

Park and Recreation Board
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, September 5, 2023 – 7:00 p.m.

Present: Gary Harris, Bob Huether, James Lannon, Doreen McVaugh, Pat Keppler, Recreation and Special Events Coordinator Caitlin Hernandez, and Borough Manager John Davis. Also in attendance was Council member Dennis Livrone.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

The **Minutes** from the June 6, 2023, meeting were approved as amended.

Arts and Crafts Program Report – provided by Caitlin Hernandez. Caitlin attended the program every day. Her report breakdown suggests the Arts and Crafts program consisted of mostly non-Borough attendees. 146 total children were signed up, of which, 39 were Borough families with the remainder being non-Borough. John reported this has always been the case since there are less kids in the Borough. Caitlin did report that no one is traveling too far to attend. The 1st session is the better attended, 2nd session had less but there were still good numbers. Caitlin would like to consider running three 45-minute sessions rather than two one-hour sessions. We believe there is enough interest to consider the three-session option and it would increase revenue for this program. Additionally, included in Caitlin's report is the thought that 12-year-olds may be a little too old for the program as the crafts are geared towards younger children.

James Lannon was approached by a resident who believed the cost of the program is not viable to keep it running and believes the cost of registration should be increased. The resident said she was getting too much for her money and thinks the Borough could charge more to help cover expenses. James wanted to know the Board's opinion on adding a 3rd session and increasing the price of registration. John and Caitlin will look over the numbers and report back to the Board with their conclusion.

Summer Shows for Kids Report – was provided by Caitlin. All three shows were very well attended. Each show had approximately 200 children attending. Caitlin would like to consider new performers for next year. Caitlin would also like to increase the sponsorship fees. Gary agreed this is something to consider, as there hasn't been an increase in many years. Historically, the sponsors we currently have, have been in place for a long time. There is nothing to say we can't have co-sponsors for the programs, and it should be considered to help elevate our performances. Burpee gives us access to shade, water, and restroom facilities. One problem is having performers agree to rain dates. The interactive programs are the most well received by the audience.

Burpee Pavilion Mural Proposal – was provided by John Davis. The artist is well-known around town. The mural on the outside is about 25 years old and needs to be updated. John has a volunteer who is willing to take on the task of updating the mural. James wanted clarification of where the mural will be located. If the Board is ok with it, John would like to move ahead with this mural.

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“Dash Down Doyle” Pop-up Bike Lane – There is a lot of progress happening with the pop-up bike lane. It is done and ready to go. The biggest benefit of this program is that it will raise awareness of bike lanes in general. We’ve also gotten a lot of good publicity with this program. We will get a report from the TMA when the program is complete. They will let us know how many people utilized it and the times it was busiest. The engineers did a great job designing the bike lane and the Borough didn’t have to pay for that.

DAA Softball/Baseball Update – was provided by John. This report was provided by the DAA, and they wanted the Borough to be aware of where they stand in a feasible way. Some leagues are struggling for field space, DAA is struggling to have enough children to play. Fall Rec ball was revived. They ran 4 clinics in July and August. They had about 40 children per outing, and they managed to get enough sign ups to have one rec team in each age group. John would like to discuss the Spring 2024 season with them before the season begins. With DAA’s consent, Burpee is being used exclusively by Plumstead. Plumstead has also been offered a field at Neis on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. Baseball isn’t having the same issues softball is having. The DAA baseball program is quite robust. John would like to find out DAA’s real need and to maybe try to have DAA be a little more flexible. We would like to try to come up with a new option, whether that means changing the lease or something else.

Related to the softball conversation, John brought to the Board another request from a travel softball team for a fee waiver. We have given fee waivers before, for example Plumstead. This travel team is from Council Rock and has a lot of Doylestown players on it as well. The Board agreed to recommend a fee waiver to Council for the Rock Gold team from Council Rock.

Park Tour and 2024 Capital Budget – Caitlin, Dave, and John met recently. Some of the budget items discussed included ongoing projects. One big project is the need for an aerator at the Borough Dam. The Friends of the Borough Dam is able to pay for the aerator. We have approximately \$1,500 that was donated in the name of Mike Stachel. One way to memorialize him would be to rename the Borough Dam after him. John wanted the Friends of the Borough Dam to know about this before bringing it to the Board.

The tennis court situation is not going well. The nets to be replaced, which is something we can install. The resurfacing of the courts is a different situation. We may have to split up how the work is done and by whom. John wants someone to look at the whole project, but we haven’t been successful yet.

The volleyball courts need some upgrades too. This is a capital item, as the sand needs to be expanded, the need for new nets, et cetera. SandYard uses the courts a lot. We will be relooking at their schedule and court usage. SandYard should probably contribute to the cost of some upgrades, based on their usage. We are looking at about \$6,000 for the upgrades.

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Bocce ball is also on the list for the budget. Somethings to consider are what options we have and all the pros and cons of having bocce courts. One option is to have the bocce courts at Wood St, since it would be entirely in the shade. If we place them at Burpee, they will be in sun exclusively.

We are looking into the picnic area at Broad Commons, which is the next phase of the project. We would like them to be covered and maybe have solar arrays on the roofs.

We are putting together a budget proposal to install restrooms in the vacant space of Borough Hall. It will be a large expense, but the alternative is portable facilities and there is no good place to have them. During business hours, Borough Hall is sufficient, but on weekends and off-hours, there is no place available to use restroom facilities.

Bike and Hike – Nothing to report.

Manager's Report – John showed the Board how the donors for the Broad Commons playground will be displayed. Our goal was \$100,000 and we are currently at \$60,000 raised. The display has been well received by the donors. We are thinking of a ribbon cutting ceremony in mid-October.

Recreation Director Report – Caitlin reports the safety surface is scheduled to arrive at the playground at Broad Commons by September 25, 2023, and the goal to open the playground is still on track for the first week in October. Dave was able to catch the Hillside Park vandals with the new cameras. Fall Scenic Strolls have returned. There are some upcoming events at Broad Commons. Rocky Horror Picture Show will be played at Broad Commons. The Lions' Concerts were just alright. They cancelled concerts without letting us know, so that did reflect negatively on us. They're a nice group, but their communication was lacking.

Gary provided an update to the Chess program. We had 45 people present for the simultaneous play event. There was also a lot of foot traffic through the park that day of people who were curious to see what was happening. Gary did announce that chess is moving to Broad Commons in October. Gary would like the move to be permanent, but some people would like it to be returned to Historical Society Park in the summer. Once the trees mature, Broad Commons will be equal to the Historical Society Park. Gary also provided his park tour data.

Old/New Business – James provided a Comprehensive Plan update to the Board. He spoke about the last workshop in May and how the Planning Commission will be moving forward in the future. There will be experts on hand to facilitate each workshop group to help the Borough attain, in a tangible way. The next meeting will be in the Council Chambers on Tuesday, September 12 at 7:30 pm.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:29 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by
Erika Fellman
Park and Recreation Minutes Secretary