



**MINUTES OF THE PARK COMMISSION MEETING  
MONDAY, APRIL 14, 2025, AT 9 AM**

**PRESENT:** Wesley Posvar, Chairperson; Jeffrey Cohen, Carrie Casey, Nicholas Muller, Members; Gary Koehler, Borough Manager; Larry Kurpakus, PWD Director; Michael Stevens, Chief of Police; Shawn M. Peterson, Borough Secretary

**ALSO PRESENT:** Frederick C. Leech, Councilmember

**VIA ZOOM:** Walter A. Scott, Mayor; Josh Lowe, Scout; David Lowe, father of Josh

**ABSENT:** Steve Whittingham, Susan Crookston, Melinda Guinn, Jay Troutman, Jeffrey Beyer, Members

Wes Posvar called the meeting to order at 9:02 AM.

The minutes of the December 9, 2024, meeting were unanimously approved.

**RESIDENT COMMENTS**

None

**PARK PUBLIC SAFETY**

Chief Stevens stated that the Police Department continues to patrol the permitted parking areas and has noticed more cars with permits. He said there has been one dog incident in the park since the December 9, 2024, Park Commission meeting, and the dog involved has been banned from Borough Parks.

Mr. Muller stated that there seems to be a professional dog walker utilizing the Borough trails. He said this person typically has 6 – 8 dogs with them and makes no attempts to pick up dog waste. Mr. Muller stated this person is typically at Riding Meadow Park during the week, around 8 – 9 a.m. Chief Stevens told Mr. Muller that when this person is observed in the park, it is advised that someone call 911 so Borough Police officers can respond to the park and address the issue.

Mr. Muller also stated that there seem to be more vehicles with expired or no parking permits utilizing the permitted parking lots on Saturdays. He asked if there was a cap on how many permits are issued yearly, as parking is limited in the permitted lots. Chief Stevens stated there was no cap on how many permits are issued yearly.

**EAGLE SCOUT PROJECTS**

Targeting Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA)

Mr. Posvar stated that Eagle Scout Victor White is currently awaiting the delivery of the beetles that will be used on a few trees in Salamander Park that are infected with Hemlock Woolly Adelgid. The beetles are expected this month. Once Mr. White receives the beetles, they will immediately be released onto the subject trees. Mr. White's fundraising efforts for the beetles' cost exceeded the original budget; he will donate the remaining money to the Fox Chapel Park Conservancy.

The Park Commission thanked Mr. White and commended him for his efforts. Chief Stevens, who sits on a board that reviews Eagle Scout projects, stated that Mr. White's project was very impressive and the most detailed he had ever seen.

Mr. Kurpakus stated that the PWD met with Tim Byan from Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve to be trained to treat Hemlock Woolly Adelgid using trunk injections. The PWD will treat approximately 120 trees in Borough parks, and the trunk injections have a seven-year treatment plan. Mr. Kurpakus said this should be completed by the end of May, and each treatment is being logged and tracked.

## PARK COMMISSION MINUTES

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### Proposed Eagle Scout Project - Country Day School Connector Trail to Riding Meadow Park

Josh Lowe presented his proposed Eagle Scout Project, Country Day School Connector Trail to Riding Meadow Park, for the Park Commission's consideration. Mr. Lowe's proposed plan is to improve access to Riding Meadow Park from Country Day School by refurbishing the existing trail. He stated this project would be completed by himself, members of his scout troop, friends, and church members.

Mr. Cohen moved to have Mr. Lowe submit a formal written proposal to the Park Commission for their consideration. Ms. Casey seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Ms. Casey thanked Mr. Lowe, his father, David Lowe, and the scout troop for their assistance in constructing the bird boxes installed throughout the Borough parks.

## **PUBLIC WORKS REPORT**

Mr. Kurpakus said that as the weather continues to warm up, the work at McCahill Park will be completed soon.

He also stated that the April 29, 2025, Western PA Conservancy planting at McCahill Park will need to be postponed until late May or early June due to park conditions not being suitable for planting.

Mr. Posvar said 35-40 volunteers attended the Western PA Conservancy planting event at McCahill Park on April 12, 2025. The volunteers planted approximately 300 bare-root trees to increase the tree canopy.

Mr. Kurpakus said that Phase II of the Sycamore Run Interceptor Project through Riding Meadow Park has begun. Once the PWD is completed in Riding Meadow Park, restoration will begin before continuing downstream. He said that areas with dense privet can be removed with a forestry mower in the winter.

### Park Signage

Mr. Posvar stated that Kolano Design has submitted preliminary drawings for the Joint Comprehensive Plan park signage to Fox Chapel and O'Hara. The next step in the process is to discuss it with Kolano Design, the Borough, and the Park Commission. Mr. Kurpakus will send the standard details with slides to the Park Commission, and then a meeting can be set up with Kolano Design to discuss it.

## **MCCAHILL PARK**

### Pickleball Courts

Mr. Posvar stated that the Lauri Ann West Community Center manages reservations for O'Hara Township's tennis courts and offered to assist the Borough if it wants to have reservations for the pickleball courts. It was decided not to have reservations for the courts at this time. Chief Stevens stated he would contact the Chief of O'Hara Township to see if they have had any issues with reservations on their courts.

## **FOXTROT TRAIL RUN**

Mr. Cohen stated that this year's run would be in collaboration with O'Hara Township. Instead of a 5K, the run would be 2 miles, with a one-mile family run/walk. They would like to have the race either the second or third weekend in September. The race would begin at the O'Hara Township Community Park, utilizing the paved loop, then proceed north to Fay Park, connecting participants into the Salamander Park loop to return to O'Hara for the finish.

Mr. Cohen stated that there would be an equitable split of the fundraising efforts between the two communities.

Mr. Cohen asked Mr. Kurpakus if McCahill Park renovations would be completed in time for the run, in order to feature the newly renovated park. The trail around the ballfields will be completed and can be incorporated into the race. Mr. Cohen said that the run could possibly be a 5K if they have the race loop through McCahill. Chief Stevens stated that the Fox Chapel Police Department could handle traffic patterns around the park for the race. Mr. Cohen stated he will revisit the route to share the linkage with O'Hara Township.

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Mr. Cohen moved to request Borough Council's approval to proceed with a joint planning meeting between Fox Chapel Borough and O'Hara Township for an inaugural trail run. The motion was seconded by Mr. Muller and passed unanimously.

### **BIRD TOWN PENNSYLVANIA PROGRAM**

Ms. Casey stated that Jeff Beyer, Nick Muller, David Lowe, and the scout troop constructed sixteen bird boxes; eight have been installed in Borough parks, along with one barred owl box. She said two more barred owl kits and multiple bat boxes would be ordered and installed sometime in November.

### **DELAFIELD CONNECTOR TRAIL**

Mr. Posvar stated that an Allegheny County Park Ranger has volunteered to assist with the Delafield Connector Trail layout.

He said there is interest from the VA Hospital regarding staff and patient use of the trail system for rehabilitation and recreational use. Mr. Leech stated that VA, Borough, and O'Hara Township staff met recently to discuss a plan to deepen the relationship between the three. He said that they are finalizing details for two groups to be formed – one consisting of residents to discuss issues such as construction noise, and the second consisting of professionals who would discuss matters related to stormwater, sewer impact, and construction.

Ms. Casey suggested to Mr. Cohen that fundraising efforts for the trail run with O'Hara Township could be used to construct the Delafield Connector Trail.

### **FOX CHAPEL CLEAN UP DAY**

Mr. Posvar said there were 14 volunteers at the April 5, 2025, event.

### **SHADY SIDE ACADEMY WEST GATE**

Mr. Posvar stated that SSA will propose plans to the Borough to construct a west gate on Riding Meadow Road for traffic from the campus. He stated that many trees marked along Riding Meadow Road would need to be removed for the construction.

Ms. Casey moved to have a letter drafted representing the Park Commission's concerns to the Planning Commission regarding the proposed construction. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cohen and passed unanimously.

### **PARK PLAN PROPOSAL**

Mr. Posvar stated that a meeting with Pashek + MTR will be held later this month to determine the goals and objectives for the Fox Chapel Park Master Plan.

### **UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS**

- Annual Garlic Mustard Pull – May 10, 2025, from 10 a.m. to noon, at McCahill Park
- The next Park Commission Meeting is on Monday, June 9, 2025, at 9 a.m.
- Fox Chapel Day – Saturday, June 14, 2025, from noon to 4 p.m. at McCahill Park
- Planting at McCahill Park on June 21, 2025, with the Western PA Conservancy

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:52 a.m.

Shawn M. Peterson  
Borough Secretary