

UPPER MERION PARKS & RECREATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, May 11th, 2021

7:30 PM

Attendees: Mike Trachtenberg, Mary Ann Ahearn, Deena Newman, Neil Sardiñas, Dan Russell, Jerry Recupido & Tina Garzillo

1. **Pledge of Allegiance**
2. **Approval of the April 13th, 2021 Meeting Minutes – APPROVED 4-0.**
3. **Guest-** Tony Hamaday-Township Manager, Geoff Hickman-Director of Public Works, David Craig-Covered Bridge Rd
 - Tony wants to make sure we know that he is available and that he appreciates our time and recommendations and that he is receptive to our ideas and concerns.
 - Jeff Hickman- We are hearing your concerns, we are working on them, and appreciate them.
 - Neil Sardiñas-How to proceed/follow-up with issues that are being reported?
 - Discussion regarding different ways to report problems within parks and recreation and throughout the township.
 - Mike Trachtenberg- Discussed the communication difficulties with the township and citizens over the past year and how we will make changes moving forward.
 - Tony- We are trying to improve communication and have changed our processes for the future. “We are not going to be perfect but we are going to try.”
 - Neil Sardiñas- Expressed concern regarding the state of the trails in Upper Merion and problems that have not been addressed in the past when he expressed multiple concerns. He also expressed concern about the future of the trails.
 - Tina shared her appreciation for Tony and Geoff and their involvement and willingness to engage in dialogue with the board.
 - Geoff- moving forward we can have Parks and Rec review the trail design to get feedback around 50% of the design milestone.
 - David Craig- Sometimes less is more. We should have more open spaces to allow for more natural setting. He asked about the changes to the trail.
4. **Board of Supervisor’s Report-Tina Garzillo**
 - Some restrictions in PA are being lifted. May 17th indoor gatherings will increase to 50% occupancy and outdoor to 75%. Closer to Memorial Day weekend most of the restrictions will be lifted except for the requirement to wear masks.
 - No masks restriction will be lifted when we meet 70% vaccinated. Currently we are at 46%.
 - Previous JC Penny site is currently a vaccine site. They are doing 1st and 2nd doses.
 - Hanging Rock Project will continue through Nov.

- Trinity Lane Bridge project will be completed in Fall 2021. They will try to preserve it historically.
- Absentee ballots need to be turned in by May 18th.
- Opening day of the Farmer's Market is this Saturday at 9am. Lots of exciting vendors.
- 4th of July event is being worked on.
- May 13th-recipient of BCA Awards will be announced.
- Top Golf Project traffic studies are taking place.

5. Park & Shade Tree Report- Jerry Recupido

- Swedesburg fence- can't be fixed due to lack of budget.
- Kingswood- tree will be trimmed soon.
- Sweetbriar- hedge trimming tomorrow. The bridge is a budget item. Needs to be replaced.
- There are 14 new trashcans that will be installed at 5 different parks (regular and recycling cans at each park and 2 at Bob White).
- 6 new dead trees were discovered today. We need to contact residents to remove them. We need to look at where trees need to be replaced where dead trees have been taken down.
- Court resurfacing project at Valley Forge Acres, Bob Holland, Bob White, and Swedesburg Park.
- Jerry is suggesting Kingswood can restructure the playground and placement of the basketball court closer to the playground. Sweetbriar- who is using the playground up on the hill? What is the purpose of the court without rims? Can it be repurposed?
- Waiting to hear back about the cost of lights that need to be replaced.
- The pavilions at Executive Estates and Swedesburg are in bad shape.
- Court resurfacing in 2022 is being planned for MC Young, Whitegate, and Walker.
- Bob White repair in the parking lot will take place next week.
- Whitegate they are looking at a way to deal with the water runoff that is causing debris on the basketball and tennis court.

6. Park & Recreation Director's Report-Dan Russell

- Pool memberships is taking off. Open house this weekend.
- Outdoor exercise programs are taking place.
- Park rentals continue to be popular and almost every weekend booked through the summer.
- Walker playground was relocated.
- June 1st there will be less restrictions at the UMCC. Allowing guest passes and day passes, allowing more open gym. Still no child watch.
- July 4th- The carnival vendor approached the township to return.
- Fireworks will be October 2nd for Community Day since July 4th date was already booked.
- Dan no longer needs the board to help with ideas but will likely still need our staff help for events in the future.
- The possibility of working with a company to do a Canadian film festival at the parks. Waiting to hear back from them.
- Next month talking to a university about a partnership to use the 90ft field.

7. Old Business

- BCA Grant Application
 - Application was complete.
- Joint Mtg with BOS 5/20-7pm-7:30pm
 - Deena
 - 4th of July carnival, fireworks at the fall festival
- Eagle Scout Future Project Guidelines/Update
 - Dan is working with colleagues that have some guidelines. He will keep us posted.

8. New Business

- The zoning board hearing rejected the UMASD request for the tennis courts at Belmont School. Tina noted that the school board is discussing possibly building courts at Heuser, but it is only a discussion at this point.
- New student member for the Parks and Rec board Mahum Mahmood. She is a 10th grader this year and has some nice ideas.
- The senior center is leaning to reopen midsummer. Let's start to think about if we want to move the meeting to the normal meeting place.

9. Additional comments

Adjournment: 9:48PM
Kindly Submitted
Deena Newman