



Minutes: Parks and Recreation Committee August 3, 2015

The regular meeting of the Middle Smithfield Township Parks and Recreation Committee was held on August 3, 2015 and began at 6:39pm at the Schoonover Municipal Building with Abigail Graham presiding.

In attendance were: Members of the Public – Eric Graham; MST Liaison – Erin Groome; Board of Supervisors, Annette Atkinson and Mike Dwyer and Parks and Recreation Board Members – Abigail Graham, Michelle Dellavalle, and Jenna Componovo (via phone conference).

Correspondence

Erin Groome presented an email she had received about posting trail signs at the township parks that showed the walking paths and explained the distance of the trail along with explaining the easy to hard physical levels. Also suggested a trail be put in around the soccer field.

Minutes

Abigail Graham made a motion to accept the minutes from July 6, 2015, Michelle Dellavalle seconded the motion. Motion approved 3-0.

Parks

Resica

A replacement committee board member is still needed due to the resignation of Raquel Barbera. A concern was brought up about the possible absence of the help that the Parks and Recreation Committee received from the Little League Softball players for special events due to the transition in leadership because Raquel Barbara, who was President of the Little League Softball, moved out of the area. Abigail Graham questioned if the special events held would be able to succeed without the help from the Little Leagues. Mike Dwyer will contact the Little League Softball organization to find out who their new leader is and discuss their township participation.

Trunk or Treat – Michelle Dellavalle suggested asking the soccer league and other youth organizations if the softball league cannot help. Mrs. Dellavalle will head the event and work alongside Erin Groome during the planning process. Erin Groome will update the parks flyers so that they have all the updated information on them and can be handed out at the Trunk or Treat event. It was suggested having a table that represented the new Community Gardens that could contain a fall garden display and information about the gardens. Abigail Graham mentioned having a table for the Dog Park or one for Awsom to show support for the community. There was discussion about tuning the Trunk or Treat into a treat trail along the walking path; a decision will be made in September depending on the volunteers received. Some of the activities could be face painting, pumpkin painting and balloon animals. Jenna Componovo will talk to some of her theater friends to see if they are willing to help with event tables. The event would run from 12pm – 2pm. Candy donations would be needed if the event is turned into a treat trail. Abigail Graham suggested using a hand stamp to keep kids from going through the trail more than once, which was an issue last year. Erin Groome will ask the school if dogs would be allowed during the event so that the Awsom table could promote adoption of the dogs they have at the shelter. Mrs. Graham also suggested having a food drive during the event to collect for the local pantries such as Bushkill Outreach.

Community Gardens

Danny and Chauly Younger now have volunteers maintaining 5 more garden boxes that they are currently growing fresh produce to give to the local food pantry, Bushkill Outreach. Michelle Dellavalle will speak with Chauly Younger to possibly do a follow up story in the local newspaper in the fall about the wonderful work Mr. and Mrs. Younger have done. Michelle Dellavalle will also be thanking all the other volunteers that have been so gracious in giving their time to work on the grounds at the gardens.

Boy Scout, James Senholzi, will be revising his shed plans and re-presenting his shed designs to the Boy Scout council for a prefabricated shed instead for his Eagle Scout project. The shed project is still on going.

A small kiosk will be erected at the Community Gardens Park so that information about the gardens or other township news can be posted for the public to see.

Annette Atkinson will order the battery powered motion lights to be placed at the Community Gardens and Dog Park to help with security. Erin Groome will look into the cost of trail cameras that could be placed at the Dog Park and Community Gardens for added security.

Annette Atkinson described a request she received from Mr. and Mrs. Younger requesting to waive the refundable deposit for a garden bed rental that would be for a local military family. Abigail Graham suggested that anyone with a hardship can present their request for a fee waiver to the Parks and Recreation Committee Board. The board will then vote on approving it. A suggestion was made that a local business could sponsor a garden box for someone. Abigail Graham will compose a letter that can be sent to the local businesses explaining this donation request.

It was noted that the public works department will now check the water and materials piles every Friday and will fill the water tanks at the gardens and replenish woodchips, screened fill/topsoil and mulch piles as needed.

Abigail Graham made a motion to review refundable deposit waivers based on hard ship letters and approval by the Parks and Recreation Committee on a case by case basis, Michelle Dellavalle second the motion. Motion approved 3-0.

Putek

Abigail Graham reported that the park is idle and committed to going back to nature.

Echo

Jenna Componovo reported that she took a ride to Pittsburg to check out the playground that had recently been built with grants. A safe base that could be used around playground would be playground safe wood chips. Mrs. Componovo will work on finding out more information on playgrounds and have the information ready for the September meeting. Michelle Dellavalle has been researching grants for a playground and said there are some available for the spring. Would need to make sure the playground is ADA compliant. This may help to get more grant funding.

Boy Scout, Joe Schuon, presented to the parks board what his current plans were for the Veterans Memorial that is being built at Echo Lake Park for his Eagle Scout project. Mr. Schuon noted that he was able to get the engraving on the granite stone donated to him. Joe Schuon is working with the public works department to get the stones that he needs taken to the park in the coming week. He will be using red stone and white granite pieces in his design. Mr. Schuon is planning

to have the project done by the end of September. A dedication ceremony will be planned for around Veteran's Day, pending availability of the VFW post.

Dog Park

Abigail Graham thanked the public works department for getting the hole in the fenced area filled in and eliminating the wire that was in the same penned area. Erin Groome asked if both types of mutt mitt bags would be needed, Mrs. Graham suggested that we order both types due to the increased use of the park. Ms. Groome will order both types of mutt mitt bags for the park.

Mrs. Graham reported that there was a request to have a dog banned from the dog park. Mrs. Graham explained to the owner why the committee will not ban any dog from the park and that each owner could come to the park at different times during the day to avoid any confrontations.

Mrs. Graham reported that the grass is suffering in the big dog area due to a lot of use and no rain. Mrs. Graham also reported that the weeds are getting over grown in back corner of the walking path and is causing the path is starting disappearing due to this. It was asked if public works could weed whack around the walking path to help eliminate this issue.

Abigail Graham suggested that the township not place agility equipment for the dogs at the park due to the fear of the equipment not being used correctly, which could result in an animal getting hurt.

Mrs. Graham reported that she is getting a lot of feedback about the park which is positive and that the use of the park has increased. It was also noted that the dog park is now listed on bringfido.com so that travelers can find the park when visiting. The committee board was informed that Judy Putek Park is still listed on the website as a place to take your dog. Mrs. Graham said this cannot be changed, but will post a comment that informs visitors of the new park and will include directions in the post. There is currently Middle Smithfield Dog Park Facebook page that is owned by Joyce Bush. It was talked about designing a new Facebook page for the dog park. Mrs. Graham suggested that we just use the current parks Facebook page to promote all the parks together. Annette Atkinson will add Abigail Graham to the list of administrators so that Mrs. Graham can update the Facebook page.

Mike Dwyer suggested making a flyer that informs residents and visitors of the other parks that are located throughout the township. This flyer could then be posted in the kiosks at each park. Erin Groome informed Mr. Dwyer that there is a pamphlet already made, but will need to be updated. Mrs. Graham will help to update the information on the current pamphlet.

A ribbon cutting for the new dog park is scheduled for a tentative date of Monday, September 14, 2015. A press release can be made up and sent out to the local media, Abigail Graham offered to draft it. The opening will be kept small. Mrs. Graham can inform local residents of the date and local animal groups such as Awsom and Camp Papillion, local veterinarians can be invited to attend also.

Abigail Graham will talk with Jeff Reichl at the next meeting about the status of the Regional Parks Committee. Mike Dwyer met with Smithfield Township recently about the status of the bike trail that was being designed for the Rivers Edge Regional Park and noted that nothing has been worked on for the trail. He is unsure if the committee has been disbanded or not.

Litter and Beautification

The Fall 1,000 Feet of Street Clean Up is being planned for Saturday, October 3, 2015. Volunteers are needed. Erin will compile a list of local Youth Groups and draft a letter soliciting their help.

Announcements – None

Individual Action Items

Jenna Componovo – Check with theater friends about trunk or treat help and playground research work

Michelle Dellavalle – Playground research work and Trunk or Treat planning

Abigail Graham – update parks flyer with current information and draft Dog Park Ribbon Cutting press release

Erin Groome – Trail Camera Research, Trunk or Treat planning work and Youth Group request letter

The next Parks and Recreation meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 8, 2015 at 6:30pm due to the Labor Day holiday. Abigail Graham made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:57pm; Michelle Dellavalle seconded the motion. Motion approved 3-0.

Respectfully Submitted By,

Erin Groome
Parks and Recreation Liaison