

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
PARK & RECREATION BOARD
MINUTES – NOVEMBER 12, 2024

The regular meeting of the Park & Recreation Board of the Township of Lower Makefield was held in the Municipal Building on November 12, 2024. Mr. Krauss called the meeting to order and called the Roll.

Those present:

Park & Recreation Board: Douglas Krauss, Chair
Michael Brody, Vice Chair
Kim Rock, Secretary
Mike Blundi, Member
Rob LaBar, Member
Dennis Wysocki, Member

Others: Monica Tierney, Park & Recreation Director

Absent: Matt Ross, Supervisor Liaison

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Wysocki moved, Mr. Brody seconded, and it was unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of October 8, 2024.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. James Meade, 1383 Chase Road, suggested that the tennis courts be lined for pickleball which would alleviate some of the backup on the pickleball courts. He also commented on the lower cost of joining Middletown to play pickleball on newer courts with lights.

3. DIRECTORS REPORT

A. Budget and Revenue Performance

- a. User fees now cover 71% of operational costs, a significant increase from last year's 53%.
- b. Expanded funding is allocated for field maintenance by an external contractor.

B. Summer Camp

- a. 2024 saw a 149% cost recovery, The surplus funds a percentage of supporting full-time staff, use of the community center, and use of the Pool.
- b. For 2025, camp size may decrease if additional school district space is unavailable. Flexible scheduling and sibling discounts will continue.
- c. Fee adjustments include increased rates for the Tween program due to trip costs and a new \$20 weekly withdrawal fee.

C. Pickleball Membership

- a. Membership fees will increase by \$5 for the six-month option to cover administrative costs, the one-year membership will stay the same. The new registration app has improved services and community engagement.
- b. Mr. Blundi did not support the fee increase.

D. Dog Park Membership

- a. Membership declined post-COVID as residents returned to work. Efforts to increase membership will focus on marketing and communication.

E. Community Pool

- a. The pool achieved a 103% cost recovery. Proposed updates include a heater replacement funded by Fee-In-Lieu and an annual 2% fee increase to maintain affordability.

F. Technology Upgrades

- a. Prioritized improvements include registration software, updated security systems, payroll systems and placer.ai a tool for measuring use of passive recreation and overall usage. Investments aim to streamline operations and maximize ROI.
- b. Board members were asked to provide Ms. Tierney with their prioritized list for Technology.

G. Fleet

- a. A \$73,200 lease-purchase plan will replace aging equipment.

H. Capital Projects

- a. Key projects for 2025 include Memorial Park Expansion, trail maintenance, and Kids Kingdom redesign. Failure to complete the Memorial Park Expansion could jeopardize a \$900,000 grant.
- b. Board members were asked to provide Ms. Tierney with their prioritized list for Capital Projects.

F. Board Decisions and Next Steps

- a. The proposed budget will be submitted to the Board of Supervisors.
- b. Board members will prioritize capital projects and Technology for 2025.
- c. Discussions on additional revenue opportunities and long-term planning for facilities and programs will continue.

Mr. Wysocki moved and Mr. LaBar seconded to submit the proposed Park & Rec Budget as presented tonight to the Board of Supervisors.

Discussion

Pickleball Membership Fee:

The Board discussed a proposed \$5 increase for the six-month pickleball membership fee. While Mr. Blundi and Mr. Kraus opposed the increase, other members supported it, citing the additional administrative costs it would address.

Security Camera Costs:

Mr. Scott Stebbins, Mr. Scott Stebbins, 1337 Edgewood Road, suggested that the Police Department cover the expense of security cameras at the Pool and Kids Kingdom to ease the Parks & Recreation budget. Ms. Tierney explained that while the Police utilize the cameras, her department also relies on them for operational purposes. She highlighted that the General Fund is near its millage cap, limiting funding flexibility.

Pool Usage and Liability:

Ms. Tierney noted that the Pool, despite operating only 14 weeks annually, remains the Township's most heavily utilized program, with 6,500 members last year and 7,500 the year before. This high participation significantly increases liability, emphasizing the importance of security measures.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. NEW PROGRAMS

Lower Makefield Township has introduced several innovative programs to enhance its recreational offerings:

- Trips Program: Partnering with an outside agency, the Township will receive a percentage of sales revenue, similar to its current ticket sales model.
- New Classes: Upcoming offerings include Chair Yoga, Soundbath, Mommy and Me Playground sessions, and additional outdoor classes.
- River Integration: Collaboration with an external company will expand outdoor programming and increase utilization of the Township's riverfront areas.

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- **Diverse Additions:** A variety of other programs were previewed, reflecting the Township's commitment to broadening recreational opportunities for all residents.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kim Rock Secretary