



MT. LEBANON  
PENNSYLVANIA

**Parks Advisory Board Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, October 5, 2021 - 6:30 p.m.  
Virtual- Microsoft Teams**

Members:

Richard Heyse  
Gregory Newman  
Peter Argentine  
Bennett Aikin

Dhanya Elias  
Rob Mackey  
Albert Presto

Mindy Ranney, Commission Liaison  
Rudy Sukal, Staff Liaison  
Phillip Avolio, Staff Liaison

1. Roll Call & Declaration of Quorum

Mr. Heyse called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM and proceeded with the roll call. Richard Heyse, Gregory Newman, Peter Argentine, Bennett Aikin, Albert Presto, and Rob Mackey attended the meeting.

Dhanya Elias was absent.

The meeting was also attended by Mindy Ranney, Commissioner and Phillip Avolio, Facilities & Parks Coordinator.

2. Citizens Comments (5 minutes each)

Angie Farris, President of the Mt. Lebanon Nature Conservancy commented that she supports the plan of revitalizing Bird Park. She offered her help with the Bird Park project. The Nature Conservancy has volunteers that have help with invasives, which included many high school students.

Trish Beckjore who is a retired landscape architecture that works with the Nature Conservancy also very supportive of the grant for Bird Park.

3. Approval of September minutes:

Mr. Heyse asked the group to review the August minutes and provide comment. A correction was made about a misspelling of name.

A motion was made by Mr. Aikin and approved by the board.

#### 4. New Business

##### a. Bird Park Planting Plan Review

Ms. Kramer would like to apply for a PAWC Environmental Grant in the category of Water Shed Protection. The grant is a maximum of \$10,000 and she would like to partner with the Parks Advisory Board and Public Works. She is open to partnering with others (i.e., members of the Parks Board that work with businesses or organizations that might be aligned with this kind of work and might want to make donations of volunteers, expertise, or material.

Ms. Kramer commented on the existing condition plan of the Native Plant Trail Loop in Bird Park which is between Youngwood Drive and the soccer field. She thinks this area would benefit from the PAWC Grant; this area was decimated by the emerald ash borer and can benefit from a water shed project.

Mr. Heyse made a motion to accept, Mr. Aikin second and the board approved.

##### b. Website Review / Communication (Peter & Albert)

Mr. Presto suggested some improvements to the website and asked for feedback from the board. Ms. Ranney informed the board that there is a plan for a new website that will be done by an outside consultant firm, but has been delayed, and thinks the Parks could give feedback. The board gave some good changes they would like to see. Mr. Sukal commented that the board could make suggests to the existing website with any changes.

##### c. Approved Street Tree List Review (Rob & Peter)

Mr. Mackey and Mr. Argentine discussed the different approved and unapproved trees that should be planted in the municipality. The existing ordinance was discussed to include the prohibited tree list.

#### 5. Park Assessment Visits

##### a. Williamsburg

Mr. Mackey commented that there are dead trees along stream above the bridge. Rudy will make it safe. Mr. Heyse commented that he thought the branches above the paved path should be removed.

Mr. Mackey commented that there is water coming from Lindenwood Avenue and making a mud channel/ravine down to the creek. Mr. Sukal will look at the issue.

The board discussed the pavilions.

b. Planting Areas

Mr. Sukal explain the budget and history of the planting areas. The board discussed. The board gave some suggestions but decided to wait to make any changes.

c. November Locations for Review

Mr. Heyse asked to set them over two years.

6. Old Business

a. Invasive Treatments (Phil)

Mr. Avolio has been speaking with Chris from Eichenlaub. They will be doing Twin Hills on Tuesday, it's the 3<sup>rd</sup> of retreat from 8 acres. Should be using less chemicals and should have less stragglers coming up. If there is money left on purchase order, will look at tree pen areas. It would be helpful if the trees were flagged before Tuesday. They will check other areas also.

Mr. Heyse asked if the city could help with a treatment solution for the English Ivy. Mr. Avolio said he would get education on the matter.

b. Maintenance Follow-Ups (Phil)

N/A

c. Arboretum Education Event Recap (Greg)

N/A

7. Commission Update:

Ms. Ranney reminded the board that uptown is under construction. Ms. Ranney asked if there are any planting that Parks would like to dig up and save. Mr. Heyse thinks the pavers might be worth saving.

Ms. Ranney commented that it's budget season and asked if they want to send her any requests.

Ms. Ranney talked about the Parks Master Plan. The project team (Mr. Heyse, Mr. Farro, Mr. Sukal, Mr. Avolio, Ms. Ranney, an ESB Advisory Board member and Chad Wertz of the Sport Advisory Board) is meeting in October. She plans on scheduling another meeting. There will be an open house on November 18<sup>th</sup> in the evening. She encourages board to attend the public discussion sessions (November 23<sup>rd</sup>, January 11<sup>th</sup>) for feedback. Mr. Heyse asked the board for any input for the next team meeting.

Peter commented that a social media questionnaire is not randomized and that even with a larger than expected response, the results can be skewed or even “gamed” depending on who responds and lobbying efforts to get special interest groups to respond—it is not free of bias. (It can be useful for gathering certain kinds of information, but not for gauging public consensus). A more accurate, data-driven account of public opinion would be to have a poll conducted with randomized residents contacted for response, and with questions carefully crafted to minimize any bias.

## 8. Announcements

Mr. Mackey comment that at next months meeting there will be a Girl Scout, Boy Scout and Pinecone Park Garden Club representative. If the board has any comments or questions, after looking at the Pinecone Park Plan from a couple months ago, please let him know.

Mr. Heyse commented that there will be another Boy Scout talking about a bridge replacement project in Twin Hills.

Mr. Presto commented that the Traffic Board acknowledged his email about the easement on Cedar between Main Park and Bird Park.

## 9. Adjournment

A motion was made by Mr. Heyse and seconded by Mr. Newman to adjourn the meeting. The motion was passed, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:37 PM.