

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
PARK & RECREATION BOARD
MINUTES – JUNE 9, 2015

The regular meeting of the Park & Recreation Board of the Township of Lower Makefield was held in the Municipal Building on June 9, 2015. Chairman Fritchey called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

Those present:

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

Others: Donna Liney, Park & Recreation Director
Dobby Dobson, Supervisor Liaison
Kristin Tyler, Supervisor (joined meeting in progress)

Absent: David Malinowski, Park & Rec Board Member
Andrew Newbon, Park & Rec Board Member

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Wysocki moved, Ms. Bunn seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of May, 2015 as written.

UPDATE ON REVERE TENNIS COURTS

Mr. Fritchey stated he spoke to Mr. Fedorchak on Friday, and he indicated he was still awaiting a return call from a representative of Toll Bros.

Mr. John Parsons, DeKalb Drive, asked if there is anything further they can do since it has been a month. Mr. Dobson noted that when there was an issue previously with Toll Bros. the only way they could get it resolved was when the Township stopped issuing them Building Permits. He stated he will discuss this further with Mr. Fedorchak. Mr. Parsons stated Toll Bros. was quickly able to remediate the basin in the area, and he questions why they are not proceeding as quickly with the tennis courts.

Ms. Tyler joined the meeting at this time.

Mr. Parsons stated they would like to use the courts, and he asked if they could put the nets back up on the courts that are usable. Mr. Gordon asked if there is a fence still up in that area, and Mr. Parsons stated there is. Ms. Liney stated while they could put up the nets, she does not feel they want to crack fill those courts at this time. Mr. Gordon stated a determination would have to be made as to whether or not they are safe. Mr. Parsons stated he has seen children playing there, and those courts do not have a lot of cracks. Ms. Liney agreed to look into this. Ms. Bunn asked that they rope off the area that is not safe to play on.

Mr. Jim Brandau stated if a decision is made to replace the tennis courts at this location, he feels they need to hold Toll Bros. accountable for the excavation since placing another surface on top of a debris field will not solve the problem.

Mr. Gordon stated at this point Mr. Fedorchak is exploring what Toll Bros. will do. Mr. Gordon added that at the last meeting they made it clear that if Toll Bros. will voluntarily replace a set of tennis courts, they still need to discuss whether the courts should be at this location or at some other location.

FOLLOW UP ON PICKLE BALL COURTS

Ms. Bonnie Gannon was present and reviewed the information she presented at the last meeting regarding pickle ball. She stated since the last meeting she followed up with the Pennsbury School District on her suggested option of partnering with the School District to have pickle ball courts on School District property; and while she is still following up on this, they indicated that they use the area she had suggested. Ms. Gannon stated she also had a suggested option about relining some existing tennis courts, and she understands that Ms. Liney has come up with a suggestion.

Ms. Liney stated Park & Recreation has reviewed some of the options that had come up with a possible solution of crack filling, painting, and marking both for tennis and pickle ball play the courts located at Heacock and Covington. She stated if the Park Board is in favor of this, she should be able to have it completed in forty-five days. Ms. Liney stated they do budget crack filling and painting for the courts; and while this would be a little over what is that line Budget item, she feels she could absorb it. Ms. Liney stated the gentleman that does the crack filling and painting is very familiar with pickle ball.

This option was acceptable to the Park & Recreation Board. Ms. Tyler stated she feels this will be a great dual use.

Ms. Gannon asked what would be the process to start a pickle ball club for Lower Makefield, and Mr. Gordon stated she would have to Permit for this. Ms. Liney suggested Ms. Gannon contact her so that she can explain the process.

SET DATE FOR ANNUAL PARK & RECREATION ROAD TOUR

Ms. Liney suggested July 14 for the Annual Park & Recreation Road Tour of the recreational facilities in the Township. She stated this is the regularly-scheduled meeting date, and the Tour would leave the Township Building at 6:30 p.m. with stops at the Samost fields, Revere tennis, Heacock pickle ball, Memorial Park, Macclesfield, and the Pool. She stated it was mentioned that they might look at a dog park outside of the Township; however, she feels due to the tight time constraints, they may have to reschedule that for another time.

The date was acceptable to the Park & Rec Board members.

DOG PARK DISCUSSION

Ms. Tyler stated she was pleased with the work done on suggested locations for the dog park; but she is concerned that if she places this on the Supervisors' Agenda, there are going to be questions that she cannot answer. Ms. Tyler stated she feels the most important issue is to determine what kind of dog park they want to have, and this could help them zone in on the proper location. She stated she feels they need to know if this will be a private dog park where you have to be a member or an open dog park. She stated they also need to know if they need to be able to "rest" certain portions of the grass and if water is required.

Ms. Tyler stated there is the "Doylestown model" with fencing and key fobs, and there is the "Morrisville model" which is very different and is an open, public facility. She stated aesthetically, the residents are going to want to know what the dog park will look like. Ms. Tyler stated they also need to consider where people can get to easily. She stated they need to know if they need to build parking and run utilities. Ms. Tyler stated she understands that the dog park will be built through fundraising. She stated Doylestown's dog park cost over \$300,000; and if they are going for this membership model, they need to know that they need to raise over \$300,000 which is a difficult amount to raise.

Ms. Tyler stated all of the locations that have been presented are okay. She stated she also wants to look at the area of the silt pile where Silver Lake was drained that attaches to the nature trail.

Mr. Fritchey stated he feels the concept should drive location rather than location drive concept.

Ms. Bunn stated the Committee had come up with the model that it will be private with a membership so that it is safe for the community and the dogs; and they do not want dogs who are unregistered, have not had shots, and do not play well with others. She stated they do not want it public like it is in Morrisville. Ms. Bunn stated they did look at the different models in the area and feel that a good size is four acres so that they have areas not necessarily to rest for grass, but to separate big dogs from small dogs; and that there be an area between, and that there be parking. She stated they did look at the silt pile, but there is not good access and there is a shooting range in the area which would not be good for dogs.

Ms. Bunn stated they came up with three top sites. She stated they understand cost is an issue. She stated they are looking for direction from the Board of Supervisors on which site to explore further before they start spending money on engineering and getting cost estimates on the three sites since each site does have its own set of challenges.

Ms. Bunn stated in terms of what the residents would see, they would see a fenced-in grassy area with some parking. She stated while they would like to have water, it is not a requirement. She stated they would also like to have benches and trash receptacles. She stated it would not be lit as like the other Township parks, it would close at dusk.

Ms. Tyler stated Memorial Park would have the most space, but the least density of population. Ms. Bunn stated she is not concerned about the distance residents would have to drive since they would have to drive to any location unless they are within walking distance of any of the sites. She stated she does not feel a central location is high on her list, and she feels it is more important to have the right location. She stated she would prefer to have it at Memorial Park than "jammed in" the middle of the softball fields especially during Tournament season when you cannot access the site.

Mr. Fritchey stated he feels the location is important in terms of who is going to use it. Ms. Bunn stated currently the options are to go to Morrisville or Core Creek Park. She stated Memorial Park would be on the way to Core Creek Park, so that would be less driving. Ms. Bunn stated she would not want to "jam it" somewhere just because it is central to the Township, and she would like to have a good site that will work for a long period of time. Mr. Fritchey stated he lives in the extreme south end of the Township, and Memorial Park is in the extreme north end of the Township; and if it would take fifteen minutes to drive to Memorial Park he does not feel most people have an hour to spend walking the dog. Mr. Fritchey stated his

concern is that the bulk of the Township population is middle to south; and if they put the dog park in an extreme northern location, they will have much lesser usage than they would have if it were somewhere closer where they would not have that kind of investiture of time. Ms. Bunn stated this kind of park is not targeting people who have fifteen minutes to walk their dog, and it is targeting people who want to spend an hour or two with their dog and driving fifteen minutes to Memorial Park would not be a problem. Mr. Fritchey stated if this is the target group he feels they are going to have considerably fewer people using it; however, Ms. Bunn disagreed.

Ms. Tyler stated she would like the dog park to be as close to a frequently used area as possible. She asked the Park Board how they feel about the soccer field area at Heacock, and she asked how much it is used by YMS. Ms. Bunn stated the Township does not own access into that site as it is owned by the Homeowners Association. She stated this is why they would like to get direction from the Supervisors so they can discuss this with the HOA or move onto another site. Mr. Wysocki stated the Heacock site is small, and Ms. Bunn stated it is just enough space at three acres.

Ms. Tyler asked if they are comfortable with a member-only Park, and Mr. Gordon stated he does not feel it should be cost prohibitive, but they should make sure the dogs have their shots. Mr. Wysocki stated this is the first time he has heard membership discussed, since they only discussed registering the dog to use the park. Ms. Tyler stated they would also pay a user fee.

Ms. Tyler stated she spoke at length with an individual from Doylestown, and the fob technology was expensive. She stated if there is the need for registration, they would need to have a Township employee maintain the registration and have the electronics for the fob on the gates; and Doylestown indicated that this was one of the larger expenses. Mr. Gordon stated he feels they should have a security code that is known to the Township and sent out by e-mail once a month as it is changed. He stated they would have to show that their dogs are registered and have had their shots. He stated it could be \$25 for the season so that it is not cost prohibitive.

Ms. Bunn stated at Core Creek they have the key fob technology, and they did not complain about the cost. Ms. Bunn stated the Committee would have to research this. She stated she does not want the project to be stalled and would like direction on the location so they can move forward. Ms. Tyler stated she does not feel the location is as important to consider first as is the concept of the type of park they want to have. Ms. Tyler stated they also need to know how many people will be using the park since if it is going to be limited to Lower Makefield residents, they do not need a park the same size as Core Creek. She stated if they do it more casually, it just could be a fenced-in area and there might be other sites that could

then be considered. She stated if it is to be a more formal dog park like Doylestown they need to consider funding and the will in the Township to raise more than \$100,000.

Ms. Bunn stated they could be working out the details of membership versus non, but they cannot wait for that to come up with a site. She stated the size would be approximately four acres regardless of where they put it. Ms. Tyler stated they could ask the Township engineer to look into easements, etc. for some of the sites. Ms. Tyler stated she is more concerned with the vision of the park than she is the site.

Mr. Fritchey stated he is concerned about how many people are going to use it, and if they make it too expensive and elaborate, very few people will use it; however, if it is more accessible to the general public, the better experience it will be, and it will add value to the Township. He stated he feels there is a danger in going too exclusive.

Ms. Bunn stated she does not feel it has to be exclusive; but in order to protect the Township, they need to make sure that the dogs are registered and have their shots; and the only way to do that is to have some type of membership. She stated there must be a fenced-in site with a perimeter fence and interior fences because the dogs have to be safe. Mr. Gordon stated this includes separation for the small dogs from the big dogs.

Mr. Wysocki stated they did rule out the Morrisville option which is open, but they did not feel it should be as elaborate as Doylestown. He stated he feels it should be more like the Core Creek model. He stated they use a card swipe system. He stated the spaces at Core Creek are more driven by the size of the dogs that are in the spaces. He stated he feels that the Core Creek model could easily handle the Township's demands.

Ms. Tyler asked if they have had enough public input as to where the public would like to see the dog park and what they would like to see. Ms. Bunn stated they have a Committee of about ten people who had expressed interest. She stated they looked at all the different sites and met a number of times before they offered up their top sites.

Ms. Tyler stated at this point she is not ready to select a site; and while they do not need a fully-engineered plan, they will direct the Township engineer to look at the sites – particularly Heacock to see if that is feasible. She stated she is apt to eliminate the site behind the Community Center because of the impact the Center will potentially have on the Waterwheel residents. Ms. Tyler stated she feels Memorial Park would be perfect if it were further south.

Mr. Dobson stated if they feel four acres is needed, they are eliminating some of the four sites already. He stated he does not feel that Heacock will work. Ms. Bunn stated the people on the Committee did not feel Memorial Park was a challenge they had to overcome since they are already going out to Core Creek already and Memorial Park would be closer.

Mr. Wysocki asked if the engineer could go to Core Creek and determine a cost estimate to replicate that model.

Mr. Gordon asked if Patterson Farm is an option because it is a good location with grass, parking and utilities. Ms. Tyler stated it is a farm, and she is not sure how much actual open space they have there that is not used by the tenant farmer. She stated Mr. Fedorchak could look at this. She stated they do have to let the residents in the area chosen know what to expect.

Ms. Tyler stated she feels the Dog Park Committee has a huge job in front of them in terms of fundraising since it took the Veterans Committee seven years to raise \$175,000 to put up Veterans Square to honor the veterans. Ms. Tyler asked if the Committee has discussed how much they are going to have to raise; and Ms. Bunn stated while they are aware that they are going to be fundraising, they have not discussed how much.

Ms. Liney was asked by Ms. Tyler to contact Doylestown to find out how much in-house maintenance is required including computer programming, fob software, fob technology, etc. Ms. Tyler stated they need to know what obligation the Township will have as to maintenance of this which she feels will be similar to the Pool sign-up process.

Mr. Dobson stated they are going to have to charge a fee for use of the park. Mr. Wysocki stated he feels Core Creek was \$35, and Ms. Tyler stated she feels the fee at Doylestown was \$50. Ms. Liney stated Doylestown was originally \$35, and they had a drop in membership when they raised it to \$50. She stated if the Township bases it on the current User Fees it would be \$15 per half season or \$30 per year, and the non-residents are \$75 per year. Ms. Tyler asked Ms. Liney to ask Doylestown how many members they have, and Ms. Liney agreed to check at Core Creek as well.

SUPERVISOR LIAISON REPORT

Mr. Dobson stated tomorrow the Railroad Edgewood crossing will be closed so that they can take out the rise.

Mr. Dobson stated the Board voted to outsource the sewer billing to Bucks County Water and Sewer Authority. He stated they will be able to provide different payment options and it will be more user friendly. It will also save the Township money. This change should not impact the rates.

Mr. Dobson stated Chief Coluzzi has provided quotes to Mr. Fedorchak on the security cameras, and a decision should be made on this shortly; and he hopes that they will be installed this year.

Mr. Dobson stated a number of trees have been planted at Veterans Square. Ms. Liney stated the water fountain was delivered today, and it will be installed by the end of the month.

Mr. Dobson stated they anticipate that the Township may reach \$1 million in road repairs this year.

RECREATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Liney stated PAA has been using the new 90' and 70' fields at Caiola Complex over the past month, and it has been going smoothly. She stated the Township will continue to water and over seed the fields to insure that the grass fully develops and any thin areas are filled in. Ms. Liney stated a split rail fence is scheduled for installation around the basin that is closest to the snack bar at the site, and the Township installed two new "Curve Ball Café" signs on the concession stands at Fred Allan and Stoddart today.

Ms. Liney stated the Annual PAA Father's Day Fast Pitch Tournament kicks off next week with what promises to be highly skilled softball players involving teams from all over the Country.

Ms. Liney stated YMS is hosting a small Tournament for younger children this weekend at Macclesfield, and there is also an annual bike ride, Miles for Mission, from the pavilion at Macclesfield out to the Delaware Canal hosted by Yardley Methodist Church on Saturday, June 27.

Ms. Liney noted the spread sheet provided in the Board's packet shows that the Pool is doing well as far as membership, and the month of June has surpassed June, 2014; and they are at 95% of Budgeted revenue. She stated hopefully they will continue with the success they have had to date. She added that Registrations for Swim Lessons and Pool Camp will be held this Saturday, June 13 at 8:00 a.m. at the Pool.

Ms. Liney stated Park & Recreation will be hosting a meeting with Supervisor Kristin Tyler and the Veterans Committee Chair for preliminary plans for an end of summer celebration similar to Community Pride Day to be held Monday, Labor Day, in the Township Community Park area; and she will keep the Park Board updated as plans become more firm.

Ms. Tyler asked about an Opening Day at the ball fields, and Ms. Liney stated she will discuss this with Mr. Fedorchak to see if they want to do this 2015 or 2016.

Ms. Tyler stated the Eagle Scout installed the Gaga court, and she would like to schedule an opening and a thank you for the Scout with Boy Scouts and Girls Scouts in attendance. Ms. Liney stated it needs to be stained, and she is not sure whether the Eagle Scout is going to do this or the Township is. She stated she also would like to get a sign installed with the rules.

LEAGUE LIAISON REPORT

Mr. Sean O'Hara, YMS, was present and thanked Ms. Liney and her crew for the work done this year as their season is ending. He stated they had another great year. He stated they are finishing their year with all loans paid off, and they have a capital reserve for future capital improvements. He stated their capital reserves grew by \$100,000 during the year.

Mr. O'Hara stated they have a lot of relationships including one with the Philadelphia Union, and they will have a YMS night at PPL Park on June 27. He stated they also formed a new relationship with a Ladies Professional Soccer Team in northern Jersey, and there will be a YMS night there in August. He stated they also have a new relationship with the Celtic Football Club in Scotland, and they are hosting a soccer camp June 22 to June 26 with coaching staff coming in from Scotland; and they will host approximately 200 players during that week.

Mr. O'Hara stated YMS had another successful season, and one team, the Xplosion Girls, qualified for the Nationals. He stated this will be their third year in a row going into the Nationals.

Mr. O'Hara stated the Adult League is starting next week on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. on three fields.

Mr. O'Hara thanked the Township for moving forward with the security cameras as they continue to have issues.

Mr. O'Hara stated they have a small Tournament this weekend with fifty teams.

Mr. Wysocki asked about their capacity as it seems YMS has grown and has a need for space. Mr. O'Hara stated they are in dire need of fields, and they have over 1,800 players during the year. He stated they do a lot of training at Macclesfield Park, and he is always asking Ms. Liney for additional space on other fields.

Mr. Fritchey stated he feels if they would execute the Snipes Plan that would help, and Mr. O'Hara agreed. He stated this would provide them with five to six fields. Mr. Fritchey stated Snipes is relatively flat so it would not require a significant amount of grading.

Ms. Liney stated YMS is just under 90% Lower Makefield residents, and every year they have trended up in their numbers.

Mr. Wysocki stated soccer is a sport that is still growing, and it is easy for young children to get involved with a low barrier for entry. He feels soccer will continue to grow in this area.

Mr. O'Hara stated YMS uses School District fields as well because they do not have enough Township fields. He stated they rent them two nights a week as well as Saturdays and Sundays.

Mr. Gordon stated they did use the fields at Memorial Park when it was opened, and he asked if it is usable; however, Mr. O'Hara stated they feel the surface is unplayable for their level of play. He stated even if it was to be used for recreational play, YMS would ask to flatten it. Mr. Gordon stated in the past they had indicated that they never wanted to Permit Memorial Park, and it does not get a lot of activity. He stated he feels YMS would be willing to take a piece of it by grading it, and there are restrooms and parking. He stated he feels it could have limited use for a specific age group which could take some of the pressure off. Mr. O'Hara stated that would help, and he suggested that the Special Stars would be a good group to use that. Mr. Gordon stated at that location they also have the inclusive playground which was built for a lot of the children in the Special Stars program.

Mr. Dobson stated while that Park was set up for passive recreation, times do change. Mr. Gordon stated he is not discussing Permitting the whole park, rather it would be one field with limited Permitted use. Ms. Tyler stated it would be ideal for the children practicing at Edgewood and for the Special Stars to play at that location.

Ms. Tyler asked what they feel YMS would ideally like to have; and Mr. Wysocki stated he feels to get the proper level of capacity needed for soccer, they could probably use twice as many fields as they have. He stated every field helps as there is a dramatic shortage. He stated lights also add capacity. Mr. O'Hara stated YMS does maintenance on a lot of the fields as they have their own equipment. Ms. Tyler stated she is aware that YMS is one of the best user groups in the amount of volunteer time; and if there is something they can do within their Budget constraints, they will work with YMS.

Ms. Tyler asked Mr. Fritchey about his feelings about using Memorial Park for the younger children, and Mr. Fritchey stated one of the issues has always been the covenants that were initially made. He stated he feels Special Stars would probably be more acceptable than anything else.

Ms. Tyler asked if this would impact the potential location for a dog park at Memorial Park, and Mr. Fritchey stated he does not feel it would. He stated the distinction they made originally was that this was to be a Community Park with multiple uses – some active and some passive. It was to be for the community to have picnics and pick-up games. Ms. Bunn stated there was to be no tournament play. Mr. Fritchey stated it was not to be an athletic complex. Mr. Fritchey stated they could do an athletic complex on a small scale at Snipes with the six soccer fields, but he would have a problem moving too much in that direction at Memorial Park because they indicated they were not going to do that. He stated he feels if they have Special Stars there it would be a consistent use to go with the inclusive playground. Mr. Fritchey stated he feels Snipes is the best solution they have for meeting their needs for more fields. Mr. Fritchey stated there is a plan for Snipes.

Ms. Bunn stated Snipes also allows them to explore the opportunity for lights especially with the fields that back up to I-95. There was further discussion about lighting fields, and Mr. Fritchey stated there had been issues with the lighting at Macclesfield; but once proper shielding was installed, there was a dramatic improvement in the ambient light effecting people in Rivergate.

Mr. Wysocki asked Ms. Tyler and Mr. Dobson if they need anything from the Park & Recreation with regard to the use of Memorial Park for the Special Stars. Mr. Fritchey stated he feels the appropriate way to explore this is for YMS to make a proposal of what they might feel it appropriate to do with Special Stars and present that to the Park & Recreation Board. He stated they would look at this and then see if they feel they can accommodate it without violating prior understandings, and then make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.

Ms. Tyler asked if the addition of the 90' and 70' baseball fields allow them to get rid of H for baseball, but it was noted it would not because H has lights.

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Mr. McNamara stated football and baseball use it in the fall because of the lights.

Ms. Tyler stated there are a lot of Public Works operations at Snipes; and before that gets too entrenched, they should discuss this to see what can be done to make the scheduling situation for YMS more bearable.

There being no further business, Ms. Bunn moved, Mr. Wysocki seconded and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Bunn, Secretary