



COUNTY OF DELAWARE
GOVERNMENT CENTER BUILDING
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PARKS AND RECREATION
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COUNCIL
DR. MONICA TAYLOR
CHAIR

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VICE CHAIR

KEVIN M. MADDEN
ELAINE PAUL SCHAEFER
CHRISTINE A. REUTHER

Delaware County Park Board Meeting
January 8, 2025
12:00 p.m.

Location: Zoom

Attendees:

- **Board:** Kathy Lopez; Barron Lacy; John McMullan; Kelly Johnson; Mary Coniglio; Stephanie Gaboriault;
- **Department of Parks and Recreation:** Anne Stauffer, Interim Director of Parks & Recreation; Beth Chapman, Marketing & Communications Manager
- **County:** Councilperson Elaine Paul Schaefer, County Council Liaison
- **Not present:** Nicholas Hoyt; Trish McFarland; Parker Snowe
- Minutes by Carol Tustin
- **Call to Order:** 12:04 pm

Meeting Minutes from November 13, 2024 were approved by the board.

Call to Order..... Chair Kathy Lopez

- The meeting was called to order at 12:04 pm by Kathy Lopez, Park Board Chair.

Interim Directors report..... Anne Stauffer

- Anne wants to report that the Rose Tree Festival of Lights was a great success. There has been a lot of positive PR and feed back about it. Dr. Monica Taylor did the opening remarks. It was actually covered by ABC News. The weatherman from ABC news, Adam Joseph, posted about it on Facebook. Some of the food trucks sold out some nights. I want to thank you for coming to the tree lighting. It was a very cold, windy night and the opening was kept very short. It was a lot of fun to see everyone enjoying themselves and all the activity. I want to thank Brook and Beth. They really pulled together to get the work done. Beth pulled in the performers, the Penncrest Band, The Upper Darby Shooting Stars, The Strath Haven Silver Tones, The Hedgerow Performers, and Springton Lake. All the performers were well attended and enjoyed by all. It seemed that they had fun performing and some sent word on what a good time they had. We don't have totals for attendance. We did get Sponsorships totaling \$13,500.00 for the event. We worked with Upper Providence Police on the vendor

nights. Brooke arranged all the vendors that we had. We had scheduled six vendors on vendor nights and about five food trucks and alcohol. There will be a report on this coming out by the end of the month and then we can discuss what next year may look like.

- The main discussion for this meeting that I need to talk about is the budget crisis this year with the County. There is a cost of revenue gap that is pretty significant. So, we are coming to the park board to look at park fees. We need to discuss fees and analyze what we may charge for things. I recently sent out an analysis of our neighboring counties and municipalities list of fees. Another way to analyze the fees is to figure out our cost for events and do a cost analysis of the fees. Right now, the County does not charge for picnic pavilions or ball fields or anything that we permit even at the Redwood Community Center. This is something we are going to ask you to look at, make recommendations for, and implement. We have already given out many permits for this year, so implementing fees this year becomes tricky.
- The Briarcliff naming has been postponed by Council, partly because of board advisement, until more community input can be sought.

Council.....Councilperson Elaine Paul Schaefer

- We are appointing a new member tonight at our Council meeting and there will be a second new appointee at our next meeting.
- Also, on our agenda tonight is putting out to bid the Leedom House, which will affect the Parks & Recreation staff. The work to do some maintenance and upgrading in the Leedom House will be coming up. Those are two high points in parks right now. There was discussion in reference to where the Parks & Recreation staff will work during the Leedom House construction. There is room in the Hunt Club which can be used so that the staff can stay in Rose Tree Park for the duration of renovations. It should only be a few weeks.

Old Business

- Community engagement is on the agenda, but why don't we hold off on that because Parker wanted to be involved in that discussion.

New Business

- There are two open positions for the park board right now. One is being appointed at this coming meeting by County Council. The openings were from Bridget and Nick, so they were both at large positions.
- The Chair and Vice Chair positions for the Park Board both have elections coming up at the annual meeting in March. The nomination guidelines are self-nominations for positions are solicited. Three volunteers who do not plan to run for either position are needed to serve on the nomination committee. Kathy will appoint the chair by February 1. Self-nominations must be submitted to the nominations committee by March 1. We will send you the names of the nominees before the March meeting. We will open the March meeting and then have a ceremonial passing of the gavel to the

new Chair. There was continued discussion on nomination procedures and possible self-nominations and board nominations and appointments with timing, etc.

- Next on the agenda is fees. Rose Tree Park Garden fees was the first item to discuss. The gardens opened in the 1980s with a fee of \$30 for the whole season. The fee has never been increased. There are increased costs with cost of water and preparing the gardens for use every year. We compared the plot costs to community gardens near us and the cost comparison shows that we undercharge. \$50 per plot seemed like the amount of comparable garden plots near us, so we would like to increase the fees this year to \$50 per plot. There was much discussion about fees and how to increase the charges, either incrementally or all at one time. The costs of maintaining the gardens, record keeping, water, etc. were thoroughly discussed. The cost to join a CSA is between \$700 and \$800 per season to pick up crops that someone else is growing. Some felt it was a large increase and some felt it should be increased to match neighboring prices. After all the discussions, there was vote held about the increase of the garden fees to \$50 for the season. The vote passed unanimously.
- Council has tabled naming the former Briarcliff building due to input from the Park Board

Open Discussion and Public Comment

- We need to discuss who we would like to hear from as presenters this year to the park board. We have a lot of historic buildings in our parks, so would the board be interested in a presentation from the historic planners from the planning department and the Delaware County Historical Society? They may want to attend the same meeting for a presentation. For the historic planners maybe we could get Rebecca Ross, who is the manager there, and Beverly Barnes and Kathy Clifford. It would be nice to have all three of them here to present. It would also be great to hear about the 250th anniversary plans. The Commerce Center is running the Delco PA 250.
- We would like to discuss our sustainability plan that involves parks and open spaces. Could we get Rebecca Yurkovic to come for a presentation?
- There was a lot of discussion on the park board visits list for this year.
- There was a public comment by Richard Shaw. He is applying for one of the open positions on the park board. He was appreciative to listen to the meeting and stated that he enjoyed the strategic discussion on park fees and thought it was a well-run meeting. He mentioned that he has a lot of work experience in open spaces to offer to the parks board.
- **Meeting adjourned: 1:05 pm**

Meetings:

January 8th, Hunt Club, hybrid
March 12th, Zoom
May 14th, Hunt Club, hybrid
July 9th, Hunt Club, hybrid
September 10th, Hunt Club, hybrid
November 12th, Hunt Club, hybrid

Park Visits:

February 12th – Clayton Park Gold Course, snowed out
April 10th – Kent Park, Clifton Heights/Upper Darby
June 1th – Juneteenth at Rose Tree Park
August 13th – Briarcliffe Building, Darby Township
October 8th – Catania Park
December TBD – Rose Tree Festival of Lights