DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & RECREATION

2022 Budget Presentation

Ronald Zuber, Director

2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS
OFFICE OF DIRECTOR

- Opening of the new Rahway Pool

- Clark Reservoir (Union County receiving grants for Testing, Permitting and Cleaning)
- 100th Anniversary of Parks (during Covid)

- **Trailside/Cultural & Heritage NaCO Award - "Bringing Nature and History to the Homebound and Disabled"**
- In an effort to reach out to Union County families during the pandemic, the Naturalists were asked to create eight nature-themed videos with educational information, links and downloadable activities for the Trailside website.
- "A Winter Walk in Conant Park" video was also created highlighting urban wildlife.
- In conjunction with Trailside's offerings, Cultural & Heritage featured virtual visits to historical sites in Union County.
- The 2021 National NaCO award was given to Union County Parks for this menu of videos and informational content that is now a permanent resource on the Union County website.

2022 GOALS & OBJECTIVES
OFFICE OF DIRECTOR

- UC Parks Master Plan will be Completed
- Mattano Park Multi-purpose Fields (Lights, Parking, Path and Restrooms)
- Cedar Brook Park Basketball Courts with lights
- Warinanco and Kawameeh Tennis/Pickleball Court resurfacing

Parks & Recreation - Director's Office				
Description	**2021 Adopted Budget**	**2021 Modified Budget**	**2021 Expenditures**	**2022 Budget Request**
Salaries & Wages	1,057,805	1,057,805	924,293.71	1,052,451
Overtime	23,000	23,000	18,133.86	23,000
Other Expenses	242,000	242,000	186,000.01	242,000
Total	**1,322,805**	**1,322,805**	**1,128,427.58**	**1,317,451**

2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS
RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Family Fun & Flix – 3 Parks – 6 Movies – 1,020 attendees
(1 movie was rained out)

Drive Up Movie Series – UC Vo-tech – 4 Movies – 400 cars attended
(1 movie was rained out)

Drive Up Concert Series – 4 Facilities – 10 Concerts – 1,140 cars attended
(1 concert was moved indoors to UCPAC – 115 attendees)

Southside Johnny Walk Up Concert – Oak Ridge Park – 2,000 attendees

Pumpkin Sail – Echo Lake Park- 2,200 participants – Sold Out

2022 GOALS & INITIATIVES

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Park Special Events:

- Touch-A-Truck
- Rhythm and Blues by the Brook
- Summer Arts Festival
- Juneteenth Concert
- Family Fun and Flix
- National Night Out
- Rolling Thunder
- Fall Music Festival
- Hayrides and Campfires
- The Great Pumpkin Sail
- Celebrate the Season

2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS
RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Trailside Nature & Science Center (Mountainside)

- The facility was closed for over a year due to the pandemic and later reopened in July 2021.
- When few activities were available due to Covid-19, residents expressed their appreciation that Union County Parks continued to offer programs for people of all ages.
- Trailside offered outdoor programs and events including; February Festivities, Earth Day Event, Nature Walks for Seniors, Back to Nature Hikes for families, Tyke Hikes, Moonlight Walks, Summer Camps as well as school and scout programs.
- Trailside also conducted virtual programs for the Newark School System and a nature walk and reptile program for the Refugee Youth Summer Academy through Kean University.

Trailside's Outreach, Educational Displays & Recycled Art

- UC parks including Conant, Rahway River, Watchung Reservation & Warinanco featured Trailside's Eco Van and Recycled Art.
- Residents enjoyed viewing over a dozen different pieces of colorful eco-art made from recycled plastic water bottles, while learning the importance of recycling and interesting wildlife facts.
- Five thousand bottles (5,000) were reused to complete this outdoor exhibit introducing park goers how artists use recycled objects to turn every day trash into imaginative treasures.

Trailside Museum Association received a grant from the Watts Foundation

- A new solar powered water feature was installed on the Sensory Trail, creating a new sensory experience of listening and feeling running water.
- This solar powered fountain provides the opportunity for Naturalists to teach about alternative energy and reducing carbon footprints.

2022 GOALS & INITIATIVES

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Trailside New Solar System Walk

- A spacewalk in the park transforms a walkway into an educational and recreational outdoor experience.
- Planned for installation in the Watchung Reservation for spring 2022.
- Eleven interactive, interpretive signs with QR codes and audio will represent the Solar System to scale.
- One step equals a million miles in space.
- The *Solar System Experience* runs the full length of the trail, *A Comet's Journey* runs back from the end of the trail to the start.
- The audio guide also includes two shorter walks for children, *Mission to Mars* for ages 4 and up and *A Voyage to Saturn* ages 7 and up.

Union County Falcon Cam

- Trailside working to include new outreach programs, improvements to website and coordinate efforts between Conserve Wildlife Foundation, NJ Fish & Wildlife and the Parks Department.
- New video has been added to the website showing a different perspective from the courthouse rooftop with a behind the scenes view into what it takes to make this unique project such a success.
- New educational material for kids of different ages will be included to add interest, highlighting the *fastest creature on Earth.*
- Union County has the only falcon cam in the state.
- We will partner with CWF to create outreach opportunities for students, teachers and the public by conducting programs at Trailside.

2022 GOALS & INITIATIVES

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Trailside Will Partner with Conserve Wildlife Foundation

- Plant a new pollinator garden on the Sensory Trail.
- This new garden will offer many colorful plants and signage will educate visitors about the importance of pollinators.
- Pollinator gardens support bees, birds and butterflies by supplying food in the form of pollen and nectar that ensure these important animals continue to pollinate our flowers and crops.

2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS
RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Watchung Stable:

- Troop programs in the spring and fall resumed with full capacity with COVID safety regulations
- Two smaller horse shows in the spring and fall to keep patrons and staff safe.
- Regular trail rides for the public started
- A modified half day summer camp program was held
- A second instructor completed the handicapped certification for our adaptive/ therapeutic riding program
- The courtyard and the area around the main barn was completely paved
- Trail work resumed quickly after the bridle trails were destroyed by hurricane Ida
- Regular equine health care including a strong vaccination program continued. We have included flu/rhino and EEE in the spring and the fall to keep the horses safe
- Regular dental work for our school horses and a deworming program for the entire barn continues with high success rate to keep our horses healthy
- The lease program continues to be over capacity and we were able to purchase three new school horses for our program

2022 GOALS & INITIATIVES
RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Watchung Stable:

- Renovate winter troop sessions and resume all normal actives by spring 2022
- Refill boarder end
- Renovation of one employee bathroom
- Exploration of hiring a grounds maintenance contractor
- Renovation of fourth riding ring
- Therapeutic riding arena and facility
- Addition of another turnout paddock
- Purchase additional horses for school program
- Riding program for people with disabilities
- Community outreach (taking horses to schools for horse-themed programs)
- Increasing public interest in trail rides, special rides or “special deal” rides
- Continue bridal trail work

2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Galloping Hill Golf Course:

- Attained 67,000 rounds of golf and over $2,600,000 in revenue
- Hosted Hurricane Junior Golf Tournament with 50 of the top junior golfers in the state
- Completed renovation and rebranding for restaurant now known as The Hill Tavern

The Learning Center at Galloping Hill:

- Largest revenue year with over $1,000,000
- Hosted over 1400 junior golfers with programs such as the 1st Tee of Raritan Valley, USGA/LPGA Girls and PGA Junior League
- Hosted the PGA Drive, Chip and Putt competition which had over 150 junior golfers from the Tri-State Region

Ash Brook Golf Course:

- Attained over 37,00 Rounds of Golf and $1,600,000 in revenue
- The Tavern at Ash Brook has become a destination locals with over 60 events held
- Summer Junior Golf Program flourished with over 180 participants

Scotch Hills Golf Course:

- Largest year for Revenue and Rounds played with $400,000 and 17,000 rounds
- Completed drainage project
- Began utilizing 3rd party online vendor to increase exposure which lead to 500 rounds booked online

Warinanco Sports Center:

- Returned to Open Skate for the Public after 2 seasons off for Covid Protocols
- Was used as a Testing and Vaccine Site for Covid

2022 GOALS & INITIATIVES

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Galloping Hill Golf Course:

- Hosting the IMG and Hurricane Junior Golf Tournaments with East Region's top juniors
- Stream restoration and drainage projects will commence

The Learning Center at Galloping Hill:

- Upgrade to Driving Range with Top Tracer Ball Flight Monitoring System
- Expand adult lesson program
- Host The Drive, Chip and Putt Competition with over 150 junior golfers

Ash Brook Golf Course:

- Stream restoration and drainage projects will commence
- Irrigation system upgrade will be made
- Additional Junior Golf Camps will be added over the summer

Scotch Hill Golf Course:

- Rebranding the facility with name change to Shady Rest Country Club
- Irrigation upgrades will begin
- Bunker restoration will begin

Warinanco Sports Center:

- Summer Camps will be increased to 14 through the season
- Re-Open Open Public Skate with no limitation in the Fall

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES				
Description	**2021 Adopted Budget**	**2021 Modified Budget**	**2021 Expenditures**	**2022 Budget Request**
Salaries & Wages	1,756,142	1,756,142	1,578,646.86	1,838,188
Overtime	18,000	18,000	27,269.66	18,000
Seasonal	310,000	310,000	215,595.49	533,000
Per Diems	194,890	194,890	91,193.32	201,390
Other Expenses	7,885,771	7,885,771	7,343,465.16	8,358,049
Total	**10,164,803**	**10,164,803**	**9,256,170.49**	**10,948,627**

2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS
PLANNING & ENVIROMENTAL SERVICES

- Horticulture
- Wildlife Management
- Volunteer Program
- Trail Maintenance

2022 GOALS & INITIATIVES

PLANNING & ENVIROMENTAL SERVICES

- Revitalize Adopt-A-Park Programs
- Rebuild Trails due to damage caused by IDA
- Rebuild Volunteer Programs

PLANNING & ENVIROMENTAL SERVICES				
Description	**2021 Adopted Budget**	**2021 Modified Budget**	**2021 Expenditures**	**2022 Budget Request**
Salaries & Wages	615,807	615,807	484,605.98	644,753
Overtime	6,000	6,000	9,921.87	-
Other Expenses	95,000	95,000	80,457.73	107,000
Total	**716,807**	**716,807**	**574,985.58**	**751,753**

2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PARK MAINTENANCE

- The Division proudly worked under the direction of the County Manager, Human Services and Emergency Services for the implementation of the County's collective response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
  This included support services in the form of manpower, equipment and administrative services. The division assisted in setting up the initial testing and remote sites and continued support throughout its operation. This transitioned to the vaccination roll-out operation as well. We also provided critical assistance to the COVID-19 relief efforts in the form of Food Bank packaging, distribution and operations.

- The Division oversaw completion of synthetic turf projects at Ponderosa Farm Park in Scotch Plains and Snyder Avenue Park Baseball Field in Berkeley Heights.

- The Division partnered with Groundwork Elizabeth to plant trees at Rizzuto Park in Union, Hillside and Elizabeth along the nature trail. We also worked with them to acquire grant-funding to aid the rehabilitation of the stream bank of Trotters Brook in that area.

2022 GOALS & INITIATIVES
PARK MAINTENANCE

- The Division will install a fitness-focused playground at Madison Avenue Park in Rahway, including a fully accessible component.
- The Division will replace the playground at Rutgers Avenue Park in Hillside and add rubberized safety-surface.
- The Division will continue to service all County parks and events by providing janitorial, landscape and support services on a daily basis.

PARK MAINTENANCE				
Description	**2021 Adopted Budget**	**2021 Modified Budget**	**2021 Expenditures**	**2022 Budget Request**
Salaries & Wages	2,455,352	2,570,352	2,441,323.44	2,774,379
Overtime	250,000	250,000	234,575.36	250,000
Other Expenses	600,000	600,000	563,667.51	595,100
Total	**3,305,352**	**3,420,352**	**3,239,566.31**	**3,619,479**

2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS
CULTURAL & HERITAGE AFFAIRS

- The Office of Cultural & Heritage Affairs, prepared a passive outdoor photo display that highlighted the last 100 years of the Union County Parks System. These photos too residents on a journey through the last 100 years in our parks showing off diversity. Imaged from before and after the 1920s and how the activities in the parks have evolved over the years were enjoyed by all you viewed them. The photos were placed in H-frames and placed along walking paths and high traffic areas of our parks.

- Work has begun on rehabilitating two cottages at the Deserted Village. This is made possible through $450,000 grant this office received from the NJ Historic Trust.

- The Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs managed the Commissioners' Initiative, the HEART Grant (History, Education, Arts Reaching Thousands) program. Many events were held virtually or safely outdoors. The Office applied for a general operating support grants from the New Jersey Historical Commission and received $74,721 to continue its history programs and services. Through a re-grant program, $33,000 was provided to 16 organizations for general operating support and history projects. The Office was also awarded $149,813 from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, which provided for $75,000 in re-grant funding to 33 local arts organizations, along with funding for technical assistance workshops and art exhibits for teens, seniors, employees and residents, and operating expenses

2022 GOALS & INITIATIVES

CULTURAL & HERITAGE

- The Office plans to continue to expand the Four Centuries in a Weekend Program and will continue meeting with the Four Centuries in a Weekend sites to brainstorm on promotion, volunteers and site plans.

- Recommendations from the Strategic Plan for Deserted Village will continue to be implemented. The Office plans to apply again to the NJ Historic Trust for Capital Grant to continue rehabilitation of Deserted Village. Cedar shake roofs will be replaced on several Deserted Village cottages to protect the historic buildings.

- With increased funding from the NJ State Council on the Arts for 2022, the Office plans to engage artists to work on a large mural projects.

- In an effort to accommodate the challenges schools are facing with COVID-19, Teen Arts Festival will return as an outdoor festival in May 2022.

CULTURAL & HERITAGE				
Description	**2021 Adopted Budget**	**2021 Modified Budget**	**2021 Expenditures**	**2022 Budget Request**
Salaries & Wages	183,199	183,199	132,556.47	174,799
Other Expenses	17,500	17,500	17,327.84	20,200
Total	**200,699**	**200,699**	**149,884.31**	**194,999**

Department of Parks & Recreation - Grand Total				
Divisions	**2021 Adopted Budget**	**2021 Modified Budget**	**2021 Expenditures**	**2022 Budget Request**
Director's Office	1,322,805	1,322,805	1,128,427.58	1,317,451
Rec. Facilities	10,164,803	10,164,803	9,256,170.49	10,948,627
Environ. Services	716,807	716,807	574,985.58	751,753
Park Maintenance	3,305,352	3,420,352	3,239,566.31	3,619,479
Cult. & Heritage	200,699	200,699	149,884.31	194,999
Total	**15,710,466**	**15,825,466**	**14,349,034.27**	**16,832,309**
Departmental Salary & Wages Total	6,870,195	6,985,195	6,158,116.02	7,509,960
Departmental Other Expenses Total	8,840,271	8,840,271	8,190,918.25	9,322,349
Total	**15,710,466**	**15,825,466**	**14,349,034.27**	**16,832,309**