

**UPPER MACUNGIE TOWNSHIP PARKS AND
RECREATION BOARD Monthly Meeting
Minutes November 2021**

The monthly meeting for the Upper Macungie Township Recreation Board was held on Thursday November 18th, 2021, at the Upper Macungie Township building. Recreation Board members present: Bret Spangler, Andrea Russell, Matthew Bernard, Karla Trumbauer, April Navarra, Wes Schlauch, Gwen McCurdy. Also present: Recreation & Events Coordinator, Lynn Matula; Parks Team Leader Jim Soltis.

Other members of the public in attendance: Deb Soltis, Neeraj Sharma (Friends President), Jason Krier (Friends Treasurer), JT Moyer (employee of UMT).

Chairman Bret Spangler called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM. He asked all present to join in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America. Bret made a motion to amend the agenda to add "LED lighting to Grange park funded by the South Parkland Youth Association." Andrea seconded. Gwen made a motion to approve the minutes, Bret seconded, all were in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

NEW BUSINESS:

- Kaybrook Park playground equipment needs replacing. Kaybrook residents raised about 3,000 dollars which is not enough to replace the main playground structure. South Parkland has no interest in funding the project because they feel they do not use the park for any purposes. The options are that UMT can pay the cost to replace the main playground structure (about \$25,000) or the playground will be torn down due to safety hazards. Many of the board members feel that UMT has many nice parks that are accessible to residents in the community, for example, Ricky Park is near Kaybrook. There are other options that could be explored for Kaybrook including a more scaled down park or an eco-park with just a few play structures. **Bret made a motion to not recommend the \$25,000 for the Kaybrook replacement equipment. Andrea seconded. April abstained. The rest of the board were in favor.**
- Leading Edge Martial Arts: **Bret made a motion to approve UMT Recreation to partner with Leading Edge Martial Arts to offer various free self-defense programs at their studio based on availability. Karla seconded. All approved.**
- Jim presented the idea of the Belsnickel Frost Fest, utilizing PA Dutch heritage planned for Thanksgiving weekend 2022. Possible ideas include a synthetic ice rink, music, inflatables, laser tag, crafters, a police and fire department parade (possible HS marching band), horse and buggy ride, chili cook-off, bake-off, food trucks, and even a possible "Northern Laser light" show, etc. The cost would be around \$70,000 and would need to be a partnership with many organizations including Friends, SPYA, the Fire department, etc. Jim would like approval from the Rec Board to get the ball rolling since a committee will need to be formed to plan this large scale event. **Andrea made a motion to approve the planning phase of the Belsnickel Frost Fest to occur sometime during the 2022 Winter Season at Grange Park, a specific date to be determined later. Gwen seconded. All approved.**

- Bret proposed “odd” month meetings for the Parks and Recreation Board, instead of every month. Extra meetings can still be called on an as needed basis. Matthew questioned how it would affect the attendance policy but Bret said this would not be an issue, especially if the by-laws are changed. April and Wes felt that monthly meetings were necessary. Karla and Andrea like the consistency of the monthly meeting. Karla and Lynn brought up the idea of lowering the minimum number of meetings and possibly cancelling the December and July meeting. Much discussion was had among the members. Bret brought up the idea of “odd” month in-person meetings and “even” month zoom meeting/workshop. Special meetings can be called if a vote is needed. Neeraj commented that the board meetings are for the community and questioned whether the public would know to attend the zoom/workshop and that it could be an inconvenience. Others felt that the public would be adequately notified before changes took place. **Bret made a motion to table the discussion on the bi-monthly meetings until the next meeting. Jackie seconded. All were in favor.**
- South Parkland has approved \$150,000 for permanent LED lights down by the dog park and near the by-pass to illuminate the fields. The lights would run on a timer and be aimed away from the road and nearby houses. UMT would provide the labor and the cost of electricity usage would be minimal. Residents have some concerns about the placement of the lights but the benefit of the permanent lights over the portable lights are that they cannot be moved and shifted by wind, coaches and teams, etc, making it much easier for the township to control the placement and angle of the lights so as to not affect nearby houses. The cost will be much less expensive to run these lights compared to the portable lights. **Karla made a motion to approve SPYA to fund the LED lighting of Grange Park near the dog park and lower fields. Bret seconded. April objected. The rest of the board was in favor.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: -None

OTHER BUSINESS:

UMT Recreation fund balance – **see spreadsheet**

Friends of Upper Macungie Parks and Recreation, Inc. fund balance - **\$28,450.43**

Lynn’s updates- ‘Movies in the park’ dates have been set, 4 dates were chosen instead of 5.

- Vendors are needed for the Noon Years Eve Fest

- Signs on the field at Grange Park may need to be altered since it is causing

confusion for families. People are welcome to use the fields to play but the township does not want large groups organizing games, etc, without permission from the township since something may be already scheduled.

PUBLIC COMMENT-

Karla asked if there is a schedule of planned park improvements available to the public/board members so upcoming projects can be more transparent. Lynn commented that community members can read the Public Works budget on the UMT website to see where money is allocated for the year. Karla feels like the public/ board would benefit from an improved and easy to find list of projects to see where the money is going so that informed decisions can be made concerning park improvements and events. Neeraj agreed with this statement, as did other members. A short itemized list of upcoming improvements and funds distribution would be helpful because many members are unclear about what the plans are for each park and cannot always attend planning meetings. Board members

would like to feel knowledgeable when residents ask about various park improvements.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn at 8:39 pm by Bret, seconded by Andrea, all agreed. Next month's meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 16th, 2021, at 7:00 PM at the Township building.

Bret Spangler-Chair

Andrea Russell-Vice Chair

Jaclyn Svetcov- Secretary

UMT Parks and Recreation Board