



**MINUTES OF THE PARK COMMISSION MEETING  
MONDAY, APRIL 22, 2024, AT 9:30 AM**

**PRESENT:** Wesley Posvar, Chairperson; Carrie Casey, Susan Crookston, Nicholas Muller, Steve Whittingham, Jeffrey Cohen, Melinda Guinn, Jeffrey Beyer, Members; Larry Kurpakus, PWD Director; Michael Stevens, Chief of Police; Shawn M. Peterson, Borough Secretary

**ALSO PRESENT:** Frederick Leech, Councilmember

**VIA ZOOM:** Alex Scott, Mayor

**ABSENT:** Jay Troutman, Member

Wes Posvar called the meeting to order at 9:34 AM.

The minutes of the December 11, 2023, meeting were unanimously approved.

**RESIDENT COMMENTS**

None

**POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Chief Stevens said that in regard to aggressive/problem dogs in Borough Parks, there were two minor-injury-off-leash dog incidents. He stated that one of the incidents resulted in a citation being issued, and the other incident resulted in a warning being issued. For both incidents, the Allegheny County Dog Warden was contacted, and the incidents were recorded.

Chief Stevens stated that the Police Department continues to issue warnings and citations to violators without parking permits at designated Borough parking lots. He suggested that signage be placed at the entrance to the permitted parking lots to alert drivers that a permit is required. He stated there would be zero tolerance for violators of this matter once signs are established.

Chief Stevens said he would send residents a Fox Chapel Alert when the signs are to be placed and post information on the Borough website and Facebook page.

**GOVERNOR'S AWARD – Multi-Sector Collaboration – Salamander Park**

The Borough, along with the Fox Chapel Area School District, the Audobon Society of Western PA, the Allegheny County Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America, and the Fox Chapel Borough Park Commission and Public Works Department, has been honored by the Shapiro Administration with the 2024 Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence.

Mr. Posvar thanked Mr. Kurpakus, the Public Works Department, Mr. Cohen, Ms. Cassie, Ms. Guinn, and the many volunteers for their efforts in planting over 1,500 native trees in the Borough. He also thanked Ms. Guinn for getting the commendation for the Borough.

**PUBLIC WORKS REPORT**

Mr. Kurpakus stated the Public Works Department has made its way to just past the pond in Hardie Valley Park with the Sanitary Sewer Project and will stop there to begin the restoration project to ensure the park trail is ready for use with warmer weather approaching. He said they will start on the last part of the project, moving towards Old Mill Road in the next few months.

Mr. Posvar stated that another invasive species for Park Commission members and the general public to look out for is Lesser Celandine. This invasive species has been spotted at the Trillium Trail, McCahill Park parking lot edge, and Riding Meadow Park. Seed and bulbets from this invasive species can be transferred by the tread on people's shoes, so it was suggested that boot brush stations be placed at the park trailhead entrances. Mr. Kurpakus will purchase these boot brush stations and have them installed.

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### **McCAHILL PARK IMPROVEMENTS**

Mr. Kurpakus stated that the DEP permit has been submitted, and all questions from the DEP have been answered by LSSE and Pashek +MTR. The Borough is awaiting approval of the permit. Once the approval is granted, the bidding for the work will begin.

Fox Chapel Day 2024 can be held at McCahill Park on June 15<sup>th</sup> from noon to four, as work at the park has not been scheduled yet.

Mayor Scott stated that the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy would like to assist the Borough with park improvements, specifically in the rain gardens. The Conservancy would provide training on how to care for them. Ms. Casey suggested that a group be formed called *Friends of the Park for McCahill* so that they can learn how to care for and maintain the rain gardens once they are installed at McCahill Park.

### **DELAFIELD CONNECTOR TRAIL**

The connector trail would run from Woodshire Drive, parallel to Delafield Road, down the hill along Old Delafield Road, and would end at the Welcome Garden along Fox Chapel Road. This connector trail would connect the O'Hara Township trail to the Fox Chapel trail, creating a link without walking on Delafield Road. Mr. Posvar will contact all Park Commission members when the walk-through is to occur.

Mayor Scott stated that the connector trail from Scott Park to the Trillium Trail parking lot is almost completed by Shady Side Academy.

Mr. Posvar stated he would like to hold a ceremonial recognition for the Shady Side Academy volunteers. Mayor Scott said there is a meeting in May with SSA to see when the last section of this connector trail will be complete. He will let the Park Commission know.

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

On Saturday, April 13, 2024, nineteen volunteers assisted the Park Commission in cleaning up Borough parks for Fox Chapel Clean Up Day. Mr. Kurpakus said that 25 bags of trash were collected.

### **OTHER VOLUNTEER EVENTS**

The annual Garlic Mustard Pull will be held on Saturday, May 4, 2024, at 10 AM. Volunteers are asked to meet at the McCahill Park parking lot. Ms. Casey stated she had a recipe for garlic mustard pesto that she would provide for the volunteers in case anyone was interested in using the leaves collected.

#### Audobon Planting Event

Mr. Cohen stated that the site selections the Park Commission found were not accepted by the Audobon Society of Western PA. He then asked if the triangle section of land near Beechwood Farms would be an area where planting could occur. Mr. Posvar said that Mayor Scott wanted to plant wildflowers in this area. Mayor Scott asked Ms. Guinn if the Audobon had their own wildflower plants that could be purchased for fall planting.

### **PRIORITY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

Mr. Cohen provided information for Park Commission members on ideas that have been discussed at previous meetings. He would like to collect opinions and gain a consensus among members on what projects they would like to address and complete. He stated the projects should align with PWD, and structure should be placed around each item. His goal is to have members discuss project ideas, mobilize volunteers, and achieve their goals.

Mr. Cohen asked the members of the Park Commission to create a list of 5 to 10 top priority items and hold an informal meeting to discuss them before the next regular park meeting.

### **PARK STEWARD REPORTS**

It was decided that Ms. Guinn would be the Park Steward for Hill n Dale and The Trillium parks, and Mr. Beyer would be the Park Steward for Hidden Falls Park.

Ms. Crookston asked if a garbage can could be placed on the trail from Beechwood Farms near VFD Station No. 2.

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Mr. Posvar stated that Mr. Beyer and the Public Works Department, along with other volunteers, did a great job removing Privet from Riding Meadow Park.

Mr. Whittingham thanked the PWD for installing the new instruments at McCahill Park's Annie's Field of Dreams. He also asked since work at McCahill Park would probably not occur until sometime in late summer/early fall, could the Park Commission reconsider the idea of the run/walk event. Mr. Cohen said that he would be happy to begin planning this event and would work with the Fox Chapel Parks Conservancy.

### **UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS**

- Garlic Mustard Pull event: Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup> at 10 AM. Meet at the McCahill Park parking lot.
- Pickleball - Sound and Fury Webinar, May 7<sup>th</sup>
- The next Park Commission Meeting is on Monday, June 10, 2024, at 9 AM
- Fox Chapel Day: Saturday, June 15<sup>th</sup>, from noon to 4 PM

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:41 AM.

Shawn M. Peterson  
Borough Secretary