**MINUTES OF THE PARK COMMISSION MEETING HELD JUNE 14, 2021**

**PRESENT:** Wesley Posvar, Chairperson; Jim Pashek, Liz Nelson, Carrie Casey Leemhuis, Michael Schiller, Jessica DeMoise, Jessie Handron, Members; Gary Koehler, Borough Manager; Alex Scott, Mayor; Dempsey Bruce, PWD Superintendent; David Laux, Police Chief; Shawn Peterson, Borough Secretary

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mandy Steele, Fox Chapel Parks Conservancy; Richard Wendell, Resident

**ABSENT:** Susan Crookston, Jay Troutman, Members

Mr. Posvar called the meeting to order at 9:03 AM.

The minutes of the May 10, 2021, meeting were unanimously approved.

**McCAHILL PARK UPDATE**

Mr. Posvar stated that concrete would be poured soon at Annie’s Field of Dreams so the playhouses can be placed directly on the concrete when they arrive.

Mr. Pashek updated the Commission on Phase II of the McCahill Park construction. He stated that Pashek +MTR had established the development documents, including a loop trail encompassing the ball fields, an all-season court that will include pickleball, basketball, and ice skating rink, and the two ball fields will be updated. With the addition of more grant money, stormwater issues will be addressed as part of the master plan as well.

**PLANTING UPDATE- HARDIE VALLEY PARK**

Ms. Casey updated the commission on the native plantings going on at Hardie Valley Park. With the Garden Club of Allegheny County donation of $10,000, Ms. Casey ordered trees and shrubs from four different nurseries. She planted almost 100 trees, shrubs, and perennials at the waterfall area with the help of volunteers and a Public Works crew. In addition, nearly fifty trees were planted with the donation of $5,000 from Seeders and Weeders at the park entrance. Almost 100 students from Shady Side joined the volunteers during this time and were educated about native plant species and invasive plants like Garlic Mustard.

Ms. Casey noted that many people walking in the park during the planting days have asked to volunteer to help care for the new trees, shrubs, and perennials.

Mr. Posvar thanked Ms. Casey for her exceptional efforts.

**DOGS IN PARKS**

Chief Laux was in attendance to give an enforcement update on parking permit citations. He stated that there have only been seven new citations issued. In addition, the Police Department is finding fewer violations, fewer dog complaints at the parks, and no major parking issues since the beginning of the enforcement. Chief Laux asked the Park Commission to consider expanding the parking at Riding Meadow Park to accommodate more cars.

It was brought up that people are now parking at Scott Park to avoid having a parking permit. These individuals are taking their dogs through Scott Park to access Riding Meadow Park. Scott Park does not allow dogs, as it is a right-of-way used by the Borough on Shady Side Academy and Pittsburgh Field Club properties. Signs posted stating No Dogs Allowed, and Permit Parking Only were removed at Scott Park by an unknown person(s) and had been reinstalled by Public Works. Chief Laux noted that officers would begin enforcing the area of Scott Park to ensure dogs are not allowed.

A Task Force consisting of Ms. DeMoise, Ms. Handron, Ms. Nelson, and Mr. Posvar from the Park Commission, and residents Ms. Mandy Steele, Mr. Richard Wendell, Mr. Jim Herald will meet periodically throughout the summer to discuss dogs in the parks. An update will be provided to the Park Commission at the September 13, 2021, Park Meeting.

**FOX CHAPEL PARKS CONSERVANCY**

Ms. Steele was in attendance to discuss the summer lantern event’s plans. The free event will be held on Friday, July 16, 2021, at Hardie Valley Park, with a rain date of Saturday, July 17, 2021. The event will begin at 8:30 PM and conclude at 10:00 PM. A shuttle service will be available from Fairview Elementary School to Hardie Valley Park. The Pittsburgh Opera and Attack Theater will start performing at 9:00 PM for the event, with singers and dancers located throughout the trail.

**COMMISSION TERM RENEWAL**

Mr. Posvar alerted the commission members to Mr. Troutman’s term expiration. As Chair, Mr. Posvar recommended the re-appointment of Mr. Troutman. Mr. Pashek moved to recommend to Council the re-appointment of Mr. Troutman to the Park Commission. The motion was seconded by Ms. Casey and passed by a unanimous vote.

**INVASIVES – WOOLLY ADELGID**

Mr. Koehler informed the commission that the Borough hired Eichelaub Inc. to treat the Hemlock trees in Hardie Valley Park for woolly adelgid. A grant is being used to offset the cost.

**PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

Mr. Koehler stated that a requisition was signed with LSSE for a stepping stone bridge crossing permit from DEP for Hardie Valley Park and Riding Meadow Park.

Mr. Bruce noted the bridges were repaired on the Trillium Trail, as well as the fences. He informed the Commission that Public Works maintains the main trails in the Borough. Therefore, Public Works crews cannot maintain any off-shoots from the main trails that serve individual properties.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS/EVENTS**

* Fox Chapel Parks Conservancy Summer Lantern Event – Friday, July 16th 8:30 PM – 10:00 PM (Rain date July 17, 2021)
* Park Commission Meeting – September 13, 2021, 9:00 AM (Plan on an in-person meeting.)

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:54 AM.

Shawn M. Peterson

BOROUGH SECRETARY