

**Minutes of the Open Space Park and Recreation Board
Upper Pottsgrove Township**

January 14, 2020

A meeting of the Open Space Park and Recreation Board was held on Tuesday, January 14, 2020. Those present were Dennis Elliott, Chuck Note, Sherry Paup, Greg Churach and Scott Wagner. Also present were County Planner John Miklos and Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Coordinator Michael Lane. M. Reddick introduced the newest member, Scott Wagner and welcomed him aboard.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Those assembled pledged allegiance to the flag.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None.

REORGANIZATION – M. Reddick opened up nominations for Chairman. Motion by C. Note and second by G. Churach to nominate Dennis Elliott for Chairman. There was a unanimous vote for Dennis Elliott as Chairman. D. Elliott opened up nominations for Vice Chairman. Motion by G. Churach and second by S. Paup to nominate Chuck Note for Vice Chairman. There was a unanimous vote for Chuck Note as Vice Chairman.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Motion by G. Churach, second by C. Note and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of October 8, 2019 as written. Motion by C. Note, second by S. Paup and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of November 12, 2019 as written.

OLD BUSINESS

REPORTS/PROJECT UPDATES

Green Ailes – Patrick Rieker was present to report on happenings at the Althouse Arboretum. He reported they collected 227 trees during the Christmas tree recycling program held on January 11th and 12th. He also reported that student logged approximately 1,083 volunteer hours from September through December 2019. He outlined upcoming events for 2020 which include a volunteer coffee on February 15th at 9:00 am; electronic/appliance/metal recycling on March 7th from 9 am to 1 pm; the community Easter egg hunt on April 4th from 10 am to 1 pm; a clothing drive and Earth Day celebration activities on April 18th from 9 am to 3 pm; free community education programs including a mushroom walk on April 25th, tree identification, native wildflowers, bird walk, night time sky and bees; a native wildflower plant sale on May 9th from 9 am to 1 pm; a youth empowerment day on May 21st with 20 non-profits and 100 students; the farmers market starting on May 29th and being held on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of each month; yoga in the meadow starting in May and being held every Wednesday evening; summer camps; and other free community programming like story time, nature walks and dog days of summer. K. Hamilton reported there is a new membership program for the community; a basic membership at \$10 per month which includes all of the 40 free programs or a high level membership at \$25 per month which includes the 40 free programs in addition to one (1) share in the CSA farm and one (1) free camp. He also reported on the student-run organic farm and advised he would like to work with a company called Trellis on this endeavor. He agreed to provide additional information for consideration at the next meeting. **Extension of Out Loop Trail at Althouse Arboretum** – K. Hamilton presented a proposed drawing for a possible

extension of the out loop trail at the Althouse Arboretum. Motion by C. Note, second by S. Wagner and unanimously carried to recommend to the Board of Commissioners approval of the extension of the out loop trail at Althouse Arboretum with the condition that additional signage be installed. **Trail Crossing on Gilbertsville Road** – K. Hamilton advised a resident expressed concern with safety issues regarding the trail crossing on Gilbertsville Road and suggested considerations be given to this area. After a brief discussion, the members agreed to see whether the Township could obtain a grant for warning lights at the crosswalk. M. Reddick advised she would need to contact PennDOT to determine if this is something they would approve since Gilbertsville Road is a State road. **Comcast Cares Day** – K. Hamilton advised he is planning to contact Comcast regarding their cares day which is typically held in May, and volunteers from Comcast come out and assist with different projects. He further advised he already has some projects in mind at the Althouse Arboretum but suggested members start thinking about projects for other open space areas in the township. He noted he will obtain confirmation for the cares day and a date and report further at the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

CONSIDER RFP FOR FARMING OF OPEN SPACE PROPERTIES – D. Elliott reported there was prior discussion regarding sending out an RFP for farming of some of our open space properties, and noted the township could potentially obtain additional money for farming of the open space. He further noted the areas could include Malmberg, Boerner, Smola and Prout. He also suggested a multiple-year contract. Motion by C. Note, second by S. Paup and unanimously carried to recommend to the Board of Commissioners approval of an RFP for farming of the open space properties listed above.

OLD BUSINESS (cont'd.)

REPORTS/PROJECT UPDATES (cont'd.)

Inclusive Playground – There was updated information provided to members concerning the proposal for an inclusive playground on the Hoffman Field. C. Note advised the Pottsgrove Inclusive Playground Committee is looking for approval of the concept for an inclusive playground to be located at Hoffman Field. G. Churach expressed concern as to what would happen with Heather Place Park, which needs major work, once this playground is built. He noted he feels it is a mistake to move forward with an inclusive playground for this area when the building needs of the township are still outstanding. R. Spaide advised an inclusive playground is something that is definitely needed for this area. D. Elliott noted this land was bought for open space recreation. G. Churach advised he is not against the concept, but believes there should be a memorandum of understanding in place first. C. Note suggested the memorandum of understanding be written without naming a specific property. Motion by C. Note, second by S. Paup and unanimously carried to recommend to the Board of Commissioners approval of the concept for an inclusive playground subject to receipt of a memorandum of understanding for use of the Hoffman Field.

PARRC Committee Updates – G. Churach advised the intergovernmental agreement has been revised and resubmitted. He reported there is consideration for hiring a strategic plan consultant at a cost of \$25,000, and Mr. Lane did apply for grants to cover this position. He further reported they discussed a contact to outsource mowing, North Coventry is still researching the “Know Your Parks” event and members would like more information on the inclusive playground.

Grants – Mr. Lane provided a report showing the grants applied for and the status of each grant. Mr. Lane suggested the Board consider prioritizing their projects so that they could consider potential grants for those projects in the future. Mr. Lane also suggested the township move forward with an RFP for Sunset Park and Fox Hill trails. Motion by G. Churach, second by S. Wagner and unanimously carried to recommend to the Board of Commissioners the preparation and advertisement of an RFP for the necessary repairs to the Sunset Park and Fox Hill trails.

VETERAN’S MEMORIAL – D. Elliott reported members of the committee will be meeting to come up with ideas for fundraisers, and there is an idea for an oldies fundraiser which is being considered. In response to a question from C. Note, D. Elliott advised that \$32,000 is needed to complete the memorial.

OPEN SPACE PLAN UPDATE – J. Miklos provided an executive summary which he briefly reviewed with members.

BOARD COMMENT

D. Elliott suggested a boardwalk could be a possibility for the wet area on Fox Hill Trail.

PUBLIC COMMENT – John Bealer, 1521 Farmington Avenue, referenced Chapter 1 of the Open Space Plan Updated and noted there is some useful information contained in this section. He referenced the demographic information and noted how much our population just in Upper Pottsgrove alone could benefit from the inclusive playground. He also referenced Chapter 2 and noted it outlines how much the township has accomplished with its open space initiatives.

ADJOURNMENT – Motion by C. Note, second by G. Churach and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle L. Reddick, Township Manager