PARK & RECREATION
REGULAR MEETING
October 23, 2019

PRESENT: JEFF WILLIAMS, JOHN BURCH, LAUREN SANKER, JOHN WALTON, JASON SAPOSNEK, DANIEL HARRISON – MEMBERS; Paul Rigney, Township Commissioner; Ginnie Anderson, Township Commissioner; Scott Fraser, Assistant Township Manager; Chad Krebs, Parks Maintenance Supervisor; Julie Roth, Recording Secretary.

VISITORS
Ben Stoner - Boy Scout Troop 190
Doug Marsico - Upper Allen Mechanicsburg Baseball Association
Bob Melphis - 430 Diehl Rd, Mechanicsburg
Dawn Waterman - Keystone FCU
Jim Cochran - Township Commissioner
Jim Salter - Upper Allen Mechanicsburg Girls’ Softball

CALL TO ORDER
Chairman Williams called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. All attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL
All present introduced themselves.

MINUTES
A motion was made by Mr. Burch to approve the meeting minutes from the September 25, 2019 meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sanker and passed unanimously.

CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENT
None
CHAIRMAN’S RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

1. **Township Commissioners—Ginnie Anderson, Paul Rigney**
   Commissioner Anderson stated that she is glad to be back. Commissioner Rigney mentioned that he is still working on putting together information on “risk parks” and will have something to the Board before the end of the year.

2. **Assistant Township Manager – Scott Fraser**
   None

3. **Park Maintenance Supervisor– Chad Krebs**
   Mr. Krebs stated that the shades are up at Winding Hill Park South playground and hopefully concrete will be installed in the next week or two.

4. **Mechanicsburg Recreation Department– Josh Green**
   Mr. Green mentioned that basketball season is soon starting and the tryouts are finishing up. He said the games will start in January. He noted that a Mother/Son event called Roll & Putt will be taking place in November at Trindle Bowl. He said he attended the NRPA Conference and came back excited to share the new ideas he learned about.

PARK ASSIGNMENTS
Mr. Williams mentioned that every time he goes past McCormick Park there is someone sitting by the water.

Mr. Burch stated that Center Square Park looked perfect and Simpson Park looked good but after the rain the sand was compacted in the volleyball court. He said there was more stone added to the paths and Mr. Krebs said the paths were widened. Commissioner Rigney asked about the bird stand at Simpson Park since it is mostly in pieces. Mr. Krebs said it either needs to be torn down or rebuilt. Mr. Burch commented that it is a bit of an eyesore. Mr. Fraser said it can be a winter project, but he doesn’t know if anyone uses it. Commissioner Rigney suggested repurposing it into benches.

Mr. Walton stated that Spring Run and Mt. Allen Parks look great.

Mr. Saposnek mentioned that there were kids on the fields at Fisher Park and the park looks really good. Commissioner Rigney noted that a bench was installed by the Girl Scouts, but it will need anchored down.

Commissioner Anderson mentioned that up until September, she was able to visit McCormick Park and Simpson Park every weekend, and with the police presence and the advertisements of Messiah College’s access closures, this year has gone much smoother than in the past. Commissioner Rigney added that the new tennis courts at Fisher Park look great but the handles that tighten the net are just laying on the ground. Mr. Fraser said he will look into that.

Mr. Harrison mentioned that Winding Hill Park North looked fantastic. He added that when he visited the park, he saw a small sink hole, so he sent an email regarding it. He said he was very happy to see that it was fixed the next day.

PUBLIC INPUT
Ben Stoner, from Troop 190, presented an Eagle Scout project to the board. The project is a fishing platform at Grantham Pond. Mr. Stoner stated that with the steep banks at the pond, it makes it hard for handicapped people to fish. He said the platform would be 16 feet long by 7
feet wide and would accommodate a wheelchair and a guest. He said the platform will run along the water and would not go into the water, and it would be placed not far from the parking lot where there already is a path. He added that he would like to have final approval by January and fundraise over the winter, with the project completed by fishing season in May. Mr. Burch asked what the expected budget would be and Mr. Stoner replied that he expects it to cost $1,500. Mr. Fraser mentioned that the Township could help with digging holes for the posts to save some money. Mr. Williams noted that with the platform close to the pond it would still be a few feet from the path, and Mr. Stoner replied that the path would be extended to the platform. Mr. Fraser mentioned that the Township could help with extending the path as well. Mr. Williams thanked Mr. Stoner for presenting to the board.

Bob Melphis, 430 Diehl Road, mentioned that he read an article in the paper regarding the termination of the recreation agreement. He asked if it was advertised that it would be voted on and Commissioner Rigney replied that ordinances need to be on the agenda, but the agreement was not. Commissioner Rigney stated that the Commissioners were not going to vote to renew the agreement as it stands now since what is listed in the agreement is not followed, and the suggestions over the years have not been taken seriously. He said the Board wants to continue the relationship but not in this agreement. He added that if it was not voted on in September then it would have been automatically renewed. Mr. Melphis stated that the harm in it is that the community was not informed.

Mr. Melphis mentioned that he is looking for input on carrying firearms in the parks. He suggested having people put a trigger lock on their gun to make it safer. Mr. Burch said he doesn’t know the legalities of it, but he doesn’t know if the Township can mandate people to put that on their guns as it is nowhere in the state law. Mr. Melphis stated that the law doesn’t say you can’t have it. Mr. Burch added that the Township Solicitor would need to advise on that. Commissioner Rigney suggested that Mr. Melphis attend a Board of Commissioner meeting with his suggestions. Mr. Williams mentioned that he is not in favor of putting a lock on a gun and Mr. Harrison added that the lock would cause a delay for a good Samaritan to be able to use the gun in a safety issue. Mr. Saposnek stated that if someone’s adrenalin is running high it would be harder for them to manage the lock.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Off-Leash Dog Park Committee Update
Mr. Williams mentioned that the committee does public events to help advertise the park and it was nice to see how many people took their dogs to the open house at the dog park the day after the event at Benny’s Pet Depot. He added that there was also a Trunk or Treat event at Daybreak Church and Mr. Burch stated that there was a parade with dogs dressed up at that event and it was very well attended. Mr. Williams said the weekend after Thanksgiving there will be another open house at the park. He added that the committee is looking into a way to do an assessment and get comments on the park from the people that use it. Mr. Williams said Josh Rittman, the scout from Troop 195, has completed bench boxes around two trees and he noted that they are very heavy, good benches.

2. WHPN and Fisher Park Project Updates
Mr. Fraser stated that the Winding Hill Park North central hub phase 2 is complete. He said the trees were planted and just the benches and tables need to be installed yet. He added that the tennis courts at Fisher Park are complete and the backboard has been installed. He also mentioned that the paths at Fisher Park are finished. He said the Township is looking to do a Spring opening for Winding Hill Park North once the misters
can be turned on. He mentioned that the large pavilion has electric and will allow for performances such as guitars or piano to create a different type of atmosphere at the park. Mr. Williams said he posted pictures of the park on Facebook and has heard a lot of feedback from people around the Country.

3. **Joint Recreation Agreement**

Mr. Williams read a statement to everyone that was released by the Board of Commissioners. He said the purpose of having this on the agenda is to provide some input on the topic. Ms. Sanker stated that she would like to see the parties involved maintain the best relationship possible. Mr. Williams mentioned that he talked with people and heard their comments and concerns. He said there is time and room for further discussion and he feels that even though the current agreement does not work, something can be created that does. He also said that neither the Upper Allen Township website nor the School District Website credits the other. He said he did a brief analysis and last year 3,979 Township residents were registered for programs and only 923 were nonresidents. Mr. Williams stated that 64% were Upper Allen Township, 31% Mechanicsburg Borough, and 5% Shiremanstown. He added that he has worked in recreation his entire career and doesn’t see anything that can’t be resolved. Mr. Walton stated that the focus should be on the residents and what they want. Mr. Saposnek mentioned that if the Township would plan on just doing a contribution then there would be no say in where that money goes. Mr. Burch added that he feels the things in the agreement can be worked out and feels it is in the best interest to stay in an agreement that works for everyone.

Commissioner Cochran mentioned that during the meeting when it was said that the agreement didn’t work, School officials were asked to come back to the Township with another agreement that would work, and instead they released the article. Mr. Williams said he does not want to get mixed up in it and just wants to do what is best for the residents.

4. **Spring Run and Miller’s Crest Playground equipment**

Mr. Fraser presented examples of color schemes for the playground equipment at Spring Run and Miller’s Crest Parks. The board chose a caramel/blue for Spring Run Park and a gray/blue for Miller’s Crest Park. Commissioner Anderson mentioned that the swings at Winding Hill Park North get very positive comments and Mr. Fraser added that the plan is to add those swings into the other parks as the swing sets get replaced. He said the equipment will be ordered tomorrow, and it will be installed in the parks in the Spring.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. **2020 Park Budget Update**

Mr. Fraser stated that 2019 was a big year for projects but 2020 will be more for maintenance items. He explained to the board what each fund was, how the money comes into the account, and what expenses are paid out of each fund. Commissioner Anderson mentioned the contribution to the Borough for the pool each year and Mr. Fraser stated that about 15 years ago the Borough was having issues with the pool and approached the Board of Commissioners, saying they might need to close the pool due to maintenance cost issues. Instead, he said the Township formed an agreement with the borough to contribute $50,000 every year with the condition that the Township residents would receive the resident fee instead of the non-resident fee for not living in the Borough. Mr. Fraser stated that the agreement ends in 2024. He said some of the large items that are in the proposed capital reserve budget for next year include construction of
a storage building, three monument signs, a track-based skid loader, a pavilion at Fisher Park, and flagpoles and lighting at four parks. He said for the park improvement fund the proposed items that have not been presented to the Board of Commissioners yet are fencing projects at the parks, playground equipment and rubber mulch, reorienting field four at Winding Hill Park North, grading and irrigation to soccer fields at Friendship Park, trees and benches at parks, miscellaneous expenses at the dog park, engineering and survey expenses at parks, and contributions to fund future replacement of poured in place surfaces. He said there is time to send him an email if anyone has any comments about the budget.

Mr. Williams said he thinks it looks great. Commissioner Rigney asked about the flagpoles and Mr. Salter stated that the Girls’ Softball Association would like to have flagpoles installed. Commissioner Rigney asked why the fence needs replaced at Top Field at Fisher Park and Mr. Marsico said it is getting old. He said it was mentioned before but wasn’t a priority then; however, it is now. Commissioner Rigney asked why irrigation would be installed at Friendship Park and Mr. Fraser said there is now someone in-house that can do it and since work needs done on the field anyway, now would be the time to do it. He said other fields could be added on later.

2. **Dog Park Fee and Registration Discussion**
   
   Mr. Williams mentioned that the committee met a couple of weeks ago and would like the board’s support in reducing the non-resident fee from $50 to $30. He said the resident fee is $20, so it would still be more than a resident fee. Mr. Burch said he is for the change in price noting that when he goes to the events, he hears from non-residents that $50 is too high. Mr. Fraser mentioned that the change in registration is that all registrants will receive a one-year membership from the time of registration, instead of everyone ending at the same time. He added that reminders will be sent out when it is time to renew the registration. Board members agreed that these changes should happen.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The next meeting will be held on October 23, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. With no further business to discuss, Chairman Williams adjourned the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Roth
Recording Secretary