

**Lower Pottsgrove Township  
Parks & Recreation Board Meeting  
Monday, September 22, 2008**

|             |                             |                           |
|-------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Attendance: | Patty Bleakley, Chairperson | Rich Wood                 |
|             | Patty Abdalla, Vice Chair   | Alyson Elliott, Assistant |
| Manager     |                             |                           |
|             | Tom Troutman                | Jennifer Corley           |
|             | Dennis Cimino               |                           |

Chairperson Patty Bleakley called the regularly scheduled Parks & Recreation Board meeting to order at 7:00pm.

**Parks & Recreation Report**

Alyson Elliott summarized the July through September financial reports and meeting minutes. She commented that the **Bateman/Romer** property went to settlement on Friday, September 19, 2008. Included in the reports was a checklist of projects that staff is working on for in 2008 for Park & Recreation. Ms. Elliott noted that the parking area at **Shaner's Grove at Ringing Rocks Park** was completed approximately one month ago and that the steps at **Sanatoga Park** should be done in the next few months. There was a contractor hired to mow Sanatoga Park at a cost of \$150 per cutting. This is because Public Works is down one person. Spregel's Run boardwalk permits are being worked on now. The Township is looking into using a recycled product for the decking because it is good for the environment and will be more durable in wet conditions. They are still working on determining the method for installation of the boardwalk. There are two options; the first will involve laying the boardwalk on top of the wetlands without anchors for minimal impact and the second, the traditional in which we will have to dig footers. The first seems much more environmentally responsible. A PNDI (Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Index) review by the Army Corps of Engineers revealed that there are no bog turtles in the area which will make the process move much more quickly.

Tom Troutman commented that he had an amendment to the July minutes. He is documented as saying that the original pavilion at Sanatoga Park was burned down, but it did not burn down, it collapsed due to a snow load. John was supposed to rebuild two pavilions with the funds received from insurance. Ms. Elliott reported that only one was rebuilt and there are no remaining funds for a second pavilion.

A motion was made by Patty Abdalla to approve the July-September Parks and Recreation Report. This motion was seconded by Dennis Cimino and carried with a vote of 5 – 0.

**Unfinished Business Ready for Action**

Ms. Elliott explained that the Township newsletter deadline is approaching and that there

was a necessity to poll the Board informally for the winning name of the park at Pleasantview and Bleim Roads. The winning name is Pleasantview Park. A motion was made to recommend that to the Board of Commissioners that they name the new park Pleasantview Park by Patty Abdalla and seconded by Dennis Cimino. The motion carried by a vote of 5 – 0.

### **New Business**

Ms. Elliott reported that a resident emailed an inquiry as to why there are no restrooms available to the public during daylight hours at Sanatoga Park. Rod Hawthorne responded to the resident explaining that Township restrooms and portable toilets had been vandalized in the past, leading the Township to open restrooms only during Township-sponsored events. The resident was understanding, but inquired as to whether or not the Board would consider portable restrooms for the public. Ms. Elliott posed the question to the Park & Recreation Board members and after discussion the issue was tabled for this meeting.

Ms. Elliott reported receiving an email from Tom Sefhakis of Sunnybrook Foundation regarding the Township cooperating with a “Heritage Days” event that Sunnybrook would like to have in 2009. Ms. Elliott reported that, while this is an interesting event, Township staff does not currently have time for significant involvement in planning and/or running this event. Board members inquired as to the level of commitment Mr. Sefhakis is looking for. Ms. Elliott will get more information from Mr. Sefhakis regarding this. The discussion for this even is tabled until such time.

Ms. Corley reported on the plans being made for the 2008 Halloween Fall Festival and noted the memorandum with attachments for the Board to approve the request to hire Ernie & Neal for entertainment along with the Balloon artist, Jack Hardesty. The motion was made to approve the arrangements Ms. Corley made for the Halloween Fall Fest, for the Ernie & Neal contract and for Jack Hardesty by Dennis Cimino and seconded by Patty Abdalla. The motion carried by a vote of 5 – 0.

Ms. Elliott reported on the events for 2009. Movie night was not well-attended and she recommended that the Board discontinue this program. After some discussion, the Board reached a consensus that it would like to attempt the Movie night one more time in 2009 at Sanatoga Park and at an earlier time. The Board discussed ways to better advertise the events and came to the conclusion that we could solicit email addresses from residents in the Fall Newsletter. Board members thought that “word of mouth” might be better advertisement and that an email chain might elicit better attendance. Mr. Wood suggested we contact Turkey Hill to see if they would be interested in bringing an ice cream trailer to the event to sell ice cream during the movie and add that to our advertising.

Ms. Elliott also reported that Township staff erroneously logged a park reservation for the pavilion and restrooms at Sanatoga Park and missed opening the facilities for her party. The patron was understandably upset and Township staff has agreed to refund her park deposit in full. An apology letter and a refund of \$80.00 will be mailed to her. Township

staff is looking at putting procedures in place to avoid this kind of mistake in the future.

Ms. Elliott presented a draft budget to the Board. The budget was broken down between Gerald Richards Park and Sanatoga Park and then again between General Fund expenditures and Park & Recreation Fund expenditures. Ms. Elliott explained the escalated cost of the Park & Rec engineering, legal, environmental and appraisals because of the cost being shared with the compost facility budget. She explained that 10 out of 25 acres will be subdivided out for the compost facility and the costs will be prorated based on the amount of work for each respective project. She also explained that the numbers are inflated right now for the purpose of putting the budget together and they will be refined as actual costs are identified. Ms. Elliott reported that she will report back to the Board at the next meeting on the budget developments.

### **Ongoing Business**

#### Policies and Procedures:

Ms. Elliott reported that she made changes based on their last meeting and suggestions from Board members. The different entities and user groups were defined. Township staff would also like to add a key deposit policy that would allow a person/group that enters into a rental agreement with the Township for park space or pavilion space to leave a deposit with Township staff and receive a restroom key. When the key is returned to the Township, the deposit will be returned to the renter. This would eliminate staff overtime as well as any oversight such as the situation that recently occurred with the reservation of Sanatoga Park.

The Board discussed a draft of the proposed policies and procedures manual for the use and reservation of Township facilities. After discussion, the Board decided that it will again have to revisit the fee schedule. Board members were in disagreement with Township Staff about a resident having preferential treatment over an organization for a rental agreement. Ms. Elliott stated she will again look into the procedures and was instructed by the Board to break down the expenses further to get an idea of the cost of each field/facility. The Board will review what is presented at the next meeting. Ms. Elliott also reported that she inquired from our insurers that the goals at the soccer fields were insurable by the Township.

Mr. Wood commented that the portable toilets were not enough for a busy soccer weekend and that the Pottsgrove Soccer Club should be allowed to use the restrooms. Township staff was not aware that PSC was not allowed to use the restrooms. He feels that there needs to be a complete overhaul of the Gerald Richards Park infrastructure as it was not designed to be used by this many residents. Ms. Elliott responded that the Township plans to make improvements as budget allows and advised Mr. Wood that PSC and other organizations should report any problems with the facilities so the Township can take care of them. If the facilities are deficient, organizations should also contact the Township to determine how they can be improved, i.e. ordering more portable toilets for a weekend.

Comments by Board Members:

Mr. Troutman commented that the Park and Rec Board used to have something to do with the trees in the Township. Were they the ones who would have approved the removal of a large amount of trees on any particular property. Ms. Elliott responded that the Park and Rec Board also serves as the Township's Shade Tree Committee; however, the removal of large amounts of trees, such as the incident to which Mr. Troutman was referring, does not fall under the jurisdiction of the Shade Tree Committee.

Comments by Visitors:

Mr. Tony Doyle commented that he likes that Township staff is working to better organize the Park and Recreation department to improve the quality of service; however, he expressed concern over the increasing aggression Township residents and sports organizations are displaying. He said they should appreciate that the Board of Commissioners supports active recreation areas because it does not have to be a priority and future boards could use their authority to make the parks passive.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 27, 2008 at 7 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Jennifer Corley  
Recording Secretary