

**LOWER PAXTON TOWNSHIP  
PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
APRIL 7, 2021**

Members in Attendance

Neal Johnson  
Jim Seidler  
Stan Smith  
Bob MacIntyre  
Angela McCloskey  
Kirby Lentz

Members Absent

Mayur Patel

Also in Attendance

Rachelle Scott, Staff Liaison  
Mikayla Hicklin, Girl Scout

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Neal Johnson called the April 7, 2021 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Board to order at 7:15 pm in Room 174 of the Lower Paxton Township Municipal Center, 425 Prince Street, Harrisburg, PA.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was none.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

No action was taken on meeting minutes from February 3, 2021 or March 17, 2021.

**GIRL SCOUT GOLD AWARD PROPOSAL**  
**MIKAYLA HICKLIN**

Ms. Mikayla Hicklin was in attendance to present her proposal for book-sharing boxes to be located in various parks within Lower Paxton Township. Handouts include a map of the proposed locations and the building design of the boxes.

Ms. Hicklin explained she has been a girl scout for 13 years, and has already completed her bronze award and her silver award, and is currently working on her Gold Award, which is the highest award available in Girl Scouts. The book selections will be targeted for elementary ages. She will design, build, paint, and install the boxes, with the help of her dad and her project advisor. Her materials will be provided by donations. The locations include Brightbill, Centennial Acres, Kings Crossing, Kohl, Koons and George Parks. The boxes, when complete, will be a gift to the Township Parks & Recreation Department meaning they will have the responsibility to maintain them.

After discussing the idea with Ms. Scott, the suggestion of having the maintenance done annually, similar to how the trashcans are painted each year by civic or volunteer groups. The life expectancy is 10-15 years.

Ms. Hicklin proposed an introduction to the book boxes to children during the summer camp program where she could read to them and interact with them. She would like to complete the project in time to make the introductions to the children in early August. The next step is to get approval from the Township and the Girl Scout Council, then she can start to work.

There are examples of nice book sharing boxes at Sweet Arrow Lake, and in Hershey. Mr. MacIntyre liked the idea and noted he has seen a few around the area. Mr. Seidler asked if the posts would be cemented, and she answered no. He also asked about the door and how to keep the box waterproof. The door will be plexiglass, and shingles might be used to keep the rain out.

Ms. Angela asked about donations. Ms. Hicklin stated she will ask family and friends, and colleges of her dad, since he works in the construction industry. Ms. Angela stated that families tend to grow out of books, and would be willing to donate them. Ms. Scott stated that Kiwanis is always interested in distributing books. Mr. Lentz reminded her that a PA One Call will need to be done prior to digging the post holes.

Mr. Smith stated the project is a great idea, and an ambitious one. Ms. Hicklin would include on the box a sign giving instructions to give a book or take a book. Mr. Smith asked about routine inspections, and Ms. Hicklin stated that after she gifts them, it will be the responsibility of the Parks Department to maintain them. Ms. Hicklin could also check them periodically when she returns to the area from college. Mr. Smith suggested the community will probably self regulate as well.

Ms. Scott explained that Ms. Hicklin and she have discussed the project as the idea was fine-tuned, and she was happy to see the locations she selected. Mr. Smith was happy to see young leaders emerge and make an investment in the Township. He would also like to see the media involved to highlight the contribution of our young leaders. The timing will work well with the completion of the project around the end of the summer camp this summer.

Mr. MacIntyre made a motion to authorize the project as presented. Mr. Seidler seconded the motion and a unanimous vote followed.

Mr. MacIntyre noted he feels it is important for young people to hear from adults they do not know, how wonderful their contributions are & how it affects the bigger picture around them. He continued to say, Tom George always ensured the young

people were acknowledged and stated how proud the Parks & Rec Dept. was of their efforts.6

### **KOONS PARK GARY LOWE FIELD SIGN**

Ms. Scott presented a second draft of the sign with the board packet. She asked the board if they are in a position to approve the field naming guidelines. Mr. MacIntyre explained that the PR Board is the advisory board, and they will support staff with her decisions and he appreciates the overall integration and the big picture. The board discussed and liked the aluminum or windscreen material, and whatever color matched the logo and other signage in the Township. The size and location (backstop) was also agreed upon by the board members. Mr. MacIntyre made a motion to approve the facility commemorative naming guidelines and placement in the parks. A unanimous vote followed. Ms. Scott will provide this to the group that wants to install a sign and they can design their sign based on these specifications.

### **CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN**

Ms. Scott explained that each department has to present a capital improvement plan for over the next five years. Then those needs will be ranked and prioritized among all department projects across the township. The process is leading into the budget planning to assist with long term financial planning. Ms. Scott stated she is still in the process of working on this plan. She further explained a master plan is a top priority, and there are three playgrounds that need to be addressed. Mr. Smith asked if this will replace the 5-year plan that was prepared. Ms. Scott stated that some of the items on the 5-year plan need addressed sooner than the master plan will be implemented. An estimated cost of a Master Plan is around \$70-\$80,000. Therefore, Ms. Scott is also looking into grant funding. The deadline for the DCNR grant has passed for this year, but we could look at applying next year, which would allocate a 50/50 match in 2023 if received. A Master Plan will help with planning for the aging parks over the next 10-15 years. She will also meet with a playground specialist to look at several of the playgrounds that will need worked on prior to the completion of the master plan.

Mr. MacIntyre asked if the money from the sale of the Buch tract will be used for this or if it could be used for this project. Ms. Scott didn't hear if the money was received but that it will be earmarked for Parks & Rec department. That is something that could be discussed with the BOS, and she will circulate dates for a potential meeting with the BOS.

Ms. Scott stated she wants the PRB to be involved to support the projects and to help her prioritize them. She noted that since the BOS has already seen the 5 year plan, they have an understanding of what is needed, but the more support and discussion that can be had, the better. Ms. Mac suggested having information such as how many people or groups use the parks and the playground, or what had to be

eliminated because of cost. User data and the survey responses should be a big help. Mr. Seidler stated this is going to be like the park planning process that we went through for George Park and Koons/Wolfersberger Parks. Mr. Lentz suggested a park tour, and members agreed since it has been a while since the last one. Ms. Scott noted that the Park Rangers are taking more detailed notes on what is taking place at the parks, and how many people are actively using what amenities.

Ms. Scott stated that the park plan emphasizes the small number of park land compared to other municipalities. Mr. MacIntyre noted that changing the layout of the parks is not a bad idea, even if there isn't a lot of amenities, an open space style park will still be a valuable park. Other members agreed. Mr. Smith noted that the disproportionate thought is related to how much building and development is taking place. Mr. Seidler noted that we are doing well compared to a national average, so the argument is all relative. Mr. MacIntyre added that there isn't a need for a 90-acre park next to Koons Park; however if you sell the 90 acres and build several hundred homes, there will then be a need for a park. He further suggested looking at what the parks currently offer and what is actually being used. Mr. Smith noted that part of what Wolfersberger was intended to be used for, was to relieve the over-use at Koons. Mr. Seidler noted that the Wolf/Koons Plan included significant planning for improvement to infrastructure of Koons park to alleviate things like the drainage problems. Ms. Scott will keep the PRB informed as things progress.

### **COMMUNITY SURVEY**

Ms. Scott stated the survey has received around 300 responses and she anticipates more throughout the month. It will close at the end of April.

### **PARK UPDATES**

Ms. Scott provided the following updates:

1. Heroes Grove:
  - a. the roof is under construction and should be complete by the end of May. May 20<sup>th</sup> will be the first event under the roof.
  - b. concerts are scheduled for the summer months: Smooth like Clyde, Shea Quinn, LP Variety Band, Renegade 6.
2. Lingle Park:
  - a. PW is installing a ceiling to deal with the bird problem.
  - b. There is an ongoing issue with powder paint being used and left on the pavilion surfaces. It seems to be part of a cultural celebration.
3. Brightbill Park: Preparations are underway for Earth Day/Arbor Day/May Day. There are a number of groups involved in overall event.

4. Tillet Toilet underbid Walters for the first time in many years, and so far it seems to be fine, they are very responsive.

### **ARTS COUNCIL UPDATES**

Mr. Smith provided the following update:

1. Mr. Milbrand was in attendance, and he spoke about practicing and gathering.
2. The arts council wanted to partner with the vintage brass group so they can do a concert at Heroes Grove. The concert will take place, but the Arts Council will not sponsor the cost of that.
3. There is art on display at Irigo's and they are looking for others to display their art there. They discussed a potential to catalog local artists on the webpage, including a photo and contact information.
4. The book discussion group is still working on how they can proceed in the future.
5. Possibility Place sign needs to be updated.

### **GREENWAY COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES REPORT**

Mr. Seidler provided the following report:

1. Ms. Scott met with the neighbors of the Oak Park Neighborhood. They were concerned with a few things including how close the trail was to the homes, wildlife, and bikers using the trail, and kids or vagrants misusing the area. Most of the neighbors were actually offering to help be part of the process by the end of the meeting. The neighbors would like to make significant changes to the roadway and the trail, so they are actively meeting and coming up with ideas. It was a positive communication and exchange of ideas. Mr. Seidler noted that by sending a map it gave the impression that it was happening asap and they were caught off guard, but once that was cleared up they were willing to help out. Mr. Seidler is reviewing the area and working on realigning the trail.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES**

Mr. Smith provided the following update:

1. The CEC got to attend the Egg-Stravaganza event and give out slap bracelets while Jim Seidler ran on a treadmill set up in the bed of a truck.
2. They will be attending the Earth Day event and the Kite Festival.

3. Mr. MacIntyre asked how much was spent on the Egg-Stravaganza. Ms. Scott stated that two groups will be requesting up to \$50 each. Money may be requested for refreshments for the Earth Day event.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **For-Profit Usage of the Parks**

Ms. Scott received a request from a private group that would like to host an adult volleyball tournament. This would include 20 nets over 8 weekends at George Park and Lingle Park. There wouldn't be vendors, but they would make money as the organizer. The P&R would get \$125 tournament fee plus \$40 per day, so around \$300 a weekend. Mr. MacIntyre stated that during that time others couldn't use the fields and this group would make a ton of money. Ms. Scott answered correct. Mr. Seidler stated there is no history of approving tournaments for profit. Mr. Lentz suggested keeping the pavilion open for others. Mr. Smith stated that the food trucks and selling of items tend to go along with events like this and those are not approved either.

Ms. Scott stated there is another group that wants to have a basketball tournament at Koons with food trucks or concession for a two-day weekend with adult players. They are estimating a revenue of about \$5000 and P&R would make \$300. Mr. Smith stated there is concern about exposure or liability for the Township, and competition, et cetera. Ms. Scott stated that we are allowing the youth organizations to bring in food trucks for their events such as Healthy Kids Running Series.

Mr. MacIntyre stated that allowing businesses to conduct business in the park has been a struggle in the past. He cited trainers working under CASA or the baseball organizations, fitness instructors and similar situations create a sticky situation for the Township. The issue is making money and having no recompense for the community that is now not able to use the facility. Ms. Scott stated that the policy says you cannot use the park to make money, so this technically does fall under that, but it is a sports league so she wanted to get the feeling of the Board. Mr. MacIntyre stated it should not be allowed. Mr. Seidler agrees with the park policy, noting this would be a significant change from the policy in place.

Ms. Scott asked if they feel differently if it were a similar organization but for youth; there is a group that is and has been using the parks for a for-profit tournament. Mr. Johnson stated that he has heard from soccer people that they make hundreds of thousands of dollars on those tournaments, and they are played on Township property. CASA is a non-profit. Mr. MacIntyre stated that a non-profit doesn't mean that they don't make money and suggested that the board revisit the issue.

Mr. MacIntyre noted that most of those that run tournaments are those that use the park fields all the time and they use the tournament as a fundraiser. If they were doing

it every weekend it would become a problem very quickly, and may need to be limited somehow, one per season seems reasonable but not every weekend. Mr. Smith noted that those groups are the ones building and maintaining the fields so they are investing that money back into their parks. He is more resistant to groups that are not investing in their community.

Mr. Johnson asked when the fees were increased. Ms. Scott stated that the fees were increased 1-2 years ago.

Mr. MacIntyre made a motion that, in accordance with the current policy, we are not permitted to do this, and we will undertake a review of the policy in the next few months. Mr. Lentz seconded the motion and a unanimous vote followed.

#### Park Tour

Members discussed using the senior van. In the past it was done on Sundays because the parks are less busy making it easier to evaluate the structures and facilities. If they are talking about the utilization of the parks this year, it would be better to do a weeknight or Saturday. Thursday 4/29/21 at 6pm, starting at the Municipal Center was agreed upon.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Hiner  
Recording Secretary