schools, to ensure greater accountability, transparency and oversight. DCA, Department of Law and Public Safety would prepare “Best Practices” guidance. Requirements include an annual audit and adherence to already established State nonprofit charitable registration requirements. **Support**

S132 – Concerns expenses to municipalities for tree purchase, planting and removal. Allows local government to finance purchase, planting and removal of trees and shrubbery through the issuance of short- and long-term debt. **Support**

S135/A560 – Revises the Athletic Trainer Licensure Act. Amends the definition of athletic training to include the treatment of an individual for an injury or illness or both, clinical evaluation and assessment of an injury or illness or both, and the rehabilitation and reconditioning of illness or injury or both. Requires trainer to display or carry their license. **Monitor**

S187 – Palisades Cliffs Protection Act. Limits the height of any development below the cliffs east of Palisade Avenue in Hudson and Bergen Counties. Limits height to no more than 10 feet below the surface of the road or the cliff height whichever is lower. **Support**

S662 – Eliminates certain requirements for nonprofit operating a ski area. Removes requirements for identifying slopes and trails, degree of difficulty, trail maps and reports, daily conditions, and removal of obvious man-made hazards. Committee has concerns for safety and the education of skiers. **Monitor**, Rick to seek clarification from sponsor.

S683 – Provides free admission to State parks and forests, and certain historic sites for certain veterans on Veterans Day. **Support**

S837 – Prohibits mandatory mask use at youth camps. **Drop**

S1857 – Authorizes use of CBT revenues for grants for prevention and remediation of harmful algae bloom. Grants would fund sewer or stormwater management projects to reduce nonpoint source pollution. Funding would be 0.3% of annual CBT revenues. Also amends the Preserve NJ Act to authorize

a portion of CBT revenues to pay 100% of a project undertaken for the management and maintenance of lakes and reservoirs to prevent harmful algal blooms. The amount authorized is .017% of annual revenues. **Monitor**

S2159 – Appropriates \$3M in federal funding from ARP 2021 to the DEP for construction of completely inclusive playgrounds. DEP to establish grant application and ranking criteria, and to prioritize counties that do not currently operate and maintain a completely inclusive playground. **Support**

S2246 – Establishes a grant program in DEP for lake management activities, appropriates \$10M. The program would provide grants to assist qualified entities to pay certain costs associated with lake maintenance and management for conservation and recreation purposes. Funds may be used for stormwater and nonpoint source pollution management activities if the DEP determines that the activities would directly enhance, improve or protect the use of the lake for conservation and recreation purposes. **Support**

S2247 – Requires use of protective headgear when horseback riding on State owned lands. Headgear must meet ASTM standards. Signs must be posted at each entrance of State-owned lands. Violators would be subject to fines. Funds would be directed to the NJ Brain Injury Research Fund. **Support**

S2276 – Requires the Division of Travel and Tourism to develop and maintain an Internet website on historical roadside markers. The interactive website would provide information on historical and cultural sites throughout the State. **Support**

Other

Rick reported that there are likely to be other bills that were posted in early March that would apply to NJRPA. These will be reviewed immediately if there is a need. He noted that April and May are usually budget focused times in the legislature.

NEXT MEETING – MAY 11 AT SUNNYSIDE RECREATION AREA, MONMOUTH COUNTY