



Upper Allen Township
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PARK & RECREATION REGULAR MEETING

February 23, 2022

PRESENT: JEFF WILLIAMS, JASON SAPOSNEK, DANIEL HARRISON, NICK CHRISTIE, LAUREN SANKER, JESSICA MARTINI – MEMBERS; James Cochran, Township Commissioner; Richard Castranio, Township Commissioner; Kelly Palmer, Assistant Township Manager; Chad Krebs, Parks Director; Julie Roth, Recording Secretary

VISITORS

Sandy Gladfelter- WellSpan Get Outdoors Program
Jennifer Lee- Derck & Edson
Jim Salter- Upper Allen Mechanicsburg Girls' Softball
Sean Cochran- Keystone FCU

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Williams called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. All attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

All present introduced themselves.

MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Harrison to approve the meeting minutes from the January 26, 2022, meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Saposnek and passed unanimously.

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr. Williams welcomed Ms. Martini to the board. He mentioned that along with a board chair from another municipality, he visited the dog park and both Winding Hills Parks and Friendship Park. Mr. Williams shared a few "art in the park" ideas for the township parks to look at in the future such as a meditation maze or chainsaw art. He added that it would give the parks something different.

CHAIRMAN'S RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

1. *Township Commissioners – Jim Cochran, Richard Castranio*

Commissioner Cochran asked Mr. Williams if he thought 2021 was a good year, and Mr. Williams replied that he thought it was. Commissioner Cochran stated that the township does not have a plan or objective for the year that would show that. He added that he is working with Ms. Palmer to put something into place. Mr. Williams stated that he is all in favor of strategic planning and park maintenance plans. Commissioner Cochran added that he is proud of what has been done and it will be hard to do better each year. Mr. Christie mentioned adding in a scan code near any new playground equipment asking people to check in which would help gauge how many people are checking out the new equipment.

2. *Assistant Township Manager – Kelly Palmer*

Ms. Palmer stated that she received an invitation for Nick Smeal's Eagle Scout Ceremony at Simpson Park on March 19th at 2pm. Mr. Krebs added that the project was installing bird houses at Simpson Park and Grantham Park. Ms. Palmer mentioned that anyone that would like to attend can RSVP.

Ms. Palmer gave an update on the progress of the Township's website. She stated that the website is being rebuilt and it is a work in progress. Ms. Palmer added that the dog park page has been updated and the registration forms are back online. She asked if anyone has any ideas for the website and Mr. Williams mentioned that the dog park section sounds like the park is not open yet, so it does need to be rewritten. He also added that all the parks have pictures shown of them and that looks great.

3. *Park Maintenance Supervisor – Chad Krebs*

Mr. Krebs stated that they are getting the equipment ready for the season and that there are a lot of limbs to be picked up due to the wind lately.

4. *Mechanicsburg Recreation Department – Sue Canniff*

Ms. Canniff stated that they are getting ready for the March programs to start including an intro to ukulele class. She added that the brochure for the summer is at the printers. Ms. Canniff mentioned that the summer concert series will be taking place again this summer. She stated that the first one will be June 17th from 6-8pm and Christian Yeager will be the participant in the series. Ms. Canniff added that they would like to hold the first event at Friendship Park and have food trucks available during it. She mentioned that the concerts will be free to attend but they are looking for sponsors for them. Mr. Williams stated that he is glad to see the special events happening again. The board agreed that Friendship Park could be used for the first event. Ms. Canniff mentioned that they are accepting applications for the summer Playground Program for ages 16 and older and for the Summer Adventure Camp for ages 18 and older.

PARK ASSIGNMENTS

Mr. Christie mentioned that Center Square Park looked very well kept but there were a few branches down. He added that Simpson Park looked beautiful but there was a crack in the climbing rock.

Mr. Williams stated that Country Estates Park looked fine as well as McCormick Park but there were people sitting at the picnic table at McCormick Park. He added that the Dog Park was busy as usual and the annual meeting will be held at the Township Building on March 9th at 6:30pm. Mr. Williams stated that the signs for the meeting along with the new QR code signs are posted.

He mentioned that there is a lot of mud at the dog park so people are sneaking into the center section, which is closed, to stay out of the mud. Mr. Williams thanked Mr. Krebs for the new boxes of waste mitts and mentioned that people brought their own bags to use when they ran out.

Ms. Sanker stated that Grantham Park looked good, but it could use some stone in the parking lot and one of the pipes going into the water is broken. She also mentioned that there were a lot of sticks laying around.

Ms. Martini mentioned that Aspen Park, Spring Run Park, and Mt. Allen Park all looked good.

Mr. Saposnek stated that there was nothing to report on at Miller's Crest Park but there were a lot of sticks and muddy footprints at Fisher Park.

Mr. Harrison mentioned that even when chilly and wet, there were people out at the Winding Hills Parks. He added that the parks looked good.

PUBLIC INPUT

Sandy Gladfelter, from Wellspan presented their program called Get Outdoors. She stated that the program is now moving into Cumberland County, and it partners with local libraries to encourage reading and get outdoors. She stated that the program takes place at state, local, and community parks. Ms. Gladfelter mentioned that kids get books from participating parks and then go to the parks to look for clues and find a post. She added that they can either get a rubbing from the post or a four-digit code and that gives them credit for the hikes. Ms. Gladfelter stated that the kids get participation badges and can win prizes which include bicycles. She mentioned that they would like to use Winding Hills Park for the program which would begin on June 1st. Ms. Gladfelter stated that they will put in the post, maintain, and remove the post so no work would be put on the township staff for it. Mr. Harrison mentioned that it sounded awesome. Ms. Sanker asked how long this program has been in place and Ms. Gladfelter replied that it started in York 15 years ago and has started to slowly expand into neighboring Counties. Commissioner Cochran asked is Simpson Library was on board with the program and Ms. Gladfelter replied that they are.

OLD BUSINESS

No old business.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Board Elections

Mr. Williams stated that a new Chairman and Assistant Chairman need to be appointed for this year. Mr. Saposnek mentioned that Mr. Williams does a fine job as Chairman and should remain the Chariman. Mr. Williams asked Ms. Sanker if she would fill the Assistant Chairman position and she stated she would. All board members agreed that Mr. Williams should remain Chairman and Ms. Sanker fill the vacancy in the Assistant Chairman position.

2. Coordination of Bench Ceremony for John Burch

Mr. Williams stated that when the Dog Park Committee meets on the 9th of March, they will discuss the bench ceremony. He thanked the commissioners for supporting this and Ms. Palmer for working with Mr. Burch's sister on the design of the plaque. Mr. Williams added that they are thinking of having the ceremony in May or when the weather is better.

3. *Derck & Edson Presentation, Public Input Session Review Presentation*

Jennifer Lee from Derck & Edson presented the findings from the public input sessions. She stated that the main meeting room was used for the public sessions which was comprised of four separate tables set up with boards and jars for voting. Ms. Lee also mentioned a tree was hung up to capture ideas that were not on the tables. The four tables had ideas for barn use, active, passive, and traditional use with each idea having a corresponding jar to place their vote in. She stated that each attendee was given ten acorns to place in the jars and vote however they chose. Ms. Lee stated that there was no age limit therefore, everyone that attended was able to vote. She mentioned that the board with leaves had the wording “what activity would you drive to do?” where attendees would write out their ideas and place them on the tree.

Ms. Lee presented a map showing where the participants lived in the Township. Then she showed a heat map showing where the concentration of voters live followed by a map showing attendees by age. The next slide presented the top choices for each session and the percentage by age groups that participated. Ms. Lee stated that walking/biking/hiking trails was the number one choice at each session as well as pollinator/butterfly/native gardens was a top choice at each session. She stated that in total there were 231 participants with 2308 total votes. Ms. Lee added that the overall participation by age was the 60+ group. She mentioned that the leaves on the tree were harder to quantify but the tree was filled twice. Ms. Lee presented an algorithm showing the items on the leaves and how many people requested them. She added that the park should complement other parks and be for all ages and abilities making it a destination in the community. Ms. Lee presented a map showing how the property can be zoned with passive on the outside area, followed by traditional and the active area on the inside. She added that this is before looking at the topography and wetlands on the property. Ms. Lee state that she is excited to be able to come back to the Board with more updates.

Mr. Salter, Upper Allen Mechanicsburg Girls’ Softball, stated that he was disappointed that it was such a small percentage of residents that came to vote and asked why there wasn’t a survey sent out that could be done online. Ms. Lee stated that they did debate having that type of input, but it would be challenging to do that without receiving duplication of participants. Mr. Cochran, Keystone FCU, mentioned that the trails and trees center is not used as much as they would have liked and by having the same type of area on this property, would it be creating more space not being actively used but will need to be maintained. Mr. Williams stated that this is a walking community and that there is always someone out walking. He added that he does not see the township ever having too many trails. Mr. Salter stated that when looking at the current parks in the township, the ones that people are walking at, are the parks that they can walk from their homes to. He asked what would be the draw to this property? Ms. Lee mentioned that this property has over sixty acres and will also include both active and traditional areas therefore making it a destination park that people will want to drive to.

ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting will be held on March 23, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. With no further business to discuss, Chairman Williams adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Roth
Recording Secretary