

Tuesday October 8, 2013
7:30 PM

Upper Merion Parks and Recreation Board Minutes

Attendees:

Dan Russell, Mike Trachtenberg, Mary Ann Ahearn, Dave Burns, Tina Garzillo, and Bill Schutter

Guests:

Kathy & Nick DeRosato, and John Tallman

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes:

The board voted to approve the 09/10/2013 minutes with the following clarification: Under New Business in the September 10, 2013 minutes, it was stated that "Upper Merion Township receives 20% of the (sports) organizations' total income." Dan Russell clarified this by stating that this is only true for organizations in which the Parks and Rec Dept. handles administrative duties for the organizations. It does not include organizations that are simply using the athletic fields.

Park Progress Report - Bill Schutter

Executive estates – fence at tennis courts was installed

Swedesburg Park - razed vines, trimmed trees, bolted down picnic table, placed wood shavings under the swings. Received estimate for replacing the light ballast in the light post inside the park entrance. Two PECO street lights are already working, one at the entrance and another in the alley. PECO will install the light inside the park if UM purchases it. According to Dan Russell, the light would cost \$550 and is 80 watt LED.

Tabak Park – filled in hole by playground equipment, sprayed swings attachments with WD-40.

Township Building Park – Trimmed trees, grinded stump. The playground bulletin board will be replaced with new rather than fixing the existing one.

Swedeland Park – Repaired storm grate, restored the memorial bench.

McKaig Nature Center - Delivered modified stone/dirt, mulch and stone for parking area. Upper Merion provided materials only, no labor.

Walker Field – Electrical breakers repaired. There has been more vandalism.

The tree inventory has been completed in Township Building Park, Heuser Park, Bob Case, and Executive Estates Park. The remaining tree inventory will resume in spring in other parks. Shade Tree Commission /Barley Van Klief will ask to get on the agenda to

make a presentation to the BOS to request help to create more interest from volunteers to help plant 50 bare root trees in 3 designated parks.

Director's Report

The agenda for the November Parks and Rec Board meeting will be limited to one topic. Invitations have been sent to athletic organizations for that Board Meeting. This is a mandatory meeting and at least one representative from each organization is required to attend if they are planning to apply for township grant money.

Ken Ballard presented the Community Center Operations Plan to BOS at a workshop meeting held on September 19, 2013. It went well. BOS were pleased. There were not too many questions. Plans are for it to open by late 2014. Ken produced a finished product for a formal BOS approval next week. It will be the footprint for the budget. A creative budget of an annual \$1.1 million cost will need to be broken down since the facility won't be open for full year in 2014. Programming staff will need to be hired by mid – year of 2014. Other staffing needs, like PT employees and maintenance staff, can wait until closer to opening day. Timing of the BOS approval is crucial. An application is also in process for a Zoning Hearing for parking relief. It should be ready to present by the beginning of November.

First budget review was presented to the township manager/budget director. 100% of budget back was requested.

Vandalism at Walker Field was substantial. There was multi-colored graffiti painted on the BB court. They are working on trying to remove the paint without damaging the BB court surface.

A memorial bench with an engraved plaque was installed at Swedeland Park. It was mostly paid for by the family of Wayne Stiles. They held a memorial service. The Stiles family expressed their gratitude to the Parks and Rec dept and the board.

Temple Brith Achim does an annual day of service. They asked to do this again in one of the township parks and want to do clean up and light maintenance work with approx. 10-15 people.

A science professor from University of Pennsylvania will be bringing college students to Executive Estates Park for some water quality testing. They will report back with their results/findings from the stream.

There was a brief discussion about the five Master Plan proposals that were received. The five proposals came from KMS Design Group, Simone Collins Landscape Architecture, T&M Associates, Toole Recreation Planning (which also includes YSM, and the Natural Lands Trust), and Remington Vernick & Beach Engineers. Each firm is qualified and has done master plans in local townships. Dan Russell would like to have our input within a couple of weeks and will get a copy of the proposals to each of us as quickly as he can. A

decision about a firm has to be made in order to make a recommendation to the BOS for their approval.

Heuser Park is a separate issue and will have its own set of design and construction plans.

Park evaluations from the board will stop after this month's assignment and will start back up in March or April.

John Tallman asked if the master plan proposals are public, and if the proposals include plans for the trails and trail connections, and if the firms will be providing design and construction plans as well.

Old Business

Kathy DeRosato asked again about doing a petition about adding an additional light to Swedesburg Park. They don't want to waste their time if the request will again be denied. Mike Trachtenberg stated that if they did a petition, it is past the Parks and Rec Board's process and the information would be passed along to the BOS. Dan Russell said that lighting issues are in the scope of the master plan, so the issue would automatically be addressed anyway and would include all the parks.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Tina Garzillo

