

Lower Paxton Township Community Engagement Committee

Meeting Notes
February 17, 2021

Members in Attendance

Jim Seidler
Denise Hussar
Pat Crawford
Stan Smith

Members Absent

Also in Attendance

Rachelle Scott, Staff Liaison
Bob McIntyre

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Seidler called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm on the above date in Room 174 of the Lower Paxton Township Municipal Center, 425 Prince Street, Harrisburg.

MINUTES

Ms. Hussar made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 20, 2021 meeting. Ms. Crawford seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

PARKS & RECREATION BOARD SURVEY

Ms. Scott stated that the Parks & Rec Board and the BOS approved the survey to be released to the public to gather information about the community needs or wants. The survey will be online, and there will be paper ones available if needed. The survey will be available for two months to try to get a lot of responses.

CEC PURPOSE AND GOALS

Ms. Scott presented information discussed at the January meeting to Brad Gotshall and he requested action steps to fulfill the purpose of the CEC. She has incorporated a draft of some of the steps. Ms. Hussar questioned if the contributing boards would need to be recreation related or just Township related. Members discussed how to include the right groups and not limit the flexibility of the CEC in the future. The past grants do not fit the language proposed, so Mr. McIntyre suggested letting the language be less restrictive. Ms. Crawford asked if the CEC agreed to limit the grants to Township items and not to fund other entities such as the fire companies.

Ms. Scott stated she wants the CEC to discuss the direction the members want it to go in the future. One question that came up is what the difference between the Lower Paxton Community Foundation and the CEC is. She was able to talk with the Foundation. There are capital improvement projects as well as small projects that will need some funding in the future. The Foundation is looking to be a fiscal sponsor for local community projects within Lower Paxton. Mr. Smith asked if they will be active in raising money, and Ms. Scott explained that they will be the legal support so that a group can raise money. They want to have two free events for the community, and basically create an identity for Lower Paxton.

Mr. Smith noted that a lot of effort has been spent over the last few years on marketing the 5K race, and asked if there was much progress with that. Ms. Crawford noted they came up with the logo and some other things. Mr. Seidler added that what they found is that the sponsors have been very loyal, returning every year. The bulk of the revenue tends to come from sponsors. Mr. Smith suggested marketing the race and any other events that may arise.

Mr. Smith suggested laying out the planning calendar style. January and February could be to identify projects, March and April are for promotion, and June and July can be implementation of the project. He would like to avoid piecemealing it together. A more inclusive marketing plan may also prove effective instead of one here and another one there.

Mr. McIntyre suggested three subcommittees: marketing, finance, and events. He also suggested short term plans that may be satisfied in a year that aren't expensive, and long-term plans that may take 4-5 years to fund. That helps the other organizations identify events. Ms. Crawford. Community art or community choir may be something to think about. Recruiting will be important. He added that there are 6 high schools in the area, with a lot of talent. Asking for help is easier if you are able to specifically identify what you need help with.

Ms. Crawford did not feel subcommittees were ideal when the CEC is already functioning well with its members all working together. It will be difficult to recruit volunteers right now since people aren't willing to come out. This group of CEC members communicate well and brainstorm together well. Ms. Scott noted that the department staff used to rely on help from Friendship Center staff, but without that support and only having three people to implement activities, recruiting volunteers and active board participation will be essential. Ms. Crawford felt that having volunteers at events is a different group of people than those that would work on a subcommittee. She thought maybe the structure was too much for this kind of organization. She felt the goal at this time is to keep the CEC in existence and with a clear purpose. Mr. McIntyre added that showing structure and plans can be for the future knowing that it cannot be implemented in the near future. It is ok to lay out a plan and work on it as time and circumstances allow. Mr. Smith suggested "establish responsibility for" instead of labeling it subcommittees to avoid a narrow idea. Mr. McIntyre also suggested that the subcommittees may only consist of people on the CEC.

Ms. Scott stated there is no deadline, so this can be worked on at subsequent meetings. Mr. Smith noted that members come from other groups, so making sure they can communicate

back to their groups with a basic frame within which they can work can be very helpful to people on the other committees.

Ms. Crawford will draft a timeline to review at the next meeting. She would also like to see proposals be accepted all year, so that the money can be used as needed.

5K RACE

Ms. Scott stated she has secured the timing company and has a contract in place. The rate is the same as last year. They have virtual race options in place now too. Mr. Seidler suggested talking about those options and maybe about competitive and noncompetitive groups. The YMCA is happy to host it at the Friendship Center and they will also promote it on the Y's race website. Mr. Seidler offered to work with Chad Krebs for the race.

ARBOR DAY / EARTH DAY

Ms. Scott stated that the Shade Tree Commission will meet at 9am on May 1st for the annual dedication ceremony. Afterwards volunteers will work from 9am-noon on cleaning the streambeds and trail, and planting trees at Brightbill Park. She requested CEC members to volunteer their time that day for registration at 8:30 am and cleaning up the park from 9:00 to 12:00.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business to discuss.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting ended at 5:10 pm. The next meeting of the Community Engagement Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, March 17, 2021, at 4:00 pm in Room 174 of the Municipal Center.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Hiner
Recording Secretary