

**FERGUSON TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, JANUARY 14, 2018  
4:00 P.M.**

**I. ATTENDANCE**

The Parks and Recreation Committee held its regular meeting of the month on Monday, January 14, 2018, at Ferguson Township in Conference Room 2. In attendance were:

**Committee:**

Niki Tourscher, Chairperson,  
Shawna Doerksen, Vice-Chairperson, absent  
Kathie Vondracek, Secretary  
Andrew McKinnon  
Connie Puckett  
Norris Muth, absent  
Denise Myer, absent

**Staff:**

David Pribulka, Township Manager  
Centrice Martin, Assistant to the Manager

Others in attendance were: Marcella Bell, Recording Secretary; and Laura Dininni, resident;

**II. CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Tourscher called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SEPTMEBER 10, 2018 MEETING**

A motion was made by Ms. Puckett and seconded by Ms. Vondracek to approve the November 12, 2018 meeting minutes. The motion carried 4-0.

**IV. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

**1. Election of Chairperson**

Ms. Tourscher asked for nominations for 2019 Chairperson. Ms. Puckett nominated Ms. Tourscher. Ms. Tourscher called for a vote. The vote passed 4-0 for Ms. Tourscher to remain Chairperson for 2019.

**2. Election of Vice-Chair Person**

Ms. Tourscher asked for nominations for 2019 Vice-Chairperson. Ms. Tourscher nominated Mr. McKinnon. Ms. Tourscher called for a vote. The vote passed 4-0 for Mr. McKinnon to be Vice-Chairperson for 2019.

**3. Election of Secretary**

Ms. Tourscher asked for nominations for 2019 Secretary. Mr. McKinnon nominated Ms. Vondracek. Ms. Tourscher called for a vote. The vote passed 4-0 for Ms. Vondracek to remain Secretary for 2019.

**V. ESTABLISHMENT OF MEETING DATES**

Mr. Pribulka stated that the Parks and Recreation Committee typically meets the second Monday of the month. When holidays occur on the second Monday of the month, the meeting is moved to the following business day, or can be scheduled for the following Monday. Mr. Pribulka review the proposed meeting schedule and stated that there are no holidays this year that fall on the second Monday. He went on to explain that as the weather gets warmer, the Committee can schedule meetings at parks and staff will update the advertisement to include the location of the meeting.

A motion was made by Ms. Puckett and seconded by Ms. Vondracek to establish the 2019 meeting dates as presented. The motion carried 4-0.

## **VI. DISCUSSION OF COMMITTEE GOALS FOR 2019**

Mr. Pribulka stated that the Committee should prioritize goals for ongoing discussions and activity that is consistent and pursues an agreed purpose that is member driven. Provided with the agenda is a copy of the relevant section, Creation and Membership, from the administrative code that outlines the responsibilities of the committee.

Mr. McKinnon stated that this year has been very controversial with Whitehall Road Regional Park (WRRP), which was in process before the Nittany Valley Environmental Coalition (NVEC) was created. He stated that there have been attempts to reopen the Master Plan and NVEC has expressed interested in greening up the WRRP. He went on to say that there is evidence that the Master Plan might be opened up anyways due to the proposed sports fields. Mr. McKinnon stated that his overall point is that since 2004, when the Master Plan was first submitted, it has been looked at top to bottom by the powers that be that want a park the way they want it. However, there's been a trend for public opinion for public parkland. Mr. McKinnon would like to see a consensus building model instead of a top-down model. Ms. Puckett added that she wants to make sure the Committee are greening up and protecting parks. It's important to make sure the Committee thinks about these things as they review plans. Mr. McKinnon folled up and stated that his second goal for the Committee is to engage the public more on park efforts.

Ms. Tourscher stated that she believes it is important to let the public know the Committee members are, maybe through public involvement and events with Centre Region Parks and Recreation. If residents know who the Committee members are, then they might provide feedback outside of meetings, since not everyone can make the scheduled meetings, or maybe they aren't comfortable expressing their opinion at a public meeting. Ms. Puckett stated that if the Committee members know when park events are ahead of time, maybe a Committee member could volunteer to go to the event. Ms. Tourscher added that someone could even send emails about park events. Ms. Puckett stated that it might be beneficial if the Committee came up with a "cheat sheet" to refer to that identifies who the Parks and Recreation Committee is and what they do to take along to the different park events. Ms. Martin stated that from what she heard the members discuss, some of these goals are outlined as responsibilities of the Parks and Recreation Committee on page 2 of Creation and Membership, and that maybe the Committee can expand on them to include strategic steps as to how to accomplish these goals.

In response to a question from Ms. Tourscher, Mr. Pribulka explained that because the Board of Supervisors only has four members, they could not appoint a representative to the Parks and Recreation Authority. Mr. Pribulka stated that Ms. Denise Myer was the Parks and Recreation Authority representative, however, her term expired and she asked not to be reappointed to the Authority. She now serves on the Ferguson Township Parks and Recreation Committee.

In response to a question from Ms. Vondracek, Mr. McKinnon stated that with the update of the Comprehensive Park and Open Space Plan, the public is being resurveyed about the WRRP. Mr. Pribulka stated that there is a meeting regarding the WRRP Master Plan on January 30, 2019 at the State College High School at 7:00 PM, with a snow date of February 2, 2019. Ms. Martin stated that she will send the meeting flyer to the Committee.

Ms. Laura Dininni clarified that the survey that stems from the Comprehensive Plan update does not just cover the WRRP—it covers all of the regional parks in general. She explained that the survey will include a question that asks the takers of the survey what municipality they live in. Ms. Dininni stated that the

data will be able to be sorted by municipality, however it is not identifying the sample size in a manner that supports statements about how applicable it is at a high confidence level to each municipality. The methodology, sample size, will only result in us being able to say about what the region thinks with confidence, but the municipality data will only be a general idea of the public opinion in the Township. Ms. Dininni added that the contractor for the Centre Region Comprehensive Park and Open Space update will likely reach out to the Parks and Recreation Committee to have a one on one meeting to review the plan when it's prepared.

Mr. Pribulka stated that the involvement of this Committee in relation to the integration of Land Development Plans with recreational planning has not established a provision in the Land Development Ordinance that includes the Parks Committee as a reviewer, but there is also nothing to preclude the Committee from providing input when a Land Development Plan is submitted to the elected officials and staff. When a developer submits a Land Development Plan, there is a formula that is used to calculate how much parkland needs to be dedicated as a part of the land development plan. On the other hand, for various reasons, the developer may not want to set aside park land, so there is an option of Parkland Fee-in-Lieu. Based on a formula set forth in the ordinance, the developer would pay the Township a certain amount of money instead of dedicating park land. The Township lacks a well-defined and well informed process to give feedback to the elected officials and staff when there is a necessity for park land to be a part of a development, or when there is not a need for a park in that specific development. Mr. Pribulka stated that he would like the Committee to be a part of the land development process in relation to park planning. A good example would be for the proposed Pine Hall Master Plan, which is the biggest development the Township has ever seen. He would like the Committee to be a part of the park planning for this development and inform staff and elected officials about what the Committee would like to see park-wise in the Pine Hall Development.

Mr. Pribulka spoke to the Fairbrook no-mow areas and stated that he would like to place this item on February's agenda for further discussion. The Township GIS tech is working on a map that will show areas the Committee designated as no-mow within Fairbrook Park and will be included in February's agenda. Mr. Pribulka expressed interest in wanted to increase education for the public on what a no-mow area means and the benefits behind it.

Mr. Pribulka stated that a motion is not needed for the 2019 goals, but it would be a good idea to discuss this item again at the February meeting so that the absent Committee members can provide feedback.

## VII. REPORTS

1. **Staff Report:** Mr. Pribulka provided his staff report which included an update to the Suburban Park Master Plan; the Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Plan; the Centre Region Parks and Recreation Steering Committee; and the Fairbrook Park no-mow areas.

Mr. Pribulka noted that the WRRP is submitting for a pre-application conference, which is not required by the ordinance, however, it is encouraged by staff. The conference takes place with the Planning Commission, where the developer presents a concept plan to receive feedback before submitting the actual land development plan. Mr. Pribulka would like the Parks and Recreation Committee to attend this meeting with the Planning Commission and provide feedback as well.

2. **Centre Region Parks and Recreation Authority:** Mr. Pribulka stated that he is currently the liaison for the Centre Region Parks and Recreation Authority. The CRPR Authority met jointly with the Centre Region Parks Capital Committee on January 10 and discussed the usual meeting

guidelines, the COG Articles of Agreement, reorganizational meeting, the amendments to the WRRP Master Plan, and the Millbrook Marsh lease agreement.

Mr. Pribulka stated that several amendments were proposed for the WRRP, including combining two open-air shelters into one all-season pavilion; the all season pavilion would be built in conjunction with the restroom, storage, concession building that is already included in Phase 1; swapping the locations of the soccer fields and tennis courts; and the reintroduction of a smaller maintenance storage building for park equipment and supplies. As decided by the Parks and Recreation Authority, the amendments constitute the reopening of the WRRP, which would have to go back in front of the General Forum. Mr. Pribulka noted that the General Forum will only discuss the above amendments and not open the whole Master Plan up for review. Mr. Pribulka stated that the next Parks and Recreation Authority meeting is January 17, 2019 at the COG building.

#### **VIII. OPEN DISCUSSION**

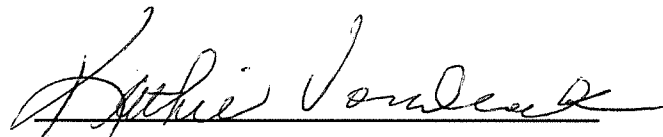
Ms. Tourscher stated her agency does an annual Park and Recreation conference and this year's event takes place at the Penn Stater in April. There are three pre-conferences: Nature Explorer Workshop, a one day conference at the Millbrook Marsh Center; Green Infrastructure; and Alzheimer's and Dementia. The other conference is a full Parks and Recreation conference with different educational tracks throughout the day. Ms. Tourscher stated that if anyone is interested in going, she can provide information on how to register for the conferences.

Ms. Dininni stated that the day after the Comprehensive Plan open house, there is an open house being hosted by Clearwater Conservancy and Penn State at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship on Waupelani Drive. The open house is about receiving input on the potential for Penn State to somehow conserve or preserve the acreage below the WRRP that extends to Route 45 and across Route 45, adjacent to Musser Gap. Ms. Dininni stated that she will send the Committee details via email.

#### **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

With no further discussion, the Parks and Recreation Committee adjourned at 5:05 PM.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



KATHIE VONDRACEK, SECRETARY  
FOR THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE