

- Ms. Elliott issued a letter to the Pottsgrove School District Athletic Director explaining that the Township will only accept field use applications from school athletic directors, as per the Board's recommendation

Mr. Wood said he had spoken with a representative of the Panthers. They will be using the Soccer Club's flag system to determine whether the fields are usable. In addition, he said they are working with the Panthers to line the field. The Panthers will be contacting the Township about storing a storage bin on the property for their painting supplies. He said they were unaware of what types of things were their responsibilities and what types of things were the Township's. Ms. Elliott said it might be a good time to start looking at the Policies and Procedures document she had been drafting to see if it can be ready for the 2009 season to pass out to the organizations as information, especially if new organizations will be looking to use Township fields. The Board agreed this would be a good idea.

Ms. Bleakley expressed concern over the use of crown vetch on the hill at the Sanatoga Park soccer field. She said it is a very tough plant to get rid of if plans change. She asked if the prisoners could be used for some of the projects planned for the parks this year. Ms. Elliott said she was unsure of the arrangement regarding the use of the prisoners for Township work and would check on it.

A motion was made by Ms. Abdalla, seconded by Mr. Wood, and unanimously carried by 5-0 vote, to approve the May Parks & Recreation Report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – READY FOR ACTION

A motion was made by Ms. Abdalla, seconded by Mr. Troutman, and unanimously carried by a 5-0 vote, to approve the April Parks & Recreation Report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – NOT READY FOR ACTION

Sports Organization Survey

The Board discussed revisions to the survey. In addition, Ms. Elliott provided the Board with the population trends based on Montgomery County and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. She also provided information on the types of development that is proposed for Lower Pottsgrove. A significant number of the new residential housing would be age restricted, thereby reducing the number of children that would be entering the schools and sports organizations. Mr. Troutman suggested asking the school district for their projections to see if they have additional information about Upper and West Pottsgrove, since they are also served by the local sports organizations.

Ms. Elliott agreed to take the Board's comments and make revisions to the survey. She said she would do some design work to make it a more appealing survey and email it to the Board for review before giving it to the sports organizations at the proposed meeting in June. The Board was amenable to this.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

ONGOING BUSINESS

Strategic Plan – Funding Strategies

Ms. Elliott queried the Board on their willingness to “sell” parts of the parks facilities for sponsorship money. It was the consensus of the Board that this would be the best way to raise money for capital improvements to the Township’s parks. Mr. Wood said he would forward to Ms. Elliott a publication by the Pennsylvania Parks and Recreation Society that will give the Board ideas for how to raise money in this manner. She said she would take a look at it and start generating ideas.

Mr. Troutman suggested an annual fundraising event. Ms. Bleakley said she would be concerned about hosting a fundraiser that would take money away from other organizations that also host annual fundraising events. Ms. Abdalla agreed, saying that these events also take a lot of coordination and time to plan.

Mr. Wood said he would be concerned about sign clutter. He would like to recognize people for their contributions without taking away from the natural atmosphere of the parks.

Ms. Elliott suggested that the sports organizations would be a good asset to tap for fundraising help, once a plan is in place, since they probably have a wide network of funding sources outside of Lower Pottsgrove Township. The Board agreed that the fundraising efforts could not be limited to Lower Pottsgrove’s borders if it were to be successful.

Ms. Abdalla warned that some of the organizations are strapped and need all the money they receive from their fundraising efforts. Ms. Elliott agreed and said that maybe a more coordinated effort would be able to open more fundraising doors for the Township and the organizations. Mr. Wood said a successful fundraising strategy will involve a variety of strategies.

Mr. Wood said he and the Pottsgrove Soccer Club had considered advocating a Pottsgrove Sports Association, which would consist of all the different sports organizations to unite their fundraising and capital funding efforts; however, this proved to be a difficult tasks with three municipalities and a school district each having their own views on parks and recreation. He said he has typically seen it work in single municipality school districts. Ms. Bleakley asked how the Pottsgrove Recreation Board would fit into this. Could it help bring all the organizations together and make fundraising a joint effort?

Ms. Elliott said she thought the regional recreation study that will be started this summer might also offer the Township the opportunity to unite to pool resources in order to reduce costs and aid in fundraising efforts. Mr. Cimino asked what types of incentives would there be to encourage communities to join a regional recreation board, especially if it meant they would give up their autonomy? Ms. Elliott said costs savings, expanding programs, and ability to garner more funds through grant sources and other donors would be good reasons to form such an organization. She said the eight municipalities who will be participating in the feasibility study already have a history of working together on regional planning issues. Mr. Cimino said he was skeptical that this would work.

COMMENTS

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

- Echoed Mr. Cimino’s comments regarding loss of autonomy if the Township were to join a

regional parks and recreation group

- Dandelions seem to be taking over the parks, something should be done to eliminate them – Ms. Elliott said she would have the public works crew look into this.
- Would the newly acquired park on Bleim Road be mown – Ms. Elliott said that Mr. Hawthorne and Mr. Fogel had decided to leave unmown as a natural area for wildlife. They would keep an eye on it to prevent it from becoming too overgrown.
- Had anything been done about the fallen tree on the trail of Schuylkill River Park – Ms. Elliott said that the public works is scheduled to take a look at it; but cautioned that it may not be on Township property.

Mr. Troutman asked if he could form a volunteer group to trim bushes and other vegetation at the parks. Ms. Elliott said it is a policy of the Township not to have volunteer groups because of liability issues. In addition, she said staff is not equipped at this time to oversee volunteers and cutting vegetation in Township parks is not permitted, as per the parks and recreation rules and regulations ordinance, which was recently passed.

Ms. Elliott reminded the Board that the summer event season will start June 14 with the community event. The Township newsletter with a ton of information on the Township's parks should be mailed out by the end of the week or early next week. The website will be updated in the next week.

The Board agreed to meet throughout the summer to have work sessions on strategic planning topics.

There being no other business, a motion was made by Mr. Wood, seconded by Mr. Troutman, and unanimously approved by a 5-0 vote to adjourn the meeting at 8:33 p.m.

The next meeting is ***Monday***, June 23, 2008.