

**FERGUSON TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
MONDAY, October 14, 2019  
4:00 P.M.**

**I. ATTENDANCE**

The Parks and Recreation Committee held its meeting on Monday, October 14, 2019, at the Ferguson Township building. In attendance were:

**Committee:**

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

**Staff:**

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

Others in attendance were: Summer Krape, Recording Secretary; Ruth Cooper, Ferguson Township Resident, Laura Dinnini, Ferguson Township Resident.

**II. CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Niki Tourscher called the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting to order on Monday, October 14, 2019 at 4:03 pm.

**II. CITIZEN'S INPUT**

Ruth Cooper stated that her property abuts the undeveloped part of Cecil Irvin Park, she heard that 2019 would be the year of beginning phase 2. With 2019 almost over she would like to know what the next stages are. Mr. Pribulka stated that the Township submitted a grant application to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources that was unsuccessful last year. Since it was unsuccessful the Township was unable to continue. The Township plans to submit another application in 2021 to apply for funding again. If that application is successful the development of phase 2 will begin in 2022.

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF AUGUST 12, 2019 MEETING**

Ms. Tourcher entertained a motion approve the August 12, 2019 minutes. Mrs. Myer made a motion to approve and Ms. Shawna Doersken seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

**V. CECIL IRVIN PARK'S UNDEVELOPED AREA**

Ms. Tourcher stated the staff received some concern about the grow zone/no mow area at Cecil Irvin Park from Ms. Cooper and a Mr. Brian Rogers. Mr. Pribulka stated that the un-developed acreage has been partly leased to Cinda Corl for a cash crop and the remainder is unable to be farmed because it is actually a storm water basin; which in the last year CRPC stopped mowing regularly. The mowing schedule is at the start of the growing season in April and again at the end which is in late September. Ms. Cooper and Mr. Rogers are concerned about invasive species and wildlife that are in this area. The residents would like to know what the Township plans to do with the area. Mr. Pribulka stated the Township did not follow the same process as Fairbrook Park, Cecil Irvin Park was less deliberate than Fairbrook where the Board identified it as a designated grow zone areas. Mr. Pribulka stated that there are a number of different options for the area such as: continuing to do what we have been doing by mowing it once or twice a year, Mow it once a week, plant a landscape buffer that the Township arborist prepared which would cost around \$40,000, plant a meadow mix. The Township needs to be careful with what is placed in the area because it is a stormwater basin and it needs to keep its functionality. Ms. Tourcher agreed that the landscape buffer is expensive.

Ms. Cooper brought a piece of the grass in from the area to show the length, she also stated that it is thick and you can't walk through it. Ms. Cooper stated that she doesn't want see the Township to spend money on mowing the area once a week. Ms. Cooper is concerned about the invasive plants and wildlife, she noted that there is a lot of ground hog holes in the area. Mrs. Myer asked Ms. Cooper what she would like to see be done. Ms. Cooper stated that she would like the Township to communicate to the community and make information available to residents. She would like to see it mowed more than twice a year. Ms. Tourcher asked if the mowing once every 6 weeks would be acceptable. Ms. Cooper stated that she would like that. Ms. Cooper also wanted to know if there is a list of an invasive species list. Ms. Tourcher stated that Committee member Mr. Norris Muth is very knowledgeable on this topic who is absent from this meeting but would be able to discuss this topic better. Ms. Tourcher thanked Ms. Cooper for attending and giving feedback. Ms. Doersken asked if there will be other parks that will be designated a grow zone? Mr. Pribulka stated that staff has discussed some areas that could be a grow zone. Ms. Cooper asked the reason of the no mowing areas. Mr. Pribulka stated that it is to encourage habitat for wildlife and insects, encourage natural areas, and infiltration managing with stormwater. Ms. Tourcher asked the Committee members if they would like to continue this discussion at the next meeting as she would like to get Mr. Muth and Mr. Andy McKinnon's thoughts on this topic. It was agreed that this topic will be added to the November meeting agenda.

#### **VI. STANDARD OPERATING POLICY FOR MOWING IN PARKS**

Ms. Tourcher explained that Public Works Director David Modricker has drafted a standard operating policy for mowing in parks. Mr. Keough asked if any other municipality has a standard operating policy.. Ms. Dinnini stated that this is for areas that CRPC will not mow. Mr. Keough stated that in his opinion toward the grow zone is that because an area is a no mow area it doesn't mean that the area is not managed. He's not hearing a lot of emphasis on a plan for the no mow areas. There doesn't seem to be a management piece that comes with the low mow/no mow area and that the management side could be costly. Ms. Martin stated that she had met with Lance King, Township Arborist today regarding this. Mr. King has met with Pam Ford to discuss some management plans. The Committee decided to also add this topic to the November meeting agenda as well.

#### **VII. WATER FOUNTAIN REMOVAL OR REPLACEMENT AT HOMESTEAD PARK**

Ms. Tourcher gave a brief overview of this topic to the Committee. Mrs. Doersken stated that the playground will be updated in 2021 so in her opinion the water fountain will be used so it will need repaired. Ms. Martin stated that in the budget this is the last water fountain that will be ADA updated. Mrs. Doersken made a motion to keep/repair the said water fountain and Ms. Vondracek seconded the motion.

#### **VIII. COMMITTEE MEMBER SCHEDULE CONFLICT**

Ms. Tourcher asked Ms. Martin if she could ask Mr. Muth what times/days would work for him for the remainder of the year. The Committee decided that a Tuesday or Wednesday at 4:00 pm would work best. Ms. Tourcher stated that she is unavailable on the first Wednesday and the forth Wednesday is the day before thanksgiving. Ms. Martin will send a doodle poll with these dates.

#### **IX. REPORTS**

##### **1. STAFF REPORT**

Ms. Martin wanted to give the Committee an update on Haymarket Park. It was decided that the Township would do a collaboration with Public Works and U.S Fish and Wildlife to convert a stormwater basin into a pollinator habitat. This is part of a pilot study to allow the Township engineer to see if there is any negative affect on the water and impacts volume control with the

engineer to see if there is any negative affect on the water and impacts volume control with the water. Ms. Martin stated to the Committee that Homestead and Fairbrook Park have both been paved this summer. The Zoning Hearing Board received three variance requests for the Whitehall Road Regional Park, two were granted and one was not.

**2. CENTRE REGION PARKS AND RECREATION AUTHORITY REPORT – MR. BILL KEOUGH**

Mr. Keough stated that the authority has met with State College Borough Water Authority since they own the property beside the Whitehall Road Regional Park and discussed a possible partnership to make some walking trails on their grounds. Nothing has been confirmed but there will be continued discussion. They are currently dealing with variance request that was not approved. Several grants are still in the decision stage for the park.

**X. OPEN DISCUSSION**

Mrs. Meyer stated that she attended the story walk as a resident and it was really great. Someone wrote a letter to the CDT slamming the story walk. This person complained about the way it looked, not the correct age group for it, and money could have been used elsewhere. Ms. Martin suggested writing a short story in the Township newsletter to clear up some of his issues.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Doersken made a Mrs. Meyer seconded. With no further discussion, the Parks and Recreation Committee adjourned at 5:30 PM.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kathie Vondracek', written over a horizontal line.

KATHIE VONDRACEK, SECRETARY  
FOR THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

