



**MINUTES OF THE PARK COMMISSION MEETING
MONDAY, JUNE 9, 2025, AT 9 a.m.**

PRESENT: Wesley Posvar, Chairperson; Jeffrey Cohen, Carrie Casey, Nicholas Muller, Susan Crookston, Melinda Guinn, Jay Troutman, Members; Walter A. Scott, Mayor; Gary Koehler, Borough Manager; Larry Kurpakus, PWD Director; Michael Stevens, Chief of Police

ALSO PRESENT: Betsy Monroe, Frederick C. Leech, Councilmembers; Craig Sorg, Sergeant; Victor White, Scout; 4 other guests

VIA ZOOM: Steve Whittingham, Member; Julie Bastianini, Marshall Township Manager; Josh Lowe, Scout; Adam Szafran, Resident; one other guest

ABSENT: Jeffrey Beyer, Member; Shawn M. Peterson, Assistant to the Manager

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

The minutes of the April 14, 2025, meeting were unanimously approved.

RESIDENT COMMENTS

Adam Szafran, 313 Hidden Falls Court, stated he and other residents are supportive of working on a plan to insulate the Hidden Falls Trail with shrubs and other vegetation to create a barrier between the neighborhood and the trail. Melinda Guinn will attend the next HOA meeting with the residents of Hidden Falls Court to discuss this.

FOX CHAPEL DAY

Sergeant Sorg stated that Fox Chapel Day will be held on Saturday, June 14, 2025, from noon to 4 p.m. at McCahill Park. Parking will be available along Hemlock Hollow Road, and a shuttle service will be available at the Fox Chapel Presbyterian Church.

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECTS

Targeting Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA)

Victor White stated that he released the beetles used to target Hemlock Woolly Adelgid on Mother's Day, May 11, 2025. He said he went back to check on the beetles a few days after the release, and all the beetles had left the nest. Mr. White will return to see if there is a reduced amount of HWA, and in about a year, he will evaluate the results of the chemical treatment versus the beetle treatment to see which worked best.

Mr. White stated that the beetles cost \$650, and he used \$82 to purchase snacks for his volunteers who helped him with his project. He said there was \$429 remaining from the money he raised for the project, and he wanted to donate the remaining money to the Fox Chapel Parks Conservancy. The Park Commission thanked Mr. White for his valued project and his donation to the parks. Ms. Casey stated that the Park Commission should write a letter of recommendation for Mr. White when he applies to colleges. Mr. Posvar stated he will write a letter of recommendation for Mr. White for his Eagle Scout promotion.

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

Josh Lowe stated his project would allow access to Riding Meadow Park from Shady Side Academy's Country Day School. He said he is asking for full approval of his project, as he has submitted the requested plans and maps to the Park Commission. He said his project creates a faster and more efficient trail between SSA's Country Day School and Riding Meadow Park, and that the trail will be sustainable with less maintenance. Mr. Troutman moved to recommend that the

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Borough Council approve Mr. Lowe's project for the connector trail from Shady Side Academy's Country Day School to Riding Meadow Park. The motion was seconded by Ms. Guinn and passed unanimously.

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 also stated that there has been a rash of vehicle break-ins in surrounding communities (O'Hara and Indiana Townships). Chief Stevens said residents must remove valuables from their vehicles and lock them. Ms. Casey asked if having cameras in the parking lots of Borough parks would assist with fewer vehicle break-ins. Chief Stevens said he sees value in having cameras in the parking lots. It was discussed that a mobile trail camera should be placed in the parking lots to monitor the areas and place wording on park signage that cameras are in use.

PROPOSED CROSSWALK AT BEECHWOOD FARMS

Ms. Monroe requested a proposed crosswalk at Dorseyville Road at Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve and the northern end of the Eliza Fox Trail due to increased pedestrian and vehicular traffic with the new development at Hidden Falls. Mr. Kurpakus is working with Jason Molinero, the District Engineer for Allegheny County, who is responsible for reviewing permit applications on County roads. Mr. Kurpakus stated that Mr. Molinero has concerns about installing a crosswalk between the two parking lots, but he suggested an opportunity to install a crosswalk at the intersection with Willow Farms Point. Mr. Kurpakus will meet with Mr. Molinero soon to discuss the matter further.

PUBLIC WORKS REPORT

Mr. Kurpakus said the contractor is finishing detail work at McCahill Park, so the area is ready for Fox Chapel Day.

Mr. Posvar asked if more remediation is needed at Riding Meadow Park. Mr. Kurpakus said that having larger trees planted there would be advantageous. Mr. Posvar stated that the Fox Chapel Parks Conservancy would discuss funding for balled trees at its next meeting.

MCCA HILL PARK

Pickleball Courts Rules

Mr. Posvar stated that the Pickleball court rules need to be implemented as soon as possible. He said they have been reviewed with input from Borough officials and now need to be approved by the Borough Council.

Mr. Troutman moved to recommend that the Borough Council approve the pickleball court rules as submitted. Mr. Cohen seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Ms. Casey asked who would enforce the rules once they were approved by the Borough Council. Chief Stevens stated that this would need to be clarified. He said the Police Department will always use communication skills, and as long as the officers understand the rules, they will do whatever the Borough Council recommends.

Mr. Kurpakus asked if the PWD would maintain the courts during the winter months or close them. It was discussed that this would be a topic in the future.

FOXTROT TRAIL RUN

Mr. Cohen stated that Matt Harris will be in charge of the run moving forward, but Mr. Cohen will still be involved in the planning. The event is tentatively planned for Saturday, September 6, 2025. Mr. Cohen listed five specific volunteer positions needed to plan the event and asked if any Park Commission members were interested. A meeting will be held soon.

BIRD TOWN PENNSYLVANIA PROGRAM

Ms. Guinn stated that the Borough earned the Bird Town PA Program Gold Level in its first year. She said almost 1,000 volunteer hours were logged this spring, 375 students were engaged in direct hands-on learning, and 575 trees and shrubs were planted.

SHADY SIDE ACADEMY PROPOSED WEST GATE

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Mr. Koehler stated that Borough engineers reviewed the application and sent comments to SSA for review. A letter was received stating that SSA would delay action by the Borough until the October Council meeting.

The application will be studied by a group of Borough engineers, Shady Side Academy engineers, the Borough's Zoning Administrator, and the SSA building and Grounds Supervisor.

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES RECAP

Mr. Posvar stated that 10 volunteers participated in the Garlic Mustard Pull on May 10th and filled 10 trash bags with the invasive species. He also said ten volunteers planted 150 Oak seedlings to replace fallen trees along the Lockhart Loop and Trillium Trail on May 24th.

DELAFIELD CONNECTOR TRAIL PROJECT

Mr. Posvar stated that the Fox Chapel Parks Conservancy may subsidize the trail construction.

UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS

- Planting at McCahill Park on June 21, 2025, with the Western PA Conservancy
- Fox Chapel Garden Club/Penn State Master Gardeners Tour – McCahill Park, Cathy Ravella – June 21, 2025
- The next Park Commission Meeting is on Monday, September 8, 2025, at 9 a.m.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:08 a.m.

Shawn M. Peterson
Assistant to the Manager