

**West Vincent Township
Park and Recreation Commission**

April 6, 2016 7:30 PM

Attendance: Chairman Brad Dyer, Bill Dietrich, Whitney Jaeger, William Holderness, Chip Farnham, Kristina Casey, Maria Jacobs, Steve Merroth, Jim Deisinger Timi Kirchner, Interim Township Manager and Township Secretary Tammy Swavely.

Dr. Dyer called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

Girl Scouts from Cadet Troop 4225 from the Owen J. Roberts Middle School presented their project for their Silver Award. This is equivalent to the Eagle Scout Project. The girls were Victoria Grace, Ella Selvaggio, Gabi Shrader and Marisa Terwilliger. They had several ideas that would be good in the Community Garden. They were raised beds, a Give-a-book – Take a book and bench, and a bee box. The girls did much research and presented what materials would be needed to build these items for the garden. The estimated costs for all of the projects would be \$1200.00. The raised beds were suggested as a project by Mr. Dietrich since there is a very rocky section of the garden that cannot be used for regular plantings. They are all very good ideas and the Commission will consider this and let them know.

A perspective Eagle Scout, Gene Krumenacker from Troop 105 came to the Commission to asking for ideas that he could have to use for his Eagle Scout project. He needs to have 100-150 man hours of work. The suggestions were benches, clearing trails, and a kiosk for the Community Garden. Dr. Dyer suggested that another good idea would be trail marking. Mr. Dietrich suggested helping dig the paths in the Community Garden. Mrs. Casey suggested bird boxes or bat boxes. The Commission will think of the best items and let him know.

The minutes from March were unanimously approved as submitted on a motion by Mrs. Jacobs and a second from Mrs. Jaeger.

Ms. Kirchner came to discuss the transition of the Park and Recreation Commission. She stated that she could help the group move forward together. The Board of Supervisors feel it is important to have a committee system and input of residents. There is a long and strong history of volunteerism in West Vincent. She feels is it important to have everyone have a common level of understanding from this point on. The first protocol she discussed was the scheduling of the facilities of the fields. The Board changed that responsibility to the Township Manager earlier this year and with that comes delegation. Ms. Kirchner read part of Ordinance 146-2009 which determines what the responsibilities are for the commissioners. With this is administrative duties including scheduling, obtaining quotes, etc. Mr. Farnham has volunteered to do the field scheduling. Ms. Kirchner wants to be sure that there is a transition here since people will call the Township or email to schedule their dates. She suggested that a staff member do the scheduling and then run it by a member for oversight and questions. That would be a wise use of volunteer time. Mrs. Jacobs disagreed saying that it would be two people doing one job. Ms. Kirchner stated that it was a suggestion. Enforcement and violations of field use was discussed. Mr. Holderness stated that he understood that the teams are paying for private access for an organized team. How

to tell someone to leave the field is tricky. The police can be called to do that for the commission. Mrs. Casey was worried about kicking people off the field. Teams can and have practiced in jerseys and can be residents. A throw together practice may occur when no one is using the field. The park is a public park. Ms. Kirchner stated that the conversations are good at this meeting. Mr. Farnham did contact Mrs. Swavely and had a conversation about scheduling the fields. Mr. Farnham feels that he will be able to go talk with the group of men who are using the field without permission to see if they will comply with the Park and Recreation policies before calling the police. Ms. Kirchner stated that the police cannot discriminate but the policy needs to be tightened up. Once it is drawn up, the solicitor will need to review it. Ms. Kirchner stated that with regards to requests for proposals that this is a staff function. Prior to the request is where the Park and Recreation Commission makes their decision. She instructed them to be specific in what is wanted in the proposal and that will be the guidance the staff needs. This will be handled by staff going forward. For questions on what to ask for, someone from the outside could be brought in, for example, the Penn State Extension for questions on what the fields really need.

Old Business:

Capital Fund: Ms. Kirchner stated that the Township has an interesting way of doing the Budget. This has created some confusion. The reserve account is kept track of through fees collected for the field use. This money all goes into the General Fund, not in a separate account. Staff divides the monies up on a spreadsheet. This can be done better in the future. The accounting reserves reflect \$20 of each hourly fee. The Park and Recreation Budget was discussed and how the number does not accurately reflect the Capital Fund or Reserve. The Turkey Trot is a fund raiser and those funds are also not accurately reflected in the Budget. There is a spreadsheet on that information also. The other interesting item in the Budget is that the Fellowship Trail funding was placed in the Public Works line item. Ms. Kirchner will add this information to straighten out this part of the Budget in her report to the Board upon finishing her job.

Fields: Several quotes were received on fertilizing and aerating the fields. This has come out of the Capital Fund in the past. Dr. Dyer stated that the Park and Rec get proposals and make recommendations as to what gets done on the fields. Mrs. Jacobs asked what the overall vision of the field maintenance was. Mr. Merroth stated that it was not to compete with field conditions of other neighboring fields, but to keep them at a respectable level. They have been sub-level in the past, and if we can get a regular maintenance plan a large amount of money will not need to be spent each year. Dr. Dyer agreed saying that we need to make the fields the best they can be and to use the funds that were collected over the years. Mr. Merroth added that is why the Capital Fund started. The fields are heavily used and this can be a consideration for the next schedule. Mr. Farnham feels that the fields should be reserved for residents. Mrs. Jacobs asked how we compare with fees. This has been the same fee since 2009. When they started, they were slightly higher than some, and lower than others. That is still the same as other Townships have raised their fees significantly. Dr. Dyer stated that now is the time to start a field maintenance program and he trusts the vendors since this is what they do all the time. Mr. Holderness agreed that a maintenance program is necessary. Ms. Kirchner stated that all points are valid and that the residents do get use of the fields. Mr. Dietrich made the motion to recommend the Windview Athletic Field quote of \$6,000 which includes fertilizing four times a year, core and aerate two times a year and to slit seed two times a year. Dr. Dyer seconded the motion. Mr. Farnham stated

that the seeding is something he does not feel the fields need. Dr. Dyer stated that the vendor is amiable to discuss the reason for seeding. Ms. Kirchner stated that she cautions the maintenance of the field by committee. This can be discussed further but for now, there are various levels of expertise and something needs to be decided now. Mr. Holderness wanted to know how effective seeding is now. Mrs. Jacobs stated that she cannot vote for the motion as presented, she is not in favor of the seeding. After some more discussion, Mr. Dietrich tabled his motion. Mr. Dietrich made the motion to recommend the Windview Athletic Field quote ala carte which includes fertilizing four times a year, core and aerate two times a year both the soccer field and baseball outfield. Mrs. Jacobs seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Community Garden: In the 2016 Budget there is \$12,000. The Public Works department has informed Ms. Kirchner that they would benefit from a water source. Ms. Kirchner reviewed what has been put into the garden so far. \$34,000 has been invested into it last year. Currently it has a water tank that the nearby homeowners do not like to look at. The way of watering the garden with the tank is not efficient. Currently the Township does not have a hydrant source. The Public Works department use a garden hose to fill up large water containers for all their activities. A second, faster source would be important for them to have. There is also the issue of Township owned potable water. If there is an emergency and the power goes out, the meter pit could be a source of potable water, there is no other source in the Township. Ms. Kirchner stated that there has been a significant investment already and could be used much more than for just the garden. It would be a good investment to make. Mr. Dietrich stated that currently he has had 10 people drop out of the garden. Two expanded their gardens and two new gardeners. No outreach has been started for new members. There is a potential for 60 plots, although many are too rocky. Mr. Holderness stated that the Sustainability Committee was against connecting to water because of the expense. A member of that committee is a hydrogeologist and would not mind putting in a shallow well or two for water. It would be unsealed, so it would not be potable water. Ms. Jaeger stated that a well would require a perc test. Mr. Dietrich stated that the garden needs potable water. Mrs. Jacobs was unhappy with the amount spent on the garden to this point. Mr. Dietrich stated that the garden is for residents and it is not a money making garden. After a lengthy discussion on the pros and cons of the expenditure, Ms. Kirchner stated that she will get more information from Public Works as a side beneficiary of the garden. Aqua PA will be contacted to see if there is fluoride or chlorine in the water.

Zoning Ordinance: The Planning Commission has recommended some changes to the Zoning Ordinance. Some of these include definitions to tighten up the Ordinance on parks. Mr. Farnham made the motion that these be forwarded onto the Board of Supervisors. Mrs. Jacobs seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

New Park Land along French Creek: The Commission will tour this park on April 15th at 5:30 PM. Mrs. Swavelly will send out a map and coordinates.

Fellowship Trail: Ms. Kirchner updated the Commission on the progress. The Township staff has met with the St. Matthews Church representatives. The Township is ready to move forward with the design of trail. There are a few things that need to be determined including the site distance on Fellowship Road and where the best place for the crossing. As soon as that is finalized along with a cost estimate from the engineer she will bring it to the Board.

Phoenixville Regional Plan Map: The Phoenixville Regional Plan is looking to update their Trail Map. A map was distributed to the Commission for review.

Pottstown Health & Wellness Grant: Mrs. Jacobs has stated earlier in an email that she would be interested in heading this. The grant is a competition between Townships in the month of July. Residents can obtain tickets to vote at the park and they can also take “selfies” and obtain points. The Township with the most points at the end of the month will receive \$5,000. Second prize is \$2,500. Mrs. Jacobs would like to have a family night camp out in the park. She will work on getting ideas ready for the next meeting.

Mr. Dietrich suggested that the Commission divide into subcommittees to help move things along and then report back to the group as a whole. This will be done at the next meeting.

Meeting Adjourned 11:00 PM.