

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
PARK & RECREATION BOARD
MINUTES – JUNE 12, 2018

The regular meeting of the Park & Recreation Board of the Township of Lower Makefield was held in the Municipal Building on June 12, 2018. Mr. Gordon called the meeting to order.

Those present:

Park & Recreation Board: David Gordon, Chairman
 David Malinowski, Vice Chairman
 Douglas Krauss, Secretary
 Michael Brody, Member
 Patricia Bunn, Member
 Bryan McNamara, Member

Others: Monica Tierney, Park & Recreation Director
 Daniel Grenier, Supervisor Liaison

Absent: Dennis Wysocki, Park & Rec Member

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Malinowski moved, Ms. Bunn seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of May 8, 2018 as written.

BIKE PATH UPDATE

Mr. Gordon noted that Ms. Tierney provided materials on the bike path. Ms. Tierney stated this summer they will do the bike path on Woodside Road from Clearview Estates to Taylorsville, and work should start on this in June. Mr. Jim Majewski stated they are still in the design phase as they were waiting for information from the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission who had done topography for all their improvements, and Remington Vernick was looking to obtain that base topography to limit the cost on survey work; and he is not sure that they have received that yet. Mr. Grenier stated, according to the Township engineer, they had not received it as of yesterday. Mr. Grenier stated on the maps provided it has been shown as walkways and bicycle paths. He stated experienced cyclists do not ride on the bike paths or the sidewalks. He stated cyclists are on moving vehicles that have rights to the roadway.

Mr. Gordon asked what would be a walkway, and Mr. Grenier stated that is what they are doing at Woodside; and it is more intended for walkers and families who are on bikes with their children. Mr. Grenier stated a bike lane is something that is in the road. Mr. Majewski stated the correct term for a path intended for walkers, joggers, and bikers is a multi-use trail.

Ms. Tierney stated they will also be working on the Oxford Valley Road path that will go in front of the Community Center, and this is part of the Grant.

Ms. Tierney stated the Township has a plan to repair bike paths, but they do not have a plan to connect existing bike paths; and she feels they should look into this in the future and come up with a five-year plan.

Mr. Krauss asked the extent of the Oxford Valley Road path, and Mr. Majewski stated it goes from Edgewood Road across the street from where the path ends, up Edgewood Road to the corner of Oxford Valley, and down Oxford Valley around the baseball fields. He noted a portion where there is a gap where they do not have the right-of-way; and in order to secure the Grant, they had to take that part out since the Township did not have full access. Mr. Brody stated he feels it should stop at Roelofs so that they could cross over where there is a sidewalk. Mr. Majewski stated that is basically where it is stopping.

Mr. Majewski stated the Township adopted a walkway system Master Plan in 1997 which showed areas that were designated for bike ways, bike paths, and bike lanes shown as existing or proposed. He stated the inventory was updated in 2003 as part of the Comprehensive Plan Update, and it has been in the Park & Rec Road Tour booklets for years. Mr. Majewski stated, in 2015 as part of the updated Comprehensive Master Plan, which has not yet been adopted, the Bucks County Planning Commission updated the inventory and provided more detail which was GIS-friendly. I showed all the areas where there are sidewalks, bicycle paths, and bicycle lanes so there is a fairly-recent inventory.

Mr. Majewski stated there are approximately twenty-five miles of bike paths in the system which also includes the Canal of approximately seven miles on the towpath. Mr. Majewski stated since 2002 the Township has added several locations to the bike path system including Stony Hill Road between Fraser Drive

and Bluestone Drive to connect a neighborhood on Stony Hill Road as well as a connection on Black Rock Road from Westover down to the Canal and over to Glen Drive. Mr. Majewski stated they connected a missing section in front of the gas pipeline facility north of Woodside Road on Lindenhurst.

Mr. Majewski stated there is also a plan to install additional bike paths on Oxford Valley and Edgewood and along Woodside Road.

Mr. Majewski stated the Park Board may want to consider developing a Master Plan to complete sections of the bike path system in its totality as well as list the gaps that exist. Mr. Majewski stated Ms. Liney had evaluated some of the missing gaps approximately fifteen years ago; and while he has not been able to find that document, he would be able to recreate it. He stated they need to document the location of the gaps in the system, assess who owns the rights-of-way in front of them, determine if there is already sufficient right-of-way, whether it is in the PennDOT right-of-way, and whether the Township needs to acquire right-of-way from property owners. Mr. Majewski stated they also need to evaluate physical obstructions to the construction of the right-of-way. He added the one that was added on Lindenhurst Road which was connected a few years ago had right-of-way constrictions, and it took ten years to get the right-of-way from the pipeline company. Mr. Majewski stated there are other places throughout the Township where there are similar situations with houses close to the road where connecting sections of the bike path would require work and cooperation with the property owners. Mr. Majewski stated they also need to consider ADA accessibility.

Mr. Majewski stated the Park Board and/or Board of Supervisors can develop a priority based on need, cost, and feasibility. He stated this should be done so that when Grants come available in the future, there is a plan in place so that they can fund the gaps in the bike path.

Ms. Tierney stated one of the challenges is obtaining the rights-of-way needed. Mr. Gordon stated he does not feel this should stop them from putting a plan in place so that they know where the gaps exist and where they need rights-of-way. Mr. Grenier stated the Park Board could recommend this to the Board of Supervisors adding it is good to have a plan in place to take advantage of potential funding sources. He reviewed how they were able to get the Grant for the bike path to go on Edgewood.

Mr. Majewski stated there are certain areas where they know there are a lot of neighborhoods where you see people walking and biking such as areas around the Pool, the parks, and the Schools. He stated the need can be subjective. Mr. Grenier stated generally you want to be able to put people in proximity to facilities that they use. Mr. Brody stated the bike paths need to be put in places where they will actually be used. Ms. Bunn stated her concern is that the bikers do not actually use the bike paths, and she feels it is dangerous to have bikers on the roads. Mr. Majewski stated while serious cyclers use the road because of the speeds they are traveling, there are many families that ride on the bike path system as do a number of walkers.

Mr. Malinowski moved and Mr. Krauss seconded to recommend to the Board of Supervisors to do a feasibility study with regard to where there are gaps in the bike path, where they lack rights-of-ways; and for areas where we do have the right-of-way, to have a priority list put in place so that when Grants become available or Township funds become available, we can put a plan in place to fill some of the gaps and have a long-range plan to complete the bike paths.

Mr. Brody noted that there was a presentation made by a bike riding group to the Board of Supervisors a few years ago, and this might have already been done. Mr. Grenier stated the Bicycle Coalition of Philadelphia and Bucks County are bicycle advocates, and the DVRPC is the group that comes up with overall plans and they probably provided some data. Mr. Majewski stated the DVRPC is putting together a sidewalk/walkway inventory for all of the Philadelphia region, and they are asking for any information that towns have to be provided to them; and they will help assess where the needs are. Mr. Majewski stated some of the base work can still be done in the Township. He stated he has started looking at the gaps, obstructions, and where are the “paths of least resistance.”

Mr. Gordon suggested that they discuss this again in the fall once they have some of this information so that they can take this to the next level and help set some priorities.

Ms. Bunn suggested that the intern working in Park & Rec do some of this work in-house so that the Township does not have to pay engineering fees. She stated the intern could get the maps together and make an identification of areas and concerns that could be seen on the maps. Ms. Tierney stated Mr. Majewski had indicated that he does have a list of some of the gaps already so she feels some things can be done in-house, and they would then go to the engineer. Mr. Majewski stated it was his plan to do as much in-house with the intern, and he has already spoken to Chief Coluzzi about borrowing one of his interns to help him with this.

Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Tierney stated she will write up the Park & Rec’s Board recommendation and provide it to Mr. Fedorchak.

PARK & REC FEASIBILITY STUDY

Mr. Majewski stated they solicited a proposal from the Bucks County Planning Commission in order to do an assessment and inventory of the Township’s athletic facilities and a needs assessment for fields. He stated the Snipes project has been discussed for a while, and there are some residents who questioned the need for

Snipes. He stated for years the athletic groups have expressed their needs to the Park & Rec Board. Mr. Majewski stated the Township wanted to have an independent assessment as to the need, and whether they need four fields, twelve, or none. He stated he and Ms. Tierney will be meeting with the Bucks County Planning Commission this week and provide them with all the information they have. He stated they will be needing information from the user groups, including their schedules for the use of the fields, how often they are used for games and practices, and the numbers of people using them. They will then compile this information and analyze the data to see how it fits with field use. He stated there are recommended standards for field usage, and they know that some of the fields are exceeding that as they are not wearing well because of overuse. Mr. Majewski stated Bucks County will compile the data and summarize it into a report including all the issues with field usage, demand, scheduling conflicts, etc. and make some recommendations. Mr. Majewski stated this will include meeting with the Board of Supervisors and the Park & Rec Board if needed; and the not-to-exceed fee for this was \$13,920. He stated the Board of Supervisors voted to proceed with that.

Mr. Majewski stated there was an optional part of the study which was the solicitation of a statistically-valid resident survey. He stated the last one was done in 1992 when the Park Plan was done, which was adopted by the Park Board and the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Majewski stated this would involve sending out a resident survey to all the households in the Township to ascertain information on current and future recreational needs. He stated the cost for that study was \$26,000. He stated the Board of Supervisors did not vote to go ahead with that at this time, but it is something for the Park & Rec Board to consider. Mr. Grenier stated he would be interested in this since a lot has happened since 1992, and he feels it would be a benefit to the Township to understand what residents are looking for; however, in an effort to get the first part done, the Board opted to put that aside at this time and move ahead with just the first part.

Mr. Grenier stated he would ask for the Park Board's assistance in case any of the stakeholders are not quick to respond with their data as the Board wants to make sure they have a comprehensive needs assessment report early on. He stated with regard to the second part, the Park & Rec Board could make a Motion to recommend to do that at some point in the future. Mr. Gordon stated at a cost of \$26,000, he would want to have more information as to how the survey will be done and what information they would be gathering. Ms. Bunn stated she feels the proposed cost is high, and she feels it would be better to put it out on the Township Website to get this information. Mr. Grenier agreed and stated the Park Board could make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors that they complete some type of survey to get this type of information, and that they look for a way to do this.

Mr. Grenier stated the reason they are considering it now is because they are going through the Master Plan process, and this would be a good time to do it although he wishes it had been done last year. He stated the Planning Commission voted in April to finalize the language in the Comprehensive Plan and sent it to the Board of Supervisors for a vote; however, the Board of Supervisors will probably not vote on it in July although they might discuss it at that meeting. He feels the Comprehensive Plan will not be finalized until the fall.

Ms. Beth Cauley stated she feels what they want to do is a good idea; and while she feels \$26,000 is a lot of money, she feels that is the fair way to do it since putting it on the Website would not be fair. She stated as a resident she is not checking the Website to see if a survey is going on, and she does not feel other residents are either. She stated mailing the survey out to the residents would be more fair and should be done in writing making it clear that it is a LMT survey. She stated there are a lot of empty-nesters and Seniors who are not checking the Website for a survey, and they make up over 50% of the Township population. She stated they may want pickleball, bocce, and tennis.

Ms. Bunn stated it would not just be a one-day opportunity on the Website, and they would leave it up for a period of time; and they will also get the word out as well. Ms. Cauley asked how they would get the word out to every Residential household. Ms. Bunn stated it could be in the next Newsletter. She stated they could also contact the Senior group, and there are computers at the Community Center.

Mr. Majewski stated they are meeting with some of the staff from the Bucks County Planning Commission, and they could get more information on the nature of the survey, how it would be done, and what the proper methodologies are.

Mr. Krauss noted that most surveys do not get a 100% response, but you would get a random sample across the Township. He added most if not all surveys are now done on-line. He stated to Ms. Cauley's point they need to consider what communication they would do to get people to go to the survey. Mr. Gordon stated there could be a counter argument made that those under forty would not fill out a paper survey.

Mr. Gordon asked if the Park & Rec Board agrees that they should find a way to gather information in the most cost-effective and most accurate way, and all Board members agreed.

Mr. Krauss stated they should reach out to the groups that currently do not have Permitted fields that would like to have access, and Mr. Majewski stated that they will do that. Ms. Tierney stated they have their contact information.

There was discussion on when the Bucks County Planning Commission would complete the Feasibility Study as it had been indicated it would take three to four months; however, Mr. Majewski stated he had advised them that timeline was too long, and they indicated they could do it quicker. Mr. Grenier stated this is why he wants the user groups to respond quickly. Mr. Majewski stated he feels two months would be a reasonable timeframe to get the Study completed, although it could take three months. Mr. Malinowski stated this would probably put the Snipes decision off until the end of the year. Mr. Grenier stated he feels they could have the Feasibility Study completed by September 1, and then they would move on from there depending on the information they get.

Mr. Brody asked what punch list items have been done at Snipes and what still needs to be done. Mr. Grenier stated they have concluded a tree survey at the site, and they did a balloon/view shed survey. He stated they also authorized the engineer to do a review of the Boucher & James Plans; and based off of that, to come up with some conceptual ideas that would make the project better, more cost-effective, and with fewer Waivers. Mr. Grenier stated, working under the assumption that the needs assessment will indicate that they do need the fields, they will look at the engineer's comments on the field design. He stated the Board of Supervisors has set a generalized plan for moving forward for resident review and discussion. He stated there has been discussion about having a public workshop in September to go over the revised plans, and they will have to determine if it would have to go back to the Planning Commission depending on the changes. He stated they will probably have the engineer prepare a final design before the Board makes a final vote with an ultimate construction time probably next year.

Ms. Cauley asked if there is a way to send an e-mail to every household. Ms. Tierney stated they have e-mails for approximately 7,000 Park & Rec users. Mr. Grenier stated while they do have a good percentage of e-mails, there are others they do not have e-mails for.

SENIORS UPDATE

It was noted the Mr. Milt Silverstein was not in attendance, and Mr. Gordon stated they will ask the Seniors again to come in the fall.

Ms. Tierney stated the Seniors have started some new programs, and they have over one hundred new participants since the opening of the Community Center. She stated she sent out a billing for the summer for the additional members, and they will then be re-billed for the entire year at the end of the year. Ms. Bunn stated she felt the Seniors year ended in August, and Ms. Tierney stated they changed their fiscal year to January to match the Township's.

Mr. Grenier stated Supervisor Weiss is the liaison to the Seniors group, and they had some informal feedback about the fees; and he expects there will be more feedback once the fee goes up.

Mr. Gordon asked about the use of the facilities by the Seniors; and Ms. Tierney stated there has been some overlapping at times of high use, and they are working on this. She stated there have been times when the Seniors used a room but not advised her and something else was booked in that same room. She stated other than some small conflicts, they have been working well together.

DOG PARK UPDATE

Ms. Tierney stated they opened today, and it went fairly smooth. Mr. Gordon stated he heard that the big dog park did not open, and Ms. Tierney agreed. Ms. Tierney stated during the last storm the creek overflowed and flooded one section of the dog park and washed out all of the dirt underneath the fence. She stated they are currently working on that. Ms. Tierney stated they hope to have that side open in a week or two, and they are trying to fix the situation so that problem does not happen again. Ms. Tierney stated there was some damming in the creek because a tree came down.

Ms. Tierney stated they had seventy-three visitors to the Dog Park today, and the system worked fairly well. She stated the key fobs themselves will need to be changed since the hole was punched too close to the bar code, and they will make a change to it with their next order so that the hole is further away from the swipe. Ms. Tierney stated there is a five-second delay between access which is not that long; and she feels it will work more smoothly once everyone understands how to use the system. Mr. Krauss asked if they could put up a weather-protected sign as to how to use the system, and Ms. Tierney stated they could do that.

Ms. Tierney stated another issue they found at the gate was that a plastic latch system was used which is difficult to get open, and they are going to put a simple “flip-down” latch on the door.

Mr. Gordon stated he heard that people were holding the gates open for non members and letting them in, and Ms. Tierney stated this morning one of the Supervisors witnessed this happening. Ms. Tierney stated they need to make sure that members know that this is not allowed. Ms. Tierney stated she was at the Dog Park four to five times today talking to people as they were coming in and making sure things were going smoothly.

Mr. Gordon stated he went to the training last week which was well done.

Mr. Grenier asked if the dogs have to wear anything on their collar to show that they are members; and Ms. Tierney stated while they do not, the owners' key fobs are associated with their dog and you can look up to see which dogs are in the Park. She stated the key fobs have all the data as to the dogs' shots, etc.

Ms. Tierney stated the waste bags are installed, and there are over 6,000 bags there at any given time. She stated benches, water supply, and some of the sponsorship signage has been installed. She stated almost all of the directional signage is up; but they found that they were lacking in some areas so they will be ordering more signage.

Mr. Gordon asked about parking, and Ms. Tierney stated parking has not been a problem. Mr. Gordon asked the capacity, and Ms. Tierney stated she feels there is capacity for approximately fifteen cars. Mr. Grenier stated it is currently gravel parking, and they may want to consider striping on the gravel. Ms. Tierney stated they do that at the Farmers Market, so that should not be a problem. Mr. Grenier stated that way they can make sure they are the right size per the Code.

Mr. Krauss stated it was noted that the benches are close to the fence, and he asked if they could be moved; however, Ms. Tierney stated they cannot be moved because they have been concreted into the ground. Ms. Tierney stated she had been advised that the benches should not be in the middle of the Park since there was a fear that a dog could run into the bench. Ms. Tierney stated there are only two benches near the edge of the Park that are close to the fence.

Ms. Tierney stated the sponsorship signage and the bricks still need to be installed. She stated they are working on getting those in before the Grand Opening. She stated while the water supply is on, they still need to install the water fountain which should happen in the next week.

Ms. Tierney stated at this point they have had approximately 540 people complete the orientation class.

LIAISON REPORTS

While there were no representatives present from the Leagues this evening, Ms. Tierney noted that this weekend they will have the Softball Tournament so there will be additional traffic.

POOL UPDATE

Ms. Tierney stated they had a couple thousand people at the Pool the first day, and they are exceeding their expectations with regard to revenue and membership. There was discussion about Pool personnel

RECREATION DIRECTOR REPORT

Ms. Tierney stated classes and programs are doing well, and they are still registering for summer camps. She stated as of today there are approximately seventy-seven registered for camps and classes during the summer. She stated the Community Center has generated \$2,825 in revenue for rentals, and they are getting requests every day for Community Center rentals. She stated they have generated \$1,030 in pavilion rental revenue. She stated program registration total revenue year-to-date is \$8,910.

Mr. McNamara asked about the camps being provided by Pennsbury Racquetball; and Ms. Tierney stated the sports camp is not as popular as the other camps they are offering this summer. She stated currently there are maybe three people registered. It was noted that there are already a number of established camps that people go to. Ms. Tierney stated the children's art programs are not as popular either so they will be looking into what is attractive in the Township and will make some adjustments the next round.

Ms. Tierney stated year-to-date revenue for the Pool is \$676,315. Season member totals are 1,896.

Ms. Tierney stated Dog Park year-to-date revenue is \$5,945 and fundraising \$43,000. Dog Park members at the end of the month were 162 residents and 2 non-residents; and there were 351 dogs, although they know it is now over 400. She stated orientations completed at the time her report was done was 549. Ms. Tierney stated the Dog Park Grand Opening will be July 15 from 12 to 4, and they will have vendors, dog-themed music and food. She stated the ribbon cutting will be at 1.

Ms. Bunn asked if there has been feedback about the new snack bar vendor at the Pool, and Ms. Tierney stated she has not heard any complaints about the snack bar.

SCHUYLER TENNIS COURTS

Ms. Tierney stated it was brought to her attention that the Schuyler tennis courts have not been renovated in years, and they are getting more use. It was noted that there had been a layer put on top; however, Ms. Tierney stated it has been “quick-fixed” a number of times over the years, but it has been approximately twenty years since the last time it was fully renovated. She stated there are large cracks in the courts, and she has asked the Township engineer to take a quick look at the courts. She stated she feels they should consider this for next year and go out for a Grant Application to have the courts renovated.

Mr. Krauss stated there is a main user group that uses these courts a fair amount, and he asked if there are safety issues with use of these courts because of these large cracks. Ms. Tierney stated that is of concern. Mr. Grenier stated the engineer also has to look at whether the last fix was done per the specs and that they did what they were paid to do. Ms. Tierney stated they will need to discuss this at Budget time. Mr. Gordon stated if money is not available to do something more substantial, they may still have to do another “quick fix.” Ms. Tierney agreed that they may have to consider some patching sooner rather than later and then consider long-term renovations.

DOG PARK DISCUSSION

Mr. Brody asked for an estimate of the cost to fix the Dog Park issues. Mr. Grenier stated they have asked the engineer to do a review and provide the Board with a report. Mr. Brody asked if there was a warranty, and Mr. Grenier stated it would be more engineer’s errors and omissions. He stated the engineer that designed it also reviewed it and was there doing construction oversight.

Mr. Gordon asked if the intent of the Dog Park was for its use year round, and Ms. Tierney agreed.

DISCUSSION OF FUTURE BOARD MEETINGS

Mr. Gordon stated while they do not meet in July or August they do a Road Tour in July, and Ms. Tierney stated it will be held on July 19 at 6:00 p.m.

Ms. Tierney stated the September meeting falls on September 11 this year, so that meeting has been moved to September 13.

June 12, 2018

Park & Recreation Board – page 12 of 12

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Douglas Krauss, Secretary