

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
PARK & RECREATION BOARD
MINUTES – MARCH 14, 2023

The regular meeting of the Park & Recreation Board of the Township of Lower Makefield was held in the Municipal Building on March 14, 2023. Mr. Krauss called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. 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
Dennis Wysocki, Member

Others: Monica Tierney, Park & Recreation Director
Fredric K. Weiss, Supervisor Liaison

Absent: Rob LaBar, Park & Recreation Board Member

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Malinowski moved, Mr. Brody seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of February 6, 2023 as written.

COMMUNITY CLEAN UP – Pennsbury Robotics Club “Make A Splash”

Members of the Sea Falcons from Pennsbury showed a slide presentation. Part of their competition includes a way to give back to the community, and they decided to have a Township-wide clean-up. They extended their clean-up to include Falls Township so that they could have a broader scope and a bigger impact. The clean-up was held on March 12.

Multiple other organizations were brought in to help with the clean-up, and over 100 people signed up for the event with 20 of those dedicated to Lower Makefield Township due to the limited amount of trash in Lower Makefield. A slide of the areas covered in Lower Makefield and Falls Township were shown.

More space than originally targeted was able to be covered in Lower Makefield, and fourteen to fifteen trash bags were filled with trash collected in Lower Makefield. The project counted as community service hours for the National Honor Society.

Ms. Tierney stated this was also a good partnership with our Zero Waste Plan as part of the Plan is to have community-wide clean-ups. Ms. Tierney stated she worked closely with Falls Township, and the students should be proud of what they did. The Board congratulated the group on the project.

There was discussion about the Underwater Robotics Club, which is the last engineering club at the School, and what is involved in competitions. It was noted that this community service project was started because part of their regional competition calls for an event called “Make a Splash,” and is meant to give teams a way to show what they bring to their community.

Board members commended the group on the work that was done. Dr. Weiss thanked the group for cleaning up a very important part of the Township, adding he will discuss this project at the next Supervisors’ meeting. It was suggested that the presentation be made available on the Township Website, and Ms. Tierney agreed to look into that. Ms. Tierney also suggested that the group speak to the Township Youth Committee.

SKATE PARK DISCUSSION

Ms. Tierney introduced Andrew Moinard who had done an independent study on the need for skate parks in Bucks County which she can share with the Board. She added he will be interviewed as part of the Macclesfield Park Plan as we are trying to interview alternative sport representatives as part of that Plan.

Mr. Moinard stated he lives at 1700 Yardley-Langhorne Road, and he was before the Board previously to discuss this topic. Since that time the Middletown Township Community Skate Park has been built. Mr. Richard VanHorn stated he owns the skate shop on Yardley-Langhorne Road. Mr. Eric Granavich stated he grew up in Middletown Township and is a lifelong skateboarder. He stated he moved to Lower Makefield in November, and would like to have consideration be given to a skate park in Lower Makefield Township.

Mr. Moinard stated they are in the process of forming a non-profit organization called the Bucks County Skate Park Association, and he will be the President and Mr. Granavich will be the Vice President.

Mr. Moinard stated in May, 2021, he introduced a Google survey which was put out through the Middletown Township Skate Park Instagram, which is an account he operates. He stated the highest number of responses were from the 19067 Zip Code, which was 13% of the 248 responders. He stated the link to access the survey has been provided to the Township. He stated there are now more female users of skate parks than previously. He stated 83.9% who responded indicated they agree that Bucks County needs more skate parks and that skate park users are an under-represented recreation group. He stated in 2019 there was a study done for Philadelphia that indicated that for every basketball court there were 18 users, and for every skate park there were a couple hundred users which shows the disparity among facilities available. Mr. Moinard stated they would like to partner with the Township to see what opportunities for a skate park are available including applying for Grants.

Mr. Krauss asked where the next closest skate park is other than the Middletown Skate Park. Mr. Moinard stated 82% of those who responded to the survey indicated Middletown was the most preferred skate park in the area which he feels is because it is a custom, cast-in-place concrete skate park, and second to that was Falls Township Park. He stated Newtown was third, Warminster was next, and then Southampton and Bensalem. He stated the difference between those other skate parks and a custom cast-in-place concrete park is user experience, safety, maintenance costs, and longevity. Mr. Krauss stated having this part of the Macclesfield Park discussion will provide those with an interest in this to have input.

Mr. Brody congratulated them for the opening of the Dogwood Skate Shop. He asked if since they were before the Board previously has there been any headway with regard to funding or ideas as to how to fund a skate park. Mr. VanHorn stated the community of skateboarding is very strong, and they have multiple events where they raise awareness in the Township. They have done a number of fundraisers. Mr. Moinard stated since the Middletown Skate Park completion, they have raised approximately \$4,000 which Middletown Township has in their non-profit. He stated they are willing to do more events and even leverage the Middletown Skate Park toward raising funds for a Lower Makefield Township Skate Park.

Mr. Brody stated he feels that it is important to consider all sports in the Township. Mr. Moinard discussed some of the instruction he had given in the past. He noted skateboarding was able to be participated in when team sports were cancelled during the Pandemic.

Mr. Krauss stated they are looking for diversity of recreation activities in the Township which is what the Play For All Plan is about, and is what they are pursuing.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Recommendation to the Board of Supervisors For a Fee of \$6,000 Assessed to the Swim Team for Their Usage of the Pool Outside of Regular Operating Hours

Ms. Tierney stated in addition to the fee of \$6,000 assessed to the Swim Team for their usage of the Pool outside of regular operating hours, there would be a rate of \$42 an hour to cover any time that they go in excess such as a Swim Meet that goes longer than was planned for in the \$6,000. She stated she does not feel that the need for that additional charge will happen; however, she wanted to have it included just in case there is an incidence when the staff has to stay unexpectedly late. Ms. Tierney stated the Swim Team is aware of this, and they are comfortable with the rate which was arrived at based on the number of hours that they are in the Pool outside of regular operating hours when we have to bring in additional staff to operate the Pool. Ms. Tierney stated this had been done in the past at no additional cost to the Swim Team, and the other members of the Pool had been incurring this cost.

Mr. Krauss asked if additional staff is brought in for the Swim Team during normal operating hours. Ms. Tierney stated since every Swim Team member must have a Pool membership, those costs are covered during regular operating hours, and the issue was outside of operating hours when staff had to be brought in special for the Swim Team. Ms. Tierney stated sometimes staff comes in as early as 4:30 a.m. to make sure the chemicals are okay before the Swim Team gets there early morning. Mr. Krauss stated while the Pool opens at 9 a.m., the Swim Team does take up lanes up to 11 a.m. He asked if additional staff has to be there during that time that would not be there if the Swim Team was not there. Ms. Tierney stated their Pool Membership covers that cost. Mr. Krauss stated with regard to the additional charge of \$42 an hour he assumes there is a range of hours/events and anything over and above that in the Agreement would be subject to the additional hourly charge.

Ms. Tierney stated she worked closely with the Swim Team to come up with these hours, and the \$42 would just be in the event that they went over those hours. She stated she believes that they will work very hard to stay within the hours.

Mr. Brody asked what this \$6,000 comes out to per person. Ms. Tierney stated the demand does not change per person and it is a little different than the standard Leagues as this is not a tax-based facility, and we are at least at minimum trying to cover our costs. She stated it was felt it was the best choice to give the Swim Team a fixed rate for the season to cover the cost that we have been paying for years. Mr. Blundi stated he feels it is very fair and is long overdue.

Mr. Blundi moved and Mr. Malinowski seconded to recommend to the Board of Supervisors approval of a fee of \$6,000 assessed to the Swim Team for their usage of the Pool outside of regular operating hours during the 2023 Swim season.

Mr. Brody stated he does not understand why we would do a different fee. Ms. Tierney stated there is variability as to the number of people who register; and if they would have a low-enrollment year, we would still need to have the same number of staff. She stated we might not cover our staff costs if we were to do a more variable billing. Mr. Brody asked if a sports league had fewer registrants would we mow the fields less. Ms. Tierney stated if there were fewer players, there would be less field requests and less maintenance required on the fields. Mr. Brody asked how often the fees are reviewed, and Ms. Tierney stated they are considered once a year.

Motion carried unanimously.

Macclesfield Park Master Plan Progress Update

Ms. Tierney stated we are working on key person interviews. She stated we tried to survey alternative sports groups, but no one really responded so she is still trying to reach the leaders of those alternative sports to participate. Ms. Tierney specifically noted sand volleyball where there is a huge community of sand volleyball players, and it would be good to get their feedback. She stated we also do not accommodate Lacrosse and cricket, and they should have some feedback as part of this process, and we are trying to reach out to those alternative sports groups to provide feedback.

Ms. Tierney stated we had two focus groups, one of which was the Seniors with about twelve people present and the other was a teen group with about eight participating. Ms. Tierney stated she is still waiting for a report on those two focus groups; and when it is provided, it will be posted on-line. She stated the Website is updated whenever something new comes out as we are trying to share everything that happens and be very transparent.

Ms. Tierney stated there will be a Community Open House meeting at some point in the future when the public can come in and ask questions, participate in activities to interact with different concepts; and there will be Park Board and Board of Supervisors meetings in the future as well once the feedback is collected. She stated at this point we are still at the point of gathering information.

Pathway to Zero Waste

Ms. Tierney stated signs were made and we are starting with implementation; and as we implement, we will continue to market the program with Stan the Can. She stated we are working on a plan for installation of signage and removal of waste bins for the passive parks that have been identified. Ms. Tierney stated some people have questioned the program and others are excited about it. She stated the staff is tracking phone calls for feedback on Zero Waste. She noted that as heard earlier this evening, we do not have much litter in the Township.

Rain Barrel Update

Ms. Tierney stated the Rain Barrel Program has been successful and we are still receiving many requests. She stated as of Monday, 115 have been sold. She stated many of those who come into the Community Center and see the sample are signing up right away. She stated she was expecting to sell about 66, and we are already at 115. She stated Middletown recently reached out to us as they would like to do this program as well. The deadline to order is March 22.

Set Date for Road Tour

Ms. Tierney stated this has been done in the past in August. It was agreed to hold the Road Tour on August 8 beginning at 5 p.m. Ms. Tierney asked that Dr. Weiss provide this information to the Board of Supervisors at their next meeting. The Board preferred that there be an air-conditioned bus.

Other Updates

Ms. Tierney stated Pool registration is going well. She stated Camp has been expanded to include Edgewood, and the Camp registration is already full again. She stated we have not yet promoted the CIT Program, but that will be done shortly. Mr. Kraus asked if the expansion will require the need to add more CITs; however, Ms. Tierney stated at this point we will keep the same number of CITs although that could be discussed for the future. Ms. Tierney stated we are doing well with Pool staffing, but we need to expand the staff for Camp because of the expansion at Edgewood; and about four more Camp counselors are needed.

Ms. Tierney stated all classes are filled and some are over filling. Some new classes are coming on board which will be shared with the Park Board. She stated we are using the tools that were developed for CAPRA to help us identify gaps and needs within our programming.

Ms. Tierney stated the Contract for Art in the Park is being finalized, and there will be eight or nine sculptures that will be placed in Memorial Park and the Community Trail around the ball fields. There will also be one sculpture at Patterson Farm at the Artists of Yardley which was their contribution. Ms. Tierney stated there is about \$900,000 worth of sculptures that will be housed in the Township. Most of the costs are being paid with Grant funds with about \$5,000 coming from the Township. Ms. Tierney stated this will be on the Board of Supervisors' Agenda for tomorrow evening along with the Swim Team fees.

Mr. Krauss asked when the installation will take place and for how long will the sculptures be in place. Ms. Tierney stated after approval by the Board of Supervisors, she believes the installation will be in April, and the sculptures will be in place for six months. She added that there will be programming related to the sculptures in partnership with the Artists of Yardley.

March 14, 2023

Park & Recreation Board – page 8 of 8

There being no further business, Mr. Wysocki moved, Mr. Malinowski seconded and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kim Rock, Secretary