

Parks, Recreation, and Shade Tree Advisory Board

Minutes of Tuesday, March 28, 2023

A meeting of the Parks, Recreation, and Shade Tree Advisory Board was held on Tuesday, March 28, 2023, at the Greater Plymouth Community Center. The meeting began at 6:30 PM.

Board members attending were Bryan Renneisen, Jason Sugalski, Jennifer McCracken, Neil Clark, Naomi Winchester, and Shannon Dryden; Parks and Recreation Director Phil Brady; Building and Grounds Director Rick Carbo; Plymouth Township Council Liaison Karen Bramblett; and Board Secretary Rosemary Winterbottom. A seventh Board member has not been selected yet by Council.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Shannon Dryden nominated Bryan Renneisen for the position of Chairman-Parks, Recreation, and Shade Tree Advisory Board. This nomination was seconded by Jennifer McCracken. There were no further nominations for this position. The Board vote was unanimous in favor of this nomination and Bryan accepted the position of Chairman-Parks, Recreation, and Shade Tree Advisory Board for 2023.

Jason Sugalski nominated Shannon Dryden for the position of Vice Chairman-Parks, Recreation, and Shade Tree Advisory Board. This nomination was seconded by Naomi Winchester. There were no further nominations for this position. The Board vote was unanimous in favor of this nomination and Shannon accepted the position of Vice Chairman-Parks, Recreation, and Shade Tree Advisory Board for 2023.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF GUESTS AND VISITORS

Guests included representatives from youth sports organizations who were making their presentations to the Board.

1. REVIEW/APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2022

A motion to approve the minutes of the Tuesday, November 22, 2022, meeting was made by Shannon Dryden. This motion was seconded by Jennifer McCracken and the minutes were unanimously approved.

2. YOUTH GROUP PRESENTATIONS

PW Spartans Football and Cheerleading

Mr. Jason Carrington, Treasurer of the organization, was present to represent PW Spartans Football and Cheerleading.

Mr. Carrington stated that he expects the organization to have an additional 15-20% participants this year. Two-hundred sixty-four (264) children were enrolled in the program last year; the teams did not play during Covid. Participation is split about 50/50 between football players and cheerleaders. The organization fielded six teams last year: Flag (ages 4-7), 65 lb. (2 teams), 90 lb. (1 team), and 105 lb. (2 teams). Two of the teams made it to the championships last season. The organization will add a Mites team (ages 3-6) this year and hope to have a 125 lb. squad as well, for a total of eight teams. Mr. Carrington noted that the Conshohocken Bears are no longer part of the KSL (Keystone State League).

In response to a question from Bryan Renneisen, Mr. Carrington noted that there is a 7-member Board for the organization. There are 5 coaches for each team: Head Coach, Offensive Coordinator, Defensive Coordinator, 2 Special Team coaches, plus a Team Dad. Each team has certified medical personnel. The season begins on August 1 with practice sessions. Games begin in September and go through November. In response to a question from Shannon Dryden, Mr. Carrington noted that the organization participates as part of Plymouth Township Day and also there is large community involvement in PW Spartans Day.

The Board thanked Mr. Carrington for his presentation.

Colonial Soccer Club

Mr. John Dean, President of the organization, was present to represent the Colonial Soccer Club.

Mr. Dean stated the organization has 1,785 children enrolled in the program, and they are the second largest club in EPYSA (Eastern Pennsylvania Youth Soccer Association). Ages of the participants range from pre-K to 18 years old, with most participants being younger than 6th grade. The age of a typical entrant to the program is 4-5 years old. There are 683 Plymouth Township residents in the program. A Cubs program (ages 2-3 year olds) was started last year.

Mr. Dean noted that Philadelphia has been selected as one of the host cities for the World Cup in 2026. He also noted that the Proving Grounds in Conshohocken will be the site of the Eastern Region Presidents Cup being held June 16-20, 2023.

In response to a question from Neil Clark regarding expenses, Mr. Dean stated that an increase in expenses in their budget was due to the hiring of a Programming Director to run outside programming (summer camps, spring camps, etc.). Scholarship are generally awarded to families in need, with gift cards provided by Dick's Sporting goods to enable to purchase of needed items. Additionally, the organization awards two college scholarships.

Naomi Winchester asked a question about the TOPS Program. Mr. Dean stated that this program for children with disabilities has 25-30 participants. Mr. Dean also stated that their program is one of the strongest TOPS Programs around. Additionally, there is one participant in the organization who is working with the goal of being on the U.S. National Dwarf Team.

When questioned about safety protocols, Mr. Dean noted that their Safety Director organized a fund raiser with the hope of obtaining funds to purchase three AED devices. Enough funds were raised that they were about to obtain nine AED devices, which they are making available to other organizations for their use.

The Board thanked Mr. Dean for his presentation.

Mount Carmel Senior Legion

Mr. Tom Longo, President of the organization, was present to represent Mount Carmel Senior Legion.

Mr. Longo stated that the organization has been operating since 1945, which makes it the organization's 78th year. The participants in the organization are boys from 15-19 years old. The team has an 18 person roster. Open tryouts were recently held, and 24 players signed up to try out for the team.

Mr. Longo stated that fees for participation are kept as low as possible. The league is very competitive, and plays old-style baseball using wooden bats. Participants are mainly from Plymouth Township, with additional participants from parts of Norristown, some from Whitman Township, and East Norriton. They play local teams, including Perky Valley and JP Mascaro. The season begins May 25 and runs for six weeks until July 4. Playoffs will begin after the regular season.

In response to a question from Naomi Winchester concerning risk management, Mr. Longo stated that coaches have background checks done and also complete a program sponsored by Youth Protect Sports.

The Board thanked Mr. Longo for his presentation.

Plymouth Little League

Ms. Susan Robinson, President of the organization, was present for Plymouth Little League.

Ms. Robinson stated that the organization has 546 participants registered for this season, and that the group continues to grow each year. Opening Day was March 25 this year. The program begins April 1 and runs through June. Tournaments begin the 3rd week in June and run through July. A Fall ball program is run in September.

Ms. Robinson stated that the organization runs both a boys baseball program (12 teams) and a girls softball program (8 teams). Participants are mainly boys from Plymouth Township and Conshohocken; girls are from Plymouth Township, Conshohocken, and Whitemarsh. It was noted that if a girl lives in Whitemarsh but attends school in Plymouth Township, she is able to play for Plymouth Little League. The boundaries for participation are dictated by the Little League Baseball organization.

In response to a question from Naomi Winchester, Ms. Robinson stated that in previous years the organization had asked for volunteer umpires. The organization has now decided to use paid umpires. Some high school parents have been able to train to be umpires. Little League umpires must be used for tournaments.

The Board thanked Ms. Robinson for her presentation.

3. DISCUSSION OF PACKET MATERIALS

The Board reviewed the monthly reports for January-2023 and February-2023. Phil Brady noted that numbers are increasing, as can be observed by the full parking lot on many days.

Phil also showed the Board photos from Bingo Night, the Sweetheart Dance, Black Heritage Day, and the Princess and Super Hero Party. Phil reported that the Bingo Night was a huge success. The Princess and Super Hero Party was combined from separate events in previous years.

4. OLD BUSINESS

A. General Department

Topic was covered by photos during Discussion of Packet Materials.

B. Community Center/CC Park

1. Front Doors

Phil Brady reported that installation of the mag locks on the doors of the Community Center will begin Monday or Tuesday of next week. This installation should take several days. Front Desk personnel will have the ability to control the locks.

C. Parks and Maintenance

Rick Carbo reported that scheduled projects include:

- 1) foul ball netting to be done in August;
- 2) demolition of 818 Germantown Pike (for open space); and
- 3) a re-do of the outlet structure in the pond at East Plymouth Valley Park.

D. Wetherill Park

1. Little Library

A local Girl Scouts group has offered to put up a Little Library at Wetherill Park, and the township has accepted their offer.

2. July 25, 2023, Board Meeting

Phil noted that the July 25, 2023, Board meeting will be held at Harriet Wetherill Park at the Butler Pike side.

E. Programming

1. Camp

Phil Brady reported that camp registration is going well. Some weeks are already full. Registration for Spring Break camp also went well.

2. Plymouth Township Day

Phil Brady noted that 2023 will be a year off for the Beer Garden due to space limitations.

3. Love Your Park Week

Phil reported that Love Your Park Week is mainly a Philadelphia event. Friends of each park do cleanups twice a year. Phil does not have the resources to support this type of an event at this time. Shannon Dryden offered to research this idea.

4. Pre-School Camp Legislation

Council Liaison Karen Bramblett offered to reach out to some local contacts she is acquainted with (Mary Jo Daley, Val Arkoosh, Maria Collett) to obtain an update on the status and progress of this legislation.

5. Black Heritage Celebration

Naomi Winchester presented a written report on the Black Heritage Celebration which was held on February 25, 2023. Phil Brady thanked Naomi for her hard work in organizing this event.

6. Veteran's Banners

Phil reported that sales of the Veteran's Banners are going well. Twenty (20) banners have been sold so far. The 4' x 6' banners will feature six (6) veterans on each banner.

4. NEW BUSINESS

No items were discussed.

5. MISCELLANEOUS

No items were discussed.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion for adjournment was made by Jason Sugalski; this motion was seconded by Shannon Dryden.

The next regular meeting of the Board is scheduled for Tuesday, April 25, 2023, at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemary Winterbottom

Rosemary Winterbottom, Secretary