



**Montgomery Township
Park and Recreation Board
Meeting Minutes for November 9, 2011**

The monthly meeting of the Montgomery Township Park and Recreation Board was held on November 9, 2011 in the Montgomery Township Municipal Building. The members of the Park and Recreation Board in attendance included: Tony Ruggieri, Heather Berkey, Keith Johnson, Leesa Meade, and Dan Spinelli. Mark Angelone was not in attendance. Also in attendance were Michael Fox (BOS Liaison), Larry Gregan (Township Manager), Kevin Costello (Public Works Director), Ray Barndt (Park Foreman) and Sharon Tucker (Recreation Coordinator).

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Tony Ruggieri called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Tony Ruggieri made a motion to approve the October minutes and Dan Spinelli seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

PARK COMP PLAN

Kevin Costello reported that the County is not ready to discuss their plan tonight as originally intended. Staff did not have their usual meeting with the County today either. Tony Ruggieri is planning to have a short Park & Rec Board meeting in December and he would be fine with having them on the agenda next month. Dan Spinelli is in agreement.

MONTGOMERY UNITED SOCCER TURF PRESENTATION

Two representatives from Montgomery United Soccer (Greg Gifford, Attorney and Dwight Wilkinson, President) were in attendance to present the proposal to install two turf soccer fields at William F. Maule Park at Windlestrae Main.

Greg Gifford reported that Montgomery United Soccer (MonU) is the third largest youth soccer organization in the area, currently having over 2,000 children (800-1,000 are in the township) participants. He stated that there is a need for fields that are able to be used consistently, without the weather being such a factor. MonU has found Windlestrae to be the best location for such reasons as having lighted fields and ample parking and there is no issue with digging into rock.

MonU has found Deluxe Athletics to be the best product for the best price with an estimated cost of between \$1.2-1.5 million (for two large 11 v 11 fields), which includes equipment, storage and all items needed for installation, as well as a buffer for unexpected charges. The fields would last 10-12 years and could be reskinned at that time for approximately \$600,000. Michael Fox stated that the Township is required to pay prevailing wage rates for construction projects and therefore the actual cost could be 35% more than the estimate. Larry Gregan stated that the township would have to bid

the project. Assuming a loan for \$1.5 Million over 10 – 12 years, the annual debt service payment would be around \$150,000/year.

Greg Gifford explained that MonU would be willing to pay \$100,000 per year to Montgomery Township in exchange for primary use of the fields. The township would be responsible for paying \$50,000 per year. Dwight Wilkinson stated that MonU would assume responsibility for maintenance of the turf fields and that the township should recognize that having these fields would save them \$10-15,000 per year on maintenance.

Tony Ruggieri expressed concern that other organizations won't be able to use the fields as MonU would want primary use on the fields during the fall (7 days per week).

Greg Gifford opined that the spring would have less teams playing on it and baseball would have access. Winter would be slow and the township could rent to other groups during that time to gain additional revenue. MonU is prepared to do the scheduling of the fields if the township is interested in that. Tony Ruggieri stated that the township would need to be responsible for scheduling, fees and administering the use of the fields.

Michael Fox stated that he is concerned that the perception is that the township is doing this almost exclusively for the benefit of MonU. He also pointed out that the project would need to be studied by the Township Engineer who would determine the cost. Further, he noted that the township would be relying on a serious financial commitment from MonU and would need a contract in place to cover the township's exposure on the debt payments for the term of the loan.

Tony Ruggieri thanked MonU for all of their hard work and asked that they please give the Park Board until the January meeting to provide a recommendation on whether to elevate the project to the Board of Supervisors for consideration. Greg Gifford stated that MonU would like to have an answer by March and then the fields could be done and ready by mid-June.

MONTGOMERY UNITED SOCCER TOURNAMENT APPROVAL

Tony Ruggieri stated that the tournament permit was approved at the last board meeting. Kevin Costello indicated that Public Works will evaluate the fields on Friday prior to the tournament weekends and again on Monday following the tournament. Ray Barndt will meet with Dwight Wilkinson on 11/11 and 11/25. They will also meet on Saturday morning prior to the start of games, if necessary, due to a last minute weather concern.

Dwight Wilkinson stated that the girls' tournament is 11/12 and the boys' is 11/26. The field assignments are U14 on Windlestrae Main, U12 on Rose Twig, U9 on Hennings; U10 at Spring Valley; U14 on Zehr 1 and 3 (field 2 is closed); U8, U16, U19 at Penndale with U16 and U19 coming to Windlestrae Main for 4:45 championship game. The assignments will be similar for the boys' weekend. Some of the games will begin at 8:00 am, the rest at 8:30 am. Dwight Wilkinson stated that the championship game was when there was a problem in the past with field damage. Dwight Wilkinson will be at Windlestrae Main on Saturday to keep a check on the fields and shorten games if necessary.

Kevin Costello indicated that the fields do already have significant wear from the season.

Tony Ruggieri will review the data available in regards to ages and teams on various fields so we have information to make a decision for the tournament usage in years to come.

PARK ACTIVITY UPDATE

Kevin Costello stated that the grass is starting to grow at Whistlestop Park. He also indicated that one dugout is complete and the roof needs to go on the other one.

Keith Johnson stated that it is good to see the foot bridges back up that were damaged from the weather.

RECREATION UPDATE

Sharon Tucker discussed the upcoming Holiday Lights contest. The Park Board members want more specific descriptions of the judging criteria to ensure everyone is evaluating it similarly. Leesa Meade asked if we could request that the participants have their lights on Sunday and Monday for judging because there currently isn't much time to judge. Sharon Tucker will email all participants to make that request.

Sharon Tucker also stated that she will be updating the Park and Recreation website information and sending the Park Board an email asking for feedback during the process.

CAPITAL PROJECTS

Kevin Costello stated that there is a Whistlestop Project meeting with the Engineer tomorrow. They are not sure if they will have everything done this year, but they are about 90% done now.

Tony Ruggieri asked for details about what the water garden will be at Whistlestop Park. Kevin Costello stated that the water garden will run between the 2 fields and look like a retention basin. A rain garden seed mix will be planted there. It will grow naturally and the plants will soak up the water.

Tony Ruggieri was at Whistlestop Park and asked some parents that were there for feedback regarding the tot lot coverage. The parents indicated that the coverage was crucial during the hot summer months.

Tony Ruggieri has some 2012 budget item requests that he will send to Larry Gregan in the morning. Kevin Costello stated that resurfacing of 2 tennis courts is in the budget, as is a new mower in capital replacement. Larry Gregan stated that the Board of Supervisors adopts the preliminary budget on Monday 11/14 and that is what gets advertised. Leesa Meade would like a line item added for a shuffleboard court at the Gazebo Park.

NEW BUSINESS

Heather Berkey heard the BJ's Wholesale Club that was talked about going behind the old Borders was rejected.

OLD BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Tony Ruggieri made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:35 pm. The motion was seconded by Keith Johnson. The motion passed 5-0.