

**LOWER PAXTON TOWNSHIP  
PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
JULY 5, 2023**

Members in Attendance

Stan Smith  
Neal Johnson  
Bob MacIntyre  
Kirby Lentz  
Alan Gallagher  
Wendy Steinbrunner  
Sandy Mort-Backus

Members Absent

Mayur Patel  
Jim Seidler

Also in Attendance

Rachelle Scott, Staff Liaison  
Brett Bentz, LBA  
Bryan Hoover, LBA

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Lower Paxton Township Parks and Recreation Board was called to order by Chairman Neal Johnson at 7:19 p.m. on the above date, in the pavilion at Kings Crossing Park, 1625 Buckingham Road, Harrisburg, PA.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. MacIntyre made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the June 7, 2023 meeting. Mr. Smith seconded the motion, and it was followed by a unanimous vote of approval.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was none.

**KOONS PARK DUGOUTS**

Ms. Scott stated that the teener field and fields 4 and 7 were known to be in questionable condition. With the tragedy that resulted from the collapse of a dugout at the 7<sup>th</sup> and Radnor Ballfield, Ms. Scott asked Bob Brightbill to evaluate the dugouts at Koons. It was determined that they lacked sufficient support, so they were promptly removed. The teams are bringing chairs and canopies for the players to use for the last portion of the season. Teeners will finish their regular season during the week of July 4<sup>th</sup>, and will have playoffs the following week. Field 4 and 5 teams and midgets are already done for the season.

Ms. Scott explained that the BOS recently reviewed Local Share Grant proposals from organizations looking for sponsor letters. Linglestown Baseball requested support for help with replacing dugouts. They were of the understanding that the dugouts had to be constructed with split-faced stone, but they were concerned with the cost of that and the safety of a fully enclosed structure. The association would prefer to install dugouts similar to the ones at the Hurley Field with a low brick knee-wall and chain link fencing for the enclosure and a shelter over the dugout.

Mr. Brett Bentz and Mr. Bryan Hoover were present on behalf of the Linglestown Baseball Association. Mr. Bentz stated that the price has more than doubled since they started looking into the replacement of the dugouts five years ago. He noted that the police department prefer it to be open for safety. Mr. Lentz stated the dugouts are probably 35-40 years old and were built by Gary Trowbridge. Mr. MacIntyre stated that the ordinance calls for buildings to be constructed with the split face stone, but dugouts do not have to be.

Mr. Hoover stated he is working with Hannold Associates who may be willing to be donate the services to prepare drawings. The size of dugouts for the bigger field is 30x8, then for younger players the dugouts are 25x8 and 20x8.

#### Linglestown Baseball Association General Updates

The LBA recently installed fencing along the teener backstop, and the netting was installed this week to keep foul balls in.

There are about 350 players and volunteerism is ok but continues to decrease. Weekend work used to involve about 40 parents, and it's been about 15 this year; coaches per team is around 2 where it used to be 6 or so.

Mr. Hoover noted that most things are fine, but one challenge is the fact that there is only one teener field (90-foot field). To accommodate the need for fields, they rent space from Susquehanna, and Paxton allows LBA to play on their two teener fields. Each of the 6 teams plays 3-5 home games away. The long term goal is to install lights, which would double the usage/availability.

LBA mows and fertilizes the fields, and they purchase the diamond tech dirt. They recently upgraded the lights from mercury to LED. Windows and a garage door were replaced in the clubhouse. They have \$10,000 in gaming grant money plus \$10,000 in their fundraising account. They would also like to install fencing around the open benches for the younger players. It can be hard to monitor who is approaching the children during a game or practice, and a fence would also keep the players from wandering over to the spectators.

Mr. Lentz asked about Nate. He had run the scoreboard for 25 years or more, but his health has declined.

#### **BRIGHTBILL PARK** **SOUNDGARDEN, PLAYGROUND**

Ms. Scott stated that 3 bids were received \$696,000, \$727,000, \$727,900. The playground area at Brightbill has drainage issues so fill will be brought in to alleviate the ponding. Work will begin in August as soon as Summer Camp is over. Substantial completion will be in November, with final completion in the spring.

## **HODGES HEIGHTS**

Ms. Scott would like to apply for a local share grant for a master plan for the Conway Tract at Hodges Heights. Fill generated with the ongoing sewer replacement work will be brought in while other details are worked out. Ms. Scott has met with Victor Banks and he seemed to be in favor of the plans, and asked a few questions such as retaining the park name and will the original park remain as is or some sort of natural upgrade. Walkability to the Conway Tract is a concern too. DEP has regulations for the landfill property so it may not be possible to walk through there, but the Greenway Committee will be talking about the issue too. Ms. Scott would like to invite the residents surrounding the park to the next Parks and Rec Board meeting.

Ms. Scott explained that the local share grant is for \$150,000 so any funding left over after the Hodges Heights Master Plan should be directed to George Park. The recent master plan calls for a turn-around/drop off at the western parking lot near the hockey rink, and an access to the 77 parking spaces behind the New Love Church. Rent for parking near Ranger Fields is currently \$10,000 per year and will be going up to \$15,000. Providing the accessway would allow the Township to get relief from the cost of the lease. The grant is due September 1 and will be awarded the following February, but it is permissible to start the work now. If the Board of Supervisors is agreeable to doing the work knowing the grant isn't guaranteed, then the work can start soon.

## **PARK UPDATES**

### **General**

Over the next few months, Ms. Scott would like the sports organizations to attend Parks and Rec Board meetings to provide status updates on their organizations.

### **Koons Park**

Ms. Scott explained that the football/cheerleading organization has split apart and they are not on good terms. The Township has historically worked with the football volunteers for maintenance of the fields and concession stand. Cheer is asking for access to the concession stand but the Township will not be entering into anymore verbal agreements; written agreements will required going forward. Cheer has access to part of the storage building and is requesting the Township provide maintenance inside however maintenance like that has always been taken care of by the volunteers. Ms. Scott will soon have the supporting letters needed to apply for the grant, therefore a consultant will be retained to work on the agreements so they are in place for 2024 seasons.

### **Lamplight Park**

Ms. Scott stated the curb cut is being done this week for the ADA accessibility.

### Brightbill

The LP Foundation held an Independence Day event at Heroes Grove. There were extra activities added and they hoped to use the parking lot in the shopping center but hadn't contacted the owner for permission so they ended up expanding into the fields beside and behind the Friendship Center. The weather was not ideal so attendance was less than they hoped but it was still a great event.

### Kohl Park

Ms. Scott stated that there are tournaments held at the handball courts and the person that organizes them is advocating for improvements to the courts. The quote he obtained was about \$6,000. If there is room in the budget closer to the end of 2023 it may be something that can be done.

### Forest Hills

Ms. Scott stated that contract will go to bid tomorrow for construction starting in September. Public Works will begin demolition of the courts, retaining wall, and fence. A sign will be posted onsite to show what is planned.

### Kings Crossing Park

Ms. Scott there is concern for the condition of the pavilion roof in the back corner. An engineer inspected the rotting section where there used to be an antenna, and provided a recommendation for repairs which will likely be done by an outside agency.

Someone requested the disc golf basket be relocated further from the trees.

## **ARTS COUNCIL REPORT**

Mr. Smith reported that the Arts Council is enjoying some progress, they have been able to establish a warm partnership with Dauphin County Library System and have created exhibition space for artwork within the library. There is an agreement to display artwork from local artists each quarter. They are actively using the Arts Council webpage for sharing information and for receiving applications from artists.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT**

The 5K race has been cancelled due to low registration. The Township was able to avoid penalty fees for the race timer since there was enough notice provided. There are two sponsors, and Ms. Scott will contact them to ask if they are willing to allow the donation to be used for the Brightbill playground project.

Ms. Scott reported that Ms. Thompson is working on ways for the CEC to connect with the community and find out where partnerships would benefit the nonprofit groups in the Township.

### **GREENWAY COMMITTEE REPORT**

Ms. Scott stated that the focus with the trail maintenance days remains Oak Park Trail to complete the trail and have a ribbon cutting or grand opening ceremony on October 6, 2023.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. MacIntyre would like to take action as a result of the illegal behavior that took place at the fireworks event. He made a motion to institute a disciplinary process which allows the director of parks and recreation to suspend or ban someone from a park for a period of 1 year, and subsequently for 5 years. This assumes there will need to be review by the solicitor and others for implementation, but Mr. MacIntyre felt it was important to react to the problem in an attempt to prevent it from reoccurring. The motion died for a lack of a second.

Mr. Smith asked if a penalty could be helpful to staff and or the police. Ms. Scott stated she doesn't receive names of anyone involved in arrests or incidents, so she wasn't sure if it could be imposed. Mr. Gallagher stated he liked the idea and added that a minor offense would result in a 1 year suspension, but a major offense would result in a permanent ban. Mr. MacIntyre noted major and minor would need to be defined and Mr. Gallagher suggested a misdemeanor versus a felony. Mr. MacIntyre explained some further complications. Ms. Scott can reach out to see if there is something that can be helpful to the police in incidents like this in a park.

### **VANDALISM AND OTHER POLICE REPORTS**

No vandalism was reported this month other than a tipped portojohn at Kings Crossing.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The next meeting is scheduled for August 2, 2023 at 7:15 pm. The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Hiner, Recording Secretary