

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

**July 14, 2020**

A meeting of the Open Space Park and Recreation Board was held on Tuesday, July 14, 2020. Those present were Dennis Elliott, Chuck Note, Greg Churach, Sherry Paup and Scott Wagner. Also present was Township Manager Michelle Reddick. Commissioners Renee Spaide and Cathy Paretti were present in the audience.

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – None.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Motion by G. Churach, second by C. Note and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of March 10, 2020 as written. Motion by S. Wager, second by S. Paup and unanimously carried to approve the June 10, 2020 minutes are corrected to revise Board comments.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**REPORTS/PROJECT UPDATES ~ Green Allies** ~ D. Elliott advised Ken Hamilton is present to provide a report on Green Ailes, and explained we are allowing him to present his report first so he does not have to sit through the whole meeting. K. Hamilton reported they are having eight (8) weeks of summer camp. However, numbers are down due to COVID-19, but they still have 3 camps with 10 children in each camp. He also reported that yoga started tonight and will be held on Tuesdays as 6:00 pm. He advised the 2019 financial information for the arboretum will be provided once it is received. In response to a question from D. Elliott, K. Hamilton advised they installed a buffer to the ponds at Sussell Park to prevent nutrients from getting into the pond and are hopeful the pond will repair itself. He further advised they also planted wildflowers and wetland plants. In response to a question from G. Churach, K. Hamilton advised the public works department is aware of what to mow and what not to mow at Sussell Park. In response to another question from D. Elliott regarding the proposed sustainable farming project at Prout Farm Park, K. Hamilton advised that Craig Collistra of Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation along with Jennifer Anderson of Trellis for Tomorrow are spearheading the project. D. Elliott noted the Township is having issues with ATVs on trails. M. Reddick reported that Chief Fisher is looking into whether violators could be prosecuted under the motor vehicle code. G. Churach advised he will obtain a proposal for removal of ash trees at Sussell Park.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**PROUT FARM TRAIL DISCUSSION** – D. Elliott advised that a resident along the Prout Farm Trail is having issues with people trespassing onto his property and destroying his “no trespassing signs” that were posted. After a brief discussion, it was agreed to have metal posts along with chains as a temporary solution and then a crosswalk along W. Moyer Road and installation of signs as a permanent solution.

**SUSSELL PARK DISCUSSION** – There was discussion concerning all the dead ash trees at Sussell Park. G. Churach agreed to obtain a proposal for removal of the ash trees.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**SHONTZ TRAIL EASEMENT** ~ D. Elliott advised he is recommending moving forward with the survey for the trail easement as this is the only connection to the Perkiomen Trail.

M. Reddick explained the money budgeted for the matching funds for the grant could be utilized for the survey since the Township did not receive the grant. She further explained the estimate for the survey is \$3,000 which is less than what the amount budgeted for the matching grant funds. Motion by C. Note, second by S. Paup and unanimously carried to recommend to the Board of Commissioners approval of the survey for the Shontz Trail easement.

**ADA ACCESSIBLE PLAYGROUND** – C. Note reported the draft Memorandum of Understanding is in the works and will be presented in August. He also reported there are several draft layouts for the playground, and noted members need to provide feedback on which plan they would recommend. After reviewing the different layouts presented, it was agreed to recommend Option C with additional parking and buffers as show on Option D and without the spray park. C. Note advised he would communicate this to the Committee.

**PARRC Committee Updates** – C. Paretto advised one of the items discussed at the last PARRC meeting was implementing a hazardous tree policy. C. Paretto noted she provided this information to everyone via email along with sample policies from Pottstown Borough and West Chester. After a brief discussion, members agreed to table discussion on this matter. She provided members with a copy of her report and reviewed the following items:

- Strategic Plan for PARRC - Barbara Heller from Berry Dunn has not been able to travel due to COVID-19 but is hopeful to be here in September. In reviewing her findings, she shares the statistics, that although all 7 townships should see an increase in aging population, no one seems to be directing any recreation towards that demographic. There has been a decline in our traditional your sports (i.e., footballs, basketball, and baseball; baseball is still seeing the most activity. However, soccer and lacrosse are rising in participation.

- Dog Parks – Barbara also stated the fastest growing park in the nation is the dog park.

- COVID-19 – Due to the pandemic, everyone agrees that their parks and trails have seen more use, and there may be a discussion on how to keep the interest going after everything goes back to normal.

- Website – PARRC will be launching its very own website soon, and all seven townships will have their park, recreation and open space information listed on the page.

- ICIA Agreement – Copies of the Agreement have been provided to all members, and it was suggested they become familiar with the document. C. Paretto noted it could be voted on at the August BOC meeting.

- 10 Minute Walk Campaign – C. Paretto explained this program last month, and reported that she, along with G. Churach, have committed to attend the four meetings a year to discuss this initiative.

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She also reported it is her understanding that Pottsgrove School Board has also signed a letter of support for this initiative and plan to attend the meetings.

- C. Parette reminded everyone that October 10<sup>th</sup> is slated to be a Walk to a Park Day.

The next PARRC meeting is July 22<sup>nd</sup> and any updates from Open Space is appreciated so that C. Parette can report to the committee on any progress that Open Space is making

**Grants** – No updates.

**VETERAN’S MEMORIAL** – D. Elliot advised there is currently \$1,200 in donations received in the account and a fundraising event is being considered for the future.

**HOLLENBACH PARK MASTER PLAN PROJECT** – C. Parette provided an updated Letter of Intent for the grant to develop a master plan for Hollenbach Park. She noted the letter of intent is asking for \$20,000 with the Township’s match being \$14,000.

**BOARD COMMENT** – G. Churach recommended daily maintenance for visibility at Sussell Park. He also noted there is a dead tree at Heather Place Park. M. Reddick advised she has asked public works to compile a list of all trees which may pose a safety hazard and need to come down. G. Churach also advised that he is maintaining the open space Facebook page.

S. Wagner expressed concern that we are preparing a master plan and a huge project at Hollenbach Park when we are not maintaining the current open space areas.

In response to a concern expressed by D. Elliott, G. Churach advised the logger was unable to access certain areas to remove dead trees.

M. Reddick advised the Township is not currently renting the pavilions due to COVID-19 so there will be a decrease in revenue for pavilion rentals.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – None.

**ADJOURNMENT** – Motion by C. Note, second by S. Paup and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:33 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle L. Reddick  
Township Manager