

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
PARK & RECREATION BOARD
MINUTES – OCTOBER 14, 2014

The regular meeting of the Park & Recreation Board of the Township of Lower Makefield was held in the Municipal Building on October 14, 2014.
Chairman Fritchey called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

Those present:

Park & Recreation Board: David Fritchey, Chairman
Dennis Gordon, Vice Chairman
Patricia Bunn, Secretary (joined meeting in progress)
David Malinowski, Member

Others: Donna Liney, Park & Recreation Director
Pete Stainthorpe, Supervisor Liaison

Absent: Andrew Newbon, Park & Recreation Board Member
Dennis Wysocki, Park & Recreation Board Member

PRESENTATION OF EAGLE SCOUT PROPOSAL TO CONSTRUCT GAGA COURT

Eagle Scout candidate Steven Weaner was present and passed out a picture and description of a GaGa court he is proposing to construct at the Kids Kingdom playground area. He is proposing construction in the space behind the fenced swings and adjacent to the restrooms. Mr. Fritchey asked Mr. Weaner to explain what a GaGa court was, and how the game is played. Mr. Weaner explained it is similar to dodge ball, but is played in a large octagon called a GaGa pit. The game has become very popular, and Mr. Weaner feels the installation he has proposed is good due to the proximity to the pool as well as the Kids Kingdom playground.

Mr. Fritchey asked if the ball is thrown out of the pit during play, and Mr. Weaner explained not too often. The games are short in duration, and the number of players varies, with older children using less players and younger children more players. Mr. Gordon explained the game is popular in summer camps. Mr. Weaner stated he hopes to construct the court late spring, 2015.

A decision would need to be made on the pit surface as some courts are constructed with concrete, some asphalt, and some dirt. The surface would affect the cost. Projected lumber costs are in the \$750 range. Ms. Liney stated she would want to research if a permit would be required for construction and if footings would be required as well.

Both Mr. Fritchey and Mr. Gordon indicated the Park Board was in favor of receiving this asset, but had reservations concerning the proposed location being close to a parking lot and the playground. Mr. Fritchey stated either Memorial park or Macclesfield Park may be better locations for this court. It was requested that Mr. Weaner mark out the proposed area at the Kids Kingdom site, and allow the Park Board to take a look at it for safety, and they would get back to him in early November; and Mr. Weaner agreed.

PAA ITEMS

Mr. Doug Krauss, Commissioner of PAA for 2014 and newly re-elected for 2015, was present. Mr. Krauss presented the Park Board with copies of the PAA Fall Update which included the PAA 2014-2015 Executive Committee and registration information.

Mr. Fritchey noted the decline in enrollment for PAA. He recounted an incident with a resident who enrolled their child in the Morrisville program because they believed it offered better coaching. Mr. Krauss noted they are attempting to address this issue, and some of their efforts are outlined in the Fall Update. Mr. Krauss noted they will be reaching out to high school coaches and travel teams to conduct skills clinics and increase marketing. One of the issues with marketing is the cost involved, and as shown on the Operating Expense Sheets, 25% of PAA expenses are for user-generated fees. Mr. Krauss observed he is not sure if something can be negotiated, but that can be a discussion at a future time.

Mrs. Godshalk recounted her granddaughter is enrolled in PAA, and all her games are played in Levittown. Mr. Krauss explained PAA combined efforts with Levittown so the children would have different teams to play.

Ms. Bunn joined the meeting at this time.

Mr. Krauss outlined the PAA plan of additional batting cages at the Greg Caiola complex and new cages at Fred Allan and Macclesfield. This would be a PAA expense. PAA is also requesting permission for a new larger storage shed at the Greg Caiola Complex, and they would like to relocate the existing shed at Stoddart to a location between the two upper fields. This would be at PAA's expense. Mr. Krauss outlined the desire of PAA to have scoreboards at each complex. PAA hopes it will find corporate sponsors for the scoreboards. Mr. Fritchey stated the Park Board is in favor of corporate sponsors which may not have been the case in the past. Mr. Stainthorpe agreed that the Board of Supervisors is open to corporate sponsorships.

Mr. Krauss asked the status of the new fields and if they will be open for use by PAA in the spring, 2015. Ms. Liney stated the Township engineer is tracking the progress of the contractor on the fields, and the majority of the punch list items are complete. Over seeding, fertilizing, treating for weeds, erosion control, and recreating swales have all been completed. The engineer does have a targeted completion of April 1, 2015 on the letter to the contractor. Mr. Krauss confirmed the paving of the parking lot for the new fields will be completed this year.

DISCUSSION OF PRELIMINARY OPERATING BUDGETS 2015

Garden of Reflection

Ms. Liney stated the Board was provided in their packet the initial draft of this Budget. She stated for several years there has been no consistent revenue stream coming into the Township for the ongoing maintenance at the Garden of Reflection.

Ms. Liney stated the newly-created Garden of Reflection Preservation Committee has begun raising funds to support the annual maintenance of the Garden, and this revenue is being deposited into the Township's 501C account under the Garden. The Township will arrange a transfer of funds to cover invoices from September, 2014 from this newly-created account as there is currently no money in the Township's maintenance account for the Garden.

Ms. Liney stated that moving forward there will be a meeting arranged with key personnel from the Garden Preservation Committee, Ellen Saracini, and the Township Park Board, with the hope that an agreement can be reached.

Ms. Judi Reiss stated Ellen Saracini has a Website that says Garden of Reflection.org; and if you go on it, you will see it says to either mail your donation to Ms. Saracini's home or do Pay Pal for your donation which goes into Ms. Saracini's account. She stated there is no money going to the Township. She stated the Website says the money is used to maintain the Garden of Reflection, and there is no mention of it going to an endowment fund for the future. Ms. Reiss stated there may be an issue with who owns the name, "Garden of Reflection." Ms. Reiss stated in some States there exists an Equity Court which can help with this issue. Ms. Reiss explained some of the Pennsbury Schools raise large donations for the maintenance of the Garden, and they are not aware the funds are going into an endowment account.

Ms. Bunn advised the Preservation Committee that they should contact Pennsbury Superintendent Mr. McHugh and explain this matter to him.

Mrs. Godshalk asked about the invoices that are outstanding from September. Ms. Liney explained there are invoices from Armour Electric, Sanders Rental for the parking lot lights, expenses incurred by Mrs. Godshalk, Cooper pest control for bees, and others. Ms. Liney stated she does understand the Preservation Committee requested no invoices from the evening ceremony be paid from the funds in the Township account. She stated the Township did receive an invoice from Newtown Rental which was for the evening ceremony. Nothing has been paid at this time as the money needs to be moved from the 501C account into the Township account. A Preservation Committer person questioned how invoices are approved and paid, and it was explained that they can be processed either through the Park & Recreation Office or the Township Manager.

Ms. Tara Bane suggested surveillance cameras be installed in the general area at the Garden to prevent future gluing or blocking of the Township donation box. Ms. Bane stated she feels an opportunity was missed to collect thousands of dollars when the donation box was blocked. Ms. Bane also inquired as to the possibility of contracting for a tent to be installed at the Garden for weddings since it is such a beautiful location. Mr. Fritchey expressed concerns with residents and noise if weddings are scheduled there.

Mr. Gordon explained to the Committee that the Park Board deferred dealing with the funding of the Garden of Reflection due to the September events, but plans to address this issue in the near future. A Preliminary Budget will be provided to the Garden of Reflection Preservation Committee members, and they will have an opportunity to review and provide input on this Budget. The plan is to reach a consensus, and have one fund for the Garden which will be controlled by the Township.

Park and Recreation

With regard to Revenues, Ms. Liney stated that consistent with the Township's past funding policy, the major portion of revenues generated to cover the Township's Park & Recreation function is through the Park & Recreation tax of 1.28 mills which is approximately \$52 per property. More property owners paid at the discount in 2014, as well as appealed their property taxes, which impacted revenues projected for 2014. Program fees are showing a slight increase, as are sales. Reimbursement from vandalism is shown in Miscellaneous Revenues. Revenues for 2014 are projected at \$865,900, which is also the projection for 2015.

With regard to Expenditures, Ms. Liney stated Park & Recreation Expenditures for 2014 are projected to finish at \$902,953, which is higher than budgeted. The main difference in Expenditures is \$58,000 in non-uniform pension transfer. Adjustments were also made in the Personnel Services transferred between the Pool and Park & Recreation. Paving the bike path at Stoddart fields is also reflected in Expenditures for 2014.

Mr. Fritchey stated he wanted to understand the Budget figures, and he reviewed the figures for anticipated Revenues and Expenditures for 2014 and 2015.

Mr. Stainthorpe stated there are more commercial properties that are appealing their assessments, and this results in a loss of revenue for the Township.

Mr. Malinowski suggested the current Park crew staff is short handed, and he feels an additional worker should be added to this crew.

Pool

With regard to Revenues, Ms. Liney stated no tax dollars support the Pool, and Revenues need to keep pace with the cost of the Pool operation. This year a consultant was hired and a Pool Steering Committee established to re-invent the Pool and generate membership in an effort to close the gap between Revenues and Expenditures. This approach has proven to be a success, with the Pool exceeding Budget Revenue for 2014. Total Revenues for the Pool are projected at \$765,803 for 2014, and a slight increase is shown for 2015 at \$779,830.

With regard to Expenditures, Ms. Liney stated the demand for higher quality services, longer hours of operation, and more special events at the Pool resulted in Personnel Services at the Pool coming in higher than budgeted for 2014. The Special Events Account was also \$10,000 higher than originally budgeted. The Pool's Capital Purchase Account was over extended due to the construction of the pergola which was originally planned to be a smaller installation by the Park crew; but due to the long winter snow season resulting in time constrains, and the Park crew being reduced to two employees at that time, the construction was outsourced. The feedback from the Pool patrons on this capital purchase has been overwhelmingly positive.

Mr. Gordon thanked Joe Menard for his expertise in working with the Pool Steering Commission to help get the Pool back on track.

Park & Recreation Fee-In-Lieu

Ms. Liney stated in 2014 there were two expenditures funded from the Park & Recreation Fee-In-Lieu Account – professional consulting services and a new wing mower.

Ms. Liney stated a new truck and a new pavilion at Memorial Park are reflected as Expenditures from the Park & Recreation Fee-In-Lieu Account for 2015.

SUPERVISOR LIAISON REPORT

Mr. Stainthorpe advised that the Township has agreed to participate in the BRRAM movement by providing approximately \$15,000 in support. He stated while he is not trying to close the Airport as many residents enjoy the convenience, he does feel that they should meet the requirements of an Environmental Assessment Study.

Mr. Stainthorpe advised that the Board of Supervisors approved the Land Development Plan for the Community Center. He also advised that there is a ribbon cutting this Saturday, October 18 for the new playground at Memorial Park at 10:00 a.m. and all are welcome.

RECREATION DIRECTOR REPORT

Ms. Liney stated the Township engineer continues to monitor the punch list items being completed by the contractor, Ply Mar, at the Greg Caiola Baseball Park. The early season treatment for weeds, fertilizing, and over seeding is completed. Repairs have been made to the rain garden near the entry, rocks have been added for erosion control, and the swale by the water tower has been enlarged and re-established. The contractor has measured the parking area in preparation for paving this year.

Ms. Liney stated the Township has installed temporary ADA parking signs in the Stoddart lot for the remainder of the fall season. Plans are to pave the Stoddart lot as necessary and install permanent ADA parking spots in the spring, 2015.

Ms. Liney stated there are a few punch list and landscape items that will be completed following the ribbon cutting of the Memorial Park inclusive playground. Several play pieces need to be switched for color, the entry garden trellis is being proposed for completion as an Eagle Scout project, and volunteers will be aiding with the perimeter playground plantings in the next few weeks.

Ms. Liney stated the architect for the planned Community Center will be scheduled to attend the November Park Board meeting to review the status and accept input from the Park Board for this facility.

Ms. Liney stated there are a number of special events that Park and Recreation is supporting:

The Lower Makefield Seniors group hosted a free health fair today at the Township Building. Representatives from a variety of companies and organizations took blood pressure, administered flu shots, and provided samples of healthy food choices to the Senior community. The event was well attended and informative.

Ms. Liney announced the upcoming ribbon cutting and grand opening of the newly-constructed Secret Garden inclusive playground at the Township's Memorial Park, 1950 Woodside Road, this Saturday, October 18th at 10 AM. All are welcome to come enjoy the exciting play pieces, light refreshments, and sunny weather.

Ms. Liney stated the YWCA will be hosting a 5K fundraiser race at Memorial Park on Sunday, October 19th.

Ms. Liney reported that volunteers from the Woodside Presbyterian Church will be at the Secret Garden playground on Sunday, October 26th for a day of service to the community during which they will plant 73 holly hedges on the perimeter of the playground. Feeney's Nursery has donated approximately 10 shade trees for this playground to be planted in the spring, 2015.

Ms. Liney reported that the Township hosted a successful Columbus Day Soccer Tournament this past weekend with close to 6,000 players, friends, and family enjoying Township facilities. This would not be possible without the outstanding coordination of the Yardley Makefield Soccer Club volunteers.

Ms. Liney stated the Pennsbury Boys Varsity and JV Soccer Teams will host their annual Senior Night and games tomorrow evening at Macclesfield on Field D.

Ms. Liney stated the Lower Makefield Farmers Market will be winding down another successful season next week. The last market day is scheduled for Thursday, October 23rd.

Ms. Liney stated the annual Veterans Day Parade has been scheduled for Sunday, November 9th at 1 PM departing from Long Acre and Edgewood Roads and concluding at Veterans Square. This year the Parade will be followed by the long-anticipated Dedication of the Veterans Monument in the Square. This year's parade Marshall will be Vietnam Veteran and Commander of VFW Post 639 Russ Davidson.

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The musical guest will be Jazz vocalist and songwriter Marcus Goldhaber performing his original Anthem "Come Home America," and the award winning Pennsbury Marching Band will march in the Parade and perform in the Square.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Malinowski moved, Ms. Bunn seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of September 9, 2014 as written.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Bunn, Secretary