

Mt. Lebanon Sports Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes

May 4, 2023 - 8 p.m.

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Amanda Rost called the meeting to order, and David Donnellan called the roll. The meeting was attended by board members Michael Diven, Andrew Grobe, Stacie Hill, Tom Langston, Shirley McElhattan, Amanda Rost and Ian Smith.

The meeting was also attended by Commissioner Mindy Ranney and Recreation Director David Donnellan.

Kristen Reisinger, Kari Resler, Shelly Saba and Stephen Strotmeyer were absent.

2. Citizen Comments

There were no citizen comments.

3. Approval of the April 13, 2023 Meeting Minutes

The minutes approved as submitted.

4. Commissioner Report

Commissioner Ranney reported that the Commission approved the construction of new pickleball courts in Meadowcroft Park in the budget. She said the project would convert the two tennis courts into 6 pickleball courts.

Ms. Ranny also reported that there would be a public discussion of brick streets at the next discussion session. She reported that the Commission has been working on a brick streets policy to preserve at least some of the brick streets. She said they were reaching the end of useful life and need to be reconstructed. She said most residents prefer brick, but they cost much more. She reported that in a survey, almost 90% of respondents were willing to pay more for brick streets. She said funding and streets for reconstruction need to be determined. She said slope, grade, proximity of other brick streets, historic districts and other aspects would be considered.

5. Advisory Board Restructuring Transition Planning

David Donnellan said he was working on getting documents uploaded to the Teams channel. He said the project prioritization document was already on the site. He asked the board to setup notifications for the channel. He said to email him if anyone had any problems or would like to add a different email address to the channel.

Commissioner Ranny said the site would serve as a repository for documents covering what the board has been doing and should continue to do.

Mr. Donnellan said the site would include the board's annual work plan, current projects, and other items, so that progress would not be lost during the transition period.

Amanda Rost said that one of the things that came out of the field survey was the concept of a youth sports board, starting with field sports, and possibly including other sports as well. Ms. Rost suggested that a representative from this new board (a field rep.), and also a recreation facilities (golf, tennis, rink) rep. should be on the Parks and Recreation (P&R) Board.

She suggested that the president of the newly formed youth sports board could serve on the P&R Board as a voting member.

Mr. Langston suggested a citizen representative for the school district be a liaison to the P&R Board. Ms. Rost suggested it be someone familiar with facilities.

Tom Langston said that any position on the P&R Board would need to represent all sports from a very high level as opposed to focusing on any one sport.

Mindy Ranny said applications for the board would be due around January of next year.

Mr. Donnellan suggested that there should be a representative who has broad familiarity with recreation programs.

Ms. Ranny said the Parks Advisory Board has tasked its members with visiting every park, and the sports representatives could similarly visit all sports facilities.

Mr. Langston suggested a pre and post season facility inspection for various facilities.

Ms. Ranny said these ideas will be in the minutes and in the transition documents.

6. Standardized Field Signage

Mindy Ranny said the municipality worked with Kolano Designs to get a proposal to design just the main park and field signs for \$11,000. She said she hopes that manufacturing will start by the end of the year.

There was a discussion regarding naming fields. It was agreed that existing field signs must reflect the official names of the fields. Commissioner Ranny said the municipality would have to approve the designs.

Tom Langston offered to research official names of fields. It was noted that the field in Sunset Hills Park may not have an official name.

7. Comprehensive Plan Advisory Group

Andy Grobe reported that there was another meeting where he stressed the importance of providing adequate field space. He noted that the issue of spectators gathering on the Cedar Blvd. sidewalk was discussed. He said recreation was the top priority for residents in the surveys. He said the possibility of a dog park and a location was discussed. He stated that the majority of people want funding to go toward parks.

Mindy Ranny said safe pedestrian walkways were the next highest priority item.

Mr. Grobe said the future for the South Parking Garage was another key decision to be made.

8. Temporary Lighting for Upper Practice Field

Mr. Langston said it would be up to the new administration to make a decision on this issue, but there was a high level of interest in lighting the upper practice field. He said the district was looking at permanent versus temporary lighting and would like a report estimating increased usage and revenue. He said he is in favor of a standard fee for turfed fields. He said the stadium field fee would require some additional consideration and could be based on level of use and needs.

Mr. Langston stated that he thinks conduit is pulled to the field, but not to the light tower locations.

Ms. Rost suggested waiting until a new superintendent is in place before pursuing the lights further.

It was noted that lighting Middle and Seymour Fields was very important and is expected to happen when the turf is replaced. It was agreed that lighting other fields is also desirable.

Ms. Rost said the high school would likely get most of the additional time if the Upper Practice Field was lighted.

Ms. Ranny said the Commissioners she has spoken with are very open to discussing shared funding and maintenance for field expansion.

9. Main Park Site Plan and Recreation Center Architectural Study

Mr. Donnellan reported that Assistant Manager McMeans and Commissioner Swager Wilson drafted the RFP and shared it with the project team today, and that comments were due on Monday.

10. Brafferton Field Project Update

Mr. Donnellan said Gateway is working on the specifications He shared the drawings with the group and discussed the plans.

Ms. Rost inquired if the infield was already grassed over. Mr. Donnellan said it was, but it may require overseeding. He said the backstop was also removed.

Mr. Donnellan said the plans included fencing and drainage improvements, and that the current improvements should not be affected by any future projects.

Ms. Rost said she was concerned about the condition of the split rail fence near the parking area. Ms. Ranny offered to bring that to the attention of the Public Works Department.

11. Pickleball Project Update

Mr. Donnellan showed the plans for the pickleball project in Meadowcroft Park. He said the project included converting the two tennis courts to 6 permanent pickleball courts. He said there would be fencing along the baseline to separate the courts, and the courts would be coated with a resurfacer to smooth out irregularities and cover the existing tennis lines. He said contractors would begin work after school was out in June and should be done by the end of August.

Mr. Donnellan said the courts are closed on school days from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. and that signage is posted at the courts.

It was noted that the courts will offer the school district an opportunity to teach students a new sport. Shirley McElhattan and Michael Diven would investigate donated equipment for the district.

12. New Business

Amanda Rost reported that there was an article in the current magazine on the field allocation process.

Michael Diven suggested promoting field names through the magazine, and suggested consulting with the Historical Society regarding field history.

13. Announcements

Amada Rost announced that the next meeting was on September 7. She also said the field study would be done by then.

Michael Diven asked where to find the Comprehensive Plan information. The Ascend Lebo website was suggested as the main source.

The board established the final meeting schedule as: January 4, February 1 and March 7, 2024 at 8 p.m.

Mr. Donnellan shared that he gave fellow staff members an orientation to the new platform tennis building and an introduction to platform tennis at a recent staff meeting. He encouraged the board to visit the new facility.

14. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:14 p.m.