

**LOWER PAXTON TOWNSHIP
PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 4, 2021**

Members in Attendance

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

Members Absent

Mayur Patel

Also in Attendance

Rachelle Scott, Staff Liaison

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Neal Johnson called the meeting of the Parks and Recreation Board to order at 7:23 pm in Room 174 of the Lower Paxton Township Municipal Center, 425 Prince Street, Harrisburg, PA.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment offered.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Lentz made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 7, 2021 meeting. Mr. Smith seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved as submitted.

CDABA

(Central Dauphin Area Basketball Association)

Ms. Scott explained that she sent an email to CDABA representatives indicating the Township would like to work together to support them, but not take over the program. She asked to schedule a meeting with them to discuss things such as registration or helping them find board members. They replied they were hoping to meet next week, but she is waiting to hear back from them on a date and time. She added that there will need to be a fee charged for LP to take on that work.

Mr. MacIntyre stated that there is no way to get this organized and done in time for the upcoming season.

Mr. Lentz stated that if LP steps in for CDABA, it will open the door for other organizations such as football or baseball to ask LP to take over that one too; it is not clear where to draw the line. It seems to Mr. Lentz that the group isn't ready to transition out of it. Mr. MacIntyre stated he interprets the lack of response as they have already checked out.

Mr. MacIntyre stated the same question came up when Lower Paxton Soccer was being taken over by Capital Area Soccer, and kept asking the Township to help on a large scale. Mr. Smith noted that one difference is that CDABA is basically self-funded.

Mr. Smith stated he is comfortable waiting for them to reach back out before offering them anything else. He added that Ms. Scott offered them what the Board discussed and nothing more needs done on this side.

Ms. Scott stated that if there is a way to support them, her first reaction is to help, but if she is cautious to set a precedence. Offering to take over their registration would be a large undertaking.

Mr. MacIntyre suggested tabling the discussion until Ms. Scott needs the Board to do something. Mr. Lentz would like to tell them now that it is too late for us to help.

Mr. Johnson noted there is no action to be taken at this time. Ms. Scott stated the only things the Board could do right now is vote to say no to CDABA, or let it open-ended as it stands now. She added that the Township Manager agrees that if there is a way to help it would be ok, but not to take on a burden we can't handle. Mr. Seidler agreed that the current situation would make it not feasible.

Ms. Scott asked if she should say that for 2021-2022 school year, the Township is not going to pursue this joint venture, allowing it to be revisited in the future. Mr. MacIntyre would like to preface it with the fact that there hasn't been any progress made, it is now too late to do this. Mr. Johnson noted that with the Township's inaction, it may force them to come up with a more creative solution.

Ms. Smith summarized that CDABA was to communicate with Ms. Scott about how to work together on a joint effort, the Board was anticipating hearing their response of which there was none, the staffing situation in the Department has changed limiting their ability to help. Since they have not done anything to further the conversation along, and the staff situation has become problematic, it is realistic to say no at this time.

Mr. MacIntyre had made a motion to table, but the Board seems more inclined to tell them no. Mr. Smith noted that staff's first direction was to "see what you can do" but now given the circumstances, she should be given clear direction. Mr. Seidler seconded the motion so that it can be voted upon. Mr. MacIntyre withdrew his motion, and Mr. Seidler withdrew his second.

Mr. Lentz made a motion to tell them that we will not take it on for the 2021-2022 season, and if they desire, they can come back to discuss the 2022-2023 season. Mr. Seidler seconded the motion. Mr. Johnson called for discussion on the motion. Mr. MacIntyre asked why an alternative is being offered, and suggested just telling them we are unable to do it this year due to scheduling problems and difficulties getting timely responses, and leave off the part about coming back next year.

Mr. Lentz amended the motion to say tell them that we will not take it on for the 2021-2022 season. Mr. Seidler seconded the motion and unanimous vote followed to approve the motion.

That leaves the future open and implies that we may be willing to work with them in the future without promising anything.

LOCAL SHARE GAMING GRANT REQUEST

Ms. Scott explained that she is applying for a local share grant for \$150,000 distributed a copy of the cover sheet. The primary project is a Parks & Recreation Master Plan in the amount of \$78,000. The second part is the replacement of the basketball courts at Brightbill Park, and that is estimated at \$144,000. She noted that there is a need for about \$58,000 to complete these, and she is looking into other grants that can be used as the matching funds for the grant. Public Works will remove the existing courts which will also count as in-kind matching funds.

The Board of Supervisors met and ranked the grant requests, and the Parks and Rec requests were ranked number one. Grants can be awarded in full or partial.

Mr. Lentz asked about the 2022 budget. Ms. Scott stated they will start to work on that now, and over the next month.

Because the draft was submitted prior to August 1, the gaming board can perform a preliminary review and offer feedback.

The engineering fees and the patch/repair have already been paid, which shows the gaming board that the Township is invested in these projects.

The preliminary approval is in February and the funding is expected to be available in May.

FEE SCHEDULE FOR 2022

Ms. Scott distributed copies of the current fee schedule, and discussed the following fees with the Board.

Pavilions

A \$5 increase is proposed, as is customary each year. There was no increase from 2020 to 2021.

Heroes Grove

Ms. Scott stated that the fee is called a “maintenance fee” and was set at \$75 initially and has not been increased. Because this facility is unique, the fees may need to be different as features are added to it. There is now storage which is locked, and a manager would need to unlock if a group needed to use chairs or something. There are lights and a sound system available now as well. Because of these things, a staff fee may need to be added to the base rate, which would be at an overtime rate for a manager and a regular rate for a park ranger.

Mr. Lentz heard that the Linglestown Gazette is hosting a coaches’ roundtable there on August 21st. There will be high school football coaches from all over the area in attendance to discuss the upcoming season.

Ms. Scott noted she doesn’t have a recommendation for fees for Heroes Grove at this time, but she is looking into suggestions.

Fields and Ball Courts

Ms. Scott wasn’t sure what the fees traditionally covered for fields, and had discovered questions as she looked into the fees and permits. Board members didn’t remember a standard increase rate, but Mr. MacIntyre suggested a \$5 increase. Mr. Johnson asked how our rates compare to other municipalities. Mr. Seidler stated that Terry Bauknight looked into that a few years ago and we are generally lower than the others.

Ms. Scott stated the rates are only for adult rentals and for non-residents.

Ms. Scott also noted that Santana Field has lights but are not operating unless someone requests it. If someone needs lights, a staff person has to go inside and turn on the breaker. At this time, there is not a fee charged for electricity there. There were two teams that requested to use the field for a night game, and they ended up not using it, but it brought up the question of the fee for usage.

Special Event Permit

This is a relatively new fee, only being implemented 2 years ago. A new Township wide ordinance is under review that will require all special events to go through the Township Manager, who will distribute to each dept head to determine how it will affect their respective departments. That will also include tournaments, and anything that will impact parking or traffic flow. It will be beneficial to include the police and public works and others so they know how to assign their staff. Fees will be assessed based on covering expenses, so Ms. Scott will need to provide a fee schedule as the Township develops the ordinance. The Township permit will require 60 days notice.

Mr. Seidler asked about a meter to measure the electricity use, and Mr. Smith noted that there will be several facilities being used at most events, so the electricity fee may need to vary depending on how many or which facilities are being used.

An example of a special event is the Orange for Owen Foundation wants to have a baseball tournament fundraiser event at Brightbill Park. It is two days and will cost around \$500. If the event went through the Township one, the parks and rec would only charge around \$110 for the field rentals. The current PR Special Event permit is \$125 per day, but isn't clear what it covers.

Ms. Scott stated that fees for Parks and Recreation should be so that they cover the cost of operation or maintenance, and not just a random fee. Mr. Seidler noted that a tournament would justify fees since there would be heavy use which could mean extra maintenance.

Vending Permits

Ms. Scott stated that a permit costs \$50 to sell in the park. These are only available to a nonprofit, resident-based youth sports organization, or Township-run event. Food trucks are becoming extremely popular, but remain limited to those categories. There has been a question as to whether the \$50 per day per truck fee is appropriate versus a seasonal or monthly fee. Ms. Scott is opposed to a seasonal or monthly fee. She feels we should know where the vendors are and when. Mr. MacIntyre suggested a one time fee with daily fees, for example, \$300 for the summer and you still have to reserve your dates but only pay \$40, where as others that don't pay the seasonal fee would have to pay a higher daily rate such as \$60. The ice cream

truck would be a prime example, where if he is asked to come to a party or event, he is passing the \$50 vendor permit fee onto the customer on top of whatever other fee he may charge them to be there.

Ms. Scott noted that at the beginning of the year, staff was discussing if having a food truck triggered the special event permit, or if one was fine and two triggered the permit. The special event application isn't clear, and even one good truck could have an impact on traffic.

Mr. Lentz stated that food trucks can significantly impact concession stand sales which a lot of the organizations rely on for funding.

Mr. MacIntyre stated he feels like one truck equates a special event.

Mr. Smith noted the reason that a food truck should trigger a special event permit is that they would not hit any other fees on the fee schedule, but they are using the park to generate income for a business, so the number of trucks makes no difference. They are using the park and generating an income on township property. Ms. Scott asked who should incur the cost. The food truck is getting the \$50 vendor permit, but the \$125 special event permit could be paid by the truck owner or the person asking the truck to come to their event or reservation. Mr. MacIntyre stated the truck has to be a special event. Ms. Lentz stated that once they pay, they get a permit and the park ranger verifies they have the permit, if they don't, they call the police to have them removed. Mr. Smith stated that the food trucks are being requested by an organization, so that organization is responsible for the special event permit, which they may or may not pass on to the truck. If the truck comes in on their own, they would be responsible to pay. (They would not be permitted to just show up and sell because they are only allowed under 3 specific circumstances...)

Mr. MacIntyre would like to see report of pavilion rentals broken down by resident and non-resident.

Ms. Scott stated the criteria to say what is or is not a special event is not clear, and it would be very helpful to determine a set of parameters, so staff can clearly understand what requires a permit. A food truck would be allowed to "cater" an event as long as they bring the food just for that party and do not open up to sell food from the truck. There is no charge or permit to bring in a caterer.

Mr. Smith asked if there is data from larger services or other organizations. Ms. Scott will see if she can gather some information. Hampden Township is one that is similar in some ways to Lower Paxton, and there are others within the PRPS network that could be helpful.

PARK UPDATES

Ms. Scott provided the following updates:

1. Heroes Grove: There will be a historical presentation regarding WWII at 6pm tomorrow.
2. Ranger Fields: CASA is working on beautification near the concession stand funded by a grant, including landscaping and a sitting area.
3. George Park: National Night Out was last night and went very well.
4. Koons Park: Basketball championships are this week.
5. Library Boxes: Miss Hicklin's library boxes are being installed. She will visit the summer camps during the last week of camp to give the children information regarding the library boxes.
6. Autumn Oaks: The Pickleball courts are in, and Joel McNaughton asked about the use of a "natural" fence instead of a 6' chain-link fence, but there are no real alternatives.
The Board agreed.
7. Summer Camp: Still going extremely well and receiving many compliments.
8. Vandalism:
 - a. Lamplight
 - i. Port-o-John was tipped over for the first time this summer.
 - ii. Theft from the Summer Camp Storage Bin.
 - b. Heroes Grove
 - i. There was graffiti on the storage wall. It is being removed.
 - c. Mr. MacIntyre asked if security cameras have been considered, whether operational or not.

ARTS COUNCIL UPDATES

Mr. Smith provided the following update:

1. The Arts Council hosted an author event, with Sherry Knowles, and it was well attended with about 16 participants.

GREENWAY COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES REPORT

Mr. Seidler provided the following update:

1. The Committee will be visiting the northern section of the Oak Park Trail to evaluate some things such as the stream crossings, obstacles, and the buffer space between the trail and the neighbors' homes.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Mr. Seidler provided the following update:

1. The 5K went well: there were 54 participants and plenty of volunteer support. They met and discussed minor improvements and ways to engage more runners.

OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m. The next meeting of the Lower Paxton Township Parks and Recreation Board is scheduled for September 1, 2021, at 7:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Hiner
Recording Secretary