



140 College Drive, Pottstown, PA 19464 | PARRCoordinator@gmail.com | 484-945-0200

PARRC Meeting Minutes

March 24th, 2021

a Virtual Meeting

In Attendance:

Cathy Paretti, Upper Pottsgrove Township
Michael Lenhart, Borough of Pottstown
Bill Keohane, Lower Pottsgrove Township
Karen Nocella, East Coventry Township
Charlie Valentine, West Pottsgrove Township

Pete Hiryak, Douglass Township
Jay Erb, North Coventry Township
Liz Willow, East Coventry Township
Craig Colistra, PAHWF
Danielle Baer, Community Planner, MCPC
John Robertson, Communications Specialist, PAHWF

Meeting notes:

1. Call to Order – 4:05.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Introductions were made.
4. Meeting minutes from February 24th, 2021 were motioned for approval by B. Keohane and K. Nocella seconded and were approved with minor revision to ECT Partner Update to date change of 5K race from April 22nd to April 2022.
5. Presentations – John Robertson, Communication Specialist with PAHWF presented the new “Outdoor Activity Finder” webpage on PAHWF’s website. When people were searching for a park on the internet in the Pottstown area, the PAHWF website came up. They had a dataset of nearby parks and added it to their website in a new page. They overlaid the dataset of over 170 locations to Google Maps. The parks can be sorted by various categories and by radius. They will upgrade it periodically. They also have some maps of the parks. C. Valentine asked how the public was finding it and the response was when they type in “parks”. He also asked if the webpage could be linked to the PARRC website. John will send the link. M. Lane commented that providing a resource for local parks was a responsibility for the Coordinator but has now been done by PAHWF. B. Keohane asked if the new Planner could have access to the site. J. Robertson commented that they could and update it when needed. K. Nocella commented that she has plans of some parks with trail outlined on it and could she send it to them. C. Colistra commented that she could and if anyone sees other parks that are not on the website, they could let PAWHF know about it so it can be added.

6. Executive and Sub-Committee reports.

Planners Report – M. Lane presented the report and asked if anyone had any questions on the tasks completed to date and the active implementation of projects utilizing Planner assistance. There were no questions. He also presented the Planners Quarterly Report that outlined the time spent for each Township’s projects over the past 3 months. There were no questions. M. Lenhart asked if there were any concerns about the time spent, especially those Townships that have not used much of the Planners time. C. Valentine stated that there were no problems with the time. P. Hiryak stated that they have had different needs at this time and with Covid and other issues, they have to deal with those impacts.

Treasurers Report – C. Paretti presented the report and stated there is \$300.00 in the account. She asked who the yearly invoice should be sent to and M. Lane stated it was usually sent to the Township Manager and they forwarded it on to the appropriate person for payment. A motion was made by C. Valentine to approve of the report and K. Nocella seconded it.



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7. Old Business –

- a. Status of Recreation Programs – C. Colistra discussed that he made revisions to the report and the programs and events need to be reviewed by M. Lane.
- b. Intern for 2021 – C. Colistra stated they have one person interested so far that came from Ken Hamilton. C. Colistra would like the IT Intern to exploit social media as much as possible. M. Lane discussed the posting of the Internships on the Handshake website which is accessed by many different schools in the Northeast.
- c. Planner position – The candidates’ references were checked and they will discuss the candidates further at the Executive Session after this meeting is adjourned.
- d. Strategic Plan – M. Lenhart and M. Lane discussed the short-term tactics from the Strategic Plan and the need for members to assign themselves to a sub-committee for the issues they are interested in addressing. M. Lane developed a document of the tactics that were categorized by start date for the year 2021. It was shared on screen and several members were added to the sub-committees of some of the tactics. Concerning the “Ensure that each agency creates a levy for an open space tax in collaboration with PARRC” tactic, B. Keohane asked for assistance. He has received some documents from East Coventry Township. C. Colistra reached out to DVRPC for some information. They keep a database of municipalities that have open space taxes. He also stated that Natural Lands has helped Lower Frederick and may have a PPT they can lend. He will check with Natural Lands. M. Lane made revisions to the document and will send the revised one to the members for review and further consideration of sub-committees to assist.

8. New Business –

- a. SOPARC Seminar – C. Colistra discussed the training he would like the PARRC members to attend. This training was discussed 2 years ago when the summer intern was using the iPad to observe and catalog user’s behavior in the parks. He contacted Troy Carlton, a professor at Catawba College, that could run a two day training session in June. It would run for two consecutive mornings and it would be a collaboration with PAHWF and they would pay for any costs. Craig would like to build on the long-term measuring of park use so that we have a better database of how the parks are used. He stated that DCNR is interested in this kind of data and we can offer the data and the opportunity for them and the County to participate in the training. It would also highlight how PARRC is responding to and addressing the changes in the industry. He asked if PARRC was interested and if we could move forward with setting times for the training. PARRC approved him moving forward.
- b. Chester County Conservation District: Croplands in the Park – M. Lane discussed that he contacted the District to discuss their procedures for converting open space to crops or meadows. He would like to set up a meeting with the two Coventry’s and the District. The Coventry’s approved of the meeting set up.
- c. Support Letter for MCPC DCNR C2P2 grant for SRT at Rt. 422 – M. Lane discussed the support letter sent to him by Donna Fabry for the Country’s SRT project. J. Erb made a motion to approve and C. Parette seconded it. M. Lane stated he would revise the letter and send it back to the PARRC members for review before sending it to Donna.
- d. 2021 Summer Operations Plans – M. Lenhart discussed the NRPA Snapshot of what is open in the park and recreation industry and the PRPS reopening guidelines. He wanted to know what programs/events were being offered by the PARRC members this summer:
 - i. NCT – No summer events but maybe a fall one. They are following the recommendations from the State and County.



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- ii. LPT – The summer concert series is going on for 6 – 8 concerts starting in late June to early August. They are not sure what to do about restrooms as their permanent restrooms are not open and are not sure of bringing in port-a-potty's.
- iii. ECT – They may do a fall festival in Sept/Oct but it would be something small.
- iv. Boro – The Powwow is planned near the Manatawny Creek, the Pet Fair is going on in Memorial Park and will be spread along the loop trail, the Volleyball Rumble is planned for the end of June with the provisions that the organizers come up with a Covid mitigation plan for Council's review. The downtown businesses would like for the Rumble to occur and the Council will see the organizers request for a Beer Tent in April.
- v. UPT – The Althouse Arboretum's summer camps are sold out. The Easter Egg Hunt is sold out. They are having their recycling and shredding event in April. She is not sure about the Farmers Market yet. M. Lenhart requested the number of attendees from the Arboretums events from last year.
- vi. WPT – They do not have any events planned.
- vii. DT – The Fish Rodeo, the YMCA July events and Open Space meetings have been cancelled. Organized sports groups are contacting the Township about some programs. Their permanent restrooms are not open and they are not sure of port-a-potties yet. They would like to see more people vaccinated first. They are thin king of removing the bleachers so people will bring their own seating to distance themselves properly. P. Hiryak asked if the Borough was going to put on Octoberfest. M. Lenhart stated the Borough was heavily criticized for the car show as there was no enforcement of mask wearing and he is not sure about Octoberfest this year.
- viii. Montco – they are still doing virtual events and are considering fall events. They would like to have the Montgomery Awards in person in November.

9. Grant Announcements and Partner Updates –

- a. Grant Announcements – M. Lane discussed the grants denied, submitted and grants to be submitted. The PMRPC grant round is open this fall and there will be an update at the next PARRC meeting.
- b. Partner Updates –
 - i. Douglass – They have been getting inquiries from team sports about using the fields. He has attended PSAT meetings and he recommended that municipalities review the American Rescue Plan to see if they are eligible to recover any funds from their loss of revenue or increase of expenses due to the pandemic.
 - ii. East Coventry – The Park & Rec Board has been discussing a licensed professional spraying herbicides on exotic invasives to get rid of them. They will be planting tree cuttings/whips this Saturday at the Maack Farm with volunteers. They are rehabbing a historic wall at the Maack Farm and a stone mason will be presenting the methods he intends to take to rebuild parts of the wall. The fall 5 and 10K bike race event, "Rock the Wall", has raised \$15,000 towards this project.
 - iii. Lower Pottsgrove – The summer concert is still going on. Gerald Richards Park Phase I construction is being reviewed by the Conservation District and they are hoping to closeout the NPDES permit. They Park and Rec Board will be considering concepts for amenities in the lower section of Sanatoga Park. They have had discussions with Pottsgrove Future Falcons football



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league for fields in Pleasantview Park and Gerald Richards Park. The league is comprised of K – 8th graders and cheerleaders. They will be installing goal posts at each park. A member of their Park and Rec Board, who is a journalist for the Sanatoga Post, is leaving the board. The Posts circulation increased dramatically during the pandemic. The Township is looking for a new Park and Rec Board Chair and member.

- iv. North Coventry – They are going to focus on improving Riverside Park and have the pickleball and boat dock projects going on this year. The budget for the boat dock project increased by \$32,000 as the dock company did not add the prevailing wages rates into their proposal for work.
 - v. Borough – Projects for 2022 include: The Memorial Park Bridge and Streambank Restoration project. The RFP for engineering design is out to replace the bridge and abutments and stabilize the banks. Riverfront Park Bridge Embankment project is at a crisis and needs streambank stabilization at the bridge over the Manatawny Creek. He attended the PRPS virtual conference and recommended other Townships attend if more virtual meetings are held by PRPS and should offer them to staff and other board and committee member. He has hardcopies of the new SCORP and PA Trail plans if anyone would like one.
 - vi. Upper Pottsgrove – The Open Space & Rec Board met with the new consultant developing the Hollenbach Master Plan and discusses amenities for the park. They are discussing the development of maps that shows where their parks are, information about them and when it was purchased, with what funds and other information. C. Paretto asked C. Colistra of the status of the stakeholder issues concerning the Food Collaborative Program. There has been question about if keeping the land organic is needed for future farm uses and is that a collaborative issue or one that should be directed to Ken Hamilton. Craig will send information to Cathy where they are with the consultant and Prout Farm Park.
 - vii. West Pottsgrove – Montgomery County gave a presentation for a bike lane on High Street from the Borough through the Township to Berks County. It would be a “road diet” as the bike lane would reduce the number of vehicular lanes with the newly painted lanes. Most of the Commissioners were not in favor as they felt the SRT was nearby and it should be used instead of the road but there is no connections to businesses from the SRT. M. Lenhart state that the bike lane would open up multi-modal funding.
 - viii. MCPC – The Progress Reports are due for the mini-grants. They have a survey out for residents to comment on for improvements to different pikes in the area. Swamp Pike is the road in our area.
 - ix. CCPC – The Planning Smarter tutorials are online and are free. They promote better planning practices. They are also offering courses at \$25.00.
 - x. PAWHF – The PAWHF grant applications for project consideration were sent in to them and are under review.
10. Public Comment – There were no comments from the public.
 11. Action items – None.
 12. Next PARRC Meeting Agenda items – Please send to M. Lane. The next meeting is April 28, 2021 at 4:00 PM. It will be held virtually.
 13. Executive Session – M. Lenhart stated that the Executive Session will start after this meeting to discuss the confirmation of the candidate for the Planner position.



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Adjournment – 6:21 PM

Recorder: M. Lane

2021 Meeting Schedule

(All meetings to be held at 5:00 PM in the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation Conference Room, 152 East High Street, 5th floor, Pottstown, PA 19464 unless otherwise noted):

January 27 February 24 March 24 April 28 May 26 June 23 July 28 August 25 September 22
October 27 December 1

Next meeting: April 28, 2021 Location: Virtual Meeting 4:00 PM