

**PARK AND RECREATION BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS:** Nick Christie (absent), Jeff Williams, Jason Saposnek, Christina Dryden, Daniel Harrison (absent), Lauren Sanker (absent), Jessica Martini

**COMMISSIONER LIAISONS:** Rick Castranio, Eric Fairchild

**STAFF:** Timothy Wendling, Chad Krebs, Eduardo Mera-Aguilar, Alexis Minana, Tiffany Herron (Mech. Rec. Dept.),

Chairman Williams called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. A moment of silence was observed and the pledge of allegiance was recited.

**ROLL CALL:**

Roll call was performed—Mr. Christie, Mr. Harrison, and Ms. Sanker were absent. Commissioner-liaisons Castranio and Fairchild were present.

**CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES**

The minutes from February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025, were considered. Ms. Martini made a **MOTION** to accept the minutes as presented. Mr. Saposnek **SECONDED** the motion which passed 4-0.

**CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chairman Williams announced that this meeting would be livestreamed for the first time. Going forward, Park and Recreation Board meetings will be watchable on Zoom and recordings will be made available after the fact on YouTube.

Chairman Williams congratulated Mr. Krebs and Mr. Mera-Aguilar for their recent award from the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society (PRPS). Mr. Krebs and Mera-Aguilar were recognized for their work on the Sensory Garden at Winding Hill Park. They received an “Excellence in Recreation” award; this is the second year in a row the UAT parks department has received this award. Chairman Williams reported having discussions with other parks professionals who were inspired by the Sensory Garden concept.

Chairman Williams addressed recent allegations by Commissioner Fairchild that he and others on the Park Board had violated the Sunshine Act in a meeting with Derck and Edson via Zoom early in the planning stages for Generations Park. Chairman Williams expressed concern that Commissioner Fairchild had insinuated that members of the Board be subject to civil penalties such as fines. Chairman Williams expressed a desire to put a pin in the issue and move forward collaboratively with Commissioner Fairchild.

Commissioner Fairchild responded that he brought up the Sunshine Law violation in the context of Mr. Williams’s bid for a spot on the Board of Commissioners. He emphasized the need for

members of the Park and Rec Board to remain current on Sunshine laws in PA. He did agree to stop pressing the issue and move forward, although he expressed that he didn't have the same vision for Generations Park as Chairman Williams.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Doug Marsico, of the Upper Allen Mechanicsburg Baseball Association, reported that registration for the upcoming season has just ended. There are 573 children registered, ages 4-18. Mr. Marsico thanked the UAT parks staff for their support.

Mr. Marsico said that they are trying to grow grass in the fields and have applied \$2500 worth of mushroom soil to aid this process.

Baseball Opening Day will take place on Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m. at Fisher Park. 2025 is the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the organization. Mr. Marsico is seeking local figures who might have played baseball for the association in the past to attend and possibly speak. Opening Day will feature food trucks for breakfast and lunch.

Mr. Marsico addressed the proposed turf installations at Fisher Park's North and South fields and described it as a long-term project. Currently, they are trying to preserve and grow the real grass already there. He said the Township Engineer, C.S. Davidson, has been engaged in the planning process for installing turf. Mr. Marsico thanked the Park Board for their support and said the project is not ready to be brought to the Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Saposnek asked how many of the youth baseball players were from Upper Allen and Mr. Marsico estimated 65-70%.

Mr. Jim Salter, of Upper Allen Mechanicsburg Girls Softball, announced their Opening Day would be Saturday, April 19<sup>th</sup> (Easter weekend) at Winding Hills Park North. They will also host food trucks. He alluded to the future possibility of having a Blackhawk helicopter drop the ceremonial first pitch; one of the participants in softball has a father who is a pilot for the PA National Guard.

Mr. Salter reported there are 257 girls registered in the program, 84% of which are Upper Allen Township residents. The organization plays other teams in a consortium called West Shore Minors Softball. Mr. Salter echoed Mr. Marsico's praise of parks staff. The season officially starts April 14<sup>th</sup>. The concession stand at Winding Hill Park will be manned throughout the season—on non-game days, the selection will be limited. The concession stand will now be serving Chik-fil-A sandwiches, JoJo's pizza, and Hershey's ice cream.

Mr. Salter invited everyone to attend Opening Day.

He requested that trash cans be placed out in the parks earlier in the season. Mr. Krebs explained that UAT hires seasonal staff to begin on April 1<sup>st</sup>. With limited staff, the trash cans cannot be

maintained. Because it is a staffing issue, Mr. Krebs suggested it was an issue for the Board of Commissioners.

### **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Castranio reported that at the BOC meeting on March 19<sup>th</sup>, the Board approved putting the Grantham Pond Improvements out to bid. Chairman Williams attended that meeting, where many members of the public came forward in support of rehabilitating Grantham Pond and Park.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee**

Mr. Wendling reported that the first in a series of historical talks, featuring Dr. Amanda Cheromiah, a scholar teaching at Dickinson University, took place at the Township building on March 10<sup>th</sup>. With assistance from the Woman's Club, who served free refreshments, the event proved a great success. The next talk will be on April 14<sup>th</sup>, to feature historian Mr. William Murray. Mr. Murray will discuss "The Creation and Early Years of Upper Allen Township." There are four more speakers scheduled through October.

Mr. Wendling reminded everyone that there are fundraising efforts ongoing to raise money for events related to the 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, including Fall Fest.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **RecTrac Software**

Mr. Krebs demonstrated new software to be deployed called RecTrac. RecTrac is a landing page which will allow users to reserve pavilions online as well as purchase dog park passes. This will greatly streamline the reservation process. The system will allow users to pay online. Chairman Williams explained that the software is by a company called Vermont Systems, which he praised.

#### **BS&A Invoice Cloud**

Mr. Mera-Aguilar reported that invoicing for the department has moved to the platform BS&A, where permitting and invoicing are automated and centralized.

#### **Recreation Report**

Ms. Herron provided information about both adult and youth participation in various programs. She spoke about the Mechanicsburg After School Program, which had 156 student-participants on the final day of the program. Dungeons and Dragons enrolled 29 students; Acting & Improv also had 19 students; Bowling had 22. The field hockey clinic attracted 29. There is a "green team" of fourth and fifth graders from Elmwood Elementary who meet each Monday at the environmental center. There are 23 enrolled in junior martial arts.

Ms. Herron reported that the summer programming catalog went out on March 17<sup>th</sup> and said extra copies were available at her office and had been distributed throughout the Township.

The Rec Department is currently seeking staff to fill summer positions at the pool, in the playground program, and for the summer adventure camp. They have already received over 50 applications, 50% of which are returning staff. They are conducting group interviews on March 29<sup>th</sup> and April 12<sup>th</sup>. Lifeguard interviews will take place mid-April and front-desk and management positions are also available at the pool.

Chairman Williams praised Ms. Herron and her staff for their work on recreation programming and thanked her for her work.

### **PARK ASSIGNMENTS**

Mr. Christie was absent, but Mr. Williams reported that Country Estates “looked fine.” Chairman Williams opined on the beauty of McCormick Park and said it is clean at this time of year. This led to a discussion about the littering problem at the park and in the surrounding areas. Trash cans had been put out in the past, but it was found that people were emptying trash from their vehicles into the bins, causing them to overflow constantly. Maintaining the bins is impractical. The policy has been like that of State parks, which is carry-in, carry-out.

Ms. Judy Bailey resides at 450 East Lisburn Road near McCormick Park and says she picks up litter there regularly, along with her neighbors. She suggested signage be installed to indicate that you must take your trash out of the park with you. She also suggested the imposition of a fine on those found to be littering. Mr. Krebs was amenable to placing signage at McCormick and plans to do so.

Chairman Williams noted that the Dog Park Committee had their annual meeting on March 12<sup>th</sup>. There are currently 280 registrants.

Ms. Dryden said Simpson Park is the most beautiful of the parks. Trout Run Park (formerly Center Square Park) had no issues.

Ms. Martini said Aspen and Spring Run are good. She did say that there is a littering problem at Mt. Allen in the pavilion area.

Mr. Saposnek said Miller’s Crest looked “fine.” Of Fisher Park, he reported that there is a water retention basin there which kids are using as a BMX track and expressed concern about erosion to the berm. Mr. Saposnek suggested that BMX-friendly features could be installed at Koser down the line to give kids a place for such activities. At Fisher, he also observed some erosion taking place on the pathway adjacent to the corn fields.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### **Generations**

Chairman Williams asked if anyone had any ideas for Generations Park, and no one came forward. Mr. Krebs announced that the Grand Opening of Generations is to take place on May 3<sup>rd</sup> from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. The Park Board will be present to talk with the public about concepts for the park. Mr. Krebs said there will be public input sessions related to Generations over the next year. At the April meeting, he will present an updated plan from C.S. Davidson.

### **PARK PROJECT SUMMARY**

Mr. Krebs provided a summary of the park's department activities throughout 2024. The Sensory Garden was installed and there are 600 plantings there; new plantings have been added for Spring.

The department overhauled the bathrooms at Fisher, Friendship, and Simpson Parks. He showed dramatic before and after photos of the renovated bathrooms.

Mr. Krebs showed the trail at Trout Run Park (formerly Center Square), where a .25 unpaved trail was mown to run along the stream there. Mr. Krebs spoke of plans to connect the trail via a boardwalk system to the Ashcombe development.

Mr. Krebs reported on the installation of trails at Generations Park which began in October 2024. There were 4,600 feet of trails added along with stormwater improvements. The trails were funded in part by an LSA grant for \$1 million.

The rain deck at Fisher Park is in its second year and it was refitted with a non-slip coating to prevent falls. It is a very popular attraction in warm weather.

Mr. Krebs listed the major events of 2024: Reading Day (~150 people); Treat Tuesdays; Movie Night with Alba Orthodontics; Fall Fest 2024 (~1500 people); Tree lighting (~350 people).

In 2025, the playground equipment at Grantham is being replaced the week of March 31<sup>st</sup>. The pond restoration was approved by the BOC and construction is anticipated to begin in June. In 2025, the pond, the pier, stormwater infrastructure, and a new intake pipe will be installed. In 2026, a half-mile of trail will be put in and the parking lot will be paved. UAT obtained a \$250,000 DCNR grant for this project.

New outdoor fitness equipment is to be installed at Winding Hill Park North this summer. The swing set at Trout Run is being replaced and rubber mulch will be installed.

Mr. Krebs spoke about the Winding Hill train viewing area, which is a budgeted project. Mr. Krebs plans to apply for a grant from Norfolk Southern to fund this project. The viewing area will have seating as well as a radio which will convey train information and movements.

At Winding Hill Park, the dirt mound will be levelled off and turned into an open field, with plans to add trails around the perimeter to connect with the existing trails. Mr. Saposnek suggested the area be made into a cricket pitch, as there are none on the West Shore. Mr. Krebs

replied that the area would sit for at least a year to allow grass to grow in. It has not been decided what to with the land.

Mr. Krebs announced that he had proposed kayak launches at McCormick and Simpson to the BOC with the aim to increase access to the Yellow Breeches. UAT has obtained a \$100,000 no-match grant for this purpose. The grant does not specify what form the increased access would take. UAT is exploring partnering with Lower Allen Township to possibly extend the route. More information to come.

A private donor has offered to fund the installation of a skate park at Koser. The legal details are being sorted and Mr. Krebs said he hoped the skate park would be put in in 2025.

Ms. Bailey asked about extending the trail at Winding Hill to Lower Allen through Orchard Glen. Mr. Krebs reported that UAT is pursuing a connecting trail there, but no decisions have been reached. UAT is looking at adding a connecting trail to give walkable access to Winding Hills park from Charter homes development in Lower Allen. The trail would connect Orchard Glenn Development to a trail in the Charter Home development. The land is owned by Orchard Glenn HOA and Charter Homes currently, so both parties need to consent.

Referring to the open space at WHN (what is now a dirt pile), Mr. Marsico questioned the wisdom of levelling the area at Winding Hill and planting grass there if it would ultimately be converted into baseball fields. Mr. Krebs explained that there was no cost-savings associated with having the fields installed at a later date.

Mr. Krebs reported that there are new water fountains going in at Fisher, Friendship, Mt. Allen, and Rosegarden. These water fountains have a bottle filler, standard height fountain, an ADA-level fountain, and a dog bowl fountain.

The flagpoles at Fisher and Friendship are being replaced.

The maintenance building at Winding Hill is almost complete. This allows equipment to be stored indoors, giving it a longer life.

Picnic tables, trees, and benches are budgeted for. The basketball courts at Miller's Crest and Spring Run will be seal coated. The Friendship parking lot will be seal-coated.

UAT is exploring options for water and sewer at Fisher. The sewer path is inefficient. The water line is insufficient at 1 inch diameter.

The gutters at Generations Barn will be replaced.

Mr. Krebs reported on dates for upcoming events related to the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary:

Historical talks to take place April 14<sup>th</sup>, May 12<sup>th</sup>, September 18<sup>th</sup>, and October 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at the Township building. Generations Grand Opening to take place on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Food Truck Fridays take place every fourth Friday at Winding Hill from 4 p.m. – 7 p.m. and will include live

music this year. Treat Tuesdays run every Tuesday when school is out—Kona Ice is a confirmed vendor. The Community Art Project will take place on June 29<sup>th</sup> at Winding Hill Park North from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Fall Fest 2025 will take place September 26<sup>th</sup> from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Winding Hill. The Tree Lighting will be at Winding Hill on November 30<sup>th</sup> from 5 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Chairman Williams showed a “gold bone” which is what dog-park sponsors receive when they donate \$250 or more to the park. Jim and Karen Cochran (who donate each year), and Mermaid Carwash, have both received gold bones this year.

With no further public input or commentary from the Board, Chairman Williams adjourned the meeting at 7:31 p.m.