

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
PARK & RECREATION BOARD
MINUTES – MARCH 8, 2022

The regular meeting of the Park & Recreation Board of the Township of Lower Makefield was held in the Municipal Building on March 8, 2022. Mr. Krauss called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and called the Roll.

Those present:

Park & Recreation Board: Douglas Krauss, Chair
Michael Brody, Vice Chair
Mike Blundi, Member
Robert LaBar, Member
David Malinowski, Member
Dennis Wysocki, Member

Others: Monica Tierney, Park & Recreation Director
James McCartney, Supervisor Liaison

Absent: Kim Rock, Park & Recreation Board Secretary

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Brody moved, Mr. Malinowski seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of January 11, 2022 as written.

Mr. Wysocki moved, Mr. LaBar seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of February 8, 2022 as written.

ULTIMATE FRISBEE

Ms. Tierney stated she was contacted by Ms. Bridget Magee representing Ultimate Frisbee looking for a space to play. She stated they are starting to have a more organized approach to Ultimate Frisbee. She stated they requested using Memorial Park; however, she advised her to consider other sites since Memorial Park has generally been off limits except for the Football Agreement. Ms. Tierney stated Veterans Square and the Dog Park are too small. Ms. Tierney stated they are looking for a place they can use spring and fall.

Mr. Krauss stated their affiliation is with PDA (Philadelphia Disc Association) and there are four teams involved. Mr. Wysocki asked the dimensions of the field requirements, and Mr. Krauss stated it is approximately the size of a football field length. Mr. LaBar stated it would be similar to a soccer or football field. Mr. Wysocki asked about the space on the opposite end of the parking lot at Memorial Park where the new tennis courts are. Ms. Tierney stated she would not recommend that as it is not flat enough. Mr. Krauss stated the only field that was used at Memorial Park in the past was the area behind the bathrooms where the gas lines run. Mr. Brody suggested an area at the church across from Big Oak Citgo, and Ms. Tierney stated she will have Ms. Magee look into that. Ms. Tierney stated she also sent an e-mail to the School District to see if there was something available, but they also have issues with space.

Mr. Blundi asked how often they play, and Ms. Tierney stated she believes that they plan to practice Monday through Friday and play once a week. Mr. Krauss stated they practice on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and then the game involves “four friendlies.” Ms. Tierney stated there are four home games. Mr. Brody asked the age group, and Ms. Tierney stated it is High School level. Mr. LaBar stated the Pennsbury High School Ultimate Frisbee Team has a long-standing tradition, and they won the State Championship a number of years. He stated this is a Club sport, and they are always looking for field space which has been difficult.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT/SWOT FOR PARK & RECREATION STRATEGIC PLAN

Ms. Tierney stated there was some confusion that this was going to be the Snipes discussion; but this is not that discussion, and it is the Master Plan discussion about the overall planning of the parks. She stated while Snipes is a part of that, they will not be making any decisions about Snipes at this point.

Ms. Toole presented a Power Point which shows what they found out, what the Township’s strengths are, what are opportunities are, and what the threats are. Ms. Toole stated they have involved over 3,000 people, and they feel confident in their understanding of community preferences. She stated what they heard from the community was more fields, preserve open space and protect natural resources, and more indoor recreation indoor space which includes space for Administration/staff since the Township does not have enough room. Ms. Toole stated what the community really wants is something for everyone. She stated there is a lot of concern about

losing open space opportunities given the Real Estate market. She stated there are about 1,100 acres of vulnerable open space remaining in the community. She stated there is also a concern about funding. Ms. Toole stated the community wants a great community with great parks, great recreation, and great trails; and we have to find a way to get there in this Plan.

Ms. Toole showed a slide of the Township's strengths. She stated Park & Recreation is a Township priority, and this is not seen in every Municipality. She stated the public is very involved, and the facilities are clean all the time given the level of resources the Township has to take care of them; but they are stretched. She stated all the ratings of the parks and the programs were high. Ms. Toole stated there is a mix of public and private support. She stated the groups that have come out to talk and advocate for their needs have been wonderful. Ms. Toole stated there is significant investment in the parks, the Pool, and the Community Center. She stated the Township is also an industry leader since of the 2,672 Municipalities in Pennsylvania, Lower Makefield will be the only one that will be Certified by this summer. She stated that underscores that the Township's operation is totally professional and ahead of any other Municipality in Pennsylvania.

Ms. Toole showed a slide on the challenges facing the Township which includes balancing the needs of the stakeholders. She stated we need to find ways to work together so that the public is served at the highest and best order.

Ms. Toole stated another challenge is maintenance, and there are only five maintenance people for over 500 acres of park land not including the Golf Course. She stated she is on the National Recreation and Park Association Board of Regents for Park Maintenance, and the standard is one worker for eighteen acres, and Lower Makefield has one worker for one hundred acres. Ms. Toole stated Macclesfield is over developed and overused, and there are policy issues about use and investment that need to be considered.

She stated Snipes has been going on for eighteen years, and we need to figure out how to move that forward, and it is felt that is a priority.

Ms. Toole stated of concern is the fact that open space is limited and expensive, and there is not much time as developers are sending letters to owners of vulnerable open space all of the time. She stated there is not much time to get any open space that might be needed to achieve the balance of active and passive recreation along with conservation of the natural resources.

Ms. Toole stated there is not enough outdoor or indoor space, and the trail system has major gaps. Ms. Toole stated that as discussed previously, the Township is a leader with regard to trails, and the Township was decades ahead of everyone else in establishing the bike path and sidewalk system. She stated there are about twenty-seven miles on the ground. Ms. Toole stated Lower Makefield started talking about bike paths in the 1980's when no one else was talking about that.

Ms. Toole stated with regard to opportunities, there are about 1,100 acres of open space remaining. She stated there are potential partnerships, and she specifically noted the organized sports groups. She stated the Pennsbury School District also emerged as a great partnership possibility, and there are others. Ms. Toole stated there is political will that supports parks, recreation, conservation, and trails; and the elected and appointed officials are very supportive. Ms. Toole stated the Five Mile Woods is a "diamond in the rough," and the Township is fortunate to have this natural area of over 100 acres. She stated currently we are in a position to obtain Federal and State funding. She stated the Land and Water Conservation Fund at the State level is about four times what it had been because that Fund has been made permanent by Congress. She stated there is also post-COVID funding, infrastructure funding, and transportation funding that has a significant component for bike paths.

Ms. Toole stated the Township is very successful in getting bike path money, and the Township should move ahead with that to address the gaps on the trails.

Ms. Toole showed a slide listing the threats. She stated the Township does not have sufficient park land, and there is development pressure on open space. She stated if the Township does not get enough park land, solutions are going to be extremely challenging and the Township will have to make difficult decisions. She stated there are groups asking for space and the Township will be in the position of having to choose who gets to use space or not if there is not enough park land. Ms. Toole stated with regard to funding, the Township is going to need more funds if they are going to be looking at open space, improving Macclesfield, moving ahead with Snipes, looking at the Five Mile Woods, completing the trail system, looking at indoor recreation space, and carrying out the Capital Improvement Program. She stated if there is not enough funding to do all of these things, the Township is going to be faced with tough decisions.

Ms. Toole stated there is a need for additional land in order to make solutions possible. She stated additional space is needed in order to fix Macclesfield. She stated Macclesfield has too many fields and not enough parking. She stated there is about two and a half acres of parking; and for a sports complex of that scale, there would be far fewer fields and parking would range from six acres to sixteen acres. She stated people have commented at public meetings about the hazardous driving conditions at Macclesfield because of the traffic.

Ms. Toole stated there are two groups of citizens – one group that is in favor of preservation and natural resource connections, access, and protection; and the other group is very “organized and aggressive” in needing more ballfields to serve the over 3,500 people who are the actual participants as well as the caretakers and family members who are involved in organized sports which total well over 10,000 people. Ms. Toole stated these two groups are at odds, and that is difficult.

Ms. Toole stated there is a need to connect the trails, and the Township cannot grow programs without additional staff and someplace to house them. She stated in the survey they saw that people want more diversified programs for more age groups. She stated they are seeing wait lists for many program and for the sports organizations. She stated tonight they heard that they may not be able to accommodate Ultimate Frisbee in a community that has the State Championship team.

Ms. Toole showed a slide about the Strategic Solution. She stated the Township needs to decide if land acquisition is a possibility or not. She stated the open space that is remaining has good potential but will come at a cost. She stated there may be potential for partnerships with an allied group where we could both get what we need on a large public open space that would have accommodations for both recreation facilities outside and recreation and educational facilities inside. She stated the Township needs to decide if they can legitimately pursue land acquisition.

Ms. Toole stated we need to assess Macclesfield. She stated there are wonderful sports groups that love this Park and work very hard on the Park but it is way over developed and insufficient with the supporting facilities that are needed. She stated she recommends having a professional evaluation of that Park which would include evaluation by a transportation and circulation engineer to look at the parking and traffic safety. She stated they also need a landscape architect and a sports field expert to look at what is the actual capacity of the site and determine the optimum level for play, safety, and maintenance.

Ms. Toole stated it is likely that once the evaluation is done for Macclesfield that the evaluators will say that there is too much in the Park, and some things need to go elsewhere; and that is where the open space acquisition discussion comes in. She stated if there is no place to move facilities to, solutions to improving Macclesfield and serving the people who need to be served are almost impossible. Ms. Toole stated there have been discussions about turf fields and multi-use fields, and that does need to happen; but it needs to be grounded in a professional evaluation and discussion to determine what should happen at Macclesfield to serve everybody.

Ms. Toole stated they are also recommending moving ahead with Snipes, and we need to update the Plan with the theme being called “Play for All.” She stated this Play for All theme means merging the two groups – the one that wants connections with nature and the one that wants more ballfields as well as the community at large that wants something for everybody.

Ms. Toole stated we need to provide life-long opportunities for all age groups including Seniors who want more space and walking clubs. She stated the Township’s population of over 33,000 has a host of needs. She stated that could all come together under the theme of Play for All.

Ms. Toole stated there should be a “re-look” at the Master Plan for Snipes that had been proposed to make sure that the Play for All theme drives it. She stated the Play for All theme at Snipes would result in more sports fields, would include pathways for walking, pavilions, play areas, restrooms, lighting, and beautiful landscaping that connects people with nature. Ms. Toole stated the suggestion is to move ahead with Snipes immediately because we are so close on it, and there should be a public process that includes the re-evaluation of the Master Plan and the presentation of that in a series of public meetings. She stated there would be two Open Houses that would present the preferred Master Plan to get comments from the public at large. There would then be a revision of that tweaked based upon the comments that come in so that we would be ready to move forward with the development of construction documents. She stated she feels this could happen quickly as the Township is already positioned to do that, and it is just making the decision to move ahead.

Ms. Toole stated they are also suggesting that the Township needs a site of at least eighty acres to develop a park with lighted ballfields, game courts, a destination playground, pavilions, pathways, sufficient parking, and landscaping. She stated it needs to be a beautiful site where people will want to spend a lot

of time. She stated currently the ball fields are used during peak sports time, but are rarely used for other purposes. She stated they would want this eighty acres to be able to accommodate and welcome a wide variety of uses including Ultimate Frisbee and cricket which came out in the survey as a growing need which requires a lot of space.

Ms. Toole stated there is also the need for indoor recreation space, adding the Township does not have enough room in the existing Community Center to accommodate the programs that people want. She stated the Community Center is undersized for a community of 35,000 people. She stated Lower Makefield is one of the most populated communities in Pennsylvania. She stated they are suggesting that when the Township looks at this eighty acre site that they look at a footprint for a Community Center that is at least 65,000 square feet which is the size where Community Centers can offset their operating costs. She stated they are looking for financial sustainability for the Township so they need to look at the Revenue-generating potential for that size of a Community Center.

Ms. Toole stated we also need to continue with the programs and staffing; but until we find more space, we cannot grow anything as there are wait lists now.

Ms. Toole stated the Township has had successful Voter Referenda in the past where the community supported funding, and that is a good precedent. She stated 95% of the survey respondents of 2,000 people considered Park and Recreation to be of great value and great importance to the quality of life in the community so there is a strong foundation of support for these kinds of discussions.

Ms. Toole noted Alternative A on the slide “Strategic Solutions.” She stated that while they really want to move ahead with Snipes, they discussed the fact that Snipes has value; and it would be interesting to see what the exact value of that site is. She stated it is only a thirty-eight acre site, and it is not anywhere near the size of a true Community Park. She asked if in the discussions there was a possibility for the acquisition of a significantly large parcel of open space, could the value of Snipes if it were sold, offset the cost of buying a larger site that would combine natural resource preservation and active recreation. Ms. Toole stated while the preference is to move ahead with Snipes now, they would be remiss if they did not give their thoughts on all of the possibilities. Ms. Toole stated Snipes has been sitting there for eighteen years, and in the Real Estate market we have now, it does have cash

value; and the Township needs to consider if that value is best remaining with Snipes or if Snipes would be a contributor to a solution that would be the acquisition of a larger site.

Ms. Toole stated the Strategic Solution is very complicated, but the Township cannot grow their programs unless there is more Administrative space to house staff or and accommodate Ultimate Frisbee, more soccer fields and cricket, and fix the issues at Macclesfield; and it is all tied together.

Ms. Toole stated this is not the whole Plan, and the Park & Recreation Board will be seeing a total Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails Plan that includes the inventory and assessment of what the Township has, the analysis of that, goals, recommendations, and an Action Plan. She stated to do that in a sound way, they need feedback.

Ms. Toole stated the other option is that the Township could stay exactly as it is, and continue with the Capital Improvements. Ms. Toole stated there would be limitations, and the Township would need to make some tough choices, but they could decide to remain the same.

Mr. Krauss thanked Ms. Toole for the time and effort that she put in as well as all of the contributors to get to where we are today.

Mr. Wysocki asked the funding is available for procurement of land, and Ms. Toole stated it is. She noted the RACP Grant, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Department of Community and Economic Development, and Federal Funding. Ms. Toole stated the Township could consider the idea of an advocate who would watch out for the Township adding that there are communities where an advocate has gotten line items in the State Budget for parks, recreation, and community development. Ms. Toole stated she also sees a lot of partnering now with health providers/hospitals. She stated the Township would still have to invest Township funding.

Mr. Wysocki stated the issue of waning availability of space is concerning; and while he recognizes that the Supervisors need to consider a balance, he feels there is an opportunity now to get additional space for Township use, and people in the future will feel that showed great foresight.

Ms. Toole stated Lower Makefield has a history of making “brave decisions” over the years, and she noted the Pool, the Golf Course, and the bicycle paths. She stated she worked in an adjoining Township where a group of citizens stated there was nothing left in their Township, and they questioned why someone did not do something thirty years ago.

Mr. Wysocki stated with regard to evaluating Macclesfield, he does not feel they need a professional to tell them that it is overused as that is already known. He stated what is needed is a solution. Ms. Toole stated the evaluation is important to tell the Township legitimately what can fit in Macclesfield and the capacity of the site.

Mr. Wysocki asked if it is known what our ratio is between active use park land and passive use as he feels that is an important factor to understand as we try to determine how to use the fields especially given the Play for All theme. Ms. Toole stated they have not done that ratio yet; however, in Section 2 which is under development, they will have that analysis. She stated there should also be a site-by-site balance. She stated Snipes should be designed to include active ballfields and other activities that people want to do in the outdoors. She stated if it is only ball fields, it will not gain any traction in the community. Mr. Wysocki stated he feels a balanced solution makes sense. He stated overall throughout the Township he would still like to know the ratio between passive and active as well as how the Township compares to the norm and whether we have a disproportionate amount of athletic fields or the other way around. He stated we have a lot of beautiful Township land, and it is possible that it is not accessible enough or not brought to light enough as that could solve some of the “back-to-nature” needs. Ms. Toole stated the Township is trying to do that at Memorial Park which was the mission for that Park.

Mr. Brody stated Macclesfield is about 95 acres, Fred Allan and Stoddart are about 30 to 40 acres, Five Mile Woods is 238 acres, and the area behind the Township Building that was just acquired is between 9 and 18 acres so there are probably 260 acres in natural open space and about 150 to 160 acres in sports fields. He also noted Memorial Park. Mr. Brody stated that does not include random basketball courts, tennis facilities, or other complexes. Mr. Wysocki stated he would like to see how that compares with what the norm should be.

Mr. Krauss stated he does have the calculation as to how much is park/open farmland versus Residential as a total percentage of Lower Makefield acreage. He stated Ms. Toole would have to compare that to neighboring Towns or National averages. Mr. Wysocki stated he was looking to see the ratio of the park land we have in passive use versus active use, and that ratio relative to the norms. Ms. Toole stated the National Recreation and Park Association is the industry leader in public parks and recreation, and for decades there were certain standards; however, by the mid 1990's it was found that those standards do not work and do not apply to everyone. She stated the standard now is called level of service, and that level of service means that every community needs to set forth their own standard of what they want to provide. Ms. Toole stated the Lower Makefield community is saying that they want the Play for All theme, and what she has been charged with is figuring out what is our park classification system and what do we have invested in what. She stated that will give a foundation for moving forward. She stated we already know that the Township needs more space for active indoor and outdoor recreation for our community as that is what the community told us.

Mr. Malinowski stated he agrees that we need more space, and we have needed more space for some time. He stated there have been issues at Macclesfield for years, but he asked where they can get the space without buying farmland or using farmland we already own. Mr. Malinowski stated there is not a lot of space left in Lower Makefield, and Ms. Toole stated there is 1,100 acres.

Mr. Krauss asked Ms. Toole if those 1,100 acres are non-preserved lands that are owned by a private entity, and Ms. Toole agreed adding it is land that is vulnerable to development. Mr. Malinowski asked if a map of that land has been included in Ms. Toole's report, and Ms. Toole stated there is an open space map although the Park & Recreation Board has not been provided that yet. Ms. Tierney stated she can share that with the Board at their next meeting.

Mr. Blundi stated he agrees with Mr. Wysocki that if they hire someone to look at Macclesfield, we know that they are going to say it is overused. He asked if there were to be more turf facilities, would that lessen the load for fields space. He asked if one turf field would be the same as having three fields. Mr. Blundi stated he would like to know from YMS if they could run their program on turf and what that would take. He noted the current high price of land and the fact that we do not know if anyone is interested in selling their land.

Ms. Toole stated with regard to the evaluation of Macclesfield, the reason she is recommending an evaluation is that while we know all the issues that are there right now, a team would be brought in to tell the Township what is the capacity of Macclesfield. She stated they would look at the configuration of the fields and natural play versus turf fields, lighting versus no lighting, and different uses including Ultimate Frisbee, cricket, soccer, football, Lacrosse, field hockey, baseball, and girls' softball. She stated they would have to look at all of the sports.

Ms. Tierney stated she understands that they would give recommendations of a better structural lay-out and flow of the Park, and Ms. Toole agreed. Ms. Toole added it would be taking the current situation and finding solutions as to traffic, landscape, engineering, sports fields, and lighting and giving the Township objective opinions. She stated that would include all of the key stakeholders in that process.

Mr. LaBar stated Ms. Toole had indicated that there were State and Federal monies available, and he asked the timeline for how quickly that money could be secured and what it must be spent on. Ms. Toole stated the funds available for parks and recreation are the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Community Partnerships Program through DCNR, the DCED Economic Development Program, and the RACP Program. She stated anything that has been discussed could be funded through any of these programs. Ms. Toole stated the Township may want to consider retaining a Grant-writing firm since the Township has diversified, great needs; and a team of Grant experts could be useful to the Township. Ms. Toole stated she does the maintenance planning for a Municipality which needed park equipment, and Grant experts were able to get \$500,000 worth of funding to buy park equipment because it was tied into sustainability and green infrastructure, and the Grant came through the Department of Environmental Protection. She stated creativity in Grants is worth considering and potentially investing in to get a return on the Township's money. Ms. Toole stated the timelines for Grants vary. She stated Grants have huge value but they need a "watchful eye" to come up with things like getting a half million dollars to buy tractors and mowers. She stated she cannot do that and neither can Ms. Tierney or Mr. Ferguson; and although they could do Land and Water, DCNR, and DCED, that would not be enough. Ms. Toole stated the new infrastructure money has a significant transportation component that includes trail funding. She stated DOT has Federal Transportation money and PennDOT has money. She stated there are a lot of sources, but it is complicated and needs a watchful eye.

Mr. LaBar stated Ms. Toole also mentioned partnerships with health providers, and he asked how that would work and how it has worked in other communities. Ms. Toole stated every local hospital is required by law to do a Community Needs Assessment every other year. She stated one of their obligations is to provide provisions for improving public health. She stated she has seen partnerships in other communities, and she noted an area where a health provider invested in pathways and facilities for active recreation. She stated St. Luke's, which is close to Lower Makefield, is heavily involved in supporting public recreation activities. She stated she has seen hospitals take some space in community centers for indoor recreation facilities for cardiac rehab that offsets operating costs. Ms. Toole stated Ms. Tierney secured the Needs Assessment from Holy Redeemer, and they are looking at that to see if there is partnership potential. Ms. Toole stated she worked on the Doylestown bike path system, and they received significant Federal funds for that. She stated they went to the Doylestown Hospital CEO and asked for an in-kind service match, and the Hospital gave them the requested amount of \$150,000 in in-kind services as the match for the Grant funding.

Ms. Toole stated forming partnerships is critical. She stated she and Ms. Tierney had a meeting with Dr. Smith, Pennsbury School District Superintendent, who is interested in partnerships. Ms. Toole stated the pool at Pennsbury needs re-vitalization, and she knows from the outreach in the community that there are needs beyond the swim season that the Township pool is open. She stated the School District advised that fewer than 30% of their students are engaged in activities after School, and she has heard it said that the hours of 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. are the most dangerous hours in America since 70% of School students are not involved in after School activities. She stated she does not have the breakdown for Lower Makefield, but she does not feel it is too far off. Ms. Toole stated those who are involved in after school activities are mostly involved in sports, but there are kids who do not play organized sports such as the "skaters, BMXers," musicians, dramatic performers, artists, and performing artists; and currently they are not getting services because of the limits in programming, staff, and indoor facilities. She stated that goes back to a partnership with Dr. Smith and the School District. Ms. Toole stated they are looking at a partnership for program expansion with Dr. Smith and the surrounding Municipalities. She stated they have already created a funding solution where over the next year, they can discuss the potential for working together on providing programs. She stated the benefit would be that the Township's limited investment would have a huge return, and the Township would generate revenue through the programs. She stated this would have a great positive impact on a population that most needs it – those in middle school, the "tweens," and early teens.

Mr. Wysocki stated Mr. Blundi had earlier discussed turf versus grass fields. Mr. Wysocki stated he was on the YMS Board when the turf field was put in, and it resulted in a “staggering” improvement in utilization. He stated if they were to play on a grass field the same amount played on a turf field, the grass would be obliterated. He stated there is definitely a multiple-field impact if a turf field is put in. He stated if they were to add lights on top of that, he feels YMS would agree that it would be a significant benefit to have more lighted turf fields if they cannot get a larger number of grass fields. Ms. Toole agreed. She stated while soccer is a big advocate, we need to look at all of the sports and general public access.

Ms. Tierney stated her understanding is that when we do the analysis, if YMS were to install two additional turf fields, that would be part of the assessment; and Ms. Toole agreed. Ms. Toole stated all ideas should be on the table. Mr. Wysocki stated he does not feel that they should just think it has to be a YMS investment to do that, because if YMS were to invest in that, they would deservedly have primary access to it; however, if the Township were to put in a multi-purpose turf field it could be used for disc players and other sport groups who would be interested in using it. Ms. Toole stated that should be a consideration. She stated any investment that is made is on land that is owned by the taxpayers, and it is not owned by any one organization; and that is why the policies need to be orchestrated in a fair way so that it is fair to everyone.

Mr. Brody thanked Ms. Toole, Ms. Tierney, and the different Ad Hoc Committees who helped build this product. He stated while he would like to see something done at Macclesfield, he would not consider doing anything there without something else already built to handle all the use that is already at Macclesfield. He stated a field was already lost when the Dog Park was built. He stated the order of operations has to be done correctly. Mr. Brody stated they are going through the CAPRA process, doing all of these assessments, and getting input, and he is looking forward to seeing how we can pursue these opportunities with the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Michael Hansen, 13 Houston Road, thanked Ms. Toole for the presentation. He stated twice Ms. Toole mentioned needing to clean up policies at Macclesfield Park, and he asked her to describe what that means. Ms. Toole stated there are some policies that could possibly help Macclesfield in both its current operation and in future improvements. She stated one would be to look at what is the turn-over in game time, and how many minutes are between the competition schedule for people coming and going. She stated

she has been there and seen how long it takes to get from one end of the Park out of the Park because of turn-over times. She stated one of the reasons that happens is because they are so limited by space and the turn-over is very quick between games without adequate time for turn-over between games with people coming and going. She stated at this point she feels there is a need to discuss this.

She stated the second discussion would be on investment particularly with YMS since they are heavy investors at Macclesfield; however, what they are investing in is land that is owned by the public. She stated there are others who want to use the facilities and “show up at the Park, which is the public estate.” Ms. Toole stated in this process they have heard is anecdotal information about Park visitors using Macclesfield and feeling uncomfortable because it does not feel like a public park, and it feels like a private facility that people invest in. She stated what they need to figure out is what are the policies. She stated it is usually termed a “gift policy” when a group donates to a Municipality for a specific purpose, and we need to consider what that means in terms of ownership, control, access by the public, scheduling, etc. She stated there needs to be a balance between recognition that it is owned by the general public but there are investments by private organizations. She stated they are looking into other examples as to how gift policies actually get enacted on use of facilities on publicly-owned land.

Mr. Hansen stated Ms. Toole also brought up Five Mile Woods. He stated he has personally led over fifty hikes at the Five Mile Woods during the pandemic with a number of groups of people, and the number of Township residents that he invited to these hikes that had never been there or even knew what or where it was, was staggering. He stated that is a resource the he feels could be heavily leveraged. Ms. Toole agreed and stated she does plan to talk to Mr. Hansen in the future.

Mr. Bill Gaboda, 1230 Ash Lane, thanked Ms. Tierney and Ms. Toole for the Plan. He asked if they will be able to see the Plan, and Ms. Tierney stated they are still working on it adding that the Park & Recreation Board is just seeing it for the first time as well. She stated once the Plan is complete and all the editing is done, they will make it available to the Board and the public.

Mr. Gaboda stated with regard to Snipes, it has been left alone for a long time; and he would like to see the Snipes site evaluated as well as the Macclesfield site. He stated at the Snipes property there are many native plants that are

growing there, and it would be good to know what, if anything, needs to be protected there. He added that the Audubon Society can help with that as well as the Natural Lands Trust, but the Township would have to ask them for this help. He stated the costs would be minimal.

Mr. Rich May, 1270 Creamery Road, stated his driveway is straight across the street from the Snipes fields. He stated fourteen Variances had been identified that were required a few years ago when the Township was looking to build three Lacrosse fields there and included a traffic study, which was not conducted in a proper manner. He stated there were concerns about flooding that would occur down Dolington Road during storms, unsuitable parking space, and the fact that the Snipes field is directly across the street from two schools. Mr. May stated it takes him fifteen minutes to get out of his driveway in the morning because all of the traffic going to the schools.

Mr. May stated it appears that the Township is now willing to spend some money to do something at Snipes adding the last time the fields were “abandoned” because the Township found itself to be out of money. He stated the Township just sold the rights to the Sewer system, and the Township will be getting \$53 million. He stated a good use of some of that money would be to lower the taxes that are about to go up for our Sewer bills because the company who bought the Sewer rights are going to raise our Sewer fees as they have done it everywhere else.

Mr. May stated “now there is found money, and it looks like drunken sailors, where every time you find some money you want to go out and buy some fields or spend money on that.” Mr. Brody stated they have put a lot of time and energy into these meetings, and he asked that Mr. May not refer to the staff, the Board members, or anyone who has put time in as “drunken sailors.”

Mr. May stated one of the things he has seen with the Board of Supervisors is in order to leave some kind of a legacy it is helpful to go out and do something like build a dog park or buy a golf course. He stated there does not appear to be anything to be gained by just paying our bills and “not being broke as we were a couple of years ago,” and being fiscally responsible. He stated Lower Makefield has a phenomenal amount of facilities. He stated we have a golf course, a swimming pool, and a dog park; and he does not know of anyone else who has a dog park. He stated we also have Macclesfield.

Mr. May stated he understands that at Macclesfield there are two large tournaments which bring people in from the tri-State area, and there are hundreds of soccer teams. He stated he understands that the Revenue that generates does not accrue to Lower Makefield Township. Ms. Tierney stated they are charged Fees, and that money goes into the Park & Recreation Department Budget. Mr. May asked if YMS does not get some of that; and Ms. Tierney stated YMS does get money, but they are charged Fees for the tournaments. Mr. May stated since the Township owns the fields, the Township should get all of the Revenue. Ms. Tierney stated YMS runs the Tournaments as fundraisers.

Mr. Krauss stated what Ms. Toole has developed with input from Township residents and participants is an assessment of needs. He stated the objective of this project was to identify what the public wants in terms of parks and recreation for the Township. He stated this is a Strategic Plan based on everyone's input, and not just one group. He stated over two thousand people participated in the survey. Mr. May stated many of those were YMS people. Mr. Krauss stated that is not known. Mr. Krauss stated the job of the Park & Rec Board is to put forth a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors. He stated Mr. May has the opportunity to go in front of the Board of Supervisors and tell them what he is telling the Park & Rec Board today. He stated the Park & Rec Board's role is to identify the needs that came out in the assessment and try to build a diverse plan for all individuals and not just one group or the other, and do what is best for Lower Makefield. Mr. Krauss stated he has lived here for twenty-six years and participated in many different activities including sports, Five Mile Woods, tennis, arts and crafts; and there are a lot of activities in the Township. He stated they are trying to make sure that we continue to build and provide opportunities, and that is what this project was for.

Mr. May asked if part of that is an indication in the study to determine whether the age of the people we are building this out for is changing. He stated the age of the Township is getting older and fewer of them are going to be playing soccer, Lacrosse, etc. Mr. Krauss stated while we can look at the Census Studies, in his neighborhood, when people move out, families with young children move in. He stated a lot of the organizations are at capacity based on the availability of the space that there is today. He stated this is all not about kids as there is adult recreation and Seniors, and they have all provided input in terms of what their needs are. He stated the Community Center has the Seniors there now, and that is still not enough space. He stated they are trying to identify what the needs are.

Mr. Cameron Lackpour, 28 Sunnyside Lane, asked about the recommendation for an additional eighty acres, and asked if that is going to be actively pursued. Mr. Krauss stated Ms. Toole has indicated that is the size of a complex that would be required to accommodate the necessary sports fields and other amenities. He stated he understands that is about the same size as Macclesfield. Ms. Toole agreed that the Township would need another Macclesfield. She stated the absolute minimum size for a sports-oriented facility is fifty-five acres. She stated she is finding that the Township would need that and more for the Play For All so that there are facilities for everybody, and that there is a connection with nature. Ms. Toole stated what she would like to see ideally in community parks is at least a third of the park size has a natural resource foundation in it. She stated eighty acres is a minimum to get the Township what it really wants. Ms. Toole stated Macclesfield should work if it is designed to its proper capacity with parking and associated uses. She stated the eighty acres is based on best park-planning practices and what the community needs.

Mr. Brody stated CAPRA is a “black diamond project manager” for Park & Rec. He stated the Park & Recreation Board pursued CAPRA accreditation, and we will be the first Park & Rec system in Pennsylvania to get that. He stated part of that process is doing the Needs Assessment. He stated it is not that they are pursuing Snipes because we sold the Sewer system, it is because we are pursuing a CAPRA accreditation, and the document that is being reviewed today is part of the result of that process.

Mr. Lackpour stated he understands that the additional eighty acres will be part of a recommended Plan, and the Board of Supervisors will make the final decision. Mr. Krauss agreed adding that Ms. Toole has indicated that there are 1,100 acres available, and Mr. Lackpour stated he would like the Township to buy all of it.

Mr. George Schlieben, 1035 Harvard Drive, stated he is the current President of YMS. He thanked everyone for going through this very collaborative process which YMS has been happy to be part of. He stated YMS is happy to discuss a partnership that would help move the process forward. He stated he feels all of the Leagues are trying their best to serve the youth of the community. He stated there are almost 900 registered to play in the YMS rec program in the spring.

Ms. Tierney stated she would like to have a more formal Special Meeting, and Tuesday, March 15 is available at 7:30 p.m. Ms. Tierney stated this would provide time to read the document, and the Park & Rec Board could then consider making a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Brody moved to have a Special Meeting to discuss the Play For All Lower Makefield Township's Plan for Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails on March 15 at 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Wysocki asked if a Motion was required to have a meeting, and Ms. Tierney stated she was not sure a Motion was required. She stated she would have to advertise it tomorrow.

It was the consensus of the Board to have a Special Meeting on March 15.

Mr. Krauss stated at that meeting the full Plan will be presented, and it will be posted on the Township Website. Ms. Tierney stated she hopes to post it prior to the meeting.

Mr. McCartney stated he did not see anything about the analysis of lighting Caiola fields and the effect that might have from a PAA and Macclesfield standpoint. Ms. Toole stated they did not go through the whole Capital Improvement Program, but it is being recommended that the Township continue on the Capital Improvement Program which includes the ball field lighting for Caiola and improvements at the Pool. Ms. Toole stated tonight she presented the big picture of how all of these pieces are tied together, and the Capital Improvements should come into the discussion as there is a need for the lights there. Mr. McCartney stated he feels they need to consider adding lights to Caiola and re-configuring what is at Macclesfield. He stated what needs to be determined is how many user hours are needed at Macclesfield for individual clubs, and if adding turf and lights could fulfill those needs for user hours at Macclesfield especially if there were lighted fields at Caiola.

Mr. McCartney asked Ms. Toole what is the typical recreation space needed in a Township based on population and demographics. Ms. Toole stated currently the Township is at about twenty-three acres per thousand. She added that there is no National standard, and the recommendation is what is the Township's level of service. She stated what they are seeing is that twenty-three acres per thousand is not meeting the Township's needs.

Ms. Toole stated at this point she cannot state what adding eighty acres would bring the number up to. She noted the State Maryland has a standard of thirty-five acres per thousand. She stated she is not sure what Lower Makefield's neighboring communities have, but she stated Upper Dublin is at about thirty-two acres per thousand. She stated the real message from the National Recreation and Park Association is that you need to attend to your own community.

Mr. McCartney stated if you look at the usable hours of the twenty-three acres, would that change by adding lights or turf fields to the existing infrastructure. Ms. Toole stated lights and turf fields help a lot in terms of use even though it would require additional maintenance. She stated they have been looking at some other alternatives, and she and Ms. Tierney have been discussing a standard practice that is used in Washington which gets a lot of rain, and they use an alternative soccer surface which is playable just after a rain, although it does "not look good," and it looks like a baseball infield. She stated they have to consider the sensibility of Lower Makefield Township, and whether the Township residents would appreciate those kinds of out-of-the box alternatives since it is not a green grass field. She stated Macclesfield cannot be maintained as a green grass field now. Ms. Tierney asked if we studied Macclesfield Park, would we be assessing those things, and Ms. Toole agreed.

LIAISON REPORT

Ms. Noelle Codispoti, 1908 S. Crescent Boulevard, PAA Commissioner, stated they are gearing up for the start of the season although technically, there is only one month of the year for baseball/softball when nothing is going on. She stated they are planning their field maintenance day and will put the nets back up on the batting cages. She stated teams are being drafted and finalized and uniforms are being ordered. She stated there are fifty-nine teams on the baseball side from age three up to sixteen years old including two travel teams at every age group. She stated on the softball side there are eleven travel teams and four in-house teams at every age group. She stated their numbers are up overall compared to last year and compared to 2019. She stated there are also two Magik teams that will play on Saturdays.

Ms. Codispoti stated they will partner with the Township to resurface fields again this year. She stated last year they partnered with the Township to resurface the three Fred Allan fields, and they are draining much better than they were; and they were playable a day after heavy downpours. She stated by the end of the summer

they hope to do the three Stoddard fields and the Pool field in the same way. Ms. Tierney stated they will continue to go through that as an improvement project each year rotating through the fields. She stated technically it should be done every year, but on a Municipal Budget that is not realistic. Ms. Codispoti stated that is also true for a non-profit Budget. Ms. Tierney stated the Turface material was purchased, and the vendor taught them how to cycle in the Turface every year to help with the drainage.

Mr. Krauss stated the Township's Disability Board was talking about inclusivity in the Parks and programs for those with special needs, and they did not seem to be familiar with all the programs in the Township. Ms. Tierney stated both PAA and YMS have accessible programs, and there is also chair yoga, Zumba, and deep water aerobics so there are other adaptable programs. Ms. Codispoti stated the Magik program is now for all ages, and the Directors will break up the sessions so that they are age-appropriate or level-appropriate. Ms. Tierney asked that PAA and YMS send their information on these programs, and she will send them to the Disability Advisory Board for their packet.

RECREATION DIRECTOR REPORT

CAPRA Updates

Ms. Tierney stated they are on track for submission. She stated they took a training on how the virtual visit will be done. She stated they were given recommendations from other Townships who have done virtual visits. She stated we will be creating a video including the staff in the parks. She stated the Youth Committee is reassembling, and they will start doing interviews for the Youth Committee. The Youth Committee will reach out to all of our partner organizations and create a community welcome box with things from each organization such as a letter, a note from a child, a note from a Senior, or a painting from one of the art classes to show what our recreation programs look like. She asked for suggestions of what else should be included from the community such as a local shop or vendor. She stated this will include all the Park participants including 9/11, Friends of Five Mile Woods, the Veterans Committee, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, etc. so that there will be a snapshot of what our community is about. She stated there are four people who will be reviewing our parks, and we will be making four packages. Ms. Tierney stated the professional videographers will be assisting with this.

Ms. Tierney stated the Township now has TikTok.

Pool Updates

Ms. Tierney stated they are ahead of benchmarks with regard to Registration percentages. She stated as of today we are over \$600,000 in Registrations. She stated the Seniors are excited about the new pricing, and we are well over our total annual projection which was 600 Seniors; and we already have 850 Registered. Ms. Tierney stated the target for Registrations by the end of March was \$583,000 and for the full year it was \$1.1 million. Mr. Krauss asked if it is felt that because the prices went up, more people joined earlier; and Ms. Tierney stated they will have to keep an eye on that.

Mr. Brody asked if there are enough people so that the Pool can be kept open all day. Ms. Tierney stated they are still doing interviews. She stated we need fifteen more lifeguards to reach the ideal number which would be sixty lifeguards, and there are ten applicants to be interviewed. She stated for maintenance we need twenty-five more people, and there are a lot of applicants for maintenance. She stated we only need one more gate attendant, and there are seven more applicants. Mr. Brody stated the last two years, the hours were extended; and he asked if there was a full day with no gap, what close time would be anticipated. Ms. Tierney stated she is not sure of that yet, and they are still evaluating how the numbers pan out.

Camp/Programming Update

Ms. Tierney stated they found a way to expand the Camp with a temporary air-conditioned tent; and they will do that this summer to try to accommodate more residents. Numbers were provided to the Park & Recreation Board which include people who withdrew because they did not know soon enough if they were going to be able to get in and how many people are currently wait listed even after the expansion of the numbers.

Mr. Brody asked the cost for Camp per week, and Ms. Tierney stated it varies based on a four, six, or eight-week program. She stated that price includes all of the trips, supplies, and activities. Campers bring their own lunch.

Ms. Tierney stated with regard to Programming, they had to limit space in some of the classes because there is not enough room. She noted that most of the programs are full. Mr. Krauss asked if they consider not having the programs that are not full and instead run duplicate classes for those that are full, and Ms. Tierney stated they have to work with the instructor's availability. She stated if registrations are under a certain number by the start of class, they do cancel it if it is not going to work out unless it is a new class when they are a little more lenient, and they try to market it a little more.

Ms. Tierney stated with regard to hiring for Summer Camp, they are doing fantastic. She stated because there is such a demand for the tween population, they are trying to create a separate tween program with separate staffing. She stated they want to make it a special program that is more targeted to that age. She stated there are a number of families waiting for that program, and she is hoping to be able to launch it soon so that the tweens would be in a different setting.

Memorial Park Update

Ms. Tierney stated she is waiting to hear when the pickleball/tennis courts will be completed; and as soon as she hears something, she will e-mail the Board. She stated they need to have a certain temperature for three days in a row and the contractor has to be available at the same time. She is working with Mr. Pockl to get this done.

Ms. Tierney stated in the Board's packet was a preliminary cost estimate and Resolution which was approved to be signed by the Board of Supervisors at their last meeting to apply for a DCED Grant that would cover work at Memorial Park. She stated because some work has been done there already, that is being used as a match for the work that still needs to be done. She stated this is the total Plan that had been discussed and would finish the project.

Mr. Brody asked if that would be considered a Play For All park, and Ms. Tierney agreed. She stated going through the process, in the Plan will be seen projects that are already in progress that should continue as is, and there are also plans that should be shifted based on other findings. Ms. Tierney stated Memorial Park meets the Play For All model.

Ms. Tierney stated the Grant Application is due on March 15, but she does not feel we will hear about it for a few months. Mr. Krauss asked if there could be a groundbreaking in the fall; and Ms. Tierney stated if we get the Grant, it could potentially happen this year.

Pool Painting and Community Park Tennis/Basketball Court Repairs

Ms. Tierney stated that the Pool Painting project and Community Park tennis/basketball court repairs were approved at the last Board of Supervisors' meeting. She stated repair of the basketball courts was an add-on to the Bidding project; and since the price came in right, they are going to move forward with that as well. She stated they will be repairing the cracking at the tennis courts and basketball courts and repainting. There was discussion whether additional lining could be done for pickleball; and Ms. Tierney stated while she could look into that to see what the added cost would be, those tennis courts are heavily used at times.

Mr. McCartney asked the ratio between tennis courts and pickleball courts. Mr. Krauss stated some of the courts are convertible. Ms. Tierney stated there are fourteen tennis courts and four dedicated pickleball courts although of the fourteen courts, Cardinal and Revere are convertible which would add seven pickleball courts.

Mr. Krauss stated if the Community Park tennis courts could be made convertible for pickleball it would add inventory and also there are lights which none of the pickleball courts have today.

Mr. McCartney stated they should consider if there is more movement toward pickleball from tennis given the demographics. Ms. Tierney stated she feels that Schuyler is going to have to be closed so that it can be repaired because it is not in good condition, and that will impact tennis inventory for a little bit.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Blundi stated they were going to discuss League sanctioning a few months ago, and that has not come back. Ms. Tierney stated she will have to wait to bring that back until after the Master Plan Strategic Plan since she wants to spend time going over League sanctioning with the Leagues, and she does not have that kind of time right now.

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Mr. Brody asked the timeline for the Oxford Valley Road/Community Trail bike path, and Ms. Tierney stated she believes it should be done closer to the fall; and while she would have liked it to have been done before Camp, she does not feel that is realistic.

There being no further business, Mr. Brody moved, Mr. Wysocki seconded and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Douglas Krauss, Chair