



TOWNSHIP OF NEW BRITAIN

Bucks County, Pennsylvania

Founded: 1723

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Helen B. Haun
William B. Jones, III
Gregory T. Hood
Cynthia M. Jones
Mary Beth McCabe

Eileen M. Bradley
Township Manager

MEETING MINUTES February 16, 2021

A Meeting of the New Britain Township Parks and Recreation Advisory Board was held on February 16, 2021 with the Zoom meeting platform beginning at 7:00 p.m. In attendance were James Bender, Kathi Sexton, Nancy Jones, Cynthia Jones, and Buddy Maeyer. Also, in attendance was Chelle Clancy and Michael Walsh, New Britain Township Staff.

1. Approval of Minutes of January 19, 2021: Upon motion by Mr. Maeyer, seconded by Mrs. Sexton the January 19, 2021 minutes were approved as written.

2. Open Space Evaluation: Mr. Ken Jones joined the Board to discuss the open space project. Invasive plants have negative effects on the spaces, by replacing these with native plants, it will help the native food web. Mr. Jones would like to see the negative effects reversed by introducing a modify and managed approach in three steps:

- Identify what is and what is not native using resources from DCNR and Penn State Extension.
- Create space for native plants using seeds, plugs, and container plants. Local nurseries that may provide a low cost or possibly free donations for restoration stock.
- Human Labor for planting with volunteer groups like Master Watershed via Penn State Extension.

Mr. Jones volunteered as the Community Liaison and Project Manager to work directly with the Watershed Groups in applying for grants managed by the Bucks County Conservation District. Typically, Non-Profit Groups work with the Neshaminy Watershed and Lehigh Valley which Mr. Jones is already involved in. The role of the Township will be to give permission by saying we have the open space areas and would like to perform restoration and work with said entities in a coordinated fashion. Mr. Jones mentioned there has been no match in the past, only labor as far as volunteered time. From Mr. Maeyer's inquiry on the ongoing maintenance, Mr. Jones stated most of the work is frontloaded which will tail for the coming years. A solution may be to identify residents who are able to volunteer for accountability of the open areas.

Mr. Bender recommended reviewing the Quinlan Preserve which was a volunteer Borough project. Mrs. Sexton inquired if the project could be tackled in a phased approach. Mrs. Sexton mentioned to Mr. Jones to capture before and after photos for a review of the finished product.

MOTION: Upon motion by Mr. Bender, seconded by Mrs. Sexton and unanimously approved, a formal recommendation to the New Britain Township Board of Supervisors will follow the meeting. To direct and authorize Township employees to work with Mr. Jones on the Open Space Preservation Project, for employees to reach out to the Consortium, Warwick and New Britain Borough soliciting input from these

resources, to discuss with the solicitor, along with a possible walk through when it gets warmer.

3. Easter Bunny & Food Drive: Mrs. Clancy updated the Board about the event flyer being posted on the outdoor sign of 207 Park Avenue, the Township Website, Social Media, and a Facebook Event page. The event is confirmed with Public Works who will provide logistics after the meeting. The Food Larder is thankful for the partnership. Ms. Clancy will be in contact with the Food Larder at end of the month for a list the most needed non-perishable items which will be posted once available. Brown bags are purchased for the Easter Egg giveaway bags, preparations have started in advance of the event. A call for volunteers from Park & Recreation Advisory Board was requested. Two people for the Easter Bunny area to help giveaway eggs and to ensure people are keeping their social distance. One additional person for the Food Drive to greet and thank people for their donations. Mrs. Clancy and Ms. Goodwin will be there along with a couple of other Public Works employees. Bob Skelton volunteered to be this year's Easter Bunny. From the Board, volunteers are Mrs. Cynthia Jones, Mrs. Sexton, Mr. Bender, Mrs. Nancy Jones, and resident Mrs. Mary Margaret Briggs. Mr. Bender also asked Mrs. Clancy to distribute flyers to Township daycares.

4. Fourth of July Parade: Mrs. Clancy will reach out to PennDOT, the Boroughs and send letters to businesses, as well as participation request mailers. The Cub Scouts Pack 133 and 36 have been in contact and will start the parade, hand out small American flags which the Township will order and pick up a day or so before the parade. They will also run a food collection for non-perishable items as flags are being passed out. The parade generally starts about 10-15 minutes after the scouts to allow time to hand everything out. Mr. Walsh added the Board of Supervisors has updated to move forward with the event.

5. Other Business: Mrs. Cynthia Jones stated the township is reworking the plan to get a trail in the Coleman property fully done connecting two parts, this is in response to DVRPC request to be able to spread more wealth to the other townships. A five- or eight-foot-wide macadam will be at the Coleman Property, along the actual creek, behind Willow Wood, into the corner where it crosses over Upper State Road. Township would work on a park and wood chip trail along with the outside of the creek. With hard packed road, we could minimize potential cost overruns as a solution to the soft soil.

Mr. Bender stated he hopes we learned our lesson with West Branch Park's back trail getting washed out many times. Mr. Walsh mentioned to speak to Public Works and review if they have feedback. Alternative options may be for Public Works can chip a path through or leave it as a grass/nature walk trail for a clear path to walk through.

5. Public Comment: Mrs. Patty Harvan provided feedback regarding the ADA Playground equipment. Her son who had autism passed away in 2019. Mrs. Harvan's son was fond of playground equipment and have been through every playground in Bucks County. Mrs. Harvan recommended the following:

- For a playground area not to have blind areas since children with autism are known to elope (decide to leave area and run without a place in mind) and if a parent cannot see across the vastness of the area, it can be dangerous for a child with autism.

- Water spouting from the ground is okay, however, to ensure that there is no collecting water as children with autism can be drawn to water but there is a danger for drowning related to a splash pool.
- Accommodate a helper and/or someone who has a vision or hearing impairment.
- Ensure there are pathways or areas where a child can explore with a caregiver.
- Not to have blind fence(s). So that caregivers can see past a fence when it comes to elopement.
- Bike riding track(s) to be away from cars and traffic.
- Lots of children with disabilities are terrified of dogs. If dogs are allowed in the area, you may risk a strong reaction from the children.

Mr. Bender mentioned feedback is welcome. The next time the Township Engineers are present, it will be useful. Mr. Walsh mentioned that ADA Compliance will be followed. Mrs. Cynthia Jones recommends assembling a focus group as best practice once further in the planning with the Township Engineers time. Mrs. Sexton stated parental and caregivers' input is invaluable. Mrs. Nancy Jones stated the playground equipment expense is high. Wherein Mr. James Bender responds we need to get it right the first time.

6. Adjournment: MOTION: A motion was made by Mrs. Cynthia Jones, seconded by Mr. Bender and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:13 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

James Bender, Chairman

Chelle Clancy, Secretary