

**FERGUSON TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, APRIL 9, 2018
4:00 PM**

I. ATTENDANCE

The Parks and Recreation Committee held its regular meeting of the month on Monday, April 9, 2018 at the Ferguson Township Municipal Building. In attendance were:

Committee:

Niki Tourscher, Chairperson
Shawna Doerksen, Vice-Chairperson
Kathie Vondracek, Secretary
Andrew McKinnon
Laura Reddington
Norris Muth

Staff:

David Pribulka, Township Manager
Marcella Bell, Recording Secretary

Others in attendance were: Pam Salokangas, CRPR Director; Denise Meyer, CRPR Authority; and Laura Dininni, Ferguson Township resident

II. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Tourscher called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MARCH 12, 2018 MEETING

A motion was made by Ms. Doerksen, seconded by Ms. Vondracek, to approve the March 12, 2018 meeting minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

IV. PRESENTATION OF WHITEHALL ROAD REGIONAL PARK—MS. PAM SALOKANGAS, DIRECTOR, CENTRE REGION PARKS AND RECREATION

Mr. Pribulka introduced Ms. Salokangas and stated that she will be giving the Committee an update on the development of the Whitehall Road Regional Park.

Ms. Salokangas stated that included in the packet is a very long memo to bring the history of the Whitehall Road Regional Park to date, including information from the Centre Region Parks and Recreation Authority and Parks Capital Boards. Ms. Salokangas explained that when she was hired in 2016, the plan was not active since the private partnership (Tollbrothers) had stalled due to ongoing litigation. Without the private partnership, CRPR was not sure how portions of the park would be paid for. Ms. Salokangas gave a brief history of the planning process from the past few years. CRPR received a grant from DCNR for the full construction of the park; however, the grant was given back due to the ongoing litigation with the adjoining property. Since the courts have ruled in favor of the Tollbrothers Development, the partnership is active once more.

CRPR staff met with park user groups, specifically sports groups, to verify whether or not the fields in the master plan were needed. There was a consensus from the groups that the fields are needed due to spill over from other fields in the Centre Region. Ms. Salokangas went on to explain that Phase 1 will include two to four fields plus a playground and walking trails. There was also a consensus with the community that there

is still interest in synthetic fields because the weather in Pennsylvania is unpredictable. Phase 1 will also include lights to extend the day since most sports activities will start after school and there is not a lot of daylight during winter months.

In response to a question from Mr. McKinnon, Ms. Salokangas stated that the Tollbrothers did include the Whitehall Road Region Park in their Traffic Impact Study because there was a current public-private partnership at the time.

Ms. Salokangas stated that the Centre Region Recreation Authority has given staff direction to start holding meetings with CRPR's engineers. CRPR met with Stahl Shaffer, its engineering firm, last Thursday to review the Land Development Plan from 2014. The next step is to hire an architect. CRPR submitted a grant for adaptive playground equipment, which is an all-ability and universally accessible playground. There is not currently one in the Region.

In response to a question from Mr. McKinnon, Ms. Salokangas stated that CRPR will be launching a comprehensive study for the Whitehall Road Regional Park later this year into 2019 to take another look at what amenities are needed for Phase 2 of the plan. She stated that Phase 2 will definitely change and the master plan will reflect those changes. The last comprehensive study for the park was done in 2010.

Mr. McKinnon expressed his concerns regarding the nature of the park and the size. He stated that CRPR should not make the park bigger than what is needed. He was also concerned about the cost of the park and whether or not the park itself is actually needed.

Ms. Dininni reiterated that CRPR has a budget cap of 4.8 million dollars and that elected officials of the Centre Region have expressed a disinterest in funding parks past what is already approved. She stated that even before the Tollbrothers partnership, there were already extreme budget deficits and there was not enough money to do what was proposed for Phase 1 of Whitehall Road Regional Park in 2014. She explained that Patton Township has written a letter to the Centre Region Parks and Recreation Authority expressing that it is not interested in regional funding for parks. Ms. Dininni is interested in getting as much input possible for Phase 1 of Whitehall Road Regional Park since it will be the last phase that has funding.

V. UPDATE ON CECIL IRVIN PARK PROJECT SCOPE OF WORK/GRANT APPLICATION

Mr. Pribulka stated that Township staff is nearing completion of the grant application for the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' Community Conversation Partnerships Program. The Committee gave recommendations at the March 12 meeting for the Township to consider for the grant application, including prioritizing pervious pavement, shared use paths, a picnic pavilion, and play equipment. Staff was able to incorporate all of the recommendations except the play equipment in the project scope of work. Provided with the agenda is a copy of the project estimate. Mr. Pribulka gave a brief update on the Cecil Irvin Park Project and showed a slide show of the proposed and future phases.

VI. CONTINUED DISCUSSION OF OWENS DRIVE PARK NAMING

Mr. Pribulka stated that the Committee tabled the discussion of naming suggestions for Owens Drive Park at the March 12 meeting. Provided with the agenda is a list of all of the suggestions that the Township has received to date. A public hearing has been scheduled for the Planning Commission April 23 meeting. The Board will be asked to formally name the park at its regular meeting on May 7.

Mr. Pribulka reviewed the list of suggested names with the Committee. There was a consensus from the Committee that if the park is named after a person, it should be someone who is or was a resident of Ferguson Township. There was a brief discussion regarding whether to use natural versus nature area for consistency.

A motion was made by Ms. Vondracek and seconded by Ms. Reddington to recommend "Pine Hall Nature Area" for the official Owens Drive Park name. The motion carried unanimously.

VII. FERGUSON TOWNSHIP PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE BYLAWS

Mr. Pribulka stated that Section 447(4) of the Ferguson Township Administrative Code authorizes the Parks and Recreation Committee to adopt appropriate bylaws to conduct meetings and business. Committee bylaws and rules of procedure serve to formalize the functions and conducting of business, rules of procedure, agenda order of business, and other relative provisions by the Committee. Provided with the agenda are draft bylaws for consideration by the Committee. Amendments or additions to the bylaws may be made and adopted this evening. Mr. Pribulka briefly went through the proposed bylaws.

A motion was made by Mr. Muth and seconded by Ms. Doerksen to adopt the Ferguson Township Parks and Recreation Committee Bylaws as proposed. The motion carried unanimously.

VIII. REPORTS

a. Centre Region Parks and Recreation Authority Report—Ms. Denise Meyer

Ms. Meyer stated that since Ms. Salokangas provided a report on the Whitehall Road Regional Park, she did not have an update for the Committee.

b. Staff Report—Mr. David Pribulka

Mr. Pribulka stated that staff is gearing up for Capital Projects. A few of the projects include Louis Silvi Baseball Field Updates, which involves ADA improvements and Haymarket Park which involves the installation of a new play structure, swing set, spring rockers, mulch beds, and an accessible path from the basketball court to the parking area. The Dog Park at Tudek Park will be temporarily closed in the next month for reseeded of one of the dog areas.

Mr. Pribulka announced that the Township has hired an Assistant to the Township manager and her name is Centrice Martin. She worked for the State College Borough as an Assistant to the Manager for Community Engagement. Ms. Martin will start with the Township at the end of the month and will be heading the Parks and Recreation Committee in the future.

IX. OPEN DISCUSSION

Mr. Muth noted that last spring there was a large population of Poison Hemlock found around Spring Creek Park. He explained that someone could injure themselves if they were to cut the plant and get the sap on their skin. Ms. Tourscher stated that the Millbrook Marsh is also trying to eradicate this throughout its property. She stated that Ms. Salokangas can share this information with CRPR maintenance staff as well.

Mr. Pribulka stated that the Committee will soon schedule dates for a tour of local parks.

X. ADJOURNMENT

With there being no further business for the Parks and Recreation Committee, the meeting adjourned at 5:38 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Kathie Vondracek', is written over a horizontal line.

KATHIE VONDRACEK, SECRETARY
FOR THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE