PARK & RECREATION
REGULAR MEETING

September 25, 2019

PRESENT: JEFF WILLIAMS, JOHN BURCH, LAUREN SANKER, JOHN WALTON, JASON SAPOSNEK – MEMBERS; James Cochran, Township Commissioner; Ken Martin, Township Commissioner; Scott Fraser, Assistant Township Manager; Chad Krebs, Parks Maintenance Supervisor; Julie Roth, Recording Secretary.

VISITORS
Jim Salter - Upper Allen Mechanicsburg Softball
Mike Waterman and Danielle Golden - 508 East Locust Street, Mechanicsburg
Bob Melphis - 430 Diehl Road
Jason Rittman - Troop 195, Eagle Scout Project

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 July 24, 2019 meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sanker and passed unanimously.

CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENT
Mr. Williams stated that today is the last day for the National Recreation and Park Association annual conference in Baltimore. He added that he was down visiting friends and was able to pick up some material on the newest equipment available to pass on to the Township staff.
CHAIRMAN’S RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

1. Township Commissioners–Ken Martin, James Cochran
   No comments.

2. Assistant Township Manager – Scott Fraser
   Mr. Fraser mentioned that since the last meeting he has been working on the refurb of the ordinances and is waiting to hear back on the definition of a few things. He also mentioned that the staff is busy working on the budget.

3. Park Maintenance Supervisor– Chad Krebs
   Mr. Krebs stated that the shade project at Winding Hill South is to start on Monday. He added that PPL and Diller’s Nursery donated 70 trees to place throughout the parks. He said another 30 trees are being donated from a developer of a project on Cumberland Parkway. Mr. Williams thanked Mr. Krebs and his staff for all of the work all summer long.

4. Mechanicsburg Recreation Department– Tonya Brown
   Ms. Brown mentioned that the fall brochure went out the beginning of September, which was a bit late due to the construction at the schools. She added that the basketball registration has begun, and the phones are ringing off the hook. She said once the new center behind the high school is finished, that and the Kindergarten Academy will give additional space for the programs. She added that they are in the planning stages of the winter brochure and they are always looking for new and improved programs. Ms. Brown stated that there are 77 children enrolled in the after-school program, which is up from 53 last year and they are looking for part time help with the program. She mentioned that the middle school program begins in two weeks and the numbers are down a little but there are a lot of fall sports going on. Ms. Brown stated that there are a lot of programs starting in the next few weeks. She mentioned that Josh Green is currently at the NRPA annual conference and will be bringing back information on new programs. Mr. Williams stated that he loved seeing the relationship between the staff and kids at the playground program at Fisher Park this past summer.

PARK ASSIGNMENTS

Mr. Williams mentioned that Country Estates park looked like it always does, and McCormick Park didn’t have anyone fishing, which is odd for this time of the year; however, he said there was someone there with a metal detector in the water. He added that the park looked good.

Mr. Burch mentioned that Center Square Park looked freshly mowed and the park looked good. He added that at Simpson Park he saw people walking their dogs, and the volleyball court looked really good also. He said he saw a small group filming down by the water. He said everything at the park looked good.

Ms. Sanker mentioned that Grantham Park looked really good and that the water in the pond was really high, but also looked good.

Mr. Walton stated that Spring Run Park looked great, but no one was there while he was there; however, Mt. Allen Park was very busy. He said the kids were playing on the playground, in the pavilions and playing baseball.

Mr. Saposnek mentioned that as of a few weeks ago, there was a lot of work being done at the park. Mr. Williams asked about the new plantings along the fence at Fisher Park and Mr. Krebs
said they were installed by the Baseball Association. Mr. Williams added that he felt they were too close.

**PUBLIC INPUT**

Robert Melphis, 430 Diehl Road, mentioned that there are concerned citizens that would like to speak at a meeting regarding Code 175-6, Restricted Acts, paragraph F, which says “...carry or discharge an air rifle or air pistol, a paintball gun or paintball marker; fireworks (including rockets), a slingshot or a bow and arrow; provided further that no person shall discharge any firearm within parks or playgrounds.” Mr. Melphis said they are concerned that a weapon can be carried in but it is against regulations to shoot it off. Mr. Fraser noted that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania does not allow local government to restrict weapons if there is a license to carry. Mr. Melphis said they would like to be able to come to a meeting to discuss it and Mr. Williams said they are welcome to come to a meeting.

Mike Waterman and Danielle Golden, 508 East Locust Street, mentioned that they moved to the area six years ago and are very involved in the area, including Upper Allen Mechanicsburg Baseball Association. Mr. Waterman said he has been a coach for five years now, and after talking with the Baseball Association, he and Ms. Golden are asking for permission to hold their wedding next year at Fisher Park. He added that they would like the ceremony to take place at home plate on North Field and then have the reception in pop-up tents at the park. Mr. Waterman mentioned that they know there is a special consideration for alcohol, but they would like to be able to have that at their reception if possible. Mr. Fraser said that would need to be approved by the Board of Commissioners. He said his concern is that Fisher Park is a public park and the park would need to stay open to the public. Mr. Williams mentioned that he feels they should secure a pavilion to have the park usage on file with the staff. Ms. Golden asked about using a sound system and the lights. Mr. Williams said the sound system installed there is very loud, and the neighbors can hear. Mr. Fraser added that they may have the blessing from the Park and Recreation board, but they will need to go to a Board of Commissioners meeting for further approval.

Jason Rittman, Troop 195, introduced himself to the Board and stated that he would like to do his Eagle Scout Project at the Dog Park. He said the project would be bench boxes around the trees to add shaded seating to the park. He mentioned the materials he will be using and stated that he will need to rent an auger to dig the holes for the benches. He added that the total cost for the project is projected at $557.60. Mr. Williams noted that the dog park committee already viewed the project. Mr. Fraser said the park can certainly use additional seating and Board members all agreed that they liked the project. Commissioner Martin said he would like to see it completed by the end of October and said since one of the higher costs to the project is the rental of an auger, he asked if the spots can be marked ahead of time and the staff could drill out the holes so that they do not have that expense. Mr. Rittman said that could be done.

Jim Salter, Upper Allen Mechanicsburg Softball, mentioned that the scoreboard should be here in the next 2 weeks and they are just waiting for the electricity. He said they really appreciate the new paths at Winding Hill Park North. He said they have a big tournament on Sunday, October 6th, and there will be 13 teams playing.

**OLD BUSINESS**

1. **Off-Leash Dog Park Committee Update**
   
   Mr. Williams stated that the next meeting will take place in the next couple of weeks and Trunk or Treat will be held at the church on September 28th. He said a member of the committee has left but another person has stepped into that position.
2. **WHPN (Winding Hill Park North) and Fisher Park Project Updates**

Mr. Fraser mentioned that the courts at Fisher Park are paved and painted and the fence is up. He added that the wall still needs installed and the paths finished. He said it should be done in the next few weeks, but the court still needs striped. He mentioned that at Winding Hill Park North, the poured in place looks really nice; however, the octagon structure is not completed yet. He added that the asphalt needs installed where the stone currently is. He mentioned that the lighting has been held up, so the completion of the project is taking a little longer than expected, but the paths are currently going in. He said once the paths are completed, running maps will be designed and placed along the paths. Mr. Williams asked to have something about the pickleball courts in the newsletter and recreation brochure once they are completed.

3. **Joint Recreation Agreement**

Commissioner Cochran mentioned that on October 12th there was a meeting with Ms. Brown and Greg Longwell from Mechanicsburg School District. He stated that 25 years ago he was a member of the school board and helped write the agreement in the form it is in today, which was before the Township had a Park Supervisor like they do now. He said the way the agreement is written, the school district needs informed now of the Board’s decision to remain in the agreement or not, but we do not have to leave the agreement until June 30, 2020. He added that the current agreement was signed in January of 2013 and talked about the rotations from 2013 to 2018, but the terms are only until 2016. Commissioner Cochran stated that the current agreement just does not make sense anymore and based on the dates in the agreement he feels that there really isn’t an agreement currently, but the Township is still honoring the agreement and staying in the terms until June 30, 2020. He added that there was a suggestion to do a donation with a simple one-page agreement and have the program run by the school district itself. The Park and Recreation Board was unanimous in saying the agreement should change, and it should be done this year. Commissioner Martin mentioned that by giving notice now but having until next summer to make the change, it gives time for suggestions. Commissioner Cochran added that the current structure does not make sense anymore. Mr. Williams stated that he has personal and professional opinions, but he would like to hear what others on the board have to say about it. He suggested meeting once or twice and then going before the Board of Commissioners with thoughts, and stated that he will contact Mr. Fraser to find a time to meet.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. **Spring Run and Miller's Crest Playground Equipment**

Mr. Fraser mentioned that the playground equipment will be purchased this year and installed in the spring. He said there are three different companies that came up with the designs, and the Township has experience with all three. He said they are all about the same price, but the colors are not set in stone and can be changed. The Board agreed with the staff choices; however, Mr. Burch added that he likes the tandem swings. Mr. Krebs stated that the tandem swings from Game Time can be purchased for the swing set at Miller’s Crest Park. Mr. Fraser added that he will bring the color options to the Board for them to decide what they would like best.

2. **2020 Park Budget Overview**

Mr. Fraser stated that they are currently working on the Capital Reserve and Recreation Fund budgets, but the General Fund budget was just proposed to the Board of Commissioners for park maintenance. He said the budget includes three full time
laborers plus the Parks Supervisor, along with a good, stable amount of part time employees. He said the Capital Fund, which has not been presented yet, will include some of the proposed projects to include changing the direction of Field 4 at Winding Hill North as it currently faces the sun, improving the drainage to Field A at Friendship Park along with adding in a sprinkler system for the field, purchasing equipment for Country Estates, and adding a walking path to Aspen Park along with some benches. Mr. Fraser said he will provide a list of the items at the next meeting. Mr. Williams asked Mr. Krebs when he is taking the Playground Safety Test and Mr. Krebs said he will have it by the end of the year.

**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 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Roth
Recording Secretary

**Note:** At the October 23rd Park & Recreation Board meeting, it was discovered that Commissioner Cochran had been inadvertently provided with an expired version of the Joint Recreation Agreement and not the current agreement, and it was that expired agreement that his comments at the September 25th Park & Recreation Board meeting were based on. It is also noted that the Board of Commissioners had already taken action at their September 18, 2019 meeting to terminate the agreement effective June 30, 2020 before Commissioner Cochran made his comments at the September 25th meeting.