

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
PARK & RECREATION BOARD
MINUTES – FEBRUARY 13, 2024

The regular meeting of the Park & Recreation Board of the Township of Lower Makefield was held in the Municipal Building on February 13, 2024. Mr. Krauss called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Those present:

Park & Recreation Board: Douglas Krauss, Chair
Michael Brody, Vice Chair
Kim Rock, Secretary (joined meeting in progress)
Mike Blundi, Member
Rob LaBar, Member
Dennis Wysocki, Member

Others: Monica Tierney, Park & Recreation Director

Absent: David Malinowski, Park & Recreation Board Member

REORGANIZATION

Mr. Wysocki moved, Mr. Brody seconded and it was unanimously carried to elect Douglas Krauss as Chair of the Park & Recreation Board for 2024.

Mr. Wysocki moved, Mr. Blundi seconded and it was unanimously carried to elect Michael Brody as Vice Chair of the Park & Recreation Board for 2024.

Mr. Brody moved, Mr. Blundi seconded and it was unanimously carried to elect Kim Rock as Secretary of the Park & Recreation Board for 2024.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Mr. LaBar moved, Mr. Brody seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of October 24, 2023 as written.

Mr. Brody moved, Mr. Krauss seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of November 14, 2023 as written.

Mr. Brody moved, Mr. Krauss seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of December 12, 2023 as written.

DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF SCOUT PROJECT

Mr. Lucas Smith, from Troop 230, was present with Mr. John Heilferty. Mr. Smith stated his Eagle project is to build a 16 by 16 viewing platform on a meadow that will be cleared in Five Mile Woods of 100 by 100 feet. Ms. Tierney stated the Board was provided all of the slides.

Mr. Heilferty stated there is an area within the Five Mile Woods that has always been open and does not have a treed canopy, but it has slowly been growing in and getting “shrubbier.” He stated there is a lot of multi-flora rose, privet hedge, and a lot of invasive, alien species. He stated it is a huge undertaking to clear that, and Mr. Smith has agreed to take that on.

Mr. Smith stated the viewing platform will be ADA-compliant, and it will make the woods accessible for people in wheelchairs and disabled people in general. He stated because the Five Mile Woods is currently mostly woods, it does not create much diversity. After clearing the meadow, wildflower seeds will be planted; and while that will not be part of his project, it will eventually be done, and that will create a much more diverse environment for small animals and new types of plants and insects will be able to live in this area.

The slides were shown, and Mr. Heilferty stated that Mr. Smith created the map that shows where the meadow area will be which is right near the entrance to the trail system. He stated the Township is separately embarking on a huge ADA-trail improvement project building over 700 linear feet of boardwalk. He stated what Mr. Smith is proposing will piggy-back off of that project and create something that will be handicap-accessible. Mr. Heilferty stated that Mr. Smith was interested in planting seeds right away, but that effort had to be slowed down as we will have to do some significant weed and invasive species control. He stated the way you typically do that when you are restoring meadow is to put down black tarp for two to three months depending on the time of the year and the temperature. He stated that will then set the stage for a proper and effective planting, and that amount of time does not mesh well with Mr. Smith’s Eagle Scout plan. Mr. Heilferty stated what Mr. Smith is proposing is already a big project.

Mr. Krauss asked for more information about the location of the ADA trail and the location of this project, and Mr. Smith showed the location on the map. Mr. Heilferty stated Mr. Smith's project is right at the beginning of the trail that the Township will be building. He stated it is 100' in. He added that this is also a project that will likely benefit from further Eagle Scout candidate participation. He stated there will be opportunities to build off of what Mr. Smith will be starting to create some additional connection/access ways from the viewing platform.

Mr. LaBar asked if the platform is proposed to go on solid ground and if it will just be on top of the ground or are there footers that will be put down to secure it. Mr. Heilferty stated it is so overgrown now, they have not been in to test the conditions where the platform will be. Mr. Heilferty stated it is proposed to rest at grade, and they do not believe that any footers will be required. He stated if it is deemed footers are necessary once they uncover the site and see the exact conditions, that would be a quick modification.

Mr. Smith stated he believes that he will have to raise it slightly. He stated it will be built in four sections. He stated once he brings them over to the cleared meadow, they will be attached together to create the full platform. He stated he feels he will have to raise it a few inches. Mr. Heilferty stated while they would use pressure-treated lumber, you do not like to have that sitting in wet conditions if you can help it. He added that it will be framed out in pressure-treated 2 by 6s which is what he usually recommends. Mr. Heilferty stated Mr. Smith will be building four 8 by 8 squares which will be a standard-looking boardwalk which will then be bolted together.

Mr. Smith stated along the edges of the boardwalk, there will be a 3" solid curbing. Mr. Heilferty stated that is compliant with ADA guidelines. Mr. Krauss asked if a ramp is required from the ADA trail to this platform, and Mr. Heilferty stated Mr. Smith will just be doing the viewing platform. He stated there is about a 20' to 30' gap between the platform and the ADA trail that we will be building. He stated initially there will just be a dirt path with a "step up." He stated initially it will not be ADA-compliant, but it will be ADA ready. He stated a subsequent Scout, the Friends of the Five Mile Woods, or Township staff could do that. He stated he has already received requests from other Scouts looking for a project, and that is something he could offer them. He stated it will ultimately not require a ramp, and what was discussed was a "Y" in the boardwalk; and Mr. Smith is just doing the end of where that Y is going to lead to.

Mr. Heilferty stated that there will be an opportunity to create a trail from the handicap boardwalk that the Township is building to Mr. Smith's platform, and he anticipates that will happen before mid-summer. He stated he is also interested in improving a trail at a location he showed on the map which goes to a classroom area. He stated he would also like there to be an access to the platform on the other side of the platform which will make a loop that handicapped people could use. Mr. Heilferty stated at this point the plans are to have handicapped people be able to come all the way into the bog area, and once Mr. Smith's project is done, they could come to the 16 by 16 viewing platform. He stated everything but the entranceway will be curbed so that you cannot fall off, and people will be able to enjoy the meadow.

Mr. Smith stated his first major task is to start a GoFundMe as he wants this done early in the process to make sure there are enough funds to start. Other steps include securing a truck/trailer and other equipment needed for the project. He stated one weekend will be spent clearing out the brush and one weekend will be spent clearing the meadow. He stated once the materials are procured, he will be building the platform. He stated other Scouts will be helping him with his project. He stated with regard to fund-raising in addition to the GoFundMe, he will also recruit Scouts to chop wood to sell. He stated he will also be asking local environmental groups for donations and asking lumber yards for donations of lumber and equipment. He stated even though this is a costly project, he feels that he will have sufficient money.

Mr. Smith stated he expects to start on March 15 and the GoFundMe will be set up the beginning of March to make sure he has enough money before he starts. He stated he expects to complete the project around June 15 which would be the best time to lay down the black tarp. He stated he believes his project will have a great impact on the environment of this area and the community.

Mr. Heilferty stated he is excited about the project because in the guide for preservation of the Five Mile Woods when the property was originally preserved in 1980, there were some existing fields, and the intent was to keep them in a field state as it is a diversity of habitat types. He stated a number of invertebrates, butterflies, pollinators, bees, etc. will be attracted to a wildflower field or meadow which increases the diversity, and the same would be expected to be true for bird species that do not normally inhabit forested areas. He stated this project will bring back into condition a habitat

type that had formerly existed in the Five Mile Woods but over the last thirty to forty years has slowly gone out of a meadow state. He stated this will be a lot of work, but thanks to Mr. Smith's hard work and generosity this project will be set in motion; but we will then have to maintain it. Mr. Heilferty stated he has agreed to take that on with the resources he has available not only through the Township but also including Scouts and other volunteer involvement.

Mr. Wysocki asked about the black tarp method for clearing the area. Mr. Smith stated he will be using a brush hog to clear the area, and tarp will be put down and will be "baking the roots" during the summer to make sure that they do not grow back. Mr. Heilferty stated the tarp will not only stop weed seeds from germinating but the early/mid-summer temperatures will bake the soil and kill off weed seeds as well. Mr. Wysocki asked if the tarp is then removed or is top soil put on top of it. Mr. Heilferty stated Mr. Smith will cut the vegetation as close to the ground as possible mechanically, and then the tarp will go on for a period of two to three months. He stated the tarp is then removed, and some roots may still need to be removed. He stated there are a number of different ways to seed a meadow, and that will be tackled separately from Mr. Smith's project. Mr. Heilferty stated he can procure seeds from Bowman's as well as a number of reputable sources on-line.

Mr. Brody moved and Mr. Blundi seconded to approve the project as offered.

Ms. Susan Fawcett stated when they do the re-seeding project, she assumes that they want to be as close to nature as possible. She stated she wants to make sure that they do not use any artificial chemicals or fertilizers in that area since that would change the balance significantly, and that is not what we want. She stated we want it to be natural and use seeds from the local area with nothing artificial. Mr. Krauss stated for Mr. Smith's project, he is not doing the seeding. Ms. Fawcett stated while she understands that, she wants to make sure about the seeds. Mr. Heilferty stated they also need to make sure that the seeds that they procure for the project are genetically suitable to the plant species in the area. He stated dealing with a reputable seed source like Bowman's and others who deal with native plants will take all of those factors into consideration. He stated they do not like to use herbicides in the Five Mile Woods; and while sometimes there is a need for that, they use those only when necessary.

Motion carried unanimously.

ULTIMATE FRISBEE SUMMER LEAGUE

Mr. Mike Brown, 209 Elm, Mr. Jeremy Mason, representing PADA which is the organization that they are proposing to run the League being proposed, and Mr. Mike Dzelzgalvis, coach of the High School Boys Team, were present.

Mr. Brown stated their plan is to use some of the players on the High School team in a coaching capacity with Mr. Dzelzgalvis being their liaison. Mr. Brown added his hope is that once he retires, Mr. Dzelzgalvis will take over and run the League.

Ms. Tierney stated the Board was provided a copy of the presentation.

Mr. Brown stated he met with the Athletic Director and Athletic Coordinator at the School two weeks ago, and they liked the proposal and are willing to help market the League and push the middle schools to have some Frisbee units this spring. Mr. Brown stated when they order their discs for the League with their logo on it, they will also order a large amount to donate to the schools. He stated this is a new sport/new league for the community, and they feel that they need to sell it to get good numbers at the start. He stated the school side is going well, but with intermurals they need to get a teacher willing to work “for almost nothing” after school for a couple hours a day. Mr. Brown stated they will be going as a group to the Teachers’ Wellness Day in April and teach the teachers how to play Ultimate and hope that one of them likes it so much that they offer to do intermurals next year. He stated he believes that we will get at least four weeks of disc skills and Ultimate in gym classes for three years of middle school going forward.

Mr. Brown stated they have been building the Makefield Ultimate Summer League (MUSL), hoping that the Township will be amenable to it. There is already a Website, makefieldultimate.org, and Mr. Mason will make that Website better in time. He stated this is a new sport and new league; and while they need parent volunteers to run the teams, if parents feel that they should not volunteer unless they know Ultimate, there will not be enough coaches. He stated they are therefore bringing in accomplished players, mostly college-age although there are no age restrictions other than they have to be beyond high school. He added he feels it is a good rule that coaches should be at least four year older than the players they coach. He stated they will be brought in to be the skills coaches, and when they come to a game, they will be paid \$20 for an hour and half or two hours.

He stated the parent coaches will be expected to volunteer like they do for every other sport. He stated over the years as Ultimate becomes more entrenched in the community, parents will know how to play, and we will not need this structure.

Mr. Brown stated the “Spirit of the Game” is an important part of what we are doing. He stated the first goal is to teach sportsmanship and Spirit of the Game is a critical, underlying fundamental of playing Ultimate well and enjoying it. He stated the aim is to treat all participants as if they are your friends treating them with respect and caring. He stated when there is a conflict with a call, they discuss it and resolve it peacefully. He stated this can sometimes be hard for middle school age players, and he feels those in high school and college are in a better position to convince the middle school players that the Spirit of the Game “is cool.”

Mr. Dzelzgalvis stated the Spirit of the Game is how everyone stays safe and how the game stays enjoyable for everyone. He stated there are less injuries and you can play longer. He stated you want to treat everyone as if they are your friends. He stated he has played against his arch-rivals in high school, and now they are some of his closest friends that he plays Club Ultimate with. He stated because the community is so small you want to uphold a certain standard when playing the game.

Mr. Mason stated from the PADA side we have a lot of different Leagues like the Middle School League which are offered in the Philadelphia area. He stated PADA is a vendor of the School District of Philadelphia for the After School Enrichment Program but not within the Athletics Department for the School District. He stated at the School District level we call Spirit of the Game social and emotional learning and conflict resolution. He stated we are teaching the players how to be better adults through sport.

Mr. Krauss stated both his and Mr. LaBar’s sons play Ultimate Frisbee. He asked what they are asking of Lower Makefield Township to help facilitate moving this along.

Mr. LaBar asked that there be further discussion about Spirit of the Game. He stated unlike other sports, there are no referees, and he asked what that means with regard to self-refereeing and how that is beneficial. Mr. Brown stated they will teach the players how to interact with each other when there is a difference of opinion. He stated peer pressure works when the better players play with the Spirit of the Game, and this is why they want to bring in

a select group of young, accomplished players at the high school and college level. He stated the social side of this is very important. He stated once a player decides they love the sport and want to play it, it is not hard for them to embrace the Spirit of the Game.

Ms. Tierney stated Mr. Brown is asking for sanctioning for a Summer League in the Township. She stated this is complementary to the sports/activities we have, and our field use slows down in the summer. She stated at this point she is not sure if this would take place at Macclesfield Park or Memorial Park.

Mr. Brown stated he believes that they meet all of the requirements for sanctioning except for the bonding requirement which is still an open issue.

Mr. Brown stated the slide that was provided with regard to expenses has been revised, and it would be \$100 to play for the season. He stated that is \$30 for the fields, but someone from out of Lower Makefield would be paying \$60. He stated PADA will be paid \$64 as a management fee which includes shirts and discs for the players, shirts for the coaches, and all the supplies needed. It would also include paying the skills coaches \$20 a night.

It was noted that Ms. Rock had joined the meeting.

Mr. Wysocki asked what PADA stands for, and Mr. Mason stated it stands for Philadelphia Area Disc Alliance. Mr. Wysocki stated he likes the concept of teaching fair play, and asked if Ultimate is always conducted without officials on the field. Mr. Mason stated that even at the highest level of Ultimate Frisbee, there are no officials. Mr. Krauss stated there are observers; and Mr. Mason stated while there are observers, they do not make active calls although they do make in and out calls. Mr. Mason stated the players are the people who make the typical umpire and referee calls on the field.

Mr. Wysocki asked what would happen in the unlikely event that two players could become combative. Mr. Brown stated the coaches would immediately be out on the field for any kind of physical abuse, harassment, etc. Mr. Wysocki stated he assumes that there would be ramifications for the players that are involved in that. Mr. Brown stated he has never seen it get to that point. Mr. Mason stated Ultimate is different as it is almost like a pick-up basketball game where players are making their own calls. He stated the difference with Ultimate Frisbee is that one of the teaching skills is the discussion back and forth between the players over a dispute.

He stated if the two players cannot agree, it goes back to before the incident happened; and the Frisbee goes back to the original spot where the throw was. He added that the coaches are on the sidelines can assist with the rules, but the benefit of this is learning conflict resolution.

Mr. Wysocki stated he was not thinking so much of a different interpretation of the rules such as in or out of bounds, as opposed to what would be the ramifications if there was a physical altercation. Mr. LaBar stated there are also rules about safety; and if something were to occur, there are discussions about that and ramifications to that, but he does not feel they would need a referee. Mr. Wysocki stated he was asking if the League has a way to deal with an altercation, since all of the other organized sports have a way of dealing with something like that. Mr. Brown stated they will have skills coaches who will be working the games as observers so they would be the ones to go out on the field to intervene if needed. He stated he hopes that will not happen adding that the adult coaches are the ones ultimately responsible to get onto the field and deal with situations. He stated you do not see this normally in Ultimate.

Mr. Krauss stated this age group in this League is instructional versus when they move up to a feeder program in high school, college, club, and beyond. He stated there may be some instances where someone does something that is inappropriate when they are learning, and the key is to teach that skill no different from other sports. He stated at this level for this sport it is about teaching skills and the other life lessons.

Mr. Wysocki stated his point was not to include referees, and it was more around an altercation. He stated it seems that the idea of fair play has worked, and he was just asking if the League is prepared to handle a situation that could arise. Mr. LaBar stated PADA is all encompassing for the Philadelphia area. He stated he assumes that there have been times when high school players have done certain things at Tournaments and there are rules in place to address those situations. Mr. Mason agreed adding that there is a conduct system; and if anything elevates to the level of an altercation, harassment, etc. anything through PADA would come to him as the Youth Director; and there is also a Youth Council which is an advisory council. He stated if he ever feels uncomfortable making a decision on his own, it would go to the Advisory Council to make a conclusion.

Mr. Wysocki asked what months this will involve, and he asked if it will overlap with any existing programs. Mr. Brown stated they would pick the months of June and July, but he assumes that there are some sports finishing up in June. He stated they would coordinate with the Parks Department as to when fields would be available. Mr. Wysocki asked how many fields would be involved in this. Mr. Brown stated it would be one field for each 28 players who register for two nights a week. Ms. Tierney asked the field size needed, and Mr. Krauss stated it is about 128 yards long and 40 yards wide. Mr. Brown stated he was thinking that they would shorten the field for the middle school level.

Ms. Tierney stated last year we did a demo as part of the Arts in the Park Program, where we had a great turn-out, and people have been asking how they could get involved. She stated there is therefore a need in the Township not only as a feeder program for the High School, but also because there was a lot of excitement when we held the demo.

Mr. Wysocki asked if the School fields are part of the consideration, and Mr. Brown stated they are open to whatever fields the Township thinks they could use. Mr. Wysocki stated the Township does not control the School fields. Mr. Krauss stated for use of any of the School fields, Mr. Brown should go back to the people he met with at Pennsbury who could Permit them space. Mr. Krauss stated they would then work with Ms. Tierney to determine if Macclesfield or Memorial Park are needed depending on how many players sign up. Mr. Krauss stated the Township would need to know the days of the week and the time needed so that we can coordinate with any of the other organizations using the fields.

Mr. Wysocki stated he feels that they should check first with the School District to see what availability they have. He added that PAA does this as they need both School fields and Township fields. Ms. Tierney stated the School District is going through a lot of construction so she does not know how much field space is going to be available during that time. Mr. Krauss stated they would need to know that they have field space before they sign up players. Mr. Krauss added that Ms. Tierney has the schedule for the Township fields and knows what is available. Ms. Tierney stated she communicates with the Middle School Fields Director, and she can reach out to that individual. Mr. Krauss stated he does not know what the School District guidelines are. Ms. Tierney stated for the Township, they would have to adhere to all of our League Policies. She stated the Park Board would have to vote to sanction them as an official Township League.

Mr. Brown stated besides using the fields, they are hoping to do a lot of marketing through the schools, and he feels we will get good opportunities there. He stated he also feels there are some good marketing opportunities through the Township Website, and they would hope to get help with that as well. Ms. Tierney stated we do lightly market for the Leagues, but because there are so many Leagues, we have to focus on Township business. She stated there could be a link on the Township Website, and we would also mention them in the Township Newsletter. She stated they could also purchase a spot to market in the Newsletter. She stated with regard to social media, we tend to focus on Township business. Mr. Brown stated he feels the best marketing will be through posters and gym teachers to reach the middle school students.

Mr. Krauss stated he knows that in the past when students are moving up to the high school toward the end of the year flyers have been sent home. Mr. Brown stated he has a brochure he prepared which he provided to the Board this evening.

Mr. Krauss stated that as noted by Ms. Tierney, last year we had a skills night, and there were close to thirty kids in attendance; and there was a lot of interest from the parents he spoke to. He stated his son and Mr. LaBar's son were exposed to Ultimate, and they are now playing in pro games and traveling to other Countries and playing against really good athletics.

Mr. Wysocki moved and Mr. LaBar seconded to approve sanctioning the MUSL for a Summer League opportunity in Lower Makefield assuming they meet all the criteria in the Township being a sanctioned League.

Ms. Laurie Grey stated she is a Lower Makefield Township resident. She stated she knows that Macclesfield was one of the potential locations for this to be held, and she asked that given what we know about the overuse of Macclesfield, that it not be considered for this League. She stated they also need to take into consideration that Macclesfield is adjacent to a Residential area, and she feels we need to consider the residents and the neighborhood when we agree to do anything at Macclesfield. She stated there is a Macclesfield Master Plan Committee, and she would recommend that the Board consider that very seriously.

Mr. Krauss stated Ms. Tierney will take into account any field use based on current usage, what space is available, and participant level. He stated no commitment has been made on this tonight, and this is just an inaugural start-up. He suggested Ms. Grey follow up with Ms. Tierney once she looks at the schedule and where there is availability. He added this use would not be put in on top of fields that are already being used.

Mr. Brown stated that Ultimate plays more to the edges of the field than to the middle so it is a natural fit with a football field; and if you alternate the two, rather than wearing a groove down the middle of the field which football does, you can actually give the middle a chance to rest while the edges get played more.

Ms. Tierney stated the Board is going to have to evaluate whether Memorial or Macclesfield would be the best fit knowing that YMS plays until mid-June and starts up in August so that there is not much of a gap. Mr. Krauss stated they will have to look at what is available and what the registration numbers are to see where it makes the most sense.

Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Brown thanked the Township for everything they do for the community as we have great parks, and he appreciates what they all do.

Mr. Wysocki asked if goal posts are required, and Mr. Krauss stated they just use cones and a disc.

PICKLEBALL MEMBERSHIP

Ms. Bonnie Gannon, Program Coordinator for Pickleball, was present. She stated we are at 461 members, and we continue to run sessions through the winter except for snow days. She stated we communicated the new 2024 Fees to the membership, and there were a lot of comments which were responded to. She stated the members were advised that the increase was to cover pickleball-related expenses, the pickleball app, back-end support, and equipment such as nets. She stated we also added value as additional reserved times were added as well as rated-sessions where you play with others at your level. Ms. Gannon stated she is hoping to work with Ms. Tierney on additional

programming such as lessons and clinics with members being offered discounts on those. She stated she is also offering a Newsletter. She stated we also hope to buy some sound proofing and windscreens.

Ms. Gannon stated we are moving to a different registration system. She stated we are currently on Meetup which has been unreliable and lacks good technical support; and as the Coordinator, she cannot help people out with the system. She stated the Board gave approval to move to Court Reserve which is a new registration system used by many pickleball and tennis venues including Mercer Bucks. She stated during the past month we have been doing a trial with the help of Sue Fawcett, who is present this evening and helped set up the portal page. Ms. Gannon stated she had a meeting today with Court Reserve, and the only thing left to be done is working with Ms. Tierney and Finance to get the billing tested. Ms. Gannon stated she set up a demo e-mail and tested the Registration Application, processes, and the digital waivers. She stated some of our users tested it and indicated that it was very user-friendly.

Ms. Gannon stated Court Reserve has additional features; and while we are using it simply to schedule Registrations, we could at any point add other features. She stated last year we ran lessons and used Community Pass, but we could use Court Reserve if we wanted to run programming and offer discounts. She stated in the future we could also use a feature for wireless locks. She stated currently during the snow, our maintenance crew has to physically go to all of the different courts and physically lock them; and the opportunity exists to buy wireless locks for all of the courts, and the maintenance team would then be able to lock them from their phone or laptop. Ms. Gannon stated people are coming to the courts at Memorial Park at 6:00 a.m., and if our maintenance team needs to do weed whacking, we could lock the courts.

Mr. LaBar asked Ms. Gannon if the features she is speaking of are part of the package that we have already or would that be an additional expense. Ms. Gannon stated it would be an additional expense for the locks, but reserving of the courts is at no additional cost. Ms. Gannon stated being able to offer special events such as lessons or clinics would be no additional cost.

Ms. Gannon stated a feature that she likes is Chat since today with Meetup even as Coordinator, she is not allowed to represent a user and their problems. She stated in Court Reserve she can access chat and in the past

month she has gotten responses in no longer than three minutes. She stated if you are an existing Court Reserve user, you just search for LMT, and you are up and live.

Ms. Gannon stated she is also excited to offer additional special programming with Ms. Tierney's help. She stated last year we ran lessons with one instructor, and we filled up overnight and had a wait list. She stated we offered a second set of sessions which also filled up. She stated she has people who are already interested this year. Ms. Gannon stated there is a company called Universal Rackets in Philadelphia that reached out to the Township, and she and Ms. Tierney met with them. She stated they offer a lot of programming in eighteen communities one of which is Sea Isle City. Ms. Gannon stated she called the Sea Isle City Recreation Board, and they indicated they have been using Universal Rackets for the past three years for adult and children's leagues. She stated we have a proposal from Universal Rackets that includes not only lessons but an ala carte menu as well, and they are willing to work with us at our Fee structure. She discussed some of the events that they offer. Ms. Gannon stated they have programs for children, including after school pickleball clinics for those in Grades 5 to 8. She stated she wants to work with Ms. Tierney to select appropriate programming. Ms. Gannon stated if we are able to offer additional programming, it would help increase revenue and be good for our community as well as our club.

Ms. Gannon stated she would like the Park & Recreation Board to consider what we should do about all of the outside groups that are using our courts. She stated there is one group that is up to 177 members, and they are scheduling every other day, for two hours at Memorial Park. She stated she is concerned about what this will mean when the weather is warmer. She stated those larger groups are violating our Codes and our Ordinances, and she particularly noted Ordinance 141. She stated when she came before the Board ten years ago, she only had 12 people in pickleball, and she was forced to pay the Fees, get a Certificate of Insurance, etc.; and these groups are scheduling on their own apps for use of our facilities.

She stated this also leads to frustration for our residents. She stated at the current time she is not scheduling a lot at Memorial Park, and most of the use is by these outside clubs as well as the general public. She stated two-thirds of those in the outside clubs are non-residents.

Mr. Krauss stated they are not clubs – they are just people who are forming their own group. He stated they are a group of people that create a group on Team Reach, and then they schedule time. He stated when we built Memorial Park, we decided that a majority of the time would be open to the public, which they are. He stated they are scheduling times when it is public time. He stated he recognizes that it is probably a problem, and we need to find a solution to that. He stated they are not clubs like Lower Makefield Pickleball as they are not paying dues or fees. He stated they are “loosely rogue groups” that travel around. He stated they play where they can find available courts. He stated there are probably people in those groups who belong to Lower Makefield Pickleball.

Mr. Wysocki stated if it is an organized group, he feels they probably do have to follow some of the Township regulations for clubs.

Ms. Gannon again noted that some of the groups are up to 177 members; and since there is no wait list; and if just half of those people show up, it is going to be an issue. Mr. Krauss stated Team Reach is just an app that gets people together and they indicate where they are going to meet, and it is nothing more formal than that. Ms. Tierney stated by leaving it open, we could have five groups of fifty scheduling open time at the Court; and if they all show up at the same time, there could be arguments. She stated this has already happened where we have two and three Team Reach groups who think that the time is open and show up. Mr. Krauss stated we treat it as public time, so Ms. Tierney has to determine what is the right way to address that since they are showing up when it is open to the public. Ms. Tierney stated there may be opportunity for us to use the app to reserve even if it just open for free, but at least people are reserving time, and we have control. She stated we could also reserve it like we reserve pavilions, volleyball, etc. Mr. Krauss stated we need to agree how we are going to handle this because we left them open specifically for the public to use the open courts. He stated he agrees that there are a lot of people who have set up with Team Reach.

Mr. LaBar asked what other Townships do or is this a problem unique to Lower Makefield. Ms. Tierney stated she does not feel anyone has come up with a good solution yet. She stated we were the first to install dedicated pickleball courts. She stated Middletown just installed pickleball courts and Falls Township is working to install pickleball courts. Ms. Tierney stated we have been the leader in pickleball, and we need to come up with a solution to this problem.

Mr. Krauss stated Veteran's Park in Mercer County has a lot more courts, and they charge a Fee for a season. He stated they also have a lot of people from Team Reach groups that go over there to play, but you pay. He stated you pay \$60 a season if you are a Mercer County resident or \$75 if you are not. He stated in Ocean City, NJ it is \$60 for the season, and there are sessions where you have to sign up. He stated if you do not sign up for those sessions, it is a walk-on; and someone is working there, and you pay \$5 for a daily pass. Mr. Krauss stated we do not have the ability to have someone sitting at the courts accepting payment.

Ms. Tierney stated while they are not going to come to a solution tonight, the idea was to bring this matter before the Board. She stated the Township is getting blamed and being told that we are reserving all of this time when we are not, and we have no control over what is happening there. She stated people are coming and playing at 6:00 a.m. and the people who live there are listening to the sounds of pickleball play at 6:00 a.m. and our maintenance staff cannot get on the courts to do work when they need to. She stated we need to find a way to get a handle on this situation.

Mr. Wysocki stated we could just not allow the courts to be used before a certain time and post that. He stated we could also set time limits on people playing during open time. He stated when there is a Club that has been sanctioned, and they are given a Permitted time, they can use that; however, when there is open time, he feels it would be a useful way to make sure a rogue group does not come in and monopolize the courts.

Ms. Gannon stated at the next meeting she will come back with some solutions to try to manage the excess groups.

Mr. Krauss stated with regard to Universal, he had discussed them with a few people. He asked Ms. Gannon and Ms. Tierney to consider what general success will look like at the end of the season for instituting these programs by using this third-party contractor. Ms. Tierney stated we have metrics for that. She stated for CAPRA Accreditation we should be having a pilot program every year, and using a third party could be considered our pilot program for the membership for this year. Ms. Tierney stated there is a demand for pickleball in the Township.

Ms. Sue Fawcett, Sandy Run Road, stated she is very passionate about pickleball, and she is helping Ms. Gannon in the Township. She stated she is one of the meeting coordinators for the advanced group, and she plays every day. She stated there are 400 members in the Middletown Township Team Reach app, which gives an idea of the scope of the problem. She stated part of that is controlling access to the courts; and as a person who is there every day, it is very frustrating if she has to control access as a volunteer, and she feels that is outside of the scope of what she should be able to do. Mr. Tierney stated that is Ms. Gannon's responsibility. Ms. Fawcett stated she is talking about being the person there who has to tell someone that they have to leave, and she does not wish to encounter that frustration, adding it can be intimidating. She stated she would rather let people play, and then deal with it later.

Ms. Tierney stated there was an issue where people showed up at the same time that our advanced players were playing. Ms. Fawcett stated she was there when that occurred, and she decided to let it go because there was plenty of room, and they were "very well qualified to play there;" and it was just a matter of scheduling and time, and that they did not want to mix with the group.

Ms. Fawcett stated with regard to spending some of the revenue, she feels our facility in comparison to other Townships "is not that great." She stated Middletown Township just put in brand new courts which are lit and have a very nice surface, and we do not have that; and it is her goal to get there somehow. She stated she knows that there is no funding, but she would like to see if there is a path that we could do to get there. She stated pickleball is a year-round sport, and she is playing every day unless there is snow on the court or it is actively raining. She stated she walks by the tennis courts, and they are empty; and if they were lined for pickleball, they would be full today. She stated she is trying to address capacity, and it all comes down to funding. She stated while it is used by Parks and Rec, "funding and everything is from the General Fund." Ms. Tierney stated that is incorrect.

Ms. Fawcett stated she does not feel we are competitive, and the courts we are playing on now are not in great shape. She stated there are issues with "reflections" and some issues with the lay-out. She stated she would like to find a way to get independent funding since there are Federal, local, and State Grants. She stated there could also be corporate sponsorships. She stated she would like there to be a plan with a scope of the project, timeline, budget, etc.; and she would like to start that process working with Ms. Tierney and Ms. Gannon.

Ms. Fawcett stated she represents a lot of players because she is there every day. She stated when we heard about the Fee increase, the first question was “what am I getting for my money?” She stated the number one response was that they were not playing on good surface, and then it was services. She stated the Schuyler Road tennis courts are beautiful, but they are not lined for pickleball, and they are empty. She stated she would like to do something with Ms. Tierney and Ms. Gannon to see about funding.

Mr. Krauss thanked Ms. Fawcett for her comments adding that he has heard some of these comments before. He asked that she continue to work through Ms. Tierney and Ms. Gannon. He noted the issues with the Township finances. Ms. Fawcett stated she believes that she represents a number of players; and she could ask them to show up at a Board meeting to express their opinions.

Mr. LaBar stated Ms. Fawcett discussed spending the revenue that we have, and he does not believe that that there is revenue to be had that we are not spending. Mr. Krauss stated the Membership Dues of \$27 has been in place for over four years, and given cost increases, what was done with dues was no different from what has been done with all of the other programming; and we have had to raise Fees accordingly. He stated there are people who play every day so the pickleball dues at \$120 is \$10 a month. He stated if you went to Mercer Bucks you would be paying more. Mr. Krauss stated he understands the fees are why a lot of people are on Team Reach because they do not want to pay fees so they play where they can at no cost.

Ms. Fawcett stated some of the people said it was not the cost, it was the principal of it being a four times increase, and what they were getting for that, commenting on the low quality. Mr. Krauss stated he understands that Cardinal has some serious cracks and Memorial Park could have been done better, and there is also the issue of supply and demand.

LIAISON REPORT

Mr. George Schlieben, President of YMS, was present. He stated they are looking at things that can be done at Macclesfield Park even though it will not be as busy as in the fall. He stated they will try some things out in the spring so that we are prepared for the fall when it is busier. He stated they are trying to have a YMS Players Board, and they have asked their players to mirror the Board we have today and learn what it is like to run a youth sports' organization to get experience and help with the marketing. Mr. Schlieben

stated related to YMS Gives Back, last year we went around to several of the local Township Fire and Police organizations dropping off contributions, and that will be happening again this year.

Mr. Krauss asked if there was a resolution with regard to the parking arrangement and traffic flow at Macclesfield, and if there is a plan in place for the spring. Ms. Tierney stated that did not fully happen last year. Mr. Schlieben stated he feels that some of the things that they are doing with the scheduling will be potentially alleviating the problem. He stated it will involve everyone helping at Macclesfield and not just YMS. He added that he will be contacting Ms. Tierney to let her know what they are proposing to do.

Mr. Wysocki stated he is in favor of the Players Board which was discussed. He asked where the meeting will be held, and Mr. Schlieben stated he will be talking to Ms. Tierney about this and would like to have their meetings to be at the Township Building. He stated for the General Membership meetings they rotate the location.

Mr. Wysocki asked if there are any programs being considered that could leverage the upcoming World Cup given that the U.S. is one of the host Countries. Mr. Schlieben stated there will be a lot coming out from Eastern Pennsylvania Youth Soccer.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Five Mile Woods Project

Ms. Tierney stated the parking spots have been paved, and this week the Township staff completed the walkway to the entrance. She stated all the supplies are in place to install the trail, and that will be done during the March work day, and the date will be posted on social media. She stated a lot of volunteers will be needed. She stated the Youth Committee will be invited to help. She stated she is also going to reach out to several Scout groups to try to get as many people as they can without overcrowding. She stated sections of the trail will need to be taken back into the woods.

Heacock Tot Lot

Ms. Tierney stated over the summer the equipment was cleared from the Heacock Tot Lot, and we are ready for the new equipment to arrive the end of February/early March. She stated there will be a Grand Opening.

Macclesfield Park Study

Ms. Tierney stated everything that was done is on-line on the Township Website and on the Zencity app. She stated there will be an Open House on March 26 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., and she invited the Park Board, the EAC, the Disability Advisory Board, and the community to come and participate. She stated there will be a fifteen-minute introduction of the goals and objectives, a forty-five-minute overview presentation, and after that there will be a sixty-minute time period where there will be four community-input stations for individual comments and suggestions. She stated this has been a one-year long process so far, and there has been a lot of feedback from the Committee, youth focus groups, senior focus groups, neighbors' focus groups and interviews with ten different key people. She stated we have a great Steering Committee comprised of League leaders, neighbors, playground enthusiasts, and a naturalist.

Pool Update

Ms. Tierney stated as of the eleventh day of Registration for 2024, the amount is \$229,000.65 with the membership at 1,500. She stated last year at the same time the membership was 1,143 and the balance was \$127,160. She stated we had a record opening day for Registration where we nearly tripled the amount of a first day of Registration that we have ever had. She stated the staff has been working very hard, and she described the work that needs to be done during Registration. Ms. Tierney thanked the staff as they are doing this as a team with Pool Registration and Camp Registration occurring at the same time.

Ms. Tierney stated Ms. Caitlin Adams will be leaving as she will be a National Aquatics Director out west. She stated she will be transitioning with us over the next few months as she is not moving right away. Ms. Tierney stated she hopes to get someone into that role as soon as possible.

Camp Update

Ms. Tierney stated the Tween Camp has had the largest response ever, and it had to be expanded. She stated to date, the amount brought in is about \$50,000. She stated we are averaging 60 campers per week, and last year we were averaging 25 campers per week.

Ms. Tierney stated she also had to expand Summer Camp. She stated that historically we only accepted about 60 campers, and this year we accepted 160. She stated last year on day four we had Revenue of \$99,000, and this year we are at about \$224,262. She stated there are some spots left each week.

Winter Programming

Ms. Tierney stated from December to February, we did 251 Registrations with Revenue of \$17,579.

Ms. Tierney stated she is finishing up interviews for Program Manager, and she hopes to make a decision by the end of this week.

There being no further business, Mr. Brody moved, Mr. Blundi seconded and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kim Rock, Secretary