

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD  
PARK & RECREATION BOARD  
MINUTES – NOVEMBER 8, 2011

The regular meeting of the Park & Recreation Board of the Township of Lower Makefield was held in the Municipal Building on November 8, 2011. Chairman Fritchey called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

Those present:

Park & Recreation Board: David Fritchey, Chairman  
Patricia Bunn, Secretary  
Dave Gordon, Member (joined meeting in progress)  
Fran McDonald, Member  
Dennis Wysocki, Member

Others: Terry Fedorchak, Township Manager  
Donna Liney, Park & Recreation Director  
James Majewski, Township Engineer  
Matt Maloney, Supervisor Liaison (joined meeting in progress)

Absent: Henry Carpenter, Park & Rec Vice Chairman  
Andrew Newbon, Park & Rec Member

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Bunn moved, Mr. McDonald seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of October 18, 2011 as written.

#### DISCUSSION OF PAA REQUEST FOR FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Ms. Jason Simon was present as liaison for PAA. Mr. Fritchey stated last month Mr. Simon discussed items on the PAA wish list, and there was also discussion as to how the Township might spend the Grant money from the State together with Township funds. Mr. Fritchey stated there was also a lengthy discussion about drainage issues at the ball fields.

Mr. Simon introduced Doug Kraus, Vice Commissioner, Treasurer, Tournament Director, and Fields Groundkeeper. Mr. Simon stated since the last meeting, he discussed these items with the newly-elected PAA Commissioner.

Mr. Gordon joined the meeting at this time.

Mr. Simon stated there was previous discussion about installing water taps on all three fields at Stoddart.

Mr. Simon stated he and Mr. Kraus looked at fence toppers for all the fields, and they would like Park & Rec to consider fence topping the entire Park system including Roelofs, and Macclesfield A & B. He stated he provided Ms. Liney with a link for the fence topper they feel would be appropriate, and they need to do investigations on the total amount of feet for the fencing. Mr. Majewski stated at Stoddart it would be approximately 300 feet of fence per field. Mr. Simon asked if this includes the foul lines, and Mr. Majewski stated this would just be the outfield. Mr. Majewski stated he has not seen fencing along the foul lines in any other areas, and Mr. Kraus noted where some of these are located. Mr. Simon stated there is an aesthetic value to having them around all the fields as well as a safety issue. He stated the topper they have selected is a fairly common design that is available and is not the top-grade design. Mr. Kraus showed a picture of what they would recommend. Mr. Majewski stated he would estimate the cost to be \$2.50 per foot installed. Ms. Liney stated she feels they could install this in house.

Mr. Simon stated they also previously discussed dug out replacement and improvements and field renovation for sloping and drainage. He stated Mr. Majewski provided some additional information on this yesterday. Mr. Majewski stated for any drainage system that is used, the prices range from \$25,000 to \$30,000. Mr. Majewski stated this would be stone with piping in the bottom, and a layer of sand. Mr. Simon stated he agrees with Mr. Majewski that sloping is important, but there should also be the right mix on the field as well. He stated they want to create an environment where they can get in as many games as quickly as they can when there is a rain event. He stated they feel that just sloping the fields without a drainage system in place will not achieve the goal of the fields being playable quickly enough, and they need both elements.

Mr. Fritchey stated he agrees with the laser grading concept Mr. Majewski has suggested. Mr. Simon stated since PAA maintains the fields once the season starts, the sloping quickly becomes at risk. Mr. Majewski stated this is not necessarily correct. He stated currently all the fields are too flat as they are all less than 1% slope; and when it rains, the water does not flow off and instead sits in localized puddles. He stated as they maintain the fields, they are pushing it around, and the puddles migrate; however, if you bring up the entire field with a minimum 1 ½%, the water would grade off, and the grade will stay there although there may be localized areas they will have to treat.

Mr. Simon asked how frequently it would have to be re-sloped to make sure it is appropriate. Mr. Majewski stated the main slope will be there forever; however, they will have to do a little re-grading approximately every five years.

Mr. Fritchey stated he has observed that there are puddles, and well-meaning volunteers are going in with rakes and impacting the grading. Mr. Fritchey stated he feels there is also inconsistency in the soil as there is clay of a varying percentage in these areas, and the clay gets compacted; and Mr. Majewski agreed.

Mr. Fritchey stated Mr. Simon provided information on the ball fields at Disney's Wide World of Sports adding he has seen these fields, and they do work extremely well. He stated if they went with a system like that with drainage underneath and 12% to 18% of sand and top soil, they would no longer have the difficulty with clay. Ms. Bunn stated this is a very expensive system. She noted Lower Makefield has clay soils; and to take up all these fields, haul away the clay, and put in a new mix would be very expensive. She questions whether this is really needed for missing some games and whether the Township has the money to do this. Mr. Majewski stated he estimates that this would cost \$25,000 to \$30,000 in addition to the re-grading which would be \$15,000 per field.

Mr. Fritchey stated they are building two new fields at a cost of \$500,000; and he feels they should do those two fields right to see if it makes a significant difference rather than repeat the same mistakes and have two new fields that have the same problems that all the other fields have.

Ms. Bunn stated while she is a landscape architect and understands what they want to do, she feels the Township needs to be fiscally-responsible with the amount of money they have. Mr. Kraus stated the Golf Course was designed with the right mix so that if it rains, the Course drains properly. Mr. Fritchey stated they do have a significant investment in all the fields, and they should work.

Mr. McDonald stated they need to know what the costs are before they can state what they are able to do. He stated they must also make sure that they are doing this right. Ms. Bunn stated she agrees, but does not feel they have to be built to the standards of Citizens Bank Park as these are for children who are playing ball for a few months during the year. Mr. Simon stated there are 1,250 children playing in this organized user group on Township facilities. He stated the fields were never engineered properly, and it is now causing problems for the volunteers doing work on the field which is also causing the problem to replicate. He stated they want the fields constructed so that they can optimize their use and keep the volunteers off the fields as much as possible. He stated there is also the opportunity for Club expansion under the new leadership, and they anticipate growth in the Club. He stated while it is a concentrated period of time, they do play in the spring and in the fall; and there is tournament play on the fields. He stated the fields are used beginning early April, through the summer, and then into the fall so they do not have a chance to rest.

Mr. Maloney joined the meeting at this time.

Mr. Simon stated the fact that there were not properly engineered when they were first built is a huge factor, and at some point it is worth it to try to make it better. He stated previously they had discussed having one of the fields at Stoddard be a case study field, and execute that field with all the changes. He stated PAA discussed this in their leadership group and feel this would be worthwhile.

Mr. Simon stated they also previously discussed that if the Township is going to bid out the building of the new fields, an alternative bid for this project would make sense to see what can be done in this economic environment to optimize the chances of getting a better deal.

Mr. Majewski stated it would cost \$40,000 per field to do all the work needed on each field for the mix and the slope. Mr. Simon asked if they were to install the drainage system and put the right mix on top, would this change the cost; and Mr. Majewski stated there is not really a lot of overlap in cost; but he did round the estimated cost down somewhat.

Mr. Fritchey stated they had also discussed that if they are going to build two new fields, they want to do them correctly to begin with. He stated if it is done correctly, it may save money over time.

Mr. Majewski stated the infields at the fields at Stoddard are all completely skinned so there is nothing to absorb water. He stated the two fields to be built will have grass so there is a much smaller area which will potentially remain wet, and this is the area he feels they should have an under drain system to drain off the water. There would still be a slope in the grass area. Ms. Bunn stated she feels they should not have anything less than 2% slope on the grass or it will not drain.

Mr. Majewski stated there is approximately \$25,000 available for improvements to Stoddard as part of the Grant. Mr. Fedorchak stated Mr. Majewski is specing out this project now in order to create construction documents. He asked Mr. Majewski when he feels they can put this out to bid, and Mr. Majewski stated he was waiting for this discussion. Mr. Fedorchak stated Mr. Fritchey had discussed using a sand mix at the two new fields, and he asked how much this would add to the cost of those fields. Mr. Majewski stated he feels it would be an additional \$25,000 for each field.

Mr. Fedorchak asked which field at Stoddard they feel should be the test field, and it was agreed it should be Field 2.

Mr. Simon stated he feels there should be discussion on the water taps and fence toppers, and they need to prioritize these items. He stated there is \$25,000 as part of the Grant which is specifically for Stoddard improvements. Mr. Majewski stated the fence toppers could be bought and installed by the Park crew or PAA volunteers. Mr. Simon stated they also need to discuss the dug out work.

Mr. Fritchey asked what the first priority should be adding he feels the drainage would be the priority so they get the maximum field utilization. Mr. Simon agreed that if they could identify a field and do the drainage project, this would be the top priority; but if they cannot do that they would have to prioritize the other items. Mr. Fritchey stated he feels those other items could be on a punch list, and they could consider them in subsequent years. He feels when they have a Grant of this size to do a big construction project, they would want to do a significant capital improvement.

Mr. Krauss stated he feels the safety issues do need to be addressed separately from the Grant, and these include the dug out design and the fence toppers.

Mr. Fedorchak stated they would like to know now exactly what the two new fields are going to cost; and if the bids come in less than the estimate, there would be extra money to work with. He stated this would be in addition to the \$25,000 that is already in the Grant Budget. He stated it is also possible the bids may come in higher.

Mr. Simon stated the Grant is also allocated for other projects, and Mr. Fedorchak stated the main item was the two new baseball fields. Mr. Simon asked if they know the cost for the tennis court resurfacing and the playground. Mr. Maloney stated he feels they are going to bid these projects in a certain order. Mr. Maloney stated they have already done the tennis courts, and he feels the playground is further along than the ball fields.

Mr. Majewski stated the Samost fields were last because they needed State approvals. Mr. Majewski noted that the tennis courts did come in higher than the estimate because they upgraded that project.

Mr. Maloney stated while the tennis court was a small number, they would eventually get to a point especially with regard to the playground when they need to make some decisions if those numbers come in high. Mr. Krauss asked if they are going to have a process that they will not start work on anything until all the bids are in before they start work on any one project; and it was noted this is not correct, and they are all separate projects. Mr. Simon asked how the Township would account for an overrun in any one of those projects. Mr. Maloney stated this is why he had indicated they would have to make some decisions. He stated the playground is a larger project than the tennis courts and an overrun could effect the baseball fields. Mr. Majewski stated every time anyone looks at any of these projects, they keep requesting more. Mr. Maloney stated the Board of Supervisors will have to be clear on the choices that are being made.

Mr. Simon asked if the overrun on the combination of the tennis courts and the playground is 20%, would this cut into the amount for the baseball fields; and Mr. Maloney stated it would not. Mr. Majewski stated there is a contingency on the overall project. He stated they have gone into this somewhat for the tennis courts, but they will have to cap the number for the number of playground pieces. He stated they may only put in ten out of fifteen pieces and just grade out the area and get it prepped so that they can add pieces later. Mr. Simon asked if the number for the baseball fields is a protected number, and Mr. Majewski stated the baseball fields have a certain minimum level of grading, fencing, backstops, parking, etc. so there is not much to downgrade.

Ms. Bunn stated she feels Mr. Simon is asking if the \$500,000 for the baseball fields could go lower, and Ms. Bunn stated this would be a decision for the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Maloney stated there is \$1million and a certain amount has been appropriated for the tennis courts, the playground, and the baseball fields; and they have built in a buffer. He stated they have already used some of this buffer for the tennis courts; and if the playground comes in higher than the Township can afford with the buffer, Mr. Majewski will not allow it to come into the \$500,000 for the baseball fields.

Mr. Simon asked what is the minimal standard that the fields should include. He asked if drainage and sloping are considered part of the standard, and Mr. Majewski agreed they are.

Mr. Maloney stated the original specs did not have the enhanced drainage systems, and Mr. Majewski agreed and stated they would make this an alternate and see how the prices come back so they can make an informed decision. He stated the original plan did include correct sloping on the fields and a good mix underneath the in-field mix so that it is well drained.

Mr. Simon stated they recognize that for the rest of the Township fields it would have to be a long-term effort as the older fields have none of the engineering. Mr. Maloney stated they could always add things on the bid as add-ons. Mr. Fritchey stated if there are fields that drain properly, they would not need as many fields if they have fields that drain poorly so it would be an economy to do things right in the first place. He noted how successful the new soccer field is at Macclesfield Park.

Mr. Wysocki stated lighting on the existing fields also would add substantial capacity on the field. Mr. Fritchey stated he feels good drainage is more important than lighting.

Mr. Krauss stated he does feel that they should have a test field at Stoddard 2, and then they can see how this works before they proceed with correcting the other fields. Mr. Fritchey agreed this would provide a good test sample to see if they should spend additional money on the other fields in the future.

Mr. Simon stated the new PAA Board does want to grow the Club, and they will then have even more concerns with field capacity. He stated all the volunteer groups are providing a valuable service to the Township which adds to the intrinsic value and adds to property values.

Mr. Fritchey stated PAA and Mr. Majewski need to discuss these options, prioritize them, and come up with cost figures so that they can come up with a plan with options.

Mr. Majewski stated there is \$25,000 dedicated to Stoddard and they have discussed making Field 2 the priority as the test field; and they need to come up with a design, put it out to bid, and find out the prices.

Ms. Bunn asked if this would be bid separately prior to the large bid for the two new fields, and Mr. Majewski stated it would. Mr. Gordon stated he felt that they discussed putting it out as an alternate as the company doing the work on the two new fields would already be here. Mr. Majewski stated it is really different types of equipment.

Mr. Fedorchak stated PAA and the Township engineer should be in agreement on the configuration. He stated at some point he would like Mr. Majewski to come up with new cost estimates for the Grant projects and compare it to the Grant Budget. Mr. Fedorchak stated they also need to control the costs of the special needs playground.

Ms. Bunn stated they can always reject the bids and bid it with the other project.

Mr. Majewski stated they are starting the tennis courts on Monday weather permitting.

Mr. Simon stated they also discussed dug out design, and Ms. Liney stated for some of those items, they can work with in-house labor. Mr. Majewski stated there will be a lot of fencing available from the tennis courts. Mr. Simon stated he will work with Ms. Liney on the operational items. Mr. Fritchey stated they should put this together quickly since they are in the Budget season.

## REVIEW OF DRAFT OPERATING BUDGETS FOR 2012

Ms. Liney stated Park and Recreation is continuing to do everything possible to keep expenses at a minimum yet continue with necessary repairs and feasible improvements in the Park system, meet the commitments for debt service obligations, and provide a balanced Budget for the Township. She reported that the Township's Park Tax has remained stable for over a decade. In 2000 the Park Tax was \$54 per property, and even as the park system has been expanded, Millage for 2012 is projected to remain at \$1.28 or \$52 per property average. In comparison, leaf collection in the Township in 2011

was \$50 per billable lot. Ms. Liney noted the Board of Supervisors have scheduled special work sessions to study all areas of the Budget November 9, November 17, and November 21.

Ms. Liney stated some of the changes from 2011 to 2012 include \$50,000 for bike path resurfacing which is a new capital project. She stated there is some money that will cover the engineering soft costs for the Grant in Capital Reserve that is new in the amount of \$30,000 for this year and next year is projected to be \$50,000.

Mr. Gordon asked if the bike path money must be used for resurfacing as opposed to new bike paths since there are gaps. Mr. Fedorchak stated he feels they should reinvest in the existing infrastructure. Ms. Liney noted two sections that are very much in need of attention.

Mr. Fritchey asked how much there is for capital expenditures, and Ms. Liney stated it is \$50,000 for the resurfacing. She stated they are relying on the Grant for capital for 2012 and anything they can work on with in-house labor.

Mr. Fedorchak stated they have presented a balanced Budget, and there may be \$185,000 left in the fund. Mr. Maloney stated they have taken into account the new inter fund transfer amount for 2012. Ms. Liney stated the inter fund transfer for 2011 will be \$97,000 but for 2012 it will be \$31,000. Mr. Fedorchak stated the inter fund transfer for the Pool will go from \$100,000 in 2011 to \$28,510 in 2012.

Ms. Liney stated the Community Pool Budget is a user-based Budget, and no tax dollars support the Pool. She stated Pool revenues need to keep pace with expenditures. In 2011 the Community Pool Budget reflected a gap between revenues and expenditures resulting from a decrease in family memberships by thirty. For 2011 the Pool generated 97.5% of projected revenue. Although they are not anticipating a significant increase of residents joining the Pool next year, 2012 Pool revenues should cover expenditures based on the new formula.

Ms. Liney stated it is a challenge to address the requirements to maintain an aging facility and provide for the capital improvements with a base of revenue that remains generally fixed. Ms. Liney stated the planned pool renovation project has great appeal, and they are optimistic going forward that they will be able to accomplish this; however, timing is important and they must weigh the project versus the cost.

Ms. Liney stated the Township does have a Plan B with some options available for discussion should it become necessary to increase funding for the Pool for the future which were included in the Board packets.

Ms. Liney noted Ms. Chris Raffle is present as the Swim Team liaison. Ms. Liney stated she will be working with Ms. Raffle on some items which she feels they can work on within the Operating Budget.

Mr. Wysocki asked why there was a drop off in family memberships, and Mr. Fedorchak stated membership has been dropping for a few years. Ms. Liney stated it could be due to the economy. Mr. Gordon stated it could also be due to an aging community.

#### SUPERVISOR LIAISON REPORT

Mr. Maloney stated the change to the inter fund transfer formula was not just for the Pool and the Parks and it was all funds that are effected by the inter fund transfer including Sewer and the Golf Course.

#### RECREATION DIRECTOR REPORT

Ms. Liney stated Park and Recreation is in the process of extending the Lease Agreement with the tenant at Five Mile Woods for an additional two years through January, 2014. Revenues from this rental help offset maintenance costs for the Woods, and provide around the clock presence for the Preserve.

Ms. Liney stated the Township is looking forward to the upcoming Veterans Day Parade this Sunday, November 13th at 1 p.m. departing from Long Acre and Edgewood Roads and concluding at Veterans Park. She stated Park and Recreation is proud to support this annual event, honoring all Veterans serving our Country. The groundbreaking ceremony for the Veterans Monument will take place immediately following the Parade.

#### COMMUNITY CENTER DISCUSSION

Mr. Maloney stated the Committee is meeting, and they will be working on a short list to present to the Board of Supervisors by the end of the year.

There being no further business, Mr. Wysocki moved, Ms. Bunn seconded and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Bunn, Secretary

