

The following was discussed as part of the report:

Mr. Troutman commented that the infields of the ball fields at Gerald Richards Park look good. Ms. Elliott reported that they were identified as problem areas by the baseball associations at the sports organization meeting in March. Public Works has been working with organizations to make them look and function better.

Mr. Wood asked if there was any intention to install bleachers on the hill along the long side of the Sanatoga Park soccer field. Ms. Elliott said they were not being considered under this contract; however, she and John Fogel have spoken about that possibility under a future contract to reduce maintenance on the steep hill.

Ms. Bleakley asked if the infield of the Sanatoga Park baseball field could be covered with a tarp to help with maintenance. Mr. Hawthorne said that he has spoken with the Pottsgrove Baseball Organization, who has asked him if there is anything they can do to help out. He said that maybe they could provide the tarp for the infield. Ms. Bleakley also asked if PBO could rake the infield. Mr. Hawthorne said that both the baseball and soccer organizations would have some role in the maintenance of these facilities, whether they do the maintenance or provide money for the Township to hire an outside contractor.

There was discussion on the future use of these fields. Mr. Hawthorne said it was intended that they would be used on a limited basis, primarily for games. The Park & Recreation Board will need to make a determination on who will use the fields, on what basis, and what the fee would be. Mr. Troutman asked if the baseball field could be used more frequently since they are not as hard on the field as soccer, lacrosse, or football. Mr. Hawthorne suggested they start slowly and increase field use as it is determined appropriate.

The Board discussed working on these questions at their next meeting. Ms. Elliott would provide them with an outline at their next meeting of the types of questions that should be discussed in relation to these fields.

Mr. Wood said that after looking at last month's Public Works report, with 70-85 percent of the crew's time being spent on park related activities, that maintenance will be a very important issue for the Board to discuss in the coming months. It will need to see if it will need more manpower, contract out some of the maintenance activities or reallocate resources over the next few years as more facilities come on line.

Mr. Troutman asked if Public Works could brush hog behind home plate of the Sanatoga Park baseball field so that balls would not be lost in there.

Ms. Bleakley filled the Board in on some of the activities that occurred at the Joint Parks & Recreation Board meeting. She said the Greater Pottstown Area Tennis Association will be holding a tennis clinic at Pottsgrove High School this summer and the Pottsgrove Community Band will be celebrating its 50th anniversary next year. There will be a concert at the High School in June 2009 to commemorate the occasion.

Ms. Elliott asked Mr. Wood if soccer was using all the fields at Gerald Richards Park because she had a request from the Pottsgrove High School Girls soccer coach to use the fields on Saturdays for practice. Mr. Wood said the PSC is using all of the fields and has not seen the girls soccer team there. He said staff should call the Athletic Director to see if he knows about these practices. He does not think they are allowed to practice away from the school.

Action: A motion was made by Mr. Troutman, seconded by Mr. Wood, and unanimously approved by a 4-0 vote, for staff to only accept applications from school athletic directors for school teams, not individual coaches.

Mr. Troutman asked when the parking area improvements at Shaner's Grove will be complete. Ms. Elliott said it is on the list to be done in Fall 2008, as per the Parks Project report. Mr. Troutman said that it should be done immediately so people could use Ringing Rocks Park. Ms. Elliott said it is intended to be completed this year as time permits. Staff was able to demolish the cottage this spring, but they have been busy with spring park work and will be busy over the summer with road projects. Mr. Troutman said the Township should hire someone to do the work if our crew cannot. Ms. Elliott said this work was not budgeted for outside work and it is not that the crew cannot do the work, they will just need to schedule it for a time when they are not busy with other time-sensitive projects. Mr. Troutman said that the public cannot use the park in its current state. Ms. Elliott replied that there is enough room to park at least two cars on asphalt until the work is done. Mr. Troutman was concerned that the Township was placing too much emphasis on active recreation parks for the sports organizations and not enough on passive recreation parks. Ms. Elliott said there are projects for both types of activities in the works, including a walking/nature trail at Sprogels Run. The Township has made the commitment to providing sports fields for its residents. These facilities are very time-consuming in the spring when the grass starts growing and needs to be mown several times a week.

Mr. Troutman also asked when the work at Schuylkill River will be done. Ms. Elliott replied that there was money budgeted for this project; however, it will probably need to be pushed back until next year because the Township spent money on the unanticipated fence project at Sanatoga Park. Mr. Troutman said he did not think it would be an expensive project. Ms. Elliott said the project would require some engineering work because it will involve working in the floodplain of Sprogels Run. Mr. Troutman also asked why a tree that fell across the path had not yet been removed. Ms. Elliott asked Mr. Troutman and the rest of the Board to report any work that needs to be done to her so it can be corrected. The Board is the eyes and ears of the park system just as much as the Township staff – in some cases members of the Board spend more time at the parks than staff does.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – READY FOR ACTION

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – NOT READY FOR ACTION

None.

NEW BUSINESS

I. *Community Day: Vendor Consideration*

Ms. Elliott said she was contacted by a vendor who would like to provide kiddie games at the Township's community day. The games would include duck bob and a few other games. It would cost \$3 per chance. Mr. Wood asked if it would cost the residents money directly, or if the Township would be paying for the vendor to attend as a free activity. Ms. Elliott said it would be a direct cost to attendees. It was a consensus of the Board that this event was not the place for this type of vendor. It would be more appropriate for a carnival.

II. *Sports Organization Survey*

Ms. Elliott presented the Board with a draft of the survey she would like to send to the sports organizations to better understand their future needs. She asked the Board to take their time reviewing it and bring her any suggestions for improving it. The Board suggested she provide demographic information on the survey so the organizations could better project their numbers.

III. *Trees at Gerald Richards Park – Field #3*

Ms. Elliott said she had been discussing with John Fogel how best to care for the steep bank at Field #3 at Gerald Richards Park now that the fence has been installed, breaking off some of the turnaround space for the Public Works crew when they mow and making it more dangerous. She suggested planting pine trees at staggered intervals along the bank and mulching it. The pines would create a windbreak and prevent weeds and grasses from growing with their pine needle carpet. There was discussion on the various types of plantings that would work for the area. The Board felt comfortable with Mr. Wood's suggestion to plant warm season grasses, which only need to be planted once a year, and trees. He said a cub scout could do it as part of their required projects. Ms. Elliott also agreed to look into what types of trees would work best in that type of location.

III. *Parks & Recreation Academy*

Ms. Elliott said she and Ms. Corley attended a Parks & Recreation Academy in April which was hosted by the PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (DCNR). This three-week seminar covered topics like Administration, Financing, and Multi-Municipal Boards. She said the courses were very helpful and offered a number of suggestions that she would like to incorporate. She and Ms. Corley will be reviewing all the documentation they received and slowly introducing it. The first thing they did was to create the monthly report, which will be used from now on.

IV. *Regional Parks & Recreation*

Ms. Elliott said she heard a presentation by Dave Kraybill of the Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation at the April meeting of the Pottstown Area Regional Planning Committee regarding regional parks and recreation. He said the Foundation will be starting an earnest discussion on the topic with all the municipalities in the region this summer. They will be forming a steering committee with representatives from each of the

municipalities and taking their time to determine whether this is the right thing for the region or parts of the region. Ms. Elliott said she will keep the Board advised on this project.

COMMENTS

Mr. Tony Doyle made the following comments at the meeting:

- Picnic tables at Gerald Richards Park need to be fixed – Ms. Elliott said she would have the Public Works Department look at them.
- Trash cans at Gerald Richards Park were overflowing. Can the Township get nicer trash cans for the park? Ms. Elliott said she will have the Public Works keep an eye on the trash at the park. They have money in this year's budget to order nice trash and recycling cans for the park.
- Can the chain at Snell and Norton Park be opened to allow access?
- He offered his help in selecting trees for different locations to make sure the Township gets quality trees.
- Would it be possible to get a copy of the Parks & Recreation Report? Ms. Elliott said the Board of Commissioners would receive them in their packets each month.
- Would like visitors to have an opportunity to comment at the meetings, preferably at the end.
- He questioned the condition of baseball field #8. It looks like they have been using it this year. Ms. Elliott said that the Public Works crew will look into repairs this fall.

Mr. Troutman said he did not believe there is reason why the Township cannot dump dirt in the Kurtz T-ball Field (Field 8) to fix the low spots. Ms. Elliott replied that the Township would take a look at the field after the season is over.

There being no other business, a motion was made by Mr. Wood, seconded by Mr. Troutman, and unanimously approved by a 4-0 vote to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

The next meeting is ***Tuesday***, May 20, 2008.