

Lower Pottsgrove Township  
Parks and Recreation Meeting  
Monday, April 23, 2012 7:00 pm

The regularly scheduled Parks and Recreation meeting was held on Monday, April 23, 2012 and was called to order at 7:03 pm. The following were in attendance:

Bill Keohane, Chair  
Tom Troutman, Vice Chair  
Patty Bleakley  
Dennis Cimino  
Rich Wood

Alyson Elliott, Assistant Manager  
Jennifer Corley

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm.

#### NEW BUSINESS

*Anna Brendle – Pottstown Health & Wellness Foundation* - Anna Brendle from Pottstown Health and Wellness Foundation was present to discuss the recreation goals of the foundation as well as what assistance they can provide on a regional basis for the recreation needs of Lower Pottsgrove Township and the eight surrounding municipalities. Ms Brendle is also able to provide insight on the mini grant program that the foundation is working on with DCNR.

She explained that DCNR was looking for park accessibility or walk-ability and also a broad range of amenities in grant applications. The foundation is looking to partner with DCNR by way of a grant that the foundation receives and then redistributes as mini grants to the eight municipalities in the Pottstown Region. There will be an independent review committee and the grant funds will be awarded over a three year period. The proposal includes awarding grants for design costs (ie. master plans). The circuit rider grant was discussed and Ms. Brendle commented that a committee has been established to discuss the best way to handle regional recreation before committing to a circuit rider recreation professional. .

Ms. Elliott discussed preliminary results of the Regional Planning Committee's Market Analysis and Fiscal Impact Study noting that Pottsgrove will have a lot of costly infrastructure needs that cannot be met by capital budgets if it continues to grow as projected. She noted that recreation infrastructure is a big part of these costs and regionalizing recreation may help defray the cost.

Mr. Wood asked how Pottstown Borough falls into all this planning since they are the only borough and have a paid Parks and Recreation staff. Ms. Brendle commented that the Pottstown Parks and Recreation used to be in school district. It was then absorbed into the borough. She noted that these mini grants are not weighed on any one municipality more than another. The proposal that is most thought out will be awarded the grant. They are looking to award one grant to each municipality. Mr.

Wood noted that none of the communities in the region, with the exception of Pottstown Borough is a walkable. All lack sidewalks and trail systems and they may not be able to be expanded on. Ms. Brendle then referenced the Penn State Study and noted that it identifies each municipality, their inventory and suggestions. It suggests that the Pottsgroves are considered good destination parks. Mr. Keohane asked if public access via public transportation is a requirement for the grant awards. Ms. Brendle said the board is looking for improved access, but recognizes the challenges of a suburban / rural area. She responded that the study does address more cost effective short term solutions to each municipality's shortcomings. Each municipality has a guide done by the study. Mr. Wood commented that involvement by the school district would be beneficial, but it does not seem that this is possible. Ms. Brendle said that even if the school district does not collaborate, at least they are aware of what we could be working on. Presently, Coventry Christian School is working with Rolling Hills Apartments on an after school tutoring program. She has seen that with other school districts there is cooperation with the municipality for use of facilities with only a joint use agreement. Mr. Wood said he would like to see that cooperation from the school district. Ms. Brendle also noted that Pottsgrove School District receives the least amount of funding from PHWF. Mr. Wood inquired as to whether it was because the applications were rejected by PHWF. Ms. Brendle said it was due to a lack of applications. In two years they have only received one application. Mr. Wood then inquired to whether there was any indication from the state regarding the discontinued funding for these grant applications. Ms. Brendle replied that the applications need to continue to be submitted to prove the need for the funds. Regional projects may be funded first. The upside to the project with the mini grants is that DCNR does not have to manage them, PHWF will manage them.

Mr. Keohane then thanked Ms. Brendle for allowing the funds for the Sprugel's Run Trail to be reallocated to the Gerald Richards Park Playground. This was a need in the community that is now going to be met.

Ms. Brendle then described a trails project that Lower Pottsgrove Elementary School wants to develop under the guidance of Mrs. Fisher. She asked Ms. Elliott if the Township can partner with the School District to see if maybe this trail could connect with a municipal trail. Mr. Wood asked if Mrs. Fisher must convey this project through the School District Facilities director and remarked that we may want to check with him first so as not to offend anyone. He also suggested there is a possibility the school district has a plan for something similar already on file before she contacts the Township.

*Pottsgrove Soccer Club camera request-* Ms. Elliott summarized a written request from Pottsgrove Soccer club to install surveillance cameras at the snack stand at Gerald Richard's Park to insure the safety of the volunteers that run the stand during games. She said the Township PD is looking to install its own system and they are looking into ways to link a system at Gerald Richards with the Township's system.

#### APRIL 2012 PARKS & RECREATION REPORT

Mr. Wood made a motion to approve the April 2012 Parks & Recreation Report. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cimino and carried with a 5-0 vote.

## OLD BUSINESS

*Gerald Richards Park Playground* - Ms. Elliott reported that the playground equipment has been delivered and that John Fogel of Public Works has proposed excavation down 6 – 9 inches instead of 18 inches. He would use the earth removed from the site to create a berm as a natural border around the playground area versus using timbers that will eventually decompose. He could use timbers on the path side to allow for the handicapped access. Due to concern about the amount of space required for the berm, Mr. Wood suggested a rubber/plastic timber border as they would be less likely to decompose.

*Sanatoga Park Field Use Agreement* - Mr. Keohane informed the members that he spoke to Rod regarding the agreement. Each of them shared their concerns. Mr. Keohane still thinks it is the right thing to do if done right. Ms. Elliott also brought up the need for speed bumps throughout the upper parking lot. The cost is approximately \$500 per speed bump and she would like to include aluminum signage as well. Mr. Troutman made a motion to approve the speed bumps and signs. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cimino and carried with a 5-0 vote.

*Summer Concert Schedule* - Ms. Corley reported that she has still not received confirmation of the sponsorship for the Summer Concert Series from Exelon Nuclear to schedule the bands. She also reported that several bands have contacted her regarding price cuts so the Township is still able to host the series. Ms. Elliott reported that she will be meeting the new Community Representative from Exelon later in the week and she would like to personally ask about the sponsorship. Ms. Corley will wait to hear if the sponsorship will be awarded.

*Pleasantview Park* – Ms. Elliott reported that the board of Commissioners requested there be no grant application this year due to lack of funding. Based on her meeting with DCNR representative Fran Rubert about the projects, she learned that DCNR would only fund up to \$250,000, rather than 50% of the project costs. Construction estimates on Phase I of Pleasantview Park are in the \$1,000,000+ range and therefore the Township would have to come up with more than \$750,000 to proceed. Ms. Elliott indicated she would like to establish a solid fundraising effort for this year and revisit the grant application process next year. Ms. Bleakley asked if the park is primarily baseball fields. Ms. Elliott responded that Phase I is baseball fields and that maybe we could go to the baseball organizations for funding or a capital campaign. She also said that Commissioner Kaiser brought up some good points on fundraising at the meeting in March. He suggested meeting with the various outdoor sports organizations to see what their respective goals are for the long term and how we can assist to make things run more smoothly and hinder the infighting. Do we go with the regional perspective? Do we charge a non-resident and resident registration fee? Do we use grant money or borrow? Ms. Elliott has asked Commissioner Kaiser to take this information to the Board of Commissioners.

## COMMENTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

There were no further comments by board members.

COMMENTS BY VISITORS

There were no comments by visitors.

With there being no further business to discuss a motion was made by Mr. Troutman to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bleakley and carried with a vote of 5-0.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 29, 2012 at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer J. Corley