



**Park Commission  
Minutes  
Monday, April 13, 2026, at 9 a.m.**

**Present:** Wesley Posvar, Chairperson; Jeffrey Cohen, Carrie Casey, Nicholas Muller, Steve Whittingham, Jeffrey Beyer, Melinda Guinn, Members

**Also Present:** Larry Kurpakus, PWD Director; C. Ellis Watson, Chief of Police; Shawn M. Peterson, Assistant to the Manager; one other attendee

**Via Zoom:** Jay Troutman, Susan Crookston, Member; Julie Bastianini, Borough Manager; Emma Smith, Fox Chapel Area High School Junior; Christina Hoenig, resident

Mr. Posvar called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Mr. Whittingham moved to approve the minutes of the December 8, 2025, meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Guinn and passed unanimously.

**Resident Comments**

Emma Smith, a Junior at Fox Chapel Area High School, stated that she has been invited to the National Youth Summit on the Environment at George Mason University this summer. While there, she will learn about national-level environmental policy and management and meet the people who shape it. Her family is assisting with some of the expenses, but she would like to raise \$1,500 to attend. She also stated that she is interested in becoming a Junior Park Steward for the Park Commission, as she is interested in Environmental Science.

Mr. Posvar asked Miss Smith to submit her resume and information on the youth summit. He said that the Fox Chapel Parks Conservancy may be an option for seeking funding. Ms. Guinn suggested that Miss Smith submit her program acceptance letter.

Christina Hoenig, 805 Fairview Road, asked that the Borough increase protection of the vernal pools at Salamander Park by registering the pools with the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program, as it promotes citizens' understanding of the importance of the vernal pools and helps guide the preservation and protection efforts. She stated that she would be happy to assist in any way possible.

**Park Public Safety**

Chief Watson stated that officers continue to actively patrol the parking lots and issue warnings and citations to those without parking permits as needed.

Mr. Muller said the dog walkers are back at Riding Meadow Park. He stated that the new park signage is great, but the sign at the entrance to Riding Meadow Park does not include the dog rules. Mr. Kurpakus stated that signs containing the dog rules can be made independently from the park signage and posted at all the Borough parks.

Mr. Muller suggested that the Dog Rules Ad Hoc Committee meet before the June Park Commission meeting to determine whether increasing the non-resident parking permit rate affected the number of permits issued.

**Proposed Crosswalk at Beechwood Farms**

Ms. Bastianini stated that she has spoken with Lissa Shulman, the Allegheny County Council representative for Fox Chapel, and that Ms. Shulman is working with the Allegheny County Public Works Department and engineers, but a final location for the crosswalk along Dorseyville Road has not yet been determined.

### **Intersection of Field Club and Hemlock Hollow Roads**

Mr. Posvar suggested to the Police and Public Works Departments that *Pedestrian Crossing Ahead* signs be placed at each approach to the intersection along Hemlock Hollow Road to alert motorists to the crosswalk rather than a four-way stop sign.

### **Public Works**

The Park Commission thanked the Public Works Department for the stream restoration work, including the removal of large trees from streams in Borough parks.

### Hardie Valley Park Construction Project

Mr. Kurpakus stated that the response to DEP's second round of questions was submitted by LSSE for the permit at Hardie Valley Park.

### **McCahill Park**

Mr. Posvar said that Ms. Guinn has twenty-five silky willows from Salamander Park that will need to be replanted in another location, and asked Mr. Kurpakus if they could be planted at McCahill Park's rain garden. Mr. Kurpakus stated that the large forebay into the big pond at McCahill Park would be a good location to replant the silky willows, as the replanting plan included trees and shrubs.

### Pickleball Courts

Mr. Posvar asked the Commission whether there was any further feedback on the pickleball court rules. Mr. Troutman stated that some pickleball players asked him about turning the courts over to people who were not playing pickleball but practicing, and whether there was a time limit for practice sessions, as there is an end to a game when points are reached.

### **Trillium Trail Park – Deer Exclusion Fence**

Mr. Kurpakus stated that the Public Works Department restored the fence along the Trillium Trail, but it still needs significant work. He stated that late winter is the best time to work in the area, so they will inventory the area in the fall and work on it during the winter.

The Park Commission thanked Mr. Troutman for allowing the PWD equipment access to the trail through his property.

### **Riding Meadow Park**

#### Invasives – Porcelain Berry Vine Removal

Mr. Kurpakus stated that he contacted Eichenlaub regarding the removal of the invasive Porcelain Berry Vine in Riding Meadow Park, but has not heard back from them.

He stated that the vines would need to be removed manually instead of chemically.

### Sewer Work Remediation

Ms. Casey stated that larger-caliber trees would be planted this upcoming fall with assistance from the Fox Chapel Parks Conservancy, which will provide funding for some good-sized trees.

### **Hidden Falls Park**

Mr. Kurpakus stated that there are four stream crossings for which LSSE has begun the permitting and design process, with wooden footbridges to start, and the Borough can explore aluminum ones if needed, based on cost. These should be completed this year.

### **Remarkable Tree Contest**

Mr. Posvar stated that Franklin Park Borough's EAC hosts a Remarkable Tree Contest, which accepts nominations for exceptional trees within the borough to promote canopy stewardship. He asked if the Fox Chapel Park Commission would be interested in presenting this to its residents, which could bring attention to undamaged trees in the Borough. The Park Commission members were in favor of beginning this program and will introduce it via the ExploreFCParks Instagram page.

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### **Delafield Connector Trail Project**

Park Commission members and Borough staff walked and marked the trail with Allegheny County's Park Ranger, and the Public Works Department has begun moving dirt and fallen trees from the trail.

### **Volunteer Activities Recap**

#### Fox Chapel Clean Up Day

Mr. Posvar stated that approximately 30 volunteers assisted in removing 19 bags of trash, and that the Public Works Department removed a half truckload of debris.

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Planting at Salamander Park

Ms. Guinn stated that the 1,000<sup>th</sup> second-grader will assist with the spring 2026 planting event at Salamander Park. She said this is her third year working with second-grade students on this project.

#### Volunteer Tally

Ms. Guinn stated that over 5,000 trees have been planted in Fox Chapel, and more than 1,000 students have volunteered at Fox Chapel Parks over a two-year period.

### **Fox Chapel 1K/5K Trail Run**

Mr. Cohen stated that the race will take place on Sunday, August 30<sup>th</sup>, at McCahill Park, and early-bird registration has begun. He said the event is sponsored by UPMC St. Margaret, which has given \$5,000. He also stated that the committee will advertise the run in the newspaper and ensure community members are aware of the race's benefits.

### **Bird Town Pennsylvania Program**

Ms. Guinn stated that the Borough earned the Bird Town PA Program Gold Level for the second year in a row.

Ms. Casey stated that there have been bluebird sightings at McCahill Park at the installed bluebird boxes. Ms. Guinn stated that bluebird boxes for educational purposes have been installed at all Fox Chapel Area School District Elementary Schools. She said this will assist with the nest monitoring part of the third-grade curriculum.

### **Resignation of Wesley Posvar as Chairperson for the Park Commission**

Mr. Posvar stated that, due to being appointed to the Borough Council in January 2026, not wishing to reduce the Commission's role or influence in the Borough, and he should avoid pre-vote opinion activities as he is now considered a Borough "decision-maker," he will step down as the Chairperson for the Park Commission, but still remain a member.

Mr. Posvar quoted former Chairperson Jim Pashek as saying, "I am looking for a volunteer." He said that the Commission should meet to discuss the Chairperson position before the June meeting and proceed from there.

Ms. Guinn thanked Mr. Posvar for leading the Park Commission for the past 7 years.

### **Upcoming Meetings and Events**

- Garlic Mustard Pull Day – Saturday, May 5, 2026, from 9 to 11 a.m.
- The next Park Commission Meeting is on Monday, June 8, 2026, at 9 a.m.
- Fox Chapel Community Day – Saturday, June 13, 2026, from noon to 4 p.m.
- Fox Chapel 1K/5K Trail Run – Sunday, August 30, 2026, McCahill Park

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:03 a.m.

Shawn M. Peterson  
Assistant to the Manager