

**LOWER PAXTON TOWNSHIP
PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 2, 2022**

Members in Attendance

Neal Johnson
Jim Seidler
Stan Smith
Bob MacIntyre
Kirby Lentz

Also in Attendance

Rachelle Scott, P/R Manager
George Kunkel, President Koons Pool
Brian Bender, VP Koons Pool

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Neil Johnson called the February 2, 2022, meeting of the Parks and Recreation Board to order at 7:18 pm in Room 174 of the Lower Paxton Township Municipal Center, 425 Prince Street, Harrisburg, PA.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was none.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY 5, 2022, MEETING MINUTES

Mr. MacIntyre made a motion to approve the January 5, 2022, Parks and Recreation Board meeting minutes. Mr. Lentz seconded the motion, and it was followed by a unanimous vote of approval.

KOONS POOL UPDATE

Mr. Kunkel provided an update on Koons Pool. He stated Koons Pool pays no real estate taxes. Lower Paxton Township pays their sewer and stormwater run-off bill. Koons Pool is a public pool open to everyone. Mr. Bender is Vice President of the board. Board members previously did all maintenance work at the pool, but they are not able to do so now. He noted the Board is hoping to be able to pay people to do more of the work. The lap pool and baby pool are being painted in the spring, with a cost of \$10,000. Starting in 2015 through 2019, the pool earned \$77,859 in gaming grants. Sixteen other items were paid for with Koons Pool's own money. They include replacing two main pumps (\$60,000). The largest was to re-plumb the baby pool and install the flower to garnish excitement for the kids (in the amount of at least \$45,000). Koons Pool successfully opened during the pandemic.

Mr. Kunkel stated improvements/repairs planned for this winter and next spring include painting the pool and bath house floor, purchase of new lounge chairs, pay down bank loan, and contribute money towards the cost of the new diving board for which a grant has been applied for. Boyer Pools will be installing the new board. He noted the Board contributes money toward projects for which grant money is being requested to show that the pool is willing to use its own money in addition to applying for a grant. Mr. Kunkel stated the pool is required to pass an electrical inspection every three years.

Mr. Kunkel stated Lower Paxton Township Day camp, YMCA's and other camps bring camp registrants to the pool each summer. They have a choice to bring their own lifeguards to obtain a lower rate. The camps' use of the pool provides income.

Mr. Kunkel stated they videotaped the big pipes that are underneath the ground. The pipes are holding their own, but they are sixty years old. Failure of these pipes could cause a permanent pool closure.

STATUS OF MASTER PLAN

Ms. Scott stated that she, Township Manager Brad Gotshall, and Assistant Township Manager and Financial Director Sam Miller plan to meet with the landscape architect and recreation programmer to set the schedule and parameters for moving forward with the Master Plan.

Mr. Seidler asked if Koons Pool has been considered as part of the Master Plan. Ms. Scott stated it has not been included at this time.

PARKS REVITALIZATION PROJECT UPDATE

Ms. Scott stated she is moving forward with ten projects, along with conducting the Master Plan. A timeline for each project should be included in the upcoming Rec Guide going out on February 25.

Ms. Scott stated three playgrounds, including one at Kings Crossing, Lamplight, and Centennial Acres Parks should be installed April 11 and completed by April 22.

Work at Possibility Place playground should take place in the fall.

Public water should be installed at Koons Park in the fall.

Ms. Scott stated she is working with an engineer, HRG, to draft a layout for Hodges Heights Park. She noted that she invited them to attend the March Park and Rec Board meeting to present the draft proposed plan which includes landscaping, changing flow of park, and putting in a courtyard instead of pavilion.

New equipment installation at Happy Tails Dog Park is planned for the fall.

Baseball backstop at Gary Lowe field and the fencing will take place in March.

Bid specs for the new storage and restrooms at Brightbill Park will go out in May.

Bids are out to have courts repaired at Brightbill Park.

Ms. Scott stated she is working on a grant for next year to install a new playground and walking track around Brightbill Park. The walking trail will go up and around Heroes Grove and around the park trying to maximize a trail and minimize interference with other park activities.

Mr. Lentz asked what Linglestown Area Dog Park installation is. Ms. Scott replied it refers to potentially having a dog park at Blue Ridge. Mr. Lentz also questioned if disc golf is being considered at that location. Ms. Scott replied yes. Mr. Seidler asked what Possibility Place plans include. Ms. Scott replied the plan is to have a general contractor inspect the playground to determine any repairs or updates that are needed. Mr. Lentz asked if anyone considered replacing wood with composite. Ms. Scott replied most of it is composite except for underneath.

Mr. MacIntyre suggested making a walkway throughout Hodges Heights Park with bushes along the way, in the form of a maze for youth, to go with the courtyard aspect. Ms. Scott stated it is similar to the figure eight to maximize a trail there. There would be additional barriers. An investigation of the ground needs to be completed to confirm plants can grow on the land.

Mr. Seidler asked if the pavilion would be remain there. Ms. Scott replied she would suggest removing it. Mr. Seidler noted that the community was adamant about having a pavilion. Ms. Scott also stated they are looking at tent type of canopy that would create a barrier from the sun and still have picnic tables located under it.

Mr. Lentz asked if closing the park and having residents use Kings Crossing Park was ever considered. Mr. Seidler stated a significant number of community members advocated for the park and the pavilion in past years. Mr. MacIntyre stated the park has always had great community support. The problem is the land. It was heavily used, but the ground was not stable. Discussion followed regarding amenities the community originally wanted at the park. Their suggestions were not possible due to the continued settling of the land. Mr. Smith asked if the access road to the top side of the landfill will be reconfigured. Ms. Scott replied the back road enters to the compost with parking spots. She noted the engineer is looking to provide edging parking along there, with the road staying as it is. The fence along Conway Road will become more of a natural barrier instead of a fence. Mr. Smith asked if there is anything between the parking

area and the park. Ms. Scott replied there was not. Mr. Smith noted residents were concerned with the speed of the trucks and the dust when driving by the pavilion. Mr. Seidler also noted there was some type of construction or work taking place at that time, and trucks were allowed to enter the park at this area and drive by the pavilion which generated dust. Mr. MacIntyre suggested putting stone over the dirt and noted only a Public Works truck would need to use the road when cutting grass.

Mr. MacIntyre suggested building a courtyard area made of pavers with a little separation that could be driven over with the mowers. If a sinking problem occurs, it would be easy to remove the paver to replace filler. Discussion took place regarding the shape of the proposed field and the safety issues with sinking of the ground if the field is used to play baseball games. Mr. MacIntyre stated there was never a big plan for this park. A driving range, BMX track, and other amenities were discussed in the past.

PARK UPDATES

Ms. Scott stated Heroes Grove Committee is planning to move forward with their Welcome Center in August. The Welcome Center will include a concession and bathrooms. Construction would start mid-August and be completed by the end of the year.

Declan Fledderjohn's signs were vandalized at Koons Park. It was reported to the police. Public Works Department located the signs in the playground and had been covered in snow. The signs were replaced immediately with the spare signs provided by Declan.

Paxtonia Baseball Association is receiving an indoor batting cage in honor of a baseball player who lost his life in a car accident. The cage went through CD School District and not the Parks and Recreation Department. Ms. Scott stated the Township's lease with the school district for the Paxtonia fields ends July 31. She noted she has tried to contact the school district regarding renewal terms. Ms. Scott also noted she is not sure that we will be renewing the lease. Paxtonia Athletic Association teams are the only ones utilizing the fields. The Township spends between \$7,000 and \$10,000 per year to accommodate them. The Township mows fields, does trash removal, pays for port-john rental and turf treatment. Ms. Scott stated the lease has been in place for twenty years, renewing every ten years. Mr. MacIntyre stated he supports not renewing the lease but suggested we inform the Paxtonia Athletic Association contact right away to make them aware the Township might not renew the lease with the school district.

ARTS COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

Mr. Smith provided the following update:

1. Reviewed application and had discussion with new Arts Council applicant.
2. Worked with Jim Milbrand on new Variety Band agreement. One additional piece of the agreement is being worked on.
3. Putting together details on the specific proposal to the CEC regarding Possibility Place sign, as well as initiative for musical devices for the park.
4. Book discussion will take place February 17.
5. Working on how to integrate Arts Council's own Facebook page with the Township's rather than trying to maintain its own.

Mr. MacIntyre suggested reaching out to former Lower Paxton Township resident, Steven Williams, who recently wrote a book titled "Skadi" pertaining to Icelandic mythology.

GREENWAY COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Mr. Seidler stated Jennifer Schultz is a new Greenway Committee member. The Committee discussed putting together a letter to residents along Oak Park trail. The letter will reassure them we are trying to utilize the contours of the land and natural boundaries so that the trail is not disruptive to their privacy. Mr. Seidler stated residents will be invited to the March meeting of the Greenway Committee to voice their concerns.

April 23 has been set as the first date for potential volunteers to help work on the trail. The fourth Saturday of each month is tentatively being considered for volunteers to help with the trail. At least one Committee member will attend each session to assist volunteers. Mr. Smith asked if the Conservancy will be involved. Mr. Seidler replied that the Conservancy would help as a consultant only at this time due to another project they are involved with. They will probably be able to assist more when this project is complete.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Mr. Seidler stated CEC members discussed their main purpose, music in the parks. The race date has been set. Ashley Williams, Parks and Recreation Department Special Events Coordinator attended the meeting. She will help coordinate race and other community activities and promote race with enthusiasm. Ms. Scott stated Ms. Williams spoke about the Easter event to be held on April 9 from 11am to 1 pm at Brightbill Park. She is looking for organizations to become involved with the event. Ms. Williams requested the CEC to donate \$50 to each nonprofit organization signing up to help with the expenses they incur for the event. The CEC approved \$50 for the first

twenty nonprofit organizations. Ms. Scott also stated the Knights of Columbus provided a donation to be a sponsor for the event.

Kite festival will take place at Lingle Park on April 24 from 12 to 2 pm. The CEC will attend the festival to promote the race.

The 2022 Arts and Parks 5K will be called the Arts and Parks 5K Music in the Parks as we promote musical instruments in the park.

Ms. Scott noted she will provide the Board with park clean-up dates.

Mr. Smith informed Mr. Seidler that the Arts Council will have a new member joining CEC to represent the Arts Council. Discussion followed regarding the process required for the new member to join the CEC to represent the Arts Council. Mr. Smith noted he will now represent Parks and Rec Board on the CEC instead of both Arts Council and PR Board.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. MacIntyre stated we need to coordinate with whomever is dealing with the property between the high school, restaurant, and Wolfersberger. If possible, we should let them know what the Township is looking for before they complete too much planning. The first thing we are looking for is park land, and secondly a trail so that the Township can continue its greenways.

Mr. Johnson asked for the status of resident Shareef Rahman's interest in a possible futsal court at George Park (hockey court). Ms. Scott replied that at this time the Board of Supervisors did not want to move forward with any changes until the Master Plan is completed. She noted that she has asked the Parks and Recreation Department sports manager to look into running a futsal league. Mr. Johnson noted he could help with it. Discussion continued.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathryn A. Sawyer

Kathryn A. Sawyer
Recording Secretary

