



Montgomery Township  
**Park & Recreation Board**  
**Meeting Minutes for July 8, 2009**

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Leesa Meade, Heather Berkey, Tony Ruggieri, Keith Johnson, Dan Spinelli, Bill Maule, Jeff McDonnell (Board of Supervisor Liaison), Kevin Costello (Public Works Director), John Nagel (Township Manager) and Allyson Planders (Management Analyst Intern) were in attendance.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Leesa Meade called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes from the June 10th meeting were approved as submitted.

**RECREATION UPDATE**

Kevin Costello informed the group that Beth Usic, Recreation Director, resigned as of July 6. Leesa stated that Beth sent an email to the Park Board members informing them of her resignation and reasons for doing so. One aspect of the email of concern to the members was the unsafe camper to counselor ratio that Beth expressed.

John Nagel, Township Manager, was present to address the concerns. He said that the Township is committed to the safety of the children. The Kids University camp meets or exceeds the standards for acceptable ratios set by the American Campers Association. He said that Township employees serve as replacements if there is a time when those standards cannot be met. The budget for the camp is just under 2,900 hours or about 9 counselors, he said. The high volume of last minute registrations with no deadline presented a problem.

John informed the Park Board that the ratios, according to the American Campers Association, should be 6 campers to 1 counselor for ages 4 and 5, 8:1 for ages 6 to 8, and 10:1 for ages 9 to 14. Bill Maule asked if anything was built in for absenteeism because of the eight counselors on the payroll for the first week, three were absent. John said not much advance notice was given of these vacations. Bill asked if HR should be asking questions about vacations, etc. upon hire and John responded that Beth took the hiring duty upon herself.

Bill suggested that the Park Board might be included in the hiring process, but John said that was not a feasible option because if that person was not a successful match for the Township, where would the blame be placed? John said the base of what they do is with the safety of the children in mind. He said that next year there will be changes to ensure the process is documented and that the same problem will not occur.

Heather Berkey suggested thinking of new ways to recruit counselors. Dan Spinelli suggested recruiting young teachers from local school districts.

John Nagel presented the ratios from comparable municipalities and from Pennsylvania code.

Leesa said that the key things that need to be worked on are creating a cutoff date, being conscious of who and how we hire and other ways to recruit. John cited miscommunication as the root of many of the difficulties with Kids University.

Bill Maule asked John if there was still \$1.5 million dollars allotted to Parks, and John said the Board will consider projects once they are identified.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

### **PREVIOUS CAPITAL**

#### **Whistlestop Park**

- Kevin Costello met with John Chambers and the topographic work has been done and elevations have been established
- John is working on a plan/permit for cost of the work
- Leesa Meade asked if the topsoil from Cutler was a given and if we could lose it while we are waiting for the permit
- Leesa asked if the Park Board should create a timetable of estimates for the Board of Supervisors
- Tony Ruggieri said that it was important to raise the park to the level of the baseball infields
- Leesa asked if the project would be able to start this time next year because the Board starts to work on the budget in mid-July
- Kevin said that he will communicate to John Chambers that they would like the estimate to be completed relatively soon
- Leesa said she hopes that at the next Park Board meeting they can pass a motion to move it to the Board of Supervisors for review
- Leesa brought information and brochures about the shade covers for the playground

#### **Spring Valley Park**

- Discussed the minimum distance between the basketball courts to keep them safe and cost of the basketball court and types of backboards
- Bill Maule presented a motion that was unanimously approved by the Park Board: "I make a motion to expand the basketball courts at Spring Valley Park to have an additional full court not to exceed \$25,000 to be completed by the Public Works department as their schedule permits."
- Keith Johnson asked if the basketball court could reasonably be completed for next June and Kevin said yes pending Board of Supervisors approval for the project
- The Park Board took a walk to look around Spring Valley: the trails were discussed, the cracks in the tennis courts need to be repaired, the volleyball court needs some sand, and the water runoff on the baseball field is bad

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

- Recycling in the parks will be a topic of discussion for the next meeting
- Tony Ruggieri asked about putting wood chips down on the deer trail in Windlestrae because there are volunteers that would be willing to spread them; Kevin said he would look into that
- Heather Berkey asked if we would be able to put up a safety flier that she had for the Bark Park
- Bill Maule asked about the possibility for a holiday lights contest for indoors but they would discuss it at the August meeting
- Leesa Meade mentioned the possibility of putting a Gaga court in one of the parks because it is inexpensive and a noncoordinated sport
- Keith Johnson noted that on the expenditure reports public information was at 91% of it's budget and contracted services was at 76%
- Leesa said that the Park Board's walk this month would be at Fellowship Park

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Leesa Meade adjourned the meeting at 9:25 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for August 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. at the Township Building.