

**EAST BRADFORD TOWNSHIP
PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
July 26, 2023 Minutes**

The East Bradford Township Parks and Recreation Board convened on Wednesday, July 26, 2023 at 7:00 pm in the Township building, 676 Copeland School Road, West Chester, PA 19380. The agenda was posted on the front door of the Township building and on the Township website at <https://www.eastbradford.org> as required by the Sunshine Law.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Marianne Bausinger, Michael Colley, John Fidler, Harry Hatzipavlidis, Matt Maturani, John Spangler

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mark Beaugard

STAFF/PROFESSIONALS PRESENT:

Rich Phifer, Director of Property & Recreation
Ryan Staiber, Property Steward
Pat Davis, Supervisor Liaison

OTHERS PRESENT:

Ajay Anne, Eagle Scout Candidate
Mr. and Mrs. Anne
Mark Ouimet
Bruce Lutz
April Tracy

CALL TO ORDER:

The regular monthly meeting of the Parks and Recreation Board was called to order by Mr. Hatzipavlidis, Chair, at 7:00 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the minutes from the May 24, 2023, meeting was made by Ms. Bausinger. The motion was then seconded by Mr. Fidler and carried with all in favor. (No meeting was held in June)

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT PRESENTATION

Eagle Scout candidate Ajay Anne of Troop 105 presented his Eagle project to the Parks & Recreation Board. Mr. Anne proposes to plant between 200 to 300 native deciduous tree seedlings in the lower section of the old meadow at Mt. Bradford Preserve. The project would be executed this Fall and would provide benefits in the way of replacing dying Ash trees, stabilizing slopes to help decrease erosion, and contributing towards the sustenance of native wildlife by overcoming invasive vegetation. The project would be facilitated by the Township removing some of the dead and dying Ash wood from the site prior to the planting. Mr. Colley motioned to recommend the project's approval to the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Spangler seconded the motion. The motion carried with all in favor.

SHAW'S BRIDGE PARK – OFF LEASH DOG COMPLAINTS

The Parks & Recreation Board discussed a recent uptick in complaints received about the behavior of unleashed dogs and some dog owners at Shaw's Bridge Park. Three residents who frequent the park as dog owners were present and contributed to the discussion. The Parks and Recreation Board members discussed the current leash policies for the park and generally believe that most dog owners act in a responsible manner and keep their dogs under control. The residents in attendance shared that their community of dog owners helps to police one another and enforce the off-leash dog policy when they observe dogs that are not under control. Several Parks & Recreation Board members expressed that they do not want to punish the vast majority of the dog owners who act responsibly when a small minority of

owners and their dogs are problematic. The Parks & Recreation Board does not support changing the current leash policies for the park. Instead, the Board members agreed that the Township should try to increase signage and messaging so that all of the park users understand the off-leash dog policies in hopes of avoiding and minimizing user conflicts. Mr. Fidler made a motion recommending that the Township increase onsite signage and informational messaging through various media (i.e. website, newsletter, social media) to better inform the park's users of the off-leash dog rules and requirements. Mr. Spangler seconded the motion which passed unanimously. The recommendation will be taken to the Board of Supervisors meeting on August 3rd for deliberation by the Township Supervisors.

PLUM RUN PRESERVE AND TRAIL – DOG POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. Phifer transitioned the dog policy discussion to the soon-to-be-opened Plum Run Preserve and the Plum Run Trail that is going to be constructed through that property and operated like the Brandywine Trail. Mr. Phifer requested that the Parks & Recreation Board make a recommendation as to what the leash policy should be for the new property. Given that this property is going to be managed for passive recreation and maintained as a preserve, coupled with the fact that there are locations nearby that accommodate off leash dogs, Mr. Phifer advocated for adopting leash requirements for the entire Plum Run Preserve, including the Plum Run Trail. The Parks & Recreation Board members agreed that off leash dogs should be prohibited at the Plum Run Preserve. Mr. Spangler made a motion recommending that the Plum Run Preserve and Plum Run Trail be regulated to require all dogs be kept on leash at all times. Mrs. Bausinger seconded the motion which passed unanimously. The recommendation will be taken to the Board of Supervisors meeting on August 3rd.

STEWARDSHIP PRIORITY REVIEW FOR 2024

Mr. Phifer and Mr. Staiber presented the Parks & Recreation Board with a list of stewardship priorities for the next year, sharing some of the efforts that will be taken to improve the natural resources and conditions at several of the Township's most significant properties. Mr. Staiber has been working in the parks since February and is observing what is happening through the growing season, particularly within the various meadows. Currently, the Paradise Valley Nature Area meadow is the highest quality meadow in the Township, which Mr. Staiber attributes to the controlled burns and timed mowings that have occurred there over the last couple of seasons.

PLUM RUN TRAIL PROJECT UPDATE

Mr. Phifer updated the Parks & Recreation Board on the status of the Plum Run Trail project. The Township received needed variance approvals from the Zoning Hearing Board in June and went before the Historical Architectural Review Board in early July to obtain a recommendation for a Certificate of Appropriateness, as the trail infrastructure will infringe into the confines of the Strode's Mill Historic District. The certificate was recommended by the Board and the Township now has the municipal approvals it needs to begin construction but is still waiting to obtain two outstanding permits from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Mr. Fidler has observed consistent washout along the Brandywine Trail following recent storms and suggests that the Township keep an eye on the section of trail next to the Trolley cut that is gradually eroding at a steep spot that will make for a challenging stabilization.

Mr. Spangler complimented the Public Works Department on the maintenance and upkeep of the playing fields at East Bradford Park and Copeland School Park, observing that they look terrific and are kept much better than most other municipal public facilities. Ms. Bausinger further complimented Public Works on the power washing that was recently done at East Bradford Park.

ADJOURN: On motion of Mr. Colley and seconded by Mr. Spangler, the meeting adjourned at 8:18 pm.

NOTICE: The next meeting of the Parks & Recreation Board is scheduled for Wednesday, August 23, 2023 at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Rich Phifer
Secretary