

Park and Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting
August 9, 2011
5:00 pm
Pendora Park Pavilion

Meeting Summary

Committee Members Present –O. Smith, R. DeGroote

Others Present –S. Katzenmoyer, H. Boyer, M. Goodman-Hinnershitz, M. Schorn, F. Denbowski

The meeting was called to order at 5:06 pm by Otis Smith, Chair.

Minutes

Motion was made by Mr. DeGroote, seconded by Mr. Smith, to accept the May 10, 2011 minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously.

Report from Recreation

Ms. Boyer reported:

- July was the largest grossing month in the last 14 years at Schlegel Pool
- Lifeguards have made 31 water rescues to date
- The backstop at the Pendora baseball field has been replaced
- The contract award for Barbey Playground renovations was awarded to Land Tech
- The new play equipment for Northmont has been ordered. Demolition of the playground will not begin until the new equipment is scheduled to arrive.
- The Baer Park tennis court rehab is complete
- The City Park tennis court rehab is scheduled to begin soon
- The summer tennis program ends on August 12 with a Family Friday Night Lights
- The under 14 tennis team won the USTA Eastern PA District team tennis championship in Allentown
- The under 14 tennis team finished 3rd at the Middle States Section Championship in Princeton NJ
- There are 52 registered participants in the Pendora summer program
- 22 youth were enrolled in the summer camp program. The summer camp program does generate revenue. Ms. Boyer explained that the youth worked to

raise funds for charity this summer through fundraising projects. They earned \$440 which will be split between the Food Bank and the Animal Rescue League.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz reported that the deplorable conditions at Neversink Playground continue. She stated that this project began two years ago and was not completed. She stated that the Mayor and Managing Director of aware of the situation. Mr. Jones reports that the contractor began the work but has yet to complete it. She noted the poor condition of the baseball field and stated that the grass does not get cut. She stated that the area Mennonite church has had volunteers cut the grass and do small maintenance projects.

Ms. Katzenmoyer questioned if CDBG funds were used for the project and if this could be used as leverage to have the project completed.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that she questions this situation at each of Council's monthly Public Works Committee meetings.

10 Year Park and Open Space Plan

Ms. Smith distributed photos of parks for the Committee to review. He explained that photos will be included in the Plan and explained that this Committee will be compiling the update to the Plan.

Mr. DeGroot and Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz also suggested including aerial photos available on the internet.

Mr. Denbowski questioned if DCNR would consider this an official plan if compiled by this Committee. Ms. Katzenmoyer will follow up. She also explained that she has spoken with the City Planner to gain input from the Planning Commission before the Plan is submitted to Council.

Ms. Katzenmoyer also distributed the results of the fall surveys returned by the Reading School District compiled to date. She stated that when the fall surveys are complete she will compile overall results from the surveys, both student and adult.

Old Business

- Recreation Commission

Mr. Smith introduced Mr. Denbowski and Mr. Schorn who have also been part of the work group.

Mr. Denbowski stated that the Recreation Commission and the PARC will need to define their goals and mission. He stated that the public will also need to be aware of the

difference between the two entities. He explained that Mr. Schorn has been named to the Commission as the Administrative representative. This appointment was made by the Mayor. He explained that the Commission will also include two Council members and three citizens.

Mr. Schorn stated that he has met with State officials to begin the transition. He stated that the facilitator has issued her report which includes many items which need to be accomplished during this transition period.

Mr. Schorn stated that the Commission will not be able to handle all the issues that are being experienced in parks and recreation immediately but that they will make slow and steady improvements. He stated that the Commission must be as non-political as possible in order to move forward.

Mr. Schorn explained that there are many entities throughout the City who provide youth recreation. He noted that the Commission will serve as an umbrella to these organizations and will compile all their information so that it is easily relayed to residents. He noted the need for the youth of the City to have positive experiences. He noted his hope that the Commission will expand into adult activities.

Mr. Schorn explained that the Commission will not oversee maintenance of parks or facilities; that this responsibility will remain with the Public Works Department. He stated that there are currently six employees who are responsible for caring for 600 acres of City property.

Mr. Schorn noted that the Commission will need the support of the PARC during its transition period until it is organized and commended the PARC for their work.

Mr. Smith expressed the belief that the PARC will overlap with the Commission once it is functional. He stated that the Commission can form committees for special projects once handled by the PARC and suggested that PARC members be utilized in the future. He noted his agreement with Mr. Schorn and stated that the PARC will support the Commission and suggested that the overlap be revisited once the Commission is functioning.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that the Administrative Oversight Committee of Council should also review this issue to decide if both entities are needed. She suggested that the members of this Council committee also help guide the future of these entities.

Mr. Smith noted his willingness to assist the Commission as needed.

Mr. Denbowski stated that the Mayor's office has been working diligently to fill the vacancies on the PARC. Ms. Katzenmoyer explained that there is one citizen opening and there is a candidate pending appointment. She stated that the professional liaisons have not been attending regularly and stated that she will reach out to the United Way

and the YMCA. Mr. Schorn and Mr. Denbowski will reach out to the RSD Athletic Director.

Mr. DeGroot expressed his agreement with Mr. Schorn and Mr. Smith. He suggested that the PARC step aside once the Commission is functional. He noted that the youth organizations need a voice in City recreation and noted the excellent work of the Gilmore Henne Foundation.

New Business

- Olivet at 11th & Pike

Mr. DeGroot expressed his thanks to Ms. Boyer for the City's assistance with this program. He stated that 165 youth are registered and approximately 55 attend daily. He noted the excellent college students on staff and stated that Olivet is donating the foos ball table to the rec center.

Mr. Schorn questioned the pay of the staff. Mr. DeGroot stated that they earned minimum wage and other duties were performed by those already on staff. He stated that the center used the City equipment.

Mr. DeGroot noted the great cooperation between the Pendora staff and the Olivet Perkiomen staff during the summer months.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 20 at 5 pm at the Pendora Park pavilion on S 19th St.

Meeting adjourned at 5:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Shelly Katzenmoyer, Deputy City Clerk