

PALMER TOWNSHIP RECREATION BOARD
June 20, 2023
7:00 PM
GENERAL MEETING

The Palmer Township Recreation Board held a General meeting on Tuesday, June 20, 2023 at 7:00 pm at the Charles Chrin Community Center of Palmer Township. The following were in attendance: Chairman, Cheryl Nielsen, Thom Lee, Vice Chair, Daryl Keckler and Angelo Stambolis. Also, in attendance was Michael Brett, Chairman of the Palmer Township Board of Supervisors, Robert Williams, Manager of Palmer Township, Kent Baird, Director of Planning, Craig Beavers, Assistant Director of Planning and Dan McKinney, Director of Parks and Recreation.

Cheryl Nielsen called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

1. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. Approval of Minutes – March 2023.

INFORMATION

The Board needs to approve/disapprove the minutes of May 2023.

Motion: Approve, Moved by Thom Lee, Seconded by Daryl Keckler
Passed. 4-0.

Board Members voting Ayes: Lee, Keckler, Nielsen and Stambolis

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

INFORMATION

No Public Comment

3. New Business

INFORMATION

Michael Brett, Chairman of the Palmer Township Board of Supervisors thanked the Recreation Board for having the guests there today and stated the Recreation Board was extremely valuable. The Recreation Plan created years ago was a master plan and they would like the Recreation Board to work with Planning for ideas and feedback. Palmer Township has a great opportunity for 12-13 parks to grow especially if Kent Baird, Director of Planning has anything to do with it. He explained that the Board of

Supervisors has not done a deep dive into the Bushkill Creek Greenway and it was being presented for the first time at this meeting today. Brett also extended that if the Recreation Board would ever like anything from the BOS, reach out or call. The meeting was turned over to Kent Baird, who introduced himself as the Director of Planning. He introduced Robert Williams, Palmer Township Manager and explained that Brett, Williams and himself have been talking about getting in front of the Recreation Board for some time. He then introduced Craig Beavers as the Assistant Director of Planning. Baird explained that he and McKinney had spoken about inclusive playgrounds and he had spoken to Tom Adams, Palmer Township Engineer and Director of Public Services and Ashley Frank, Assistant to Public Service about Penn Pump revisions and those talks are continuing. Baird showed a PowerPoint on Park Planning that he thought this had already been discussed with the Recreation Board. Baird and Williams explained the Grant process and the free Millenium portal and stated the Recreation Board can have access. Lee questioned if we missed out. Williams explained we did not miss the boat, we avoided it. We focused on business, not parks. Penn Pump is beautiful but aged. The consultant that did the plan years ago did what we paid him for but the solicitor took out everything ADA philosophy in government and the residents knew better and said no, do not need warehouses, need greenery. Baird resumed explanation and went over the 2019 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan and changes. Nielsen questioned what the Bushkill Creek Greenway is. Baird explained that it is from Mill Race Park to Binney & Smith, to define that area, to protect that area, to make it sing. Lee asked how far that will be. Baird explained that is under five miles, Northampton County funded this plan. People should have the option to use parks and trails as an option. Williams stated that sometimes with change comes resistance, Operserving what space we have left and have the walkability concept. Lee asked how much support there is from the current BOS. Brett answered that this is still all in the making but practically unanimous. After a year of discussion and education, economy and growing goes together, identifying appropriate uses and a balance of trying to achieve. Baird resumed his presentation. Williams discussed the Silk Mill and its vision, can look at the broader picture and listen to all sides, collaboration of ideas. Baird stated that if there are any thoughts on Parks, township wide, please reach out. Lee stated that communication goes both ways. Brett explained that after talking with Lee that both sides were working parallel and decided to get staff in front of the Recreation Board. Craig Beavers, Assistant Director of Planning took over the discussion discussing Recreation Fees. Discussion and explanation occurred. He stated that they are looking at fee changes and discussed current fees. Baird ended with he wants this to be a two-way street and Beavers agreed. Lee asked if they see the Recreation Board taking a more active part? Baird answered with as much as you want, at least you will be in the KNOW if you don't that is up to you and Lee explained that we are just trying to identify our role. McKinney commented that this board needs direction and this is a great start. Nielsen commented that this Board used to

be involved in everything, now nothing. Stambolis questioned if the Recreation Board uploads into SharePoint will it be seen? Baird explained SharePoint. Lee questioned if there were any recommendations that are needed for current grants? Baird explained sometimes it is letters of support. Beavers stated, "you are it", you are the front line and will not come in at the end. Lee stated that some of us have been through the Turf Field and the Pool, and the dynamic is gone, nobody follows the bi-laws, nothing written down. Baird explained that links can be seen on other municipalities to see what neighbors are doing, explained the process and thanked the Recreation Board for listening. Nielsen thanked everyone for coming and explaining what is going on even though it has been going on but sharing what is going on is appreciated.

4. OLD BUSINESS INFORMATION

A. E-bikes

McKinney explained that e-bikes were discussed in previous meetings and was asked for a recommendation and the recommendation was to take the recommendation of the State, documentation attached.

Williams stated to put in a recommendation and present it to the BOS.

Thom Lee made a motion as a Board that the Palmer Township Board of Supervisors consider adopting the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources on E-bikes.

Motion: Seconded by Daryl Keckler
Passed. 4-0.

Board Members voting Ayes: Keckler, Lee, Nielsen, Stambolis

B. Fairview Pickleball Courts Review

Discussion occurred about the Fairview Pickleball Courts. McKinney explained there is a new drainage plan that had to be created, 240,000 is now 300,000, the gentleman is from Palmer, how to proceed? Williams stated the project is approved, prices change. Brett questioned whether it was a complete teardown. McKinney confirmed. Brett asked if lined for tennis. McKinney answered tennis lined for Pickleball, one tennis court. Williams advised to send the change to the Municipal Building to be put on the agenda for the BOS. Brett asked to make sure there is a ratio between tennis and pickleball. Lee and McKinney responded that the ratio was backed up with a study.

Cheryl Nielsen made a motion to recommend that the Palmer Board of Supervisors approve the new cost of 300,000 from 240,000 because of the drainage change beyond our control.

Motion: Seconded by Angelos Stambolis
Passed. 4-0.

Board Members voting Ayes: Keckler, Lee, Nielsen, Stambolis

A. Youth Center Review

McKinney explained that Cintas is coming to put in the fixtures for the bathrooms. Nielsen asked who was paying for it. McKinney answered that is a great question, it is not in our budget. Nielsen asked if the township would take over the building. Brett answered that we have access to the building, we have not taken over financial or constructional responsibility. July 29th is the deadline to be completed. The locks have been changed and the building secured. Williams explained that after the gas leak, the township took over insurance liability, so the building and site is secure, can get into the building by appointment with Tom Adams, there is a group that wants to do things their own way, McKinney was able to bridge the gap, what's the Palmer Township Athletic Association doing with the basement? McKinney answered that they are planning to install their own lockers and there is a community kitchen. Brett explained that the PTAA now has to come to us, what we are hoping by July 29th is to see a completed outside and downstairs. Nielsen asked if would be ready for this football season. Both McKinney and Brett stated it depends on after July 29th. Williams stated that it was a hostile takeover when the locks were changed, but now we can make sure contractors have insurance, the propane tank was removed, and on July 29th we will do the right thing. What is going to happen to the building? McKinney stated there will be a lot of empty rooms. Lee explained that the Recreation Board had made a list of nontraditional activities. McKinney commented that some space at the Community Center is not utilized.

5. Director's Report INFORMATION

McKinney stated that Elia Lee, our new camp director is doing an outstanding job, working a tremendous number of hours and she just happens to be Thom Lee's wife, we are working on her to dial down, she is miraculous. Camp is full each week. The pool is open, tremendous staff, Shannon Hogan the pool manager is doing an impressive job, we keep a lot of our crew due to her.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Thom Lee made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:53 pm, the motion was seconded by Darryl Keckler.

Board Members voting Ayes: Keckler, Lee, Nielsen, Stambolis
Passed. 4-0.

Next meeting July 18, 2023 at 7:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Lazarus
Corresponding Secretary