

**Upper Merion Township
Park and Recreation Board Minutes
June 14, 2011**

Attendees: Dan Russell ,Barb Schafer, John Tallman, Eileen Connelly, Mary Ann Ahearn, Mike Trachtenberg, Erika Spott

Guests: Carole Kenney, Bill Kenney

Pledge of Allegiance

Minutes for May 2011 meeting approved.

Board of Supervisors Liaison Report:

1. Swim Club should be opening soon although there is no certain date. Water has been approved and the township needs to issue a use & occupancy permit once all inspections are passed. Lots of obstacles have been overcome and lots of hard work has been done. The season will be extended for members.
2. Complaint over the cricket pitch in the softball field at Bob White Park was discussed at length. Complainants were invited to attend the meeting and share their concerns with the board but did not attend. Erika visited the park and spoke with softball players who had no complaints. John also visited and spoke with residents in the park and found them interested and happy with how things are going. There are some ruts in the infield from a gravel delivery truck that will be leveled. A police report filed on the first weekend of the UMCC's use of the field was a permit conflict because the club did not provide their game schedule. They left the field for use by the softball team. They are now providing their monthly schedule one month in advance. All park usage schedules are provided to the police to resolve any permit disputes. In future, all complaints that Erika receives will be forwarded to the board with complainants invited to attend the meeting.
3. Residents have asked when the goats will be coming back to Bob White Park. We will contact Yvonne Post to see if she can bring her goats to help show ours what needs to be done. Best to set it up ahead of time and spread the word.
4. Park usage rules and regulations were discussed and copies of the current permit application were distributed to the board. The board will investigate other townships' park usage rules and come up with some suggestions for the next meeting. These would include clear consequences for things like leaving water valves open, not putting equipment away, not returning equipment, leaving lights on, and in general not leaving things in good condition for the next user.

Directors Report:

1. Items for June 16th BOS meeting –
 - a. Final presentation of the Community Center feasibility study
 - b. Presentation of park & rec grants to sports organizations.
 - c. Repairs to Executive Estates Park bridge which has been closed for 2 months due to erosion damage to bridge abutment. DEP and the county are involved. Repairs cost \$36,000 which has wiped out our capital repair budget. Residents have been very understanding and the park should be open by July 4th.
2. Upper Merion Baptist Church sponsored park cleanup at Heuser Park, the Heuser-Bob Case trail and Walker park. They loved the experience and we are hoping they will formally adopt a park.

3. Concerts Under the Stars is off to a great start with 550 paid and 150-200 unpaid admissions for the first concert. Our sponsorship coordinator has gotten \$30,000 for the series so far this year and will also work with the Tricentennial Committee. Will recommend renewing his contract. The number of concerts this year was limited due to budget cuts. Next year we'd like to add more shows.
4. Summer camps and programs start June 20th, with 14-15 camps per week. Training for 100-110 staff will be held on June 17th. Enrollment numbers are good.
5. Surface safety in playgrounds – 5 tractor trailer loads of “wood carpet” mulch were installed in Belmont Park, V.F. Acres Park, and around the climbing rock at the Township Park.
6. Park & Rec dept are working on the July 4th event.
7. Progress has been made with Norfolk Southern regarding the trail from Heuser to Valley Forge. They will work with us on possible fencing where the tracks run close to the proposed trail, and a pedestrian bridge over Trout Run Creek. Onsite meeting for a walk through in late June or July.
8. Dan was elected Administrator for our region in the National Park & Recreation Association and will work with National Association on legislation & issues.
9. There is no official policy on driving on the road to the Heuser field club house, but the gate will probably be locked in response to safety concerns brought up at last month's meeting.
10. Park lighting problems: Some park lights are on timers and photocells, and some are on manual breakers. Swedeland, Bob White tennis and Exec.Estates tennis are on timers and several had to be replaced this year. Heuser and Baxter field lights are on breakers with some people having keys. Possible fines for leaving lights on should be in the terms of use for these parks.
11. Trails: trail through VF golf course development – we should comment when the development plans are presented. Nothing to do now. Note that tracks along Ross Rd. and behind Genaurdis have been removed in preparation for future trails.

Old Business

1. Bill Wall Park fence in disrepair: the township has replaced one section already so it is a township responsibility. Kingwood park fence also needs repair.
2. Lack of feedback on park inspections: Binders with previous evaluations for each park, along with reports from the township would help identify chronic problems and provide continuity. John has made binders for 4 parks so far, and these should be brought to our meetings and distributed to whoever has the next inspection. Barbara will follow up with the township on getting reports back from the township in response to our inspections.

New Business

1. Adaptive equipment: Eileen & her family will meet with Dan to select the adaptive equipment and bench in memory of her daughter.
2. Use of UMASD facilities: Dan reported on the May 25 meeting with UMASD business manager Steve Skrocki regarding the township's relationship with the district in light of budget cuts.
 - a. Senior Center: the township pays the lease and UMASD is proposing a 3% increase.

- b. Belmont Park and the Pattan Bldg: The township has a classroom in the building rent free from the UMASD. The township put in AC and does maintenance. UMASD is proposing \$11,000 per year and we hope to negotiate that amount.
 - c. The terms of Park & Rec use of indoor and outdoor school facilities is still to be determined. UMASD is asking for an hourly rate along with a percentage of revenue from programs, but have been cautioned that the township will no longer be able to wave fees if that happens.
 - d. P & R is currently planning fall activities to use school facilities. Plan B would be to spread programs out to private concerns and churches which would be more costly.
3. Parking in front of Pertuccis in Norview Park: Neil emailed concern about safety with cars pulling directly into the space in front of the ordering area to park. There is no barrier separating parking cars from patrons, and bollards were suggested as a way to provide better safety, with the possible addition of planters or picnic tables in place of those few parking spaces which could be relocated to the side of the building next to the raised patio area. We need to talk to Petruccis.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ann Ahearn
Secretary