

**LOWER POTTSTGROVE  
PARK & RECREATION COMMISSION**

*January 29, 2007  
Meeting Minutes*

Attendance:            Thomas Troutman, Chair            Alyson Elliott, Assistant Manager  
                              Patty Bleakley                        Stephen Klotz, Commissioner  
                              Dennis Cimino                         Anthony Doyle, Commissioner

Mr. Troutman brought the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

A motion was made by Ms. Bleakley, seconded by Mr. Cimino and unanimously carried to approve the meeting minutes of November 14, 2006.

A motion was made by Mr. Cimino, seconded by Ms. Bleakley, and unanimously carried to approve the Treasurer's Report. Checking Account: \$2,893.80. Savings Account: \$122,157.51.

**OLD BUSINESS**

I.     *Santa's Hotline*

Ms. Elliott reported that more than 80 children participated in Santa's Hotline in December. There were so many children that they called in last minute help from Officers Will James and Woody Diesinger. The members of the Commission expressed their thanks to the officers for their help in making this year's Santa's Hotline a success.

II.    *Sanatoga Park Ball Fields*

Ms. Elliott and Commissioner Klotz reported that the contractor staked out the site and found that due to settling, kids four-wheeling, and several other factors, there was a difference between the actual grade and that which was on the plans. Township staff has asked Bursich and ProTract to determine which would be the most cost-effective solution: have the contractor make field corrections or redraw the plans so the grades are more accurate.

II.    *Summer Events*

Ms. Elliott reported Jen Corley is working on scheduling bands for the summer concert series. She is awaiting responses from requests for proposals and should have a line up by the end of February. Ms. Elliott and Rod Hawthorne have begun fundraising for this year's events. They have people lined up to donate money – but no definite commitments at this time. Ms. Bleakley asked if the event banner would be reusable if the Township secured a different sponsor for his summer's events. Ms. Elliott replied that she did not think it would be reusable.

The annual events calendar has been tentatively set as the following:

- Easter Egg Hunt – March 31, 2007
- Fishing Derby – June 2
- Movies in the Park – June 29, July 20, August 17
- Summer Concerts – June 17-August 26
- Halloween Festival – October 28
- Santa's Hotline – Mid December

Ms. Elliott said she is working on securing a rain location for the summer movie nights and hopes to have them at the Ringing Hills Fire Company hall. She will send Park & Rec Commissioners a listing of movies so they can choose titles for the movie nights.

III. *Grants*

Ms. Elliott gave a report of the various grant applications the Township will be pursuing for park and recreation related activities.

Montgomery County Open Space Acquisition Fund – April 2008

The Township has made an offer on one of the three properties under consideration, is working through some difficult issues with a second, and has received a negative response from the School District on a collaborative effort on their property. The Township will probably look to pursue an outright purchase of the project.

Health & Wellness Foundation – March 2007

Ms. Elliott is working on drafting the first phase of the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation, which is due in early March.

PECO Green Regions Grant – March 2007

Ms. Elliott said she is looking into reapplying for the Green Regions Grant that Ed Wagner applied for in the spring of 2006 to do a master site plan for Snell and Norton Park.

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Grant – March 2007

This grant will work in conjunction with the Green Regions Grant to help fund a master site plan for Snell and Norton Park.

Department of Community & Economic Development LUPTAP Grant – Open Ended

Ms. Elliott said this grant project does not directly relate to parks and recreation, but will involve joint a master plan with Limerick Township for the Route 422 Sanatoga Interchange area. This study will probably involve regulations to create public spaces and/or pedestrian and trail linkages to other recreational assets in both townships.

**NEW BUSINESS**

I. *Jim Leh*

Mr. Troutman reported that Mr. Leh had tendered his resignation, and on behalf of the Park and Rec Commission offered his thanks to Mr. Leh for his almost a decade of service.

Ms. Bleakley introduced Patty Abdalla as a potential candidate to replace Mr. Leh. She and Mr. Klotz said she was an outstanding member of the community who is very involved with her kids and many civic events. Mr. Klotz said she brings a great deal of enthusiasm and creativity that will be an asset to the Township and the Park and Recreation Commission. She organized a hoop shoot to raise funds for Katrina relief and raised \$1,800.

A motion was made by Ms. Bleakley, seconded by Mr. Cimino, and unanimously approved by a 3-0 vote, to recommend the Board of Commissioners appoint Ms. Abdalla to the Park and Recreation Commission.

Mr. Troutman said he would be interested in creating another newsletter outlining Park and Recreation activities and events, like they did last year. Ms. Elliott said the Township is in the

process of purchasing a machine to fold and stuff the new sewer and trash bills. This machine would also be able to insert an additional document in the mailer – such as a newsletter. This would be an ideal opportunity for the Park and Recreation Commission to send out a newsletter without incurring additional mailing costs.

A motion was made by Mr. Dinnocenti, seconded by Ms. Bleakly, and unanimously approved by a 3-0 vote, to create and send out the second annual Park and Recreation newsletter with the trash and sewer bills.

II. *Greg Delp, Little League*

Mr. Delp, a representative of the Pottsgrove Little League petitioned the Park and Recreation Commission to commit to a location for a little league field/complex within the Township. He said it is very difficult for families to travel between townships for events and that there is a substantial need for fields. He said if he could have a commitment from the Township, he would be able to start fundraising so the organization could contribute to the development of such a facility.

There was a great deal of discussion about the state of the Township's recreational fields. All agreed that there is a definite need for more fields; however, there were two competing ideas on how it should be done. Ms. Elliott explained that she met with Fran Rupert of DCNR to discuss a grant application to perform a master site plan for the Snell and Norton Park site. If the Township used grant money to perform a master site plan, then it would make it easier to receive grant money to develop the site. This method would take approximately three to five years and would allow the Township to effectively leverage tax money.

For others, the three to five year time frame was too long to wait for playing fields, and they advocated fundraising and beginning the process to develop the Snell and Norton site right away. After much debate, the Park and Recreation Commission asked Ms. Elliott to pursue the DCNR grant for a master site plan at Snell and Norton Park, due in late March. They also said they would support Mr. Delp and Little League's efforts to fundraise for facilities in the Township.

Mr. Delp asked Ms. Elliott to draft a letter outlining the process the Township would follow so he could provide the supporters of Little League with information about the Township's position so they can begin their fundraising efforts.

III. *Skateboarders in Lower Pottsgrove*

Ms. Bleakley said she noticed that skateboarders need a place to go – they are always being pushed out of parking lots and streets. She understands that there is liability for having skateboard facilities, but cited Amity Township's skateboarding ordinance and thought it might be worth exploring. She said some kids had done research and prepared a presentation for Judge Durkin about building a skateboard park somewhere in the Pottstown region, which never happened.

The Commission decided to ask Ms. Elliott to explore the insurance implications of a skateboard park and Ms. Bleakley said she would invite the kids to the February meeting to do a presentation to begin a dialogue on the idea. If the group provides good answers to the Commission's concerns, they would approach the Board of Commissioners to see if they would be able to pursue this project.

IV. *Vendors in the Park Policy*

Ms. Elliott said the Township received a call from a local business asking if it would be possible to give away or sell its wares at Township events in the parks. Ms. Elliott said the Township does not have a policy for such occasions and suggested that the Commission may want to explore its options

before deciding one way or another. Members of the Commission asked Ms. Elliott to research other policies and provide a draft for the Commission to work with.

V. *Field Use Policy*

Ms. Elliott received a call from the Windcroft School, a private school located outside of the Township, requesting the use of soccer fields during the spring season. Ms. Elliott told the school representative that due to the lack of space, it would not be possible. While this is the case, Ms. Elliott said she would like to work with the Park and Recreation Commission to create a system for field reservations the Township will be able to use in the future, especially if/when it has more fields to offer to groups. Members of the Commission asked Ms. Elliott to begin researching and draft a policy for them to review and comment on.

VI. *Park & Rec Long Range Policy*

Ms. Elliott said she would like to work with members of the Commission to an abbreviated strategic plan of sorts for the Township's park and recreation activities. This plan will help the Commission identify needs, identify a future vision of the township's park and recreation system, and set out strategies for achieving this vision over the next five to 10 years. Most importantly, this exercise, which will commence over the next year, will provide the Commission with a means for addressing park needs at budget time. The Commissioners were agreeable to pursuing this process.

A motion was made by Ms. Bleakley, seconded by Mr. Cimino, and unanimously approved by a 3-0 vote to adjourn the meeting at 8:24 p.m.

Next meeting: February 27, 2007