

**Upper Merion Township  
Park and Recreation Board Minutes  
November 13, 2012**

**Attendees:** Dan Russell, John Tallman, Neil Sardinias, Mike Trachtenberg, Mary Ann Ahearn, Barb Schafer, Eileen Connolly, Dave Burns

**Guests:** Jay Kowal, Stephen Stiles, Debbie Stiles, Holly O'Daniell, Matt Lazwicki, Regina Goerenemann, Jose Almonte, Rich Lachenmayer, Billy Martinez, Nadine Martinez, Paul Salamy, Katherine McClelland

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Approval of September 2012 Minutes**

**Approval of October 2012 Minutes**

**Guests**

1. Jay Kowal reported on the work his department has done since the last meeting.
  - a. Bob White Park - land has been cleared in preparation for the invasive vine goat control test.
  - b. Requests for help with Hurricane Sandy damage affecting streets have been numerous: 110 requests have been handled to date with up to 40 more to be dealt with in the next two days.
  - c. Park clean up after the storm will now begin
  - d. Jay will be back at our March meeting
2. Stephen Stiles presented a request to install a memorial at Swedeland Park for his late brother who was very involved with the park. The board unanimously agreed to pass the request on to the BOS.
3. Sports organization representatives reported on their organizations:
  - a. Regina Goernemann of the King of Prussia Soccer Club: The club plays at Baxter field and they also play at Bob Case field, which is in poor condition, even forcing a game to called. The topsoil contains debris and the field is graded poorly. The soccer club weeds, seeds and feeds the field at their expense and they've put in a shed to house the water wheel. Dan said that there are significant funds in our capital budget to improve it and that funds from flag football and the cell phone tower will be put back into the field. The club house at Baxter field needs "some love" as well. Dan and Soccer Club president, Steve Ryan, will communicate further on the club's needs.
  - b. Katherine McClelland and Paul Salamy of the Marlins Aquatic Club: The club is doing well, swimming is becoming more and more popular, and the team is improving. They are the least expensive swim team in the area although they may have to raise fees again this year. They do have some scholarships to offset this. They are a full year club which coordinates well with Park & Rec and are very connected to the school district.
  - c. Jose Almonte and Paul Salamy of the Upper Merion Lacrosse Club: Lacrosse is growing in PA and the club is becoming more competitive with a high retention rate. Boys and girls teams are offered from pre-K through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Spring is the main season, along with a fall program at Bob Holland Park and an indoor winter league at YSC Sports in Wayne. A high percentage of players are from the township. The club tries to keep fees affordable and also grants scholarships. They currently recycle uniforms and want to make a large capital expenditure on new uniforms.
  - d. Rich Lachenmayer of the Valley Forge Generals Senior Legion Baseball Team: PA has over 200 teams that compete in state, regional and national tournaments. Senior legion is for 16-19 year olds and Junior for 13-15 year olds. Fees are considerably less than other leagues at \$150/player with help from grants and business support. Heuser baseball fields are great overall but the infield grass needs work, and the team needs bull pan mounds and a batting tunnel for warm up..

- e. Mike asked all the teams about accommodating children with special needs and a discussion followed. Lacrosse and soccer are very competitive and haven't been approached on this matter or turned anyone away. Baseball is also very competitive and was able to re-direct a special needs player to a less competitive team in Bridgeport. All agreed that they would try to work with anyone as long as there are no safety concerns and parents are in agreement. Mike asked if they are open to working with professionals to accommodate special needs kids and all said yes.

#### **Director's Report:**

##### 1. Goats for weed control -

- a. Clearing the area to prepare for the goats is finished and Dan met with Yvonne Post and two of her goats there. While noise from trucks on the expressway startled them as did a deer carcass, they sampled a lot of different vegetation. Neighbors were impressed and interested.
- b. Next step is for Yvonne to put together a plan with several options. The area is too large for her four small goats and it may require a herd of 30-50 goats to do the job. She may bring her goats back a few more time to see how they do, and will contact Brian Knox, mentioned in the article in today's Inquirer ([http://articles.philly.com/2012-11-13/news/35088970\\_1\\_goats-yvonne-post-poison-ivy](http://articles.philly.com/2012-11-13/news/35088970_1_goats-yvonne-post-poison-ivy)) to see what he recommends.

##### 2. 2013 Budget – was presented to the Board of Supervisors

- a. Operating budget: includes a 5% increase to cover Community Center operating expenses.
- b. Capital budget: the park tax is fully restored for 2013. The budget includes funds for the following:
  - i. Bike trail
  - ii. New playing fields at Heuser funded by \$300,000 from the bond issue.
  - iii. Replacement of safety turf at playgrounds to be done over several years.
  - iv. Funds for a Park & Recreation Master Plan were approved and will be spread over several years. It will be started in 2013.

##### 3. Holiday Hoopla - December 7<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM in cooperation with the Tricentennial Committee. All invited to attend.

##### 4. Hurricane Sandy – not much damage to our parks. We lost 3 trees, 2 of which were in the Township Park. There were no sink holes!

##### 5. Bike Trail – we've heard nothing back from Norfolk Southern. Still need to research who owns the spur.

##### 6. Synthetic turf at Heuser Park –

- a. Field Turf's estimate came in at twice the cost of Sprint Turf's.
- b. Funding will not come out of the Community Center bond.
- c. There is work to do informing the community of the benefits of synthetic turf.

#### **BOS Liason report (given by Dan on behalf of Erika Spott who could not attend):**

1. Dog Park – the BOS has gotten requests for a dog park and Erika asked for our feedback. Concerns over liability, fights among the dogs, and waste were raised.
2. Adult Day Care – should this be part of the new Senior Center? We will look into what sort of organization normally runs this.

#### **Old Business:**

1. Shannon Connolly's memorial tree will be planted soon.

**New Business:**

1. John Tallman is joining the Zoning Hearing Board and resigned his membership and position as chairman of the Park & Recreation Board as of tonight. Dave Burns was voted new chairman until our annual reorganization in January 2013. We thanked John for his many years of service to the township on the board and wished him well in his work with the Zoning Hearing Board.
2. Eileen asked about participation in the Outer Limits program. Dan responded that there are 2 or 3 activities so far, Radnor has pulled out and we are still trying to build up attendance.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Mary Ann Ahearn", followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Mary Ann Ahearn

Secretary