



WILLISTOWN TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION

Minutes 10-18-2022 7 PM

MEETING LOCATION: COXE MEMORIAL CAMPUS, 688 SUGARTOWN ROAD, MALVERN, PA 19355

Members: Brad DeHart, Ken Lehr, Bernadette Downey, Bob Kacergis, Erin Smith

Absent: Denise VanValkenburgh, Bill Unrath

Staff Liaison: Mary Hundt, Parks & Recreation Director

ADMINISTRATION

Congratulations Erin! Brad welcomed Erin and thanked her for interviewing with the Board and for her volunteerism to date.

Approval of Minutes April 19, May 17, August 16 minutes: Ken motioned; Bob seconded. All were in favor.

Budget

Proposed 2022 Budget Discussion

Mary highlighted the out-of-the-ordinary budget requests for 2023.

Okehocking Preserve Ridley Creek Restoration Project Phase I

She reported that the budget process is ongoing and that she and the Township Manager and new Public Works Director were working on specific allocations of budget items and processes now that Public Works will be responsible for buildings, infrastructure, and grounds going forward.

During her budget review, Mary discussed the special October PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources grant round and the Okehocking Preserve Ridley Creek Restoration Project. The Phase I project design and permitting 50% grant match amount would be approximately \$40,000. This project will address approximately 200' of the creek, some of which is exhibiting severe left bank erosion and channel migration needing mitigation. Mary conducted a site visit with the consultant with whom she worked on the dam removal in 2011 and he produced a project proposal. The Township Manager did not feel comfortable presenting the the grant match for the project for approval to the Board of Supervisors before they see the 2023 proposed budget that includes significant special project expenditures.

Mary has recently asked the Township Manager if she may put the match for the project in the 2023 budget for the spring DCNR grant application round.

Bob questioned whether the Open Space Fund could be a match or a contributing factor to the required match. A discussion ensued. Mary explained that the state amended the legislation to include maintenance and improvement expenditures as acceptable fund expenses years after the open space referendum was run in 1999. When the Supervisors at the time were asked about utilizing the Fund for such purposes, they declined to take action saying this type of use was not a part of the original Open Space Referendum public communication materials. Bob suggested that we approach the Supervisors again with the amended legislation language and with the note that both the acquisition as well as the improvement expenditures are capital expenditures.

Tree Removal

Mary is proposing \$35,000 for Ash tree removal because of the Emerald Ash Borer blight. Bob inquired as to where the trees were. Mary explained that she and the tree contractor assess the fall zones for the trails—where dead or dying trees can be hazards and fall into circulation patterns. This may not be only hazard trees, as other dead and dying trees may be removed if they pose hazard to other plant material or

waterways, etc. We are at an escalation stage and once one Ash becomes infested, those around them are next.

Fee Schedule Review and Motion to Recommend: Board of Supervisors

A lengthy discussion was held. The Board discussed the Photography Permit and noted that the Parks Code states that a permit is required when charging fees on Township parkland, preserves, and trails and that this is not a revenue generating effort. It was also noted that requiring insurance from the photographers any covers liability concerns. Valley Forge Park charges \$75 for their permit. The Board agreed to a Photography Permit fee of \$50 for a one time or annual permit if the photographer is charging for their services. After the Park Programming Permit was thoroughly discussed and the field use and pavilion rentals fees were reviewed, the Board agreed to no change for these permits. **Bernadette moved that a photography permitting fee for one time or annual use of \$50 be recommended to the Supervisors in the 2023 proposed Fee Schedule; Bob seconded. All were in favor, with Ken abstaining.**

PLANNING

New Business

Open Space Review Board Ratings Review Feedback 864 Grubbs Mill Road

All members conducted a site visit with Mary except for Bernadette and Denise who were familiar with the property. The Board was provided the following documents for their consideration: *Kirkwood Farm Expansion 2022 Public Benefits*, the *864 Grubbs Mill Road Conservation Plan May 2022* documents, and an excerpt from *Acres of Quakers* describing adjacent historic features.

Mary reviewed the items that came up from the site visits including a crosswalk, loop trail, and additional parking provided at Kirkwood Preserve. Bob suggested benches.

Ken asked if other Boards or Commissions have spoken on the project and Mary reported that the Planning Commission and Historic Commission have endorsed the project. Bob motioned to support the lot 1 acquisition provided that there is a (Grubbs Mill) road crossing, incremental parking at the preserve, a walkable trail that is maintained and a desire for benches along the trail. Ken seconded. All were in favor.

Old Business

Comp Plan Update

Mary continues work on Chapter 6 and had a recent mapping meeting with the planner.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

New Business

Sip, Story, & Stroll October 22, Okehocking Preserve. The Board discussed who could attend. Bart VanValkenburgh, Historical Commission Chair, will tell a story about local history, and a Willistown Police Department officer will be coming through to talk about dog rules and safety in the preserve.

Old Business

Events

Summer Camp Plan: UPDATE

Jump Start Sports has a new franchisee for our region. Mary spoke with the Township Manager about hiring a summer camp director as an alternative or giving

the new franchisee a chance, and they agreed on the latter.

PARK MANAGEMENT

Old Business

Easement 40 Lloyd: Draft Update

Greentree Park and 40 Lloyd Parking and Access Easement and sign location: Mary showed the Board the details of sign and its location, Brad pointed out that it is not the Board's purview but more like zoning officer, and Mary stated that because it was on parkland she wanted to run it by the Board. Mary noted the shape of the sign mimicking the main Township Park signage as a nod to the Township. After some discussion, Mary will re-request the Township seal on the sign. The Board acknowledged that they are not the final say in the placement and sign design.

New Business

Serpentine Preserve: Mary is having the trails brush hogged in the 27-acre field.

OLD BUSINESS

Brad inquired about the dog signage at Okehocking. Mary said it is in progress.

Rita Reves key for Bernadette.

NEW BUSINESS

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Joseph Heenan

- Public Exhibition Permit: Mary clarified that the Township does not administer a Public Exhibition Permit for its own events.
Residents should get discounts for programs and rentals on park land, but there are state and other funds that were not Township residents who paid for some of the properties and improvements.
- Board minutes not being posted for citizen comment. Mary clarified that the Township and general municipal protocol does not call for putting draft minutes online for public comment. She believes the Municipality Planning Code is the guiding document. There was a mention of asking for public comment prior to approving the minutes. Bob suggested that we highlight the motions in the minutes so that it pops out for the reader.
- Trail at 864 Grubbs Mill Road: Mary noted that the trail would be included in the exhibit to the Declaration of Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions, which is essentially an easement. He asked if the property was going to be on the Open space Review Board meeting agenda. Mary said that it may be on their next agenda, and she discussed the Rating Review process.

ADJOURNMENT

Brad motioned to adjourn; Bob seconded. All were in favor.

Next Meeting: The third Tuesday of the month at 7PM at the Coxe Memorial Campus, 688 Sugartown Road, Malvern. Please enter through the back door. All meetings are open to the public and available on Zoom.