

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
PARK & RECREATION BOARD
MINUTES – OCTOBER 8, 2013

The regular meeting of the Park & Recreation Board of the Township of Lower Makefield was held in the Municipal Building on October 8, 2013. Chairman Fritchey called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

Those present:

Park & Recreation Board: David Fritchey, Chairman
Patricia Bunn, Secretary
David Gordon, Member
Dennis Wysocki, Member

Others: Donna Liney, Park & Recreation Director
Kristin Tyler, Supervisor Liaison

Absent: Fran McDonald, Park & Rec Board Vice Chair
David Malinowski, Park & Rec Board Member
Andrew Newbon, Park & Rec Board Member

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Wysocki moved, Mr. Gordon seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of September 10, 2013 as written.

DISCUSSION OF 2014 OPERATING BUDGETS

Park & Recreation Budget

Ms. Liney stated the Board of Supervisors reviewed and approved the Park & Recreation Budget for 2014 last week during the Budget Work Session. She stated this will be the fourteenth year Park & Recreation is presenting an Operating Budget with no increase in millage. The Park & Recreation tax for 2014 will be \$52.

Ms. Liney stated since the year 2000, when the Park tax was \$54 through 2009 when the Park tax was \$62, they have continued to provide improvements and comprehensive service to the expanding Park system in the Township. She stated this is certainly positive from the community's standpoint as residents are living through a challenging economy. Park & Recreation Revenues for 2014 are projected to come in at \$870,000 and Expenditures are projected at \$859,000.

Ms. Liney stated on the Revenue side of the Parks Budget, user fees were increased in 2011 to \$15 per resident and \$36 per non-resident. Although enrollment in some of the user groups is slightly down, by and large, given the economic climate, program fees have been stable. The reduction in program fee dollars in 2013 is a result of the decision by the user groups to host less tournaments. She stated they also had several groups reduce or cancel their summer camps.

Ms. Liney stated on the Expenditure side, Parks & Recreation is committed to the ongoing challenge of doing more with less. Manpower remains unchanged for 2014, and they are mindful of minimizing necessary overtime. The three person Park crew is supported with summer seasonal help.

Ms. Liney stated the Repairs and Maintenance line item exceeded the budgeted amount due to repairs completed in 2013 from Super Storm Sandy. Ms. Liney stated Park & Recreation continues to complete more projects in house, seek competitive pricing on purchases, and service its equipment.

Mr. Fritchey stated after reviewing the Budget he understands that they are only spending \$2 per household more on support of the Park system than they are on leaf removal. Ms. Tyler stated not reflected is the Grant money, and the \$500,000 that the Board of Supervisors authorized to complete the projects. Mr. Fritchey stated his concern is that they cannot expect to get Grants every year. Ms. Tyler stated they are also going to have to man the Community Center, and there will be additional maintenance at Memorial Park. Mr. Fritchey stated his concern is they are not going to be able to sustain this, and they should have a serious examination of the funding for the Park system. He stated the tax was higher than it is currently in previous years.

Ms. Liney stated the Township Manager has indicated that there are projects scheduled for next year including the inclusive playground and the Community Center, and he will be commissioning signage announcing these projects. She stated he has indicated that they anticipate completing the playground in 2014.

Mr. Fritchey stated he is concerned that these projects are being accomplished by means other than the Township funding their operations at a level that is sufficient and sustainable particularly if they are adding additional assets. Ms. Tyler stated more than what is collected from the Park tax is included for the Park system adding it was not just the Grant money as the Township is putting money in as well.

Ms. Bunn asked if the Community Center will be a line item for the Park & Rec Budget, and Ms. Liney stated it is her understanding that it will fall under Park & Rec.

Mr. Gordon asked when they are breaking ground for the Community Center, and Ms. Tyler stated at the next Board of Supervisors meeting, they will consider hiring the architect. She stated she expects the project will be bid out in January or February. Ms. Bunn questioned how they could bid out the project this quickly when they have not hired the architect, and Ms. Tyler stated they do have a Plan. Ms. Bunn stated since those Plans were considered, the EAC indicated that any new buildings were to be green, and the Plans did not contemplate a green building. Ms. Tyler stated they need to have shovels in the ground before the end of 2014, and Ms. Bunn stated she feels that will be possible.

Mr. Wysocki asked what criteria they are using for the building. Ms. Tyler stated the Seniors indicated that they were interested in having an area for cards, a comfortable place to sit, meeting rooms, and a place for the seniors to watch movies on Friday. She stated there are layouts available. There will not be a stage, and there will only be a convenience kitchen. Ms. Tyler stated she would be in favor of an exercise room which would involve a particular type of flooring so that it could be multi-purpose room.

Mr. Wysocki stated he feels it would be good to have the Community Center provide an area for the local sports teams to keep locked files, and an area for their computer system. He stated it would also be nice to be able to display their trophies at the Community Center.

Ms. Bunn stated since this is a Community Center, the Leagues should not be charged a fee for space at the Center if the Seniors are not paying a fee.

Ms. Tyler stated she is not sure that there would be sufficient space for every organization to have their own office at the Community Center. Ms. Bunn stated she feels each organization could have a 10' by 10' space and should not have to share space. Mr. Wysocki stated he feels this is something the architect could consider and it could be a common office space with each individual organization having a locked closet. Ms. Bunn stated she would like this done right up front and not section 6,000 users into one small office.

Ms. Tyler stated she was envisioning a large reception area which would have couches and chairs and a piano as the Seniors have a piano. She stated she also feels there should be a dedicated card room so that the Seniors do not have to always put away the tables and chairs, but this could be used for any other meetings. She stated she also feels there should be a convenience kitchen, a multi-purpose arts and crafts room, a lot of storage, Township office space, and at least three other meeting rooms which maybe could double as offices. Ms. Tyler stated they want everyone to be able to meet in the Community Center in a comfortable setting. Ms. Tyler stated

they also want the Community Center to be the emergency shelter so they will need storage to store cots, etc. She stated there will also be outside storage such as a shed.

Mr. Wysocki stated there should be some accommodation for the organizations to be able to lock up files, registration forms, etc. Ms. Bunn stated she does not feel there should be shared space for the organizations. Mr. Wysocki stated he feels each organization should have a little space that is there own so that they can keep their files in the Community Center. Ms. Bunn stated she would envision that it could be a small 10' by 10' office for storage of their files, but they would use the general purpose room for their meetings. It would not be for storage of sports equipment. There was discussion on how many of these small offices they would need, and it was suggested that they would need one for YMS, PAA, Football, the Seniors, and the Township. Mr. Fritchey stated his concern is that every organization may want to have an office. Ms. Liney stated she feels if they are paying user fees and running a year-round program, that group could be considered for a small office.

Pool Budget

Ms. Liney stated the Community Pool Budget is a proprietary Budget fully funded by Membership fees. No tax dollars go into the Pool.

Ms. Liney stated as discussed on a number of occasions this year, the Pool enrollment has continued to taper from its peak in 2009, even with the addition of new programs and special events. She stated they were able to achieve 93% of the budgeted Membership Fees for 2013 despite the changing demographics, competition from area facilities, and a difficult economy.

Ms. Liney stated last year the Pool launched the Associate Family Membership category, which was successful in bringing seventy families and approximately \$35,000 in revenue to the Pool. Based on the success last year, they are optimistic that they can build on and see a similar increase in 2014.

Ms. Liney stated Revenues for the Pool next season are projected at \$730,000 and Expenses of \$718,000.

Ms. Liney stated Pool Personnel Services was slightly higher than budgeted due in part to the reallocation of time for projects the Park crew completed for ADA compliance at the Pool. Because of the skilled internal workforce, they were able to accomplish the requisite modifications at a reduction of 70% of the estimated cost if they had used outside contractors. The Pool also offered expanded hours this season, opening at 10:00 a.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

Ms. Liney stated the line item expenditure for Maintenance and Repairs is slightly over Budget, and is attributed to the efforts to bring the Pool into compliance by the Park Crew.

Ms. Liney stated moving forward they will continue to evaluate and look for opportunities to increase membership; and the goal is to return to the membership levels enjoyed in 2009.

Ms. Liney stated Mr. Fedorchak is working with a gentleman from the Citizens Budget Committee who had a successful business and has ideas about marketing the Pool, and they will meet with him in January. Ms. Tyler stated she also wants marketing directed at Township residents joining the Pool.

Ms. Liney stated there was discussion about lowering the rates which may encourage more residents to join the Pool. Mr. Gordon stated his children are no longer on the Swim Team, and they paid the \$400 but never attended the Pool. Mr. Fritchey stated they need to consider if they have moved beyond a reasonable cost or whether it is just changing demographics with fewer families with young children in the Township. Mr. Gordon stated there are certain people he knows who swim laps so the Pool is still a draw for them.

Ms. Tyler stated Ms. Liney also came up with an idea of having a July only Membership with no Swim Team eligibility, and this would be at a lower cost but higher than the August-only Membership.

Mr. Gordon stated he also feels the \$10 Guest Fee keeps him away at times since he would have six to eight family members wanting to swim for an hour, and this would cost \$80 which he does not feel is worth it.

Mr. Fritchey asked if the feeling is that the \$400 fee is a deterrent, and Ms. Bunn stated she does not feel it is considering the fees charged by area pools. Ms. Liney agreed that the Township rates are very competitive. Mr. Gordon asked about the possibility of charging a Membership Fee of \$150 but then charge \$8 or some other fee every time you go to the Pool. Ms. Bunn asked about a June only membership. She stated she does not feel those members would be eligible for Swim Team membership, and Swim Team membership would only be those who have the full Membership.

Mr. Wysocki asked if they have concerns about exceeding the Pool's capacity, and Ms. Liney stated they do not. She stated the capacity is over 3,000, and highest they got this year was 1,900.

Mr. Wysocki stated he feels the marketing program should be targeting families with young children. Mr. Fritchey stated the changing demographics are impacting the Pool. Mr. Gordon stated there was a time when there was a lot of development going on, but now the largest development is Matrix which is a fifty-five and older community. Mr. Wysocki asked if they should create a new category for people who are older, and Ms. Liney stated they could consider a Membership for those aged fifty-five to sixty-two before you reach the Senior Limited Membership. Mr. Gordon stated this category would target the “empty nesters.”

Ms. Tyler stated the Transfer Taxes are coming up so houses are turning over with new families moving in.

Ms. Liney agreed to look at potential monthly Membership fees.

Garden of Reflection Budget

Ms. Liney stated for the last several years there has been no revenue stream coming into the Township for the ongoing maintenance at the Garden of Reflection. The original concept from the Garden of Reflection Committee was to provide funds for the care of the Garden. The Fund balance beginning in 2014 is projected to be \$25,000 and expenditures are projected to be \$60,000. With the limited resources in place, no funds are budgeted in the Park & Recreation Budget for maintenance of this facility. Ms. Liney stated they will continue to support the efforts of the Garden of Reflection Committee as best they can, and they are hopeful the Committee will meet the original agreement.

Ms. Bunn stated the Garden of Reflection Committee is raising funds for the Garden of Reflection, and she questions where that money is going. Ms. Tyler stated Ms. Saracini is in the midst of establishing a 501C3; and it is her intention to develop an endowment to perpetually fund the Garden of Reflection, and at this time Ms. Tyler believes she has approximately \$250,000. Ms. Bunn suggested a recommendation go to the Board of Supervisors about this situation since she is concerned that this will effect the Park & Recreation Budget.

Mr. Wysocki asked if the Committee should not be sent invoices to cover the Township costs of maintenance.

Ms. Tyler stated she feels they need to meet with the members of the Garden of Reflection Committee. Mr. Gordon stated that this should be put on a future Agenda of the Park & Recreation Board.

Mr. Wysocki asked how the costs are currently being paid, and Ms. Tyler stated they maintenance costs have been pulled out of the Fund in the Park & Rec Budget so far. Mr. Wysocki asked about sending the Garden of Reflection the invoices for the maintenance costs; and Ms. Tyler stated Ms. Saricini's intent is to develop an endowment, and they would have to get to \$2 to \$3 million. Mr. Fritchey stated if she has gotten to \$250,000 in twelve years, it will be years before she gets to \$2 million; and meanwhile, they are running deficits. He stated the Fund Balance is down to \$24,000, and the expenditures for 2014 are projected to be \$60,000. Ms. Liney stated it costs approximately \$50,000 to \$60,000 per year to maintain the Garden of Reflection. She stated the care of the Garden of Reflection is contracted out at a cost of approximately \$25,000 to Realty Landscaping. She stated added to this is the cost of water which is approximately \$10,000 to \$12,000 and electrical costs of approximately \$18,000. Ms. Liney stated to date the Township has covered these costs by drawing down from the Fund, but they have drawn down to the point where they will not be able to finance it next year.

Mr. Fritchey stated this must be addressed since they are running at a deficit, and it is not an option to allow the property to deteriorate. Ms. Liney stated there are fund raisers during the Course of the year, but that money is not coming into the Township. Mr. Wysocki asked if the Township has requested that they replenish this fund, and Ms. Tyler stated they have not. Ms. Bunn asked how there could be a private endowment on a public piece of property with one person controlling the money. Mr. Fritchey stated the Township owns the land where these features are build. Ms. Bunn stated she is concerned that funds are being raised but the funds are not being turned over to the Township for the maintenance of the facility. Ms. Tyler stated this is because of Ms. Saricini's intent to fund an endowment. She stated you would need almost \$3 million to generate interest of \$60,000 to do a years' worth of maintenance. Mr. Fritchey questioned the legal authority of the Committee or the individuals on the Committee. Mr. Fritchey stated since the Park & Recreation Board is advisory to the Board of Supervisors they could suggest to the Board of Supervisors that there be an accounting as to what is happening with the funds being raised and request clarification as to how they will sustain the Memorial in the middle of a Municipal Park. He stated he is concerned that this situation could have a negative impact on the Park & Recreation Board Budget going into 2014 and the future, and it is not obvious that anything is being done to rectify what appears to be an irregular situation. Mr. Fritchey stated he feels Mr. Fedorchak needs to take decisive action on this in consultation with the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Fritchey moved, Ms. Bunn seconded and it was unanimously carried to advise the Board of Supervisors that the Garden of Reflection Budget does not sustain the maintenance costs to the end of the year 2014 and threatens the overall solvency of the Park & Recreation Budget for 2014 and moving forward. This is an unsatisfactory situation that needs to be addressed decisively.

SUPERVISOR LIAISON REPORT

Ms. Tyler stated they approved the additional funding for the Community Center of \$250,000 and \$250,000 for the inclusive playground. She stated they are proceeding as quickly as possible with these two projects, and expect to break ground on the inclusive playground in the spring. She stated at their next meeting the Board of Supervisors will move forward with an architect for the Community Center.

There was further discussion about the concerns with the Garden of Reflection funds. Mr. Fritchey stated ultimately this is a Township asset which is built on Township land. Mr. Fritchey stated they need to meet the Operating Expenses. Mr. Gordon stated he feels it would be advisable to have a representative on the Garden of Reflection Committee who is not emotionally attached, and the Township Controller needs to have oversight and control over the funds. Mr. Fritchey stated he feels there must be professional management. Ms. Bunn stated the Park & Rec Board may want to take on this issue on behalf of the Township.

Mr. Gordon asked where the funds came from that the Township has now, and Ms. Liney stated they were deposited years ago as a result of fundraising. Mr. Gordon stated at some point that money no longer came to the Township and instead went to Ms. Saracini. Mr. Gordon stated the other option is to have Park & Recreation take over the maintenance even though the Park crew may not do it as manicured as the contractor does. He stated they could also decrease the use of water and electricity.

Mr. Wysocki asked for an update on the Golf Course, and Ms. Tyler stated the Board authorized a \$400,000 Capital Expenditure to expand the kitchen, purchase a tent so that they could host wedding events and banquets, and replace a pond liner. Ms. Tyler stated they came in with this proposal showing a return on investment. Mr. Wysocki asked about the lawsuit, and Ms. Tyler stated the judgment has been paid. She stated a Bond was refinanced including funds to repay the Township for paying this judgment.

COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN UPDATE DISCUSSION

Mr. Fritchey stated the Planning Commission met with the planner from the Bucks County Planning Commission, and the Planning Commission was of the opinion that the Five Mile Woods and the Golf Course should count toward park land so they get back into the issue regarding the formula. He stated he understands they will come out with the a new report. He feels that the Park Board felt strongly that they wanted to continue with the position that neither the Five Mile Woods nor the Golf

Course should count into the mathematical formula, and that the Township is in a deficit as to recreational land for the population of the Township. Mr. Fritchey stated he feels this should remain clear in any new Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. Bunn asked why they do not feel those should be included, and Mr. Fritchey stated he does not feel they should count toward the ten acres of land needed per 1,000 residents. He stated if there were 280 acres in Five Mile Woods it would be considered to support the recreational needs of 2,800 people, and he does not feel that is rational. He stated he feels they should have 330 acres of active recreational land for 33,000 residents. Mr. Gordon stated the Five Mile Woods is a piece of unique-use land not traditionally used in a traditional park or recreation way. Mr. Fritchey stated it should not count in the equation of whether or not there is adequate space for planning purposes of future acquisitions of land. Mr. Gordon stated with regard to the Golf Course, it is not free to the public which makes it very different; and there is a small percentage of the population that play the game of golf.

Mr. Fritchey stated he is concerned that unless it is manifested clear in the Comprehensive Plan that the Township does not have adequate park land, this could be a reason for future members of the Board of Supervisors to state that they do not need to acquire additional park land.

Ms. Tyler asked why Snipes should be included and not the Five Mile Woods, and Mr. Fritchey stated there is a Plan to use Snipes for active recreation. He stated they must consider the implementation of currently-approved Plans and there is the further matter of whether there is a need to acquire more land for the building of further parks.

Ms. Tyler stated she feels that the formula may be the problem. Mr. Fritchey stated he feels the formula is practical and was derived from experience. He stated they want to anticipate the needs and have park space that is adequate for the population that they expect to have upon build out which he felt was anticipated to be 36,000. He stated this needs to be recognized in the Comprehensive Plan and by the current and future Supervisors.

It was agreed that the Park & Recreation Board would like to see the second draft of the Comprehensive Master Plan so that they can consider if changes need to be made.

RECREATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Liney stated they are mid-way through the fall season in the Park season, with football, baseball, soccer, and tennis all Permitted for use of Township facilities. As in the past, three of the user groups are sharing time on the lighted field, Macclesfield H, in an effort to meet their need for space.

Ms. Liney stated the Samost ballfield construction continues to track on schedule. Field perimeter fencing is completed, with safety toppers installed, and the backstops and hood on the 70 foot field are under construction. The rain garden next to the concession stand has been shifted slightly to allow better access. The pathways through the complex are being laid out today.

Ms. Liney stated Ply Mar Construction is scheduled to begin work on the fields at the Fred Allan Complex the week of October 21st, following the conclusion of the fall softball season. The infields on all three fields will be dug out, new drains installed in the infields 6" below the surface, stone and infield mix placed on top, and laser graded as opposed to the current flat surface.

Ms. Liney stated preparations are underway for the upcoming Columbus Day Soccer Tournament offered by Yardley Makefield Soccer. This Tournament uses Township and School District facilities as well as venues outside the Township to host thousands of participants in this prestigious Tournament.

Ms. Liney stated Pennsbury High School soccer teams are scheduled October 14th and October 16th for games on the turf field at Macclesfield. Senior Recognition Night will precede these games and is always a well attended event.

Ms. Liney stated the Lower Makefield Seniors hosted an informative Meet the Candidates forum this morning in the Township Building. Candidates for Township Supervisor and Pennsbury School Board discussed their positions and answered questions for the audience.

Ms. Liney stated the Lower Makefield Farmers Market will be coming to an end Thursday, October 24th following another successful season.

Ms. Liney stated Park & Recreation is busy working with the Veterans and Special Events Committees to organize the Annual Veterans Day Parade on Sunday, November 10th at Veterans Square. The Pennsbury Marching Band as well as veterans and local Scout Troops will be participating.

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Ms. Liney stated Pennsbury High School Frisbee will be holding a tournament at Memorial Park Saturday and Sunday, November 9th and November 10th. The Township will begin winterizing facilities following this event.

Ms. Bunn stated she was very thankful that the Stoddart path was paved. Ms. Liney stated the Officers of PAA also sent letters.

Ms. Tyler stated there is a Scout whose Eagle Scout project was the construction of two portable flag disposals, and he will be at the Veterans Parade and anyone who has a U.S. Flag which needs to be properly disposed of, can bring it to the Parade that day. She stated there will be a link on the Township Website indicating where residents can take their flags. She stated one of these will then be kept at the V.F.W. and the other at the American Legion. She stated once a year he will then have a flag burning ceremony.

There being no further business, Ms. Bunn moved, Mr. Gordon seconded and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Bunn, Secretary