



**Parks Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 3, 2023 - 6:30 p.m.
Municipal Building: Meeting Room C
APPROVED**

Members

Richard Heyse
Peter Argentine
Tom Schevtchuk

Dhanya Elias
Kelly Ogrodnik

Rob Mackey
Bennett Aikin

Commission Liaison
Andrew Flynn

Staff Liaison
Rudy Sukal

Staff Liaison
Phillip Avolio

1. Roll Call & Declaration of Quorum
Mr. Mackey declared a quorum and called the roll. Present were Richard Heyse, Bennett Aikin, Peter Argentine, Rob Mackey, Tom Schevtchuk, staff liaisons Rudy Sukal and Phil Avolio.
2. Citizens Comments
There were no citizen comments.
3. Arboretum Event 2023 at Bird Park, October 15, 1-3 PM
Mr. Schevtchuk said Mr. Heyse would be at the event, and Mr. Mackey said he would be able to attend. Mr. Argentine asked and Mr. Avolio agreed to have pamphlets printed for the event. Mr. Argentine said the last time they did this there were signs indicating when the next Parks Advisory Board meeting would take place. Mr. Mackey said he would take care of that.
4. Approval of September minutes
Mr. Argentine moved and Mr. Heyse seconded to approve the September 5, 2023, minutes. The motion carried unanimously.
5. Public Works Update on grounds, facilities, trees etc.
Mr. Avolio gave the following updates. He said the first phase of improvements is complete with the installation of the fence along where the backstop used to be. They did leave a space for access to a future walking trail that would lead to the cul-de-sac on Brafferton Drive. For the next phase Thomas' Pro Turf will reshape the infield and add the correct depth of topsoil and form it in such a way that the field will drain properly. They will be able to get two growing seasons on the field and will make the decision later as to whether sports need to stay off the field for a time. Mr. Avolio said as soon as the Main Park restrooms and the concession stand by the Dixon and Middle fields are closed for the season, they will replace the flooring in both buildings. They will install new fixtures in Main Park to give

the building a refresh. They will be replacing about 210 feet of fencing against the hillside slope at Middle and Seymour fields, which will remain when the new turf is put in. They will put new fabric on, add rails, and a gate in the middle to give access so balls may be retrieved, instead of people climbing over the fence. Mr. Avolio said he will be meeting with Eichenlaub next week to go over items the board members have noticed during the year. There were two meetings regarding the Parks Master Plan. Mr. Heyse asked if there would be usage density calculations to see how much intensity per thousand square feet for various facilities. Mr. Avolio said he was not sure if they were that far into the metrics, but he would contact Municipal Planner Ian McMeans. Mr. Avolio said the 11 trees that died have been replaced in Robb Hollow Park. The contractor watered the trees heavily, put the guards back on, and restored the trail on their way out. Mr. Argentine asked if the municipality had received its tree order. Mr. Sukal said he has requested some quotes and is waiting for those. Mr. Mackey asked if the Cedar earth area would be replaced. Mr. Avolio said most likely in the next five years. He said he walked with groups around two of the three areas for signage, one of which was Main Park. They are proposing to leave the brick entrance sign alone for now, but it could eventually turn into an LED message board. They did decide on some locations for field signs at Bird Park and Robb Hollow. They determined a box sign is appropriate at Bird Park, but most of the other areas only need one-sided signs. He said there would be another walk through the next day.

Mr. Schevtchuk asked about the schedule for Oikos. Mr. Avolio answered he thought a draft would be submitted in December and a final report possibly in January. He said he'd forwarded the maps created with Eichenlaub in the last four years to Tim Nuttle so he can see the progress that has been made. Some areas, such as Iroquois Park, have been reduced to maintenance and he can take care of those himself. Mr. Mackey asked if the interactive map with the grid would be given to Oikos. Mr. Avolio said he could integrate that map into what he was going to give to Mr. Nuttle. Mr. Sukal said the main use of the grid map is for people to communicate to public works where a tree may be blocking a path, or some invasives that need to be addressed. Mr. Avolio said he's already used that grid map to inform public works crews that trees needed to be addressed. Mr. Argentine asked if some citizen comments from the last meeting were addressed. Mr. Avolio said the tree that was leaning in Main Park has been removed, and he walked the perimeter to see how far back the mowed grass is, but there is a lot of growth that will take quite a bit of time to remove. Mr. Heyse asked if the arborist could look at some of the pine trees behind the fence at Bird Park. They appear to be turning brown at the top and could be diseased. Mr. Mackey said the postholes where the swing set used to be below the commissioners' parking lot are sinking and have become a tripping hazard.

Mr. Sukal said leaf season started yesterday and the number of crews will be increased as the leaves start falling in earnest. Tree planting will be split up since it has started a little later than normal. Crews are finishing up stump grinding

which took longer because of the size of trees, such as the large trees taken down on Austin Avenue. Crews will replace 85-90 trees this fall and finish the rest in the spring. He received a path specification from Gateway Engineers, who have been involved with the Montour Trail, and it's the same specification used along the firing range and along Cedar Boulevard, which has held up very well. This would provide a standard for all the trails in the parks going forward. He talked about Gateway checking boundaries – not doing survey work but using LIDAR imagery over aerial imagery to give an approximate property line based on recorded information. For some of the larger parks, such as Main Park and Bird Park, which have more properties on the perimeter the cost would be \$5,000 to \$7,000 to produce that imagery. Then the municipality could decide if it's within budget to do actual surveys and determine where property lines are. Mr. Heyse said this would help to notify residents if they are encroaching on park lands.

6. Commission Update

Mr. Mackey said in the last couple of Commission meetings there's been a push for electric equipment. The Commission approved the request to purchase an electric greens mower for the golf course. He recommended the members watch the recordings of the last two Commission meetings. Mr. Heyse asked how long the battery charge would last. Mr. Sukal said it would take approximately two to two-and-a-half hours to mow the greens, and the mower would need to be on a charge overnight. After approximately five years the mower is then cycled down to a lower use, meaning it would be used for cutting tees and aprons and not greens. After about five years it costs approximately \$20,000 to replace the lithium-ion batteries, if the price does not go up, and if the battery will last the full five years. He is concerned about the fire safety upgrades that would be needed to house the electric vehicles.

7. Comprehensive Plan

Ian McMeans, the municipal planner, distributed drafts to the Sports Advisory Board, The Nature Conservancy, and the Parks Advisory Board. Several board members emailed Mr. Mackey their comments and he is compiling those into one document to give to the board members. Mr. Heyse said he was confused about how the Parks Master Plan fits in with the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Schevtchuk said he was confused by the statement that said to update the Mt. Lebanon Parks Plan according to the visual community-wide master plan and was wondering if this was a new document. Mr. Argentine said there is a community-wide standard, but it does not go into detail. Mr. Heyse wanted to know how the Parks Master Plan rolls into the Comprehensive Plan, or even if it does. He said there were no recommendations from the Parks Master Plan listed in the Comprehensive Plan. There was discussion regarding ADA paths in the parks and costs.

8. Old Business status, discussion, next steps

1. Communications and Signage

Mr. Avolio said he was meeting the next day. Ron Block, from the Nature Conservancy, gave input on where the signs from Robb Hollow should be. He said they may try to get some signs printed on cheaper material to be able to see the scale before the actual signs are ordered.

2. Forestry & Invasives

A rough draft should be submitted in December and with a final in January.

3. Park Design Guidelines & Trail Restoration

They will confer on this subject at the next meeting.

4. Main Park Master Plan

There's a consultant involved now so there are no updates from Mr. Heyse.

5. Brafferton restoration and playground

No updates.

6. Invasives in Municipal Code

No updates.

7. PAB Duties and Tasks document

Mr. Avolio has received comments from board members, has edited the document, and sent it to the municipal planner for his comments.

8. Park Visits: Purpose, format, documentation

Mr. Mackey divided each park into different months and tried to spread them out (Appendix A). There is an arboretum even in Bird Park in October. He considered deer season, and the ability to walk around the parks at specific times of the season. Mr. Mackey suggested they decide on a day to visit the parks and anyone who is available to show up, and anyone not available try to visit the park on their own. Mr. Heyse said it was helpful to him to go visit an unfamiliar park with a group of people. Mr. Argentine asked what the goal of the visits is, and how does that tie into the boards being restructured. He suggested they focus on the parks the board can influence immediately, or perhaps follow-up on the invasives plan. Mr. Heyse suggested gathering information for the incoming board members to bring them up-to-speed on items the current board has been working on, and what has been accomplished. There was further discussion regarding the best way to provide information.

9. New Business

Mr. Argentine asked about future discussions regarding giving the parklet on Cedar Boulevard a name, or is it considered part of Robb Hollow. Also define what kind of parklet it is. He also asked about the area across Cedar Boulevard from the tennis courts, if that area could be enhanced since many cars go by that area every day, as well as the area of Bird Park that is next to Washington Road. Could those areas be made to look more inviting. Mr. Mackey said the pedestrian area on Cedar at Salem has been discussed in the Commission meetings for several months. He wondered if there could be a walking trail through that wooded area that could connect to the lighted intersection at Morgan/Greenhurst/

Cedar to encourage pedestrians to cross at that intersection, instead of at Salem and Cedar. It was decided to discuss this further at a future meeting.

10. Seasonal and special items

January	✓ Discuss this item	July	No meeting
February	✓ Bird Park Field	August	Oikos Invasives Update
March	✓ Nature Conservancy	September	Deer Management
April	✓ Invasives in Muni Code	October	Street trees
May	✓ CIP List Formulation	November	Project Recap
June	✓ CIP/Budget Vote	December	Board transition

Mr. Mackey said the seasonal item for October is street trees, and he thanked Mr. Sukal for sending the board a list of municipal street trees (see Appendix B). He said he and Mr. Argentine gave Mr. Sukal feedback on some different species of trees. There was discussion regarding suggesting to the Commission changing some of the trees to more mid-sized trees to help prevent sidewalks from being heaved up by tree roots.

When a homeowner requests a new municipal tree or township acts to replace a removed tree, what is the process or sequence of decisions to arrive at the species and planting location for a new tree.

Mr. Sukal said considerations for planting trees is location based on the amount of space between the curb and the sidewalk, salt tolerant and drought tolerant trees, as well as the shape of the tree because of vehicular traffic. He described the root-damaged sidewalk assessment program. There was further discussion regarding tree placements, sidewalk safety, utility wires, and tree placement and maintenance. He demonstrated to the board how public works handles work orders for tree maintenance.

11. Commission Meeting Message

There are no messages to present at the next Commission meeting.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

APPENDIX A

**Parks Advisory Board
 Park Visit and Meeting Discussion Schedule
 Fall 2023 - Spring 2024
 DRAFT**

Park	Meeting Discussion	PMP Pages	Scheduling Considerations
Bird Park	7-Nov-23	60 - 65	Arboretum Event Oct. 15th, no hunting in Bird
Main Park with Tennis Center	7-Nov-23	124 - 133	fall sports underway
Twin Hills*	5-Dec-23	82 - 84	invasives still green, no hunting from Nov 25 - Dec 26
Church Place	5-Dec-23	119 - 123	
Meadowcroft	5-Dec-23	134 - 137	
Golf Course and Community Gardens	2-Jan-24	138 - 143	more sledding, less golfing, no daytime hunting
Country Club	2-Jan-24	90 - 93	
Rockwood	2-Jan-24	104 - 109	
Hoodridge (Conservation Area*)	6-Feb-24	66 - 71	leaves mostly down, deer season ends Jan 27
Highland Terrace	6-Feb-24	94 - 97	
Iroquois	6-Feb-24	98 - 103	knotweed stems
Robb Hollow*	6-Feb-24	78 - 81	deer season ends Jan 27
McNeilly*	5-Mar-24	72 - 77	leaves down, deer season ends Jan 27
Sunset Hills*	5-Mar-24	110 - 116	deer season ends Jan 27
Williamsburg*	5-Mar-24	117 - 119	deer season ends Jan 27
Beggs-Snyder	5-Mar-24	86 - 89	

*Archery Deer Hunting: Sept. 16-Nov. 11, Sunday Nov. 12, Nov. 13-18, Sunday Nov. 19, Nov. 20-24, and Dec. 26-Jan. 27, 2024.

Visit at midday and wear high visibility clothing.

APPENDIX B

Seasonal Item: Street Trees

List of Available Trees, highlight indicates spring dig/plant

Here are some suggestions for shorter maturing trees:

- 20 Acer campestre 1 3/4"
- 20 Acer ginnala Ruby Slippers 1 1/2"
- 5 Amelanchier Cumulus 1 1/2"
- 5 Amelanchier Robin Hill 1 1/2"
- 25 Prunus Accolade 1 3/4"
- 25 Prunus sargentii Columnaris 1 1/2"
- 10 Prunus x hillieri Spire 1 3/4"
- 25 Syringa reticulata Ivory Silk 1 3/4"

Here are some suggestions for larger maturing trees: (Note: The trees highlighted in yellow are considered a fall risk, some of which you have used in the past.)

- 30 Acer miyabei State Street 1 3/4"
- 50 Acer rubrum (cultivars such as Autumn Flame, Autumn Radiance, Redpointe or Red Sunset)
- 50 Celtis occidentalis 1 1/2"
- 25 Cladrastis kentuckea 1 3/4"
- 25 Ginkgo biloba Autumn Gold 1 3/4"
- 50 Gleditsia Skyline 1 1/2" or 2"
- 50 Gymnodioicus dioicus 2"
- 10 Liquidambar styraciflua Cherokee 1 3/4" - supposed to be virtually fruitless
- 50 Platanus acerifolia Exclamation 1 3/4"
- 25 Quercus coccinea 1 3/4"
- 25 Quercus macrocarpa 1 3/4"
- 5 Quercus muehlenbergii 1 3/4"
- 25 Quercus palustris 1 3/4"
- 25 Quercus robur 1 3/4"
- 25 Quercus rob x macrocarpa Heritage 1 3/4"
- 25 Quercus rubra 1 3/4"
- 25 Tilia americana Redmond 1 3/4"
- 10 Tilia cordata Corinthian 1 3/4"
- 25 Tilia x flavescens Glenleven 1 3/4"
- 25 Tilia x euchlora 1 1/2"
- 25 Tilia mongolica Harvest Gold 1 1/2"
- 25 Tilia tomentosa Sterling 1 3/4"
- 20 Ulmus americana Jefferson 1 3/4"
- 20 Ulmus americana New Harmony 1 3/4"
- 25 Ulmus x Triumph 1 3/4"
- 25 Zelkova Village Green 1 3/4"