

**Upper Allen Township  
100 Gettysburg Pike  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055  
Phone: (717) 766-0756 ♦ Fax: (717) 796-9833  
www.upperallentwp.org**

**PARK & RECREATION  
REGULAR MEETING**

**July 26, 2023**

**PRESENT:** JEFF WILLIAMS, CHRISTINA DRYDEN, LAUREN SANKER, JASON SAPOSNEK - MEMBERS; Ken Martin, Township Commissioner; Richard Castranio, Township Commissioner; Chad Krebs, Parks Director; Eddie Mera-Aguilar, Parks and Facilities Coordinator; Julie Roth, Recording Secretary

**VISITORS**

Jim Salter- Upper Allen Mechanicsburg Softball

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Williams called the meeting to order at 6:3 p.m. All attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL**

All present introduced themselves.

**MINUTES**

A motion was made by Ms. Dryden to approve the meeting minutes from the June 28, 2023 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Saposnek and passed unanimously.

**CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT**

Mr. Williams mentioned that July is Park and Recreation Month. He added that the pre-meeting for tonight's meeting was held at Winding Hills Parks and the parks were heavily used and looked great. Mr. Williams recognized Tiffany Herron, as this was her first meeting.

**CHAIRMAN'S RECOGNITION OF VISITORS**

**1. Township Commissioners - Ken Martin/Rick Castranio**

Commissioner Castranio mentioned that he stopped in for Kona Ice at Friendship Park and it was a nice treat. Commissioner Martin told the park department to keep up the good work and thanked the board for their service. Mr. Williams stated that it is fairly rare to have elected officials listen to what is said at the meetings, and he thanked the Commissioners for listening and actually hearing what is said.

**2. Assistant Township Manager - Kelly Palmer**

Absent

**3. Parks Director - Chad Krebs**

Mr. Krebs stated that the grass volleyball courts have been installed and the basketball court at Center Square Park has been redone. He added that the mister station at Fisher Park has been started. Mr. Krebs stated that the contractors are getting ready to move the house at Generations Park.

**4. Parks & Facilities Coordinator-Eddie Mera-Aguilar**

None

**5. Mechanicsburg Recreation Department- Tiffany Herron**

Ms. Herron mentioned that Park and Recreation Professionals Day was celebrated all week and staff were delivered something each day to their location. She added that this is the last week for the playground program with 182 registered kids. Ms. Herron mentioned that the average participation per day was between fifty and sixty. She stated that the summer programs are winding down and if anyone has anything to add to the fall brochure to let her know.

**PARK ASSIGNMENTS**

Mr. Williams mentioned that Mr. Christie sent an email stating that Friendship Park and Rosegarden Park looked good. He added that a car was parked at Country Estates Park, but no one was there and the park looked fine. Mr. Williams stated that McCormick Park had a social group with a folding chair set up and there were people in the water. He added that on Wednesday July 12<sup>th</sup> was the 5-year celebration of the Dog Park. Mr. Williams mentioned that the Dog Park Committee had a stand set up with lemonade and door prizes. He added that at one point he counted 27 vehicles there. Mr. Williams mentioned that last time he checked, there were 306 registered dogs, and he keeps restocking the registration forms at the gate.

Ms. Sanker mentioned that Grantham Park looked really good but some of the areas could use a trim. She asked if a trash can could be placed by the dock as sometimes trash is left there.

Ms. Dryden mentioned that Center Square Park could use a trim and at Simpson Park, there is a tree branch hanging that wind could bring down.

Mr. Saposnek stated that Fisher Park looked really good and Koser Park looked much improved from the last time he visited. He added that there were two families at Miller's Crest Park while he was there, and one mentioned how much they liked the park.

**PUBLIC INPUT**

Jim Salter, Upper Allen Mechanicsburg Softball, stated that they had a successful camp. He mentioned that they would like to set up a projector to play a movie on August 19<sup>th</sup> after the game on field 1 at Winding Hill Park ends. He added that they would be out of the park before 10pm. Mr. Krebs stated that he does not see any issues with it. Mr. Mera-Aguilar added that if a train goes through then that would interrupt the movie. Mr. Williams asked the board and they all agreed they were okay with the movie that night. He added that he is excited to see movies in the park coming back.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**1. Park Events Update**

Mr. Mera-Aguilar mentioned that there were between five hundred and six hundred people in attendance at the first movie night of the summer. He added that there were four food trucks and two of them ran out of food within the first hour. Mr. Mera-Aguilar stated that the lights that were rented were brighter than expected and the parking lot was safe to walk in. He mentioned that Alba Orthodontics provided free popcorn, glow sticks, and bubble wands. Mr. Mera-Aguilar added that the fields were packed with blankets and chairs. He added that next month's movie was voted on and the movie chosen is the original Toy Story.

Mr. Mera-Aguilar mentioned that Alba Orthodontics donated \$2,300 for inflatables for the Fall Fest. He added that two local bands are booked for the event, and they will each cover for a few hours. Mr. Mera-Aguilar mentioned that about one month out, one part of the event will be heavily advertised each week. He stated that volunteers are needed for inhouse activities such as the maze, hayrides, and other items. He added that he will have a finalized list closer to the time.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Winding Hills Sensory Garden**

Mr. Krebs mentioned that adding in a sensory garden with a few trails has been talked about for the past few years, but since the paving will be taking place at Winding Hills Park, it was mentioned at the last Board of Commissioners Meeting to be added into the paving contract. He added that it will be for all senses including fruit trees, fuzzy plants, honey suckle and lemon grass along with others. Mr. Krebs stated that it will be fenced off this fall to give it time to grow and then will be open in the spring. Commissioner Martin stated that he is very excited and thinks this is the kind of thing that helps to set the township apart. He asked if there would be plaques and Mr. Krebs stated that there would be signs at the entrances and each area would have a small sign. Mr. Williams mentioned that this will be great for kids on the spectrum and thinks this will be a fantastic addition to the park.

Mr. Krebs stated that he is pleased to announce that the Parks Department has been internationally accredited as a Certified Autism Center through the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards. He added that autism is diagnosed in 1 of every 36 children and 1 in 6 people have a sensory need, so it's important for us to look at inclusivity with a high priority in our parks. Mr. Krebs mentioned that to acquire this certification, the entire Park Staff has been trained, tested, and certified on three different levels of autism awareness courses. He added that this certification will feature the township on AutismTravel which is a website dedicated to providing leisure and travel for the autistic community and is accessible to over 5.6 million parents and families worldwide. Mr. Krebs stated that an announcement is also made to all certified travel agents who have completed Certified Autism Travel Professional training.

Mr. Krebs stated that Upper Allen Township is the first publicly owned and managed parks system in Pennsylvania and the 5th parks system in the country to become a Certified Autism Center. In Pennsylvania there are 14 other certified centers consisting of private and public entities like Knoebel's and Sesame Place. He added that on an accessibility related note, the Park and Recreation Board, Board of Commissioners and staff deserve a lot of credit in acquiring this certification. Mr. Krebs stated the first inclusive playground was designed and installed 5 years ago at Winding Hill North and then again it was a high priority in the design of Friendship Park's playground. He mentioned that on August 17<sup>th</sup> the International Board of Credentialing and Continuing Education Standards will be conducting a national media announcement on the certifications. Mr. Krebs stated that he is presenting this certification to the Park and Recreation Board tonight and will be presenting it again to the Commissioners at the next Board of Commissioners meeting on August 16<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Williams mentioned that he would like to recognize Mr. Fraser, who has been pushing to get the parks as all inclusive as possible. He added that he is proud to be affiliated with a government and staff that goes above and beyond.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The next meeting will be held on August 23, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. With no further business to discuss, Chairman Williams adjourned the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Roth  
Recording Secretary