



WILLISTOWN TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION

MINUTES 1-17-2023 7 PM

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

Members present: Brad DeHart, Erin Smith, Ken Lehr, Bob Kacergis, Denise VanValkenburgh, Bill

Unrath Absent: Bernadette Downey

Staff Liaison: Mary Hundt, Parks & Recreation Director

Administration

New Business

- 2023 Reorganizational Meeting: Appointment of Board Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary
Bob motioned election of the following slate: Brad, Chair; Bernadette, Vice Chair; Mary, Recording Secretary. Denise seconded. All in favor. Brad suggested voice-to-print software for the volunteer boards to make minute taking easier.
- November 2022 Minutes for Approval: Denise motioned to approve as amended; Bill seconded; Erin abstained. All in favor.
- Year End Report: Mary reviewed the 2023 Draft Annual Report. Bob noted the need to add the Okehocking Wall construction, Brad suggested the inclusion of the Willistown Township/40 Lloyd Avenue sign, access, and parking easement negotiations; Bob suggested inserting the tree planting under Okehocking as well. Bill noted the need to include the Greentree Park Pavilion holiday lighting.

Planning

Old Business

- Comp Plan Update: Chapter 6 final from Parks and Recreation Department has been submitted. Will be released for public comment once the traffic planner has contributed and the Planning Commission has reviewed it. The Board recommends keeping the Nike Site on the radar for Chapter 7 in terms of future planning and Parks and Recreation interests.
- Open Space Review Board Update: Bob reported that the board is meeting next week. Mary reported that the appraisal for 864 Grubbs Mill Road is in and with the Township Manager. It will be discussed with the Board of Supervisors and then the Open Space Review Board will be instructed on next tasks, if any.
- Parks Code Chapter 96: Mary will send the Parks Code to the Board prior to the next meeting.

New Business

- Parks and Recreation Departmental Focus Discussion

Mary led a general conversation and noted that she will be discussing this with the Township Manager. She is looking to ensure everyone is on the same page.

Silos:

- Programming an important component in our mission to serve the public, create community, and celebrate this community.
- Stewardship, unlike quite a few local municipalities, we have a lot of open space and ecological assets in our infrastructure. This will become more of a focus as the responsibilities of infrastructure and grounds is transferred to Public Works.
Educational component of environmental stewardship.
- Administration as the third silo.

The group discussed the importance of balancing the tasks of the Department and possible intern assistance. Programming: Continued expansion is not sustainable. This department does more programming than some local departments with two staff and a friends-of group. The events are a lot of work for the Director and the Board. Family events should be top priority. Greentree In Tune and On Tap program is wonderful but

does not need to expand. Brainstorming of combining events ensued. Consider focusing on more stewardship events. Consider the existing local offerings for each age group in the programming plan.

The intern discussion boiled down to the idea of an intern for communications including social media and pr. It was noted that an intern could become another program to manage. Ken will send Mary contact info a potential intern source at Cheyney University of PA.

Program Management

Old Business: None

New Business

2023 Event Calendar to Date

- **Hike Willistown:** The Hike Willistown Series brings a variety of entertaining guides and storytellers to our preserves and trails for fresh-air outings to walk and talk with Willistown residents, neighbors, and friends about the properties and topics including conservation, resource protection, land management, wildlife watching, local history, and more. It's all about enjoying the great outdoors! An intention is to weave into the community fabric local conservation, preservation, watershed protection, and recreation efforts through highlighting Willistown destinations and partner organizations along with Willistown Parks and Recreation.
February 4 Winter Hike w/ CRC 10-11:30AM. Bill will attend.
Spring Hike with Historic Sugartown: Early Okehockings and Quaker Settlement
- **Greentree In Tune & On Tap 4th Event Survey:** Merge this band into the Country Fair and stick with 3 Greentree In Tune and On Tap events.
- **Potential Fall Fest w/ CRC Watersheds Association:** The Board agreed, there is not enough bandwidth to do this event.
- **Willistown Summer Fun Camp Registration** is open and Mary is confident in the new leadership at Jump Start Sports.
- **Philadelphia Union Youth Soccer Camp Week Registration Pending**

Programs

- **GO WilMa! 2023 Program** brainstorm and organization will occur in March.
- **Willistown Community Garden:** There are still openings for new members.
- **Chester County Beekeepers, CRC, and Willistown Parks Okehocking Bee Program:** Mary discussed this potential collaboration at Okehocking and possibly Sugartown Preserve. The Board was positive about the addition but concerned about additional workload for the Director.

Park Management

Old Business

- **Public Works Transition Facilities and Grounds:** Ongoing
- **Greentree Easement:** The draft has gone through the Township solicitor and Township Manager and is now back with 40 Lloyd Ave for their review.
- **Serpentine Preserve Equestrian Crossing:** Ongoing
- **Kirkwood Preserve Pedestrian Crossing:** Ongoing
- **Okehocking Dog Management:** A program that needs attention, including dogs on leash signage in the interior of the preserve and the trifold brochure from Parks and Recreation and Police Departments. The issues of unruliness and the impression that there is no monitoring of this behavior are serious concerns.
- **Woodland Management:** Mary and the arborist estimate the loss of approximately 25% of the trees at Okehocking. The main culprit is the Ash Borer and the continued decimation of that large population at Okehocking. There is no stopping it.

Mary also reported the loss of a few significant old oaks likely from Oak Wilt and loss of a number of cherries, perhaps from age. Serpentine and Sugartown have also been impacted, but not to as large a degree.

New Business

- Public Works Facilities and Grounds Reporting: Now that Public Works is taking over the management of park and recreation buildings and grounds, Mary asked the Board how they would like to be updated on these efforts. Ken stated that West Goshen Township has a Public Works employee attend the Parks and Recreation Board meetings to give updates. Perhaps the Department could provide a brief written summary. Brad motioned that the following is requested: The Parks and Recreation Board requests the Public Works Department provide a report on the conditions of the parks, any maintenance that has been or needs to be conducted, and any other related park management issues for the monthly Parks and Recreation Board meetings. Denise seconded.
- Eagle Scout Potential Project Discussion

Communications

Old Business

Memo Boards: Thank You Erin!

Old Business: None

New Business: None Public Comment: None

Adjournment: Bob motioned; Bill seconded; all 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.