

# LOWER POTTS GROVE TOWNSHIP PARKS & RECREATION BOARD

**January 29, 2008  
Meeting Minutes**

Attendance: Patty Bleakley, Chair  
Patty Abdalla, Vice Chair  
Thomas Troutman  
Dennis Cimino (7:15)  
Rich Wood  
Alyson Elliott, Assistant Manager  
Jennifer Corley

Ms. Bleakley called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

A motion was made by Patty Abdalla, seconded by Mr. Troutman to approve the meeting minutes of November 26, 2007. The vote to approve these minutes was unanimous at 4-0.

Ms. Elliott advised the Board that they must reorganize at the beginning of each year. Rich Wood nominated Patty Bleakley as Chair and the nomination was seconded by Thomas Troutman. The vote was unanimous for Ms. Bleakley to continue on as Chair at 4-0. Mr. Wood also nominated Patty Abdalla as Vice Chair and the nomination was also seconded by Thomas Troutman. The nomination was carried by a 4-0 vote.

## Announcements & Reports

### A. *Financial Report*

Ms. Elliott explained that the report will now be presented in a balance sheet format. The report detailed the 2007 budget vs. the actual expenditures of Park and Recreation Funds. Checking Account as of December 31, 2007: \$3,695.10. Savings Account: \$100,072.57.

### B. *Parks and Facilities Report*

Ms. Elliott reported that the *Shaner* cottage demolition has been completed. The remaining cleanup work and the parking lot will be completed later in the year. This project was done in house, by Public Works at a cost of approximately \$2000. It was quoted at approximately \$9000 to have a contractor complete the job. *Sanatoga Park* – the block building is near complete. The roof has been installed, but requires completion. Donations by the following groups were accepted to bring this to fruition:

- Concrete foundation – LPT Public Works
- Block Work – Scheler & Schifflet
- Roof – Commissioner Klotz
- Electrical Work – Commissioner Foltz

There are still a few punch list items that remain to be completed in the spring. Discussion was opened by Ms. Elliott about the fencing of the soccer fields at Sanatoga Park. A motion was made to go out for bid for fencing around Sanatoga Park Soccer Field by Tom Troutman and seconded by Patty Abdalla. The motion carried a unanimous vote of 4 – 0. Mr. Troutman asked about improving the quality of the gates at Sanatoga Park. Ms. Elliott replied that improvement of the gates was not part of this project. *Gerald Richards Park* fencing bid was presented and the difference between Option 1, galvanized chain link fencing, and Option 2, vinyl-coated chain link fencing, was discussed. Due to the location of the field, the Board concluded that the vinyl-coated fencing would be the most appropriate. A motion was made to recommend to the Board of Commissioners Option 2 with the vinyl coating by Tom Troutman and seconded by Patty Abdalla. The vote was carried unanimously at 5 – 0. *Sprogels Run Park* – the engineer is working on a design and permitting for the project.

C. *Police Report*

Sanatoga Park Soccer Fields were damaged. Damages are estimated at \$2700.00. The individuals were caught. Patty Bleakley asked if members of the Board should plan on attending the hearing. Tom Troutman established he will be going. Ms. Elliott commented she will speak with Township Manager, Rod Hawthorne to see if the presence is necessary.

D. *Joint Park and Recreation Board Report*

Ms. Bleakley and Commissioner Klotz were appointed to serve on the Joint Park and Recreation Board for the Township. Ms. Bleakley had nothing to report as the meeting was cancelled because the Board did not have a quorum.

E. *Sunnybrook Ballroom*

Ms. Elliott reported that the Township is working with the Foundation to coordinate our efforts in terms of marketing and events. Mr. Troutman reported that the Tommy Dorsey Band is going to play at the Grand Opening. Rich Wood asked if they were fully up and running yet and Mr. Troutman suggested he check out their website, it is informative.

F. *Events Reports*

Ms. Elliott reported on the upcoming annual events that the Township has planned. She deferred to Jen Corley for detailed information. Discussed were the Easter Egg Hunt, the Summer Concert Series, the Community Day / Summer Event Kick-off, the Movies in the Park, the Halloween Festival and Santa's Hotline. For **Easter**, Mrs. Corley detailed we were going to have more games for the children. She has researched the cost for sacks to have a "Bunny Hop" race and also some small prizes for each child. We have secured free entertainment in the way of B101 radio station and their mascot. BUZZBEE will be attending the Hunt and the radio station will broadcast from 9:30 am until 10:30 am. We are also working with the area high schools to have some of the students volunteer to assist with the games and running the hunt. Coventry Christian students have expressed an interest in participating and

Mrs. Corley will contact the Key Club advisor at Pottsgrove High School and the Student Council advisor at St. Pius X High School for additional volunteers as needed. The **Summer Concert Series** is taking shape. The first concert is *Bill Koss Combo*. This band was requested by the residents on the survey. The last concert will be Pottsgrove Community Band. Mrs. Corley is in contact with them and awaiting a confirmation. We have confirmations from *The Barbone Street Jazz Band* and *The Mango Men* and are researching some Country and Rock bands. These were the most requested genres in the Park and Rec Survey. Concerts will run from June 22 to August 10 with a break July 4 weekend. The **Community Day / Summer Event Opener** will be Saturday, June 14. We will begin with the Fishing Derby at 7:00am. Mrs. Corley is soliciting student volunteers for this event as well. They can measure fish, indicate most unusual catch etc. We will also hold a resident “Shred Event” at the upper parking lot of Sanatoga Park. We are in talks with a mobile shred unit that will come out from 9 – 12pm. We are going to solicit volunteer firefighters from both Ringing Hill and Sanatoga Fire Companies to assist with the event. The firemen can have a boot drive along with the shred event. The Township will collect the funds from the firemen and disperse it evenly between the two companies so one is not in favor over another. The shred event will be a constant flow of traffic entering from S. Park Road and exiting Sanatoga Road. We will solicit Police and Fire Police assistance with traffic control. After the shred event is completed, we plan to have local bands play at the Sanatoga Bandshell. We are attempting to have three or four bands play 30 to 40 minute sets. We are collecting a list of the equipment they will need and checking into rental prices. At present we are in contact with John Shantz at Pottsgrove High School and he is helping us gather bands. The students seem very enthusiastic to play there. For **Movies in the Park**, we were informed that we cannot play any Disney movies on the weeks we are scheduled to have our movie nights. The list of movies was again discussed. All Board members agreed that the Christmas in July theme with a Toys-for-Tots drive was a good idea. After discussion the board agreed on *A Christmas Story* for the movie. Mrs. Corley is contacting the local Toys-for-Tots to arrange a drop off. Non-Disney movie lists will be distributed. Included with the packet was a short list. Ms. Elliott brought forth discussion on the **Halloween Festival**. The board agreed that we will not change that for this year. With the addition of the games last year, it was a success. **Santa’s Hotline** will be offered again this year. Ms. Abdalla suggested we contact Sanatoga Ridge and Buchert Ridge to see if the residents would be willing to volunteer their time to make the Santa calls. Mrs. Corley will contact the schools again for some “elves” to assist with taking the calls from parents.

G. *Grants Report*

The School District Property has only one outstanding item to complete before the Township can settle on the property. It is to go to the Court of Common Pleas to eliminate the “right of reverter” clause on March 19. The master site plan grant for Snell and Norton Park was granted. Alyson is in the process of drafting and RFP for the project. A steering committee will be formed for the project.

H. *Spring 2008 Township Newsletter*

Ms. Elliott reported that she and Mrs. Corley are working on the spring newsletter, which is expected to be delivered to residents in May. There will be articles about park and recreation events and park news among other topics.

I. *Planning Studies Report*

The Community Revitalization Plan is in progress. Community revitalization grants have been submitted for (only 2 will be funded): Sunnybrook Ballroom restoration, streetscaping along East High Street, and bus shelters for High Street. Ms. Elliott reported that the Sanatoga Interchange Study is in progress.

Unfinished Business – Ready for Action

A. *Parks and Recreation Ordinances*

Ms. Elliott and the solicitor have made the edits. Discussion was on the introduction of a purchasing procedure for non-budgeted items and also the notation about equestrian use in the parks. Ms. Elliott stated that the purpose would be to designate trails or areas where they could go, not eliminate them from using Township parks altogether. There is also a provision in the Township's Codification that the Park and Recreation Commission is the board that oversees the Shade Tree Ordinance and asked if the Board would like to expand its responsibilities under this ordinance. The Board said it is comfortable with keeping the ordinance as is. Motion to recommend to the Board of Commissioners that the Shade Tree Ordinance remain as is by Rich Wood. The motion was seconded by Patty Abdalla and carried by a unanimous vote of 5 – 0.

Unfinished Business – Not Ready for Action

A. *Sports Organization Memorandum of Understanding*

Ms. Elliott reported that she has met with Mr. Hawthorne and the solicitor to discuss the draft she developed. The solicitor had some legal questions that he would like to present to the Board of Commissioners before presenting his final advice. Ms. Elliott has been polling the Board on those questions.

B. *Strategic Planning*

Ms. Elliott reported on what has been accomplished to date on several projects and what action remains to be taken on those projects. She presented the findings of the Parks and Recreation Satisfaction Survey for the Board to review. She said it was an affirmation of some of the policies the Board and staff are working on and had several recurring themes: there needs to be more promotion of the Township's parks and recreation activities, trails and playgrounds are the most desired recreation amenities, and there is a strong desire for an annual community day. Overall respondents thought the Township's activities were good quality, but there was a desire for safer facilities and to spend taxpayer dollars wisely. Ms. Elliott added that a good number of the items residents asked for are being addressed in 2008 and as part of the Board's strategic planning exercise.

## New Business

- A. *Amendment to Township's Open Space Recreation & Environmental Resources Plan*  
Ms. Elliott mailed a draft along with a memo for the board to review. This amendment adds open space parcels to the Township's "wish list" so that the Township has justification for purchasing open space using grant money. The Township has requested appraisals for three of the properties listed in the open space plan amendment. Mr. Troutman commented that this is an aggressive plan and he likes it. He inquired about the sources of funding and why the Township wasn't going after more properties. Ms. Elliott commented she is pursuing County funding at this point because the State requirements are too stringent and have a significantly longer application process. The Township does not have matching funds available for any more than the above referenced three properties which precludes them from purchasing additional open space at this time. A motion was made by Tom Troutman and seconded by Rich Wood to recommend the Open Space modifications to the Board of Commissioners and carried by a 5 – 0 vote.
- B. *Park Naming*  
Ms. Elliott proposed to the Board a process for naming the acquired Open Space tracts. The Board of Commissioners received a request from the former owner of the "Shaner Tract" to name it *Shaner Park*. This Board is in agreement that the park should remain named Ringing Rocks Park as it is contiguous to Ringing Rocks Park. Ms. Elliott suggested naming the pond "*Shaner's Pond at Ringing Rocks Park*" or the springhouse "*Shaner's Springhouse at Ringing Rocks Park*". For the School District Property, the Board will come up with three to five names for that property and then ask residents to vote in a naming contest in the Spring Newsletter, with an announcement of the final name in the Fall Newsletter.

## Comments

Rich Wood commented that the County would like to offer three Informational Kiosks to the Township for use in its parks. The County would make any necessary repairs to them prior to delivery. They will deliver the kiosks and the Township would install them. They are only three years old. The Board discussed installing the kiosks at Gerald Richards Park, the Sanatoga Bandshell, and at the Shaner Tract. A motion was made to accept the donation of three informational kiosks from Montgomery County by Tom Troutman and seconded by Dennis Cimino. The vote carried at 5 – 0.

Mr. Wood also asked the Board to investigate installing permanent recycle bins at Gerald Richards Park near the snack bar. Ms. Elliott said recycle bins for Gerald Richards and Sanatoga parks were included in the 2008 budget item. Mrs. Corley told Mr. Wood that she has a temporary unit that can be used in the interim.

Mr. Troutman asked if there was any progress being made on the cleanup of the Schuylkill River Park entrance. Ms. Elliott commented that it is in the budget as a low priority item. It may not be

done this year because the Township will be purchasing fencing for the soccer field at Sanatoga Park. Mr. Troutman commented that since it may be a fire and emergency hazard, it might have been made a higher priority. Ms. Elliott commented that because of it's proximity to the river it may require DEP permitting and engineering work to repair.

Mr. Troutman also asked about the fountain in Sanatoga Lake. Ms. Elliott is looking at the possibility of having a developer donate a fountain that is appropriate in size for the lake. The goal is to install a fountain that will properly aerate the lake.

With no other business to discuss, the motion was made to adjourn by Rich Wood and seconded by Dennis Cimino, unanimously approved by a 5 – 0 vote at 9:20 p.m.

Next meeting:            *Tuesday*, February 26, 2008.