

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
PARK & RECREATION BOARD
MINUTES – OCTOBER 12, 2021

The regular meeting of the Park & Recreation Board of the Township of Lower Makefield was held in the Municipal Building on October 12, 2021. Mr. Krauss called the meeting to order and called the Roll.

Those present:

Park & Recreation Board: Douglas Krauss, Chair
Michael Brody, Vice Chair
Kim Rock, Secretary
Mike Blundi, Member
David Malinowski, Member

Others: Monica Tierney, Park & Recreation Director

Absent: Robert LaBar, Park & Rec Board Member
Dennis Wysocki, Park & Rec Board Member
James McCartney, Supervisor Liaison

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Brody moved, Mr. Blundi seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of June 8, 2021 as written.

CRICKET PRESENTATION

Mr. Paresh Birla was present. He stated cricket is getting more popular in the United States. He reviewed the history of cricket. He stated they would like to have space in the Township where they could play cricket.

Mr. Brody asked the dimensions of the space needed. Mr. Birla stated the area needed would be 65 meters from the center of the pitch to the boundary. He stated the pitch itself is about 24 to 25 steps, and they need flat ground.

Ms. Tierney stated she had advised Mr. Birla that they did not have space for this at this time; however, this is something they should consider for future planning. She noted in addition to Mr. Birla another separate community

group came to her asking for space for cricket. She also stated that cricket was also a topic of discussion at a meeting she attended for Bucks County Park & Rec Directors.

Mr. Krauss stated there is limited field space in the Township. He asked if there is a typical season for cricket, and Mr. Birla stated the season starts in spring and ends toward the start of winter. Mr. Krauss asked the age of those playing today. He also asked if a youth size field would be the same as the field used by adults. Mr. Birla stated currently it is 60% adults and 40% youth players, and they are seeing an increase in demand. Mr. Krauss asked if it is both male and female; and Mr. Birla stated while there is a female team forming in West Chester, there is not one yet in Lower Makefield. Mr. Krauss asked the duration of a game of cricket which they would need to take into consideration for field allocation. Mr. Birla discussed the different variations, with the shorter format being two to three hours.

Mr. Blundi asked if the area needed would be a circle 65 yards across, and Mr. Birla agreed. Mr. Birla stated sometimes they use the baseball field near the Township tennis courts as well as the School field in that area.

Mr. Brody asked if they need a fence around the field, and Mr. Birla stated they do not.

Mr. Krauss asked the number of players on the field, and Mr. Birla stated there are about 15 players on the field at a time. Mr. Krauss asked the number on the roster; and Mr. Birla stated it is normally 11 to 12, but it could go to 21.

Mr. Blundi asked if cricket is similar to soccer where there is constant running or more like baseball; and Mr. Birla stated it is more like baseball.

Mr. Brody asked if they could play at night since it is mostly adults playing. Mr. Birla stated the game can be played at night provided there is enough light, but usually they play early in the morning on the weekends. Mr. Krauss asked if they would be interested in playing from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. during a week night if a field were available. Mr. Birla stated he feels people would play then if a field were available.

Ms. Tierney stated she did ask Mr. Birla to participate as part of the Committee involved in the Needs Assessment.

Mr. Dinish Puppala from Lower Makefield stated he has played cricket for twenty years throughout the Country, and he currently travels close to one and half hours every weekend the entire summer to play cricket. He stated he represents the other group that reached out to Ms. Tierney about the need for cricket fields. He stated they also want to promote the game at the grass roots level through the schools.

LIAISON REPORT

Mr. Mike Hansen, 13 Houston Road, representing YMS Soccer, stated they had the Columbus Cup Tournament this weekend. He stated they were down overall in numbers which he believes was due to competing tournaments and on going Pandemic-related issues. He stated the regular fall season is ongoing for Travel and the Rec program is at record levels of participation. He stated they have been trying to rest some of the fields, and more field space is needed given additional user groups coming into the Township.

Mr. Krauss asked what Mr. Hansen feels is driving the increasing number of players. Mr. Krauss stated he feels they are seeing an influx of younger people into the community as older people are selling their homes. Mr. Hansen stated he agrees with Mr. Krauss and also feels people seem interested in getting outside coming out of the restrictions of the Pandemic. He added that over the last eighteen to twenty-four months he has seen more people walking, riding bikes, etc.; and there is the need for more recreational space on many levels.

RECREATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Community Day Date Proposal for 2022 and 2023

Ms. Tierney stated she would like to discuss Community Day date proposals for the next three years as there is a need to plan far out. She stated this event is close to 9/11 and she would propose again that instead of having it Labor Day weekend it be the weekend prior to Labor Day weekend and have Community Day the last Saturday in August for the next three years.

Ms. Tierney stated there was discussion internally about making this a fall event in October, but that would be close to the Veterans Day Parade as well as potentially competing with other area events. Ms. Tierney stated this year there was a decent turn out in spite of the rain, and there were lines all day for the rides although there was not a lot of vendor traffic.

Ms. Rock asked if this was the first year that it was not Labor Day weekend, and Ms. Tierney agreed. Ms. Rock stated she feels many people go away the last week in August as it is right before School starts. She stated she feels Labor Day weekend is a good time to hold this since School is open although she understands the concern about it being close to 9/11. She stated attendance may also have been down because people were on vacation, although it may have been due to the weather. Ms. Tierney stated she believes a lot of people travel on Labor Day weekend as well. Ms. Kim asked if they should consider approving dates for the next two years; and if the traffic is down, they could consider switching back to Labor Day weekend. Ms. Tierney stated they could re-evaluate that. Ms. Tierney added it does help to have consistency for sponsorship further in advance so that they can build up the event. Mr. Krauss stated if the event is not as successful as they want, the sponsors may be willing to switch to Labor Day weekend as it may bring in more people. Mr. Krauss stated he agrees with Ms. Rock that more young families may stay local during Labor Day weekend because School is in session.

After discussion, it was agreed to select dates for 2022 and 2023; and then vote in 2022 after the event selecting dates a few years out.

Mr. Brody stated his 8-U Baseball Team ran some of the booths at this year's event; and even with the weather, it was a great fundraiser for the Team.

Mr. Brody moved, Mr. Blundi seconded and it was unanimously carried to recommend to the Board of Supervisors approving Community Day be held on Saturday, August 27, 2022 and Saturday, August 26, 2023.

Project Updates

Ms. Tierney stated there were some issues related to COVID with regard to shipping the Community Center doors, and the hope is to have them installed in the next month.

Ms. Tierney stated they are working on the Needs Assessment and the Park & Rec Strategic Plan. She stated the first Needs Assessment Committee meeting will be held next week, and they will be planning an open forum for the community at some point. Surveys will be sent out to the community soon.

Mr. Krauss asked who is on the Committee, and Ms. Tierney stated she can share the list of names of the seven members.

Ms. Tierney stated they were going to do patching of the surface at the Memorial Park playground, but it was difficult to find a company willing to come in and work on this project. She stated a temporary fix has been done to make it safe. She stated rubberized surfaces do have to be rehabbed every seven years, and they are looking to put that in the 2023 Budget. The estimated cost is \$60,000. Mr. Krauss asked if the temporary solution will last until 2023; and Ms. Tierney stated if it does not last, they could do another minor, temporary fix.

Ms. Tierney stated at the Fred Allen fields, they were able to do surface-grinding laser leveling and add Turfix, which is a type of dirt/stone that helps absorb the water off the surface. She stated this has been a great addition, and the fields have been “fantastic.” She stated the Township did one field, and PAA did two fields so all of Fred Allen has been done. She stated after one of the storms she observed no water on the surface. She stated they need to discuss with PAA how maintenance should be done in order to maintain it. She added every year a little Turfix will need to be added, and she is looking to do more fields hopefully with PAA in 2022. Ms. Tierney stated she is trying to put money aside every year to cycle through the fields. She stated the drainage should be better than it has been.

Ms. Tierney reviewed all the repairs that were done at the Pool this year, which were smaller repairs that were included in the Budget.

Ms. Tierney stated in 2021 they wanted to do crack repairs at the Community Park tennis courts; but when they got cost estimates, they were \$60,000 which was much higher than the \$25,000 anticipated so they are looking to repair that in 2022.

Ms. Tierney stated the Woodside Road bike path is being funded through a number of different Grants with a Township match. This is a 2022 project.

Ms. Tierney stated the Memorial Park tennis and pickleball project has started, and she hopes that it will be completed by the end of this year although that cannot be guaranteed.

Ms. Tierney stated there is a three-year plan for bike path repairs, and initially was to be about \$42,000; however, with the new prices, they are estimating that to be about \$50,000.

Ms. Tierney stated they are looking to do the fields at Caiola in 2022 with the Turfix and laser grading. She stated she hopes that PAA will partner again with the Township on this like they did at Fred Allen.

Ms. Tierney stated with regard to the Memorial Park East project, they are looking to do at least the pavilion next year. She stated there is some Fee-In-Lieu money that could be put toward the pavilion.

Mr. Krauss asked if a restroom is planned for the pavilion. Ms. Tierney stated they did not originally plan for a restroom, but she feels that this needs to be discussed as a lot is being built on the east side of the park.

Ms. Tierney stated she hopes the Community Trail will be put out to Bid by the end of this year and be completed in 2022. She stated the project cost is approximately \$780,000.

Ms. Tierney showed a slide of 2023 projected projects. She stated she would like to see the Schuyler tennis courts done in 2023. She noted the Memorial Park playground rubberization that was discussed earlier is estimated to cost \$60,000. She stated she was looking at the playground plans for Memorial Park East, and with the size of the Park and the number of people using the Park, she feels they grossly underestimated the size of the playground that should be put in. She stated Warwick did a playground using a wood mulch surface, and the cost was approximately \$280,000. She noted the Lions Pride Park was done at a cost of \$2 million. She stated she feels a realistic estimate for a Memorial Park East playground with a rubberized surface would be \$500,000 to \$1 million. She stated she asked Mr. Pockl to look into this specifically, and she will come back to the Park Board to review this further.

Mr. Blundi asked if there would be Grant money for that; and Ms. Tierney stated there is potential Grant money, and she had asked Mr. Pockl to look into that as well.

Ms. Tierney stated our pocket parks are very outdated compared to other Townships, and she would like to look into a rotational, lifecycle replacement of the pocket parks. She stated generally a playground at a pocket park would be replaced every twenty years, and she would like to start at Heacock which she has estimated will cost about \$200,000.

Ms. Tierney stated there was discussion about the ADA Transition Plan, and one of the places to start would be Veterans Square which is estimated at \$65,000 mostly for parking lot accessibility and striping. She stated this would be a 2023 project.

Ms. Tierney stated she did an assessment of the Macclesfield Park baseball fields, and they are in bad condition. In order to bring them back to where they need to be it is estimated to cost \$200,000 to \$250,000 per field for rehab, and she has shown this as a 2023 project.

Ms. Tierney stated there are numerous other projects that need to be done including the Pool parking lot and the Macclesfield Park parking lot.

Mr. Krauss stated this is just for work to be done at existing parks, and does not include new parks; and Ms. Tierney agreed. Ms. Tierney stated the goal is to have a good maintenance plan into the future and do more preventative maintenance so that a lot of things do not need to be replaced at the same time.

A gentleman from the audience asked if any other fields were assessed at Macclesfield; and Ms. Tierney stated that while the assessment she just discussed was related to the baseball fields with a baseball field specialist, she does assess the fields frequently and she understands that there are issues on the soccer fields as well.

Ms. Rock asked Ms. Tierney if she spoke to Mr. Cremeans about the tennis courts as he indicated that he has a contractor who can re-do a tennis court for \$12,000 a court. Ms. Tierney stated she did discuss this with Mr. Cremeans; however, our problems are very structural and go deeper than a surface fix. She stated they have been patching it for a number of years so she had the engineer look at it, and their estimates came in much higher than \$12,000 per court for repairs; but that may be good for other courts that are not as bad as Schuyler.

Discussion of Fees and Charges for 2022

Ms. Tierney stated given the wage increases globally, they are looking to increase wages; and they are doing an assessments of what other pool facilities in the area pay and what other employers in the area pay. She stated once this is completed, we will most likely need to increase Pool Membership Fees to cover the increased wages. She stated this will be for Summer Camp as well.

Ms. Tierney stated there has been discussion about the Swim Team paying League Fees, and she would like this to be discussed by the Board. She stated currently the Swim Team does not pay anything back to the Pool even though there are a number of additional hours that the Pool is open specific to the Swim Team when no one else can come to the Pool. She stated the Pool staff comes in as early as 5:00 a.m. prior to the Pool opening, and the Swim Team comes in at 6:00 a.m. and are there until Noon Monday through Friday. She stated they also come in Saturdays for Swim Meets as well as weeknights. She stated when there are Meets, it requires staff to be present, and there is a lot of flexibility that they have to have specific to the Swim Team in excess of what is required for the General Membership.

Mr. Brody stated he understands that if he has a Family Membership, a member of his family could join the Swim Team and just pay the Swim Team fee; and Ms. Tierney agreed. Mr. Brody asked the fee to join the Swim Team; however, Ms. Tierney did not know. She stated that fee goes to the Swim Team and not the Pool. Mr. Krauss stated this policy has been in place for many years; and while the Swim Team members pay for a Pool Membership, they are getting extra benefits at no additional cost even though there are extra costs for the Pool and Township staff as well as whatever other maintenance is required. He stated he does not feel they are any different from PAA, YMS, or any other organization that is using Township facilities; and they should be paying a User Fee whether they are a resident or non-resident. He stated it may not capture 100% of the costs, and will still be somewhat subsidized similar to the other Leagues. He stated at this point the members of the Pool are technically paying for the Swim Team for something that they do not necessarily benefit from, and he is not sure that the Pool members are aware of that.

Mr. Brody stated he assumes that the manhours paid for the Pool coverage is higher than the other Leagues pay for field maintenance, and he would be in favor of some degree of a Fee. Mr. Krauss stated the current User Fee is \$15 for residents and \$32 for non-residents, and he feels those on the Swim Team should pay that same User Fee; and Mr. Brody agreed.

Mr. Krauss stated other organizations do put in a lot of sweat equity and provide maintenance that the Township benefits from, and he does not believe that those involved on the Swim Team are doing that kind of maintenance at the Pool; and those are costs that the Township is assuming.

Ms. Tierney stated this change could be included in the overall Motion for Fee changes.

Mr. Blundi stated he feels it is reasonable to ask for what all the other Leagues are paying. Mr. Malinowski stated he would be in favor of this as well.

Ms. Tierney stated with regard to the Fee charged for a Pool picnic pavilion, the charge is \$10 an hour compared to all the other Park pavilions, which are \$15 an hour, so she would like to increase the Pool picnic pavilion fee to \$15 an hour.

Ms. Tierney stated currently the charge for swim lessons are very low as generally charges in the area for swim lessons are \$65 to \$70, and she would like to increase the charge by \$5 for the first and second child. She stated currently private swim instruction is \$25 for a half hour; and while she would keep that the same, she would like to offer semi-private lessons up to three children of the same level with each additional child to be charged \$15 for the half hour. Mr. Krauss asked the number in the group lessons; and Ms. Tierney stated that it is eleven, and the lesson is for one hour. Ms. Tierney stated they could also consider increasing the fee for the private lesson to \$30 for the half hour.

Mr. Brody asked the last time these fees were raised, and Ms. Tierney stated these have been stable for some time. She stated they previously did not charge for picnic pavilions at all, and about two to three years ago they changed this to \$10 an hour. Mr. Krauss stated the Pool was closed in 2020. Ms. Tierney stated the Membership Fees were increased in 2018 or 2019, but we have the lowest Membership Fees compared to all of the other area pools even for non-residents. Mr. Brody stated the next time this is discussed he would like to know how often there have been rate increases. Ms. Tierney stated the wages in the area have increased significantly in the last year, and they will need to increase the pay a lot in order to get employees.

Mr. Blundi asked the number of weeks swim lessons last, and Ms. Tierney stated it is for six weeks of lessons.

Mr. Krauss asked if there are other proposed changes to Fees within Park & Rec; and Ms. Tierney stated at this point it is just being considered for the Pool and Summer Camp where they are incurring more costs and will need to increase the Fees. Mr. Krauss stated at this point there is nothing specific for the Park & Recreation Board to recommend for approval. Ms. Tierney stated there will be an initial Budget meeting when she will need to bring something before the Board of Supervisors which is in early November prior to the next regularly-scheduled Park & Recreation Board meeting. She stated there could be another meeting of the Park & Rec Board prior to that if they wish. Ms. Tierney stated the Fees are usually included in the Budget presentation. Mr. Krauss stated he feels the Park Board would like to see the actual Fees proposed before making a recommendation. Ms. Tierney stated she would double check on the protocol to see if the Fees could be presented later. Mr. Krauss stated he feels the Board of Supervisors will want to know when and what the last increase was. Ms. Tierney stated she believes it was in 2018 or 2019. Ms. Tierney stated she can come back to the Park & Recreation Board with all Fees in their entirety, and Mr. Krauss agreed that should be done.

Approval of Naming Policy

Ms. Tierney stated this has been discussed a number of times, and it was sent out again to the Park & Recreation Board to see if they would be in favor of recommending approval tonight or if there were further modifications. It was noted that Mr. Wysocki was not present this evening; however, it was felt that what was provided to the Board was the last iteration that was discussed.

Mr. Malinowski moved, Mr. Brody seconded and it was unanimously carried to recommend to the Board of Supervisors adoption of the Naming Policy.

Project Updates (continued)

Ms. Tierney showed a picture of work being done at Memorial Park. Mr. Blundi noted the color of the pickleball court, and asked if the surface will stay that color; and Ms. Tierney stated the surface will be painted. Mr. Krauss asked about the color scheme for the pickleball courts, and Ms. Tierney stated she can get Mr. Pockl to provide that to the Park & Rec Board members.

Boy Scout Projects Updates

Ms. Tierney stated the shade structure at Veterans Square is up. She stated they are also working on a shade structure at the Dog Park. She stated the mile marker signs are up at Memorial Park.

Ms. Tierney stated they will be over seeding and filling holes at the Dog Park. The large dog side has been closed in order to do some maintenance, and they will be flipped back soon.

CAPRA UPDATE

Zero Waste Plan Presentation

Ms. Tierney stated she has been working on this with the EAC, and she will be presenting it to the EAC on Thursday. She stated the Park & Rec Board members were presented with an initial draft copy. She stated the EAC did an assessment of the trash to recycle, and she feels that we can improve in this area in the parks. She stated the EAC found that the assessment of our waste receptacles showed it was 12 to one waste receptacles to recycle bins in our parks which needs to be improved. A picture was shown at the basketball courts where there are two waste bins; however, all of the recyclables are lying on the ground. She stated while having recycle bins there may not solve the entire problem, it would make it more convenient as every morning there are bottles lying all over the ground at the basketball courts.

Ms. Tierney stated the EAC also found out that there were many different variations of receptacles with different colors, shapes, and sizes; and she feels consistency is important. She stated there should also be labeling on the containers as to whether they are for waste or recyclables.

Ms. Tierney stated she and the staff came up with a twenty-year plan for the parks, and they would like there to be a recycling container for every waste receptacle. She stated they would also align this plan with the ADA Transition Plan. She stated they found there were a lot of trash can placement issues when they did the ADA Transition Plan.

Ms. Tierney stated they would also like to develop a plan for special events and what would be required when someone comes to them about a special event. She stated they would also like to develop a way to measure the success of the program and work on educating the community and staff about the program.

Ms. Tierney stated they discussed standardizing the look and feel of the trash and recycling containers throughout all of the Parks. A picture was shown of an option which is a three-can option at a cost of \$1,500. She stated while it could take years to standardize the trash bins throughout the Township, they may be able to find a Grant opportunity for a recycling initiative.

Mr. Krauss stated the Township staff is responsible for collecting all of the trash throughout the parks and a service is not used, and Ms. Tierney agreed.

Ms. Tierney stated one of the Zero Waste education ideas they came up with was the idea of a “nudge campaign,” which makes it convenient for people to dispose of recyclables and includes placement of the containers. She stated another idea was “Suzy Recycles How About You,” and they could show people from the Township such as a PAA athlete properly disposing of recyclables and have posters in the Park. She stated this is a way to encourage good behavior.

Ms. Tierney stated they also want to have something that is easily identifiable, and they could start out by putting “recycle” and “waste” stickers on the bins; and have that consistent across the Township parks.

Ms. Tierney stated currently we get contamination charges from Waste Management, which while small, do add up. She stated it will require more staff time to make sure that the bins are separated properly and that there are not contaminants. She stated there will be an expense to replacing and adding bins.

Mr. Krauss asked if the EAC provided a recommended number of bins/receptacles needed for all of the parks so that they would know the total cost to get the Township where they want it to be. Ms. Tierney stated part of the plan is to develop a map of the in-season/off-season lay-out; and they would need to map out how many are needed at each of the parks. This has not yet been done, and they had just started with the inventory. Ms. Tierney stated the EAC was initially recommending three recycle bins to one trash can; however, she indicated that since at the current time they only have

one recycle bin to twelve trash cans, one-to-one would be a good first goal. Mr. Krauss stated they may be able to limit the paper recycling bin to only certain locations.

Ms. Rock stated she feels there are receptacles that have a smaller opening for bottles so that people cannot put something larger in it, and Ms. Tierney stated she feels those would be a good idea.

Ms. Tierney stated the staff also talked about adding in the long term more water fountains for refillable water bottles, which may result in less bottles in the parks. She stated they also talked about adding compost bins in the future if the recycle program is successful.

Mr. Krauss stated he would be in favor of the water fountains for refilling water bottles particularly at the Pool, the baseball fields, and Macclesfield. Ms. Rock stated it would also be good at the playgrounds.

Ms. Rock stated the recycling receptacles should be a different color since it is easier for parents to tell children which color receptacle to use. Ms. Tierney stated she agrees that color and the smaller openings help. Ms. Tierney asked that the Board provide her with any additional comments, and she will provide the Park Board with any modifications suggested by the EAC after she meets with them. Ms. Tierney stated we need to continue to discuss how we can keep waste out of the landfills.

Maintenance and Operation Plan Presentation

Ms. Tierney stated there was not an updated Maintenance and Operations Plan in the Township. She stated what she is presenting is just a start, and she is looking to make it better over time. She stated she met with the staff discussing what they do, and this Plan is helpful for new staff. Ms. Tierney noted Page 6 where there is a classification of the parks based on their usage and what type of maintenance they need, and they refer to the parks based on their color throughout the manual. She stated the checklist is different for a “yellow park versus an orange park versus a red park.” She stated at the back is a list of all of the maintenance needs throughout the year including inspections that need to be done, what needs to be painted annually, mulching, etc. She stated they will review this once a year. She stated while this is an internal document, they could share it publicly.

Mr. Krauss stated they appreciate all the work that the Park crew does, and he would encourage the Board to review it so that if they see something at the parks they can bring it to the Township's attention.

Ms. Tierney stated the way they do work orders is antiquated, so the next step would be to get a mobile app where they could take a report on the computer and send it to the crew; and once they complete the work order, they would check it off on their phones. She stated in this way a resident could make a report about an issue at a park, and they would get a report back when the item is taken care of. She stated there would be QR Codes that would be throughout the parks which could be scanned to make a report which would go to the staff who would follow up on it. They are reviewing a number of different systems, and this is something they would like to do in the future to serve the community better.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Brody thanked the Board for allowing him to serve on the 9/11 Committee, and he thanked everyone who worked on this event. Mr. Brody was thanked for volunteering and making the day special for those in the community.

There being no further business, Mr. Malinowski moved, Mr. Brody seconded and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kim Rock, Secretary