



Allen Township Park and Recreation Board

Meeting Minutes April 27, 2023 5:30 P.M.

Site Meetings of the Allen Township Park and Recreation Board was held on Thursday, April 27, 2023 and began at 5:30 P.M. at the Allen Township Municipal Building, located at 4714 Indian Trail Road, Northampton, PA, before traveling to Kreidersville Park, located at 10 Park Road, Northampton, PA, and Allen Township Riverview Preserve, located at 614 W. 27th Street, Northampton, PA.

1. Roll Call:

Present: Gary Behler; Paul Link; Mary Austin; Nicole Dotta; Donna Teklits; Ilene Eckhart, Manager; Maurin Ritinski, Administrative Assistant; Tom Gogle, Public Works Crew Leader; and Amber Averbek, Records Clerk/Receptionist

Absent: Louise Bugbee; Maria Bonett; and Adrienne Ibarra

2. **Announcements and/or Actions to Add New Items to Current Agenda:** Ms. Eckhart introduced William Car, Land Manager at Pennsylvania Game Commission. She explained that he is in attendance to attend the site visit to the Allen Township Riverview Preserve and further discuss the property and the Hunter Access Program.

3. **Review of Minutes:** Mr. Behler made a motion to approve the minutes of March 23, 2023; seconded by Ms. Teklits. On the motion, by roll call vote, all members present voted yes.

Following the review of minutes, the Park and Recreation Board traveled to Kreidersville Park to conduct the Public to be Heard segment of the meeting and begin the first site visit.

4. **Public to be Heard:** Bradley Creyer, 3896 Kreidersville Road, inquired on what was the purpose of this meeting. Mr. Creyer indicated that the Kreidersville Park does not get much use. Mr. Creyer requested a shade tree at the Kreidersville Park. Mr. Creyer questioned if a tick application can be applied to the property. Mr. Creyer also inquired on the appropriate public meeting to discuss access to the park, traffic on Howertown Road, and drainage concerns. He also explained that there are numerous occasions where traffic will turn onto Park Road without knowing that there is no outlet.

Amanda Borowski, 4189 Howertown Road, explained that she homeschools her children and that her children use the Kreidersville Park as a continuation of their backyard. She reported that her children use the park daily and that she enjoys the safety of this park. Ms. Borowski requested that more mulch be added to the playground area since mulch has not been added to the park in the past two (2) years. Ms. Borowski also requested that the open space in the park remain open to allow park users to continue various uses in this space including activities such as kickball and baseball.

Art Brown, 4167 Howertown Road, was concerned with how long it would take a shade tree to grow at Kreidersville Park. Mr. Brown indicated the area that he believes would be best for a shade structure. Mr. Brown stated that the park does not need a port-o-let or any lighting. He also reported that his grandchildren love the park as it is. Mr. Brown would like to keep the attendance at the park small and local.

Chad Niebell, 4241 Howertown Road, inquired if the playground mulch can be changed to rubber mulch. Mr. Niebell stated that he does not want a bench placed in the open grassy area.

All of the residents in attendance voiced their concerns with the height of the regular swings and requested that the chains be lengthened on these swings. Ms. Borowski noted that the chain length for the baby swings are at an acceptable height.

5. Business Items

A. Park and Recreation Board Spring 2023 Park Site Visits:

- i. April 27, 2023 – 5:30 P.M. – Allen Township Riverview Preserve and Kreidersville Park**

Kreidersville Park Site Visit

Mr. Link explained to the public the schedule for the Park and Recreation Board meetings and that meetings are open to the public. Mr. Link explained that the Park and Recreation Board is newly created and the Park and Recreation Board Members are taking time to visit the parks in order to gain familiarity, insight, and feedback from residents on what improvements may be needed at each park. Ms. Eckhart provided the Park and Recreation Board and members of the public with a brief history of the park. She explained that the playground equipment was all removed at one point and taken to the Township Building in preparation for the possible sale of the property. When the property was not sold, the Public Works Crew reinstalled all of the playground equipment. Ms. Eckhart indicated that there are standards for playgrounds, including the chain lengths on the swings. Mr. Gogle stated that if swings too high they can pose a fall risk for the children.

Ms. Eckhart suggested a picnic table or gazebo structure for placement at the park. Mr. Behler suggested a shade structure similar to the ones at the Allen Township Dog Park.

The Park and Recreation Board discussed adding additional mulch to the park. Ms. Eckhart noted that there are standards for rubber mulch. She indicated that this request will be evaluated further.

Mr. Link explained to Mr. Creyer that there are pros and cons of treating the property for ticks. It was explained to all members of the public that some park users may have allergies to tick treatments and other pesticides. Mr. Link stated that the best solution for limiting ticks is to mow the property regularly. Ms. Eckhart recommended that park users use tick repellent on themselves prior to visiting the park for additional protection.

It was explained to Mr. Creyer by Ms. Eckhart that topics concerning access to the park and traffic should be discussed before the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Behler indicated that the next Board of Supervisors meeting will be Tuesday, May 9, 2023. Ms. Eckhart stated that a larger “No Outlet” sign may be beneficial to add.

Mr. Behler summarized that the primary concerns for this park from the residents in attendance seem to be shade, height of the swings, and mulch.

The Park and Recreation Board thanked the residents in attendance for their feedback regarding this park. This concluded the site visit of Kreidersville Park.

Allen Township Riverview Preserve

The Park and Recreation Board traveled to the Allen Township Riverview Preserve for a site visit. Ms. Eckhart stated that there were no members of the public in attendance for this site visit. Ms. Eckhart explained that this park has no improvements and consists of 85-acres. She explained the acquisitions of the various parcels that make up the park including 45.18-acres consisting of parcels K3-15-1, K3-17-1 & K3-14-1 of the former Estate of Vernon; 12.3-acres consisting of parcel K3-15-2 formerly of Mary Ann Nagle, and the 27.51-acre perpetual lease arrangement with PPL consisting of parcels K3-17-1A, K3-15-3, L3-3-1, L3-1-3, L3-2-1A, and K3-16-1.

Ms. Eckhart explained the history behind each acquisition and their associated location. She indicated that the leased PPL parcels consist of the remains of canal lock #32, an overflow waste culvert, including sluice gate, Locktenders’ house remains, towpath and embankments associated with the former Lehigh Navigation Canal System. Ms. Eckhart reported that the former Estate of Vernon contains mature woodlands, floodplains, wetlands, ponds, and wildlife habitat. This property also contains historical remnants from the Lehigh Canal, including Guard Lock #31 and portions of the canal towpath and canal channel or prism, dating back to the mid-1800’s. Ms. Eckhart reported that prior to the Township’s acquisition of this property, certain areas of the property had historically been used as a dumping ground which precipitated a Phase I environmental assessment and subsequent remediation work. Ms. Eckhart explained that the former Mary Ann Nagle property contains mature woodlands, floodplains, wetlands, ponds, and wildlife habitat. She indicated that the property may contain historical remnants of the Lehigh Canal, and portions of the canal towpath and canal channel or prism, dating back to the mid-1800’s. Ms. Eckhart reported that in 2020 the Township razed a 2-story stone farmhouse (circa 1840) and associated outbuildings due to ongoing vandalism damages. She reports that once the buildings were demolished the vandalism ceased.

Ms. Eckhart reported that in 2016, the Township collaborated with the PA Game Commission to include the properties in the Hunter Access Program for archery only via permit. She explained that the intention of the enrollment was to provide an opportunity for hunters as well as bring a law enforcement presence to the rather remote property. Ms. Eckhart stated that the PA Game Commission has enforced not only game law violations, but also DUI’s and other criminal offenses during their patrol of the property.

Ms. Eckhart reports a successful one-acre meadow planting on the properties. The planting has enriched the habitat for the instinctive migratory pollinators, including Monarchs and other species. Ms.

Eckhart indicated that the meadow is now self-sustaining and only requires a once-annual winter mowing to control any woody plant growth. Mr. Car, Land Manager at Pennsylvania Game Commission, expressed his satisfaction with the meadow planting. He suggested treating the thistle in the meadow. Mr. Car indicated that he was impressed with there being one (1) mile of river frontage for these properties. Mr. Car indicated that bird boxes have also been placed on the properties. Ms. Eckhart reported that there are also duck boxes that were provided by the PA Game Commission. She indicated that more duck boxes will be installed by Ducks Unlimited. Mr. Car and Ms. Eckhart explained that citations have been issued in the past for duck hunting with rifles on the property. Mr. Car indicated that the primary use of the property is for hunting.

Mr. Car used a specialized camera to look into one of the bird boxes that is near the meadow planting. He explained the importance of the bird box for kestrels, a small hawk. Mr. Car noted that the property is the perfect habitat for these birds of prey. Mr. Car explained that these birds are not doing well in Pennsylvania due to loss of habitat. Upon inspection of the bird box, Mr. Car reported that there was no kestrel in the box yet but that he is hopeful one will choose to nest in this bird box.

The Park and Recreation Board continued to walk the property. Mr. Car stopped to check some tree stands that were left from last season. He indicated that he would be issuing a warning to one of the tree stand owners and directing this owner to clean up the litter that they had left behind at the site.

Ms. Teklits questioned if a nature trail could be added to the property. Ms. Eckhart indicated the barriers to this being invasive plants, which cause trails to overgrow quickly, and the railroad crossing requirements.

Ms. Eckhart spoke of the invasive plants on the property including barberry bushes and multiflora rose. Mr. Car explained that these invasive plants harbor ticks and are detrimental to other vegetation and animals. The Park and Recreation Board discussed possible solutions for managing invasive plants. Ms. Teklits suggested a controlled burn. Mr. Link suggested having goats eat the invasive plants. Mr. Car indicated that barberry is best treated during spring or late fall with herbicide. The herbicide application must be followed up with additional applications to prevent regrowth from seeds. He indicated that fire does not carry through barberry. Mr. Car also noted that goats would leave the invasive species until last and therefore this would not be effective. Mr. Car recommended that the Township work on managing invasive plants. Ms. Eckhart indicated that she will work on obtaining estimates and reviewing available grants.

Ms. Eckhart briefly spoke on the private railroad crossing. She indicated that the Township is working with NorFolk Southern to upgrade the crossing at the Township's expense and specification of NorFolk Southern. Ms. Eckhart reports that the process has been painstakingly slow. The upgrades will include additional safety features for the private crossing that allows public use. Ms. Eckhart explained that the crossing will provide limited public use to a passive public park.

6. Public to be Heard: No public comment.

8. Announcements: Mr. Link announced the next Park and Recreation Board meeting which will take place at the Kreidersville Covered Bridge Park.

The upcoming meetings held at the Allen Township Fire Company Building (unless otherwise noted) as listed on the agenda are as follows:

- Board of Supervisors – Tuesday, May 9, 2023 at 6:00 PM
- Planning Commission – Monday, May 15, 2023 at 6:00 PM
- Board of Supervisors – Tuesday, May 23, 2023 at 6:00 PM
- Park and Recreation Board – Thursday, May 25, 2023 at **5:30 PM** (*Site Visit of Kreidersville Covered Bridge*)

9. Adjournment: There being no further comments or business the meeting adjourned at 7:13 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ilene M. Eckhart



**Allen Township
Park and Recreation Board
Meeting Agenda
Thursday, April 27, 2023
5:30 P.M.**

Meeting Site Visit Locations:

**Initial Location: Allen Township Municipal Building, 4714 Indian Trail Road
Site Visits to: Riverview Preserve, 614 W. 27th Street and
Kreidersville Park, 10 Park Road**

The Allen Township Park and Recreation Board meeting will be held at Allen Township Municipal Building located at 4714 Indian Trail Road, Northampton, PA to be followed by physical site visits to Riverview Preserve, 614 W. 27th Street and Kreidersville Park, 10 Park Road, Northampton, PA

A summary of the public comment policy and procedures is located at the end of the agenda as a reference for individuals wishing to address the Board during the “Public to be Heard” segments.

Note: Per Act 65 of 2021 requirements, this agenda was posted to the Township website, at the Township Municipal Building, and at the physical location of the proposed meeting, by Township staff on: April 25, 2023.

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

_____ Paul Link, Chairman	_____ Gary Behler, Member	_____ Ilene M. Eckhart, Manager
_____ Donna Teklits, Secretary	_____ Adrienne Ibarra, Member	_____ Louise Bugbee, Member
_____ Nicole Dotta, Member	_____ Mary Austin, Member	_____ Maria Bonett, Member

3. Announcements and/or Actions to Add Items to Agenda

4. Review of Minutes

5. Public to be Heard (Residents shall limit their comments to no more than three minutes)

6. Business Items

A. Park and Recreation Board Spring 2023 Park Site Visits

i. April 27, 2023 – 5:30 PM – Allen Township Riverview Preserve and Kreidersville Park

7. Public to be Heard (Residents shall limit their comments to no more than three minutes)

8. Next Meetings – All meetings will be held at the Allen Township Fire Company Building, located at 3530 Howertown Road, Northampton, PA – **WITH THE EXCEPTION AS THOSE NOTED AS SITE VISITS BELOW**

- ◆ Board of Supervisors, Tuesday, May 9, 2023 at 6:00 PM
- ◆ Board of Supervisors, Tuesday, May 23, 2023 at 6:00 PM
- ◆ Planning Commission, Monday, May 15, 2023 at 6:00 PM
- ◆ Park and Recreation Board, Thursday, May 25 at 5:30 PM (Site Visit: Kreidersville Covered Bridge Park)

9. Adjournment

-Public Comment Policy and Procedures-

- 1. A period for public comment will be held at the beginning of the meeting and at the conclusion of all agenda business items. Any public comments or questions shall be reserved until time on the agenda. Public comments and questions will not be permitted during the course of the Board's/Commission's business items.*
- 2. Individuals who speak must give their name, address and municipality prior to speaking.*
- 3. Time limit on length of public comment or presentation will be three (3) minutes per person, per meeting.*
- 4. A speaker will only be granted one three (3) minute extension, if given, for a maximum speaking time of six (6) minutes, at the discretion of the Chairman.*
- 5. Comments/questions shall be directed to the Board/Commission members only.*
- 6. Procedures will be in place to maintain proper decorum for the hearing. Public participation will be allowed but the Board will ensure respect for all citizens and maintain order. Personal attacks and outbursts will be ruled out of order. The Chairman of the Board or Commission may, within this discretion, rule out of order scandalous, impertinent, and redundant comment or any comment the discernible purpose of which is to disrupt or prevent the conduct of the business of the meeting.*
- 7. Individuals with lengthy written statements may submit them for the record and provide a verbal summary of three (3) minutes or less. Interested persons may email public comments via email, sent to manager@allentownship.org until 3:00pm local time the day of each meeting or by contacting the Township office. Public comment received via email will be read at the outset of the meeting. If you require an auxiliary aid, service or other accommodation, please contact the Allen Township offices in advance. In addition, an audio recording of the meeting will be posted to the Township website: www.allentownship.org within 48 hours of the meeting.*