



# LANSDOWNE BOROUGH

## PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD MINUTES

### SEPTEMBER 19<sup>TH</sup>, 2022

*Meeting was called to order at 7:07 PM.*

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Erica Sollberger (Director), attending Board members included Ronald Bailey Ford, Mary Catherine Berner (Secretary), William Griffin, and Joe Grubb (Chair). No members of the public were present.

**AGENDA:**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/10vnhPPpMp\\_LV4PZxHjFNnzxHbrPVYum\\_6IJA120z30](https://docs.google.com/document/d/10vnhPPpMp_LV4PZxHjFNnzxHbrPVYum_6IJA120z30)

**DISCUSSIONS & DECISIONS**

**Borough Council Business**

- i. Borough Council Business could not be discussed due to absences.

**Vice Chair**

- i. Reminder that the Parks and Recreation Board needs a Vice Chair. Mr. Grubb and Ms. Berner have filled the roles of Chair and Secretary.

**2022 Events Calendar**

- i. August 26<sup>th</sup> was the last Parks and Recreation's Movie Night with Finding Nemo. Attendance was lower at this event than at the previous ones. *[Discussed further in bullet v.]*
- ii. The EAC's Plant-Based Community Fun Day happened on August 27<sup>th</sup> at Hays Park. It is estimated that the Council handed out roughly 750 flyers and 30 people attended the event.
- iii. Reservoir Park's cleanup was on September 10<sup>th</sup>. Four people participated, three of which were P&R Board members. Japanese hops and knotweed removal were the primary focus. Multiple residents stopped by and said they did not know the event was happening; one person did not know the Borough had a website. *[Discussed further in bullet vi.]*
- iv. The Community Bike Ride and Walk took place on September 17<sup>th</sup> to celebrate the installation of the bike lanes. Feedback was very positive and the idea of a monthly/more frequent bike ride was discussed. Previously, the Boy Scouts and Lansdowne Police had bike safety events.
- v. *[Movie Night cont.]* Attendance has tapered off from the first event to the last, dropping from 50 people to around 20. There is no barrier to entry; it appears a lack of awareness is the main contributor to low participation. For the 2023 season, the Twentieth Century Club can be reserved on the same nights in case of poor weather so events don't have to be rescheduled last minute. Finding Nemo was rescheduled twice due to rain.

- vi. *[Park Cleanups cont.]* Participation has dropped significantly as the year goes on. Late 2021 cleanups had 10-15 volunteers each but subsequently declined, especially after Sycamore Park's April cleanup. Better outreach is needed not only to make the public aware of events but to better gauge when things should be scheduled.

### **Model of Public Engagement**

- i. Long-range planning was tabled due to attendance. Ms. Sollberger will send out related information and give Board members a month to review. Equity and inclusion are goals but better engagement also gives the P&R Board an opportunity to aid Borough Council in decisions.
- ii. Six children suggested park names for the Tot Lot in May, not a sufficient sample size. Borough Council has to decide whether or not to re-open the naming contest; it may or may not come back to P&R.

### **Outreach**

- i. Online outreach can be improved. Currently, most announcements and advertising go on the Borough website and in the monthly newsletter.
  - a. Ms. Sollberger manages the P&R Board Facebook page. Ms. Berner volunteered to share events like park cleanups to local groups like Lansdowne Proud, Lansdowne Garden Club, etc.
  - b. QR codes on park signs are an option to provide park-specific information for visitors. A sub-committee (consisting of Mr. Grubb and Ms. Berner) was made to work on this further.
  - c. The EAC gathered ~70 emails from people who would be interested in volunteering for park and nature-related activities.
- ii. Message boards were suggested in this month's Environment, Parks, and Recreation Committee meeting as a place to post Borough news in an effort to increase engagement. Belmont and Hays were two pilot parks proposed as they are on opposite sides of town. Upgrading the message board in the Landing also discussed, but the NV5 plans for the Landing have bicycle parking where the current board is. Community Relations will also be working on this proposal.
- iii. The idea of a large banner to advertise events was positively received. Targeted flyer distribution at specific locations (local businesses, churches, parks) was also thought to be a good idea. Widely distributing flyers wasn't seen in a positive light due to environmental concerns for paper use and contributing to litter.
- iv. Working in tandem with sister groups under the Environment, Parks, and Recreation Committee would be beneficial in building relationships. Attending meetings held by these groups can be informative for P&R Board members.
  - a. Environmental Advisory Council meets on the first Friday of the month at 6 PM.
  - b. Shade Tree Commission meets the second Wednesday at 6:30 PM.
  - c. Environment, Parks, & Recreation meets on the second Monday at 6 PM.  
→ Borough calendar: <https://www.lansdowneborough.com/calendar>

### **Public Trash & Recycling Plan**

- i. Re-evaluating locations of trashcans throughout the borough was discussed, to ensure they are in ideal locations. Replacing and upgrading receptacles was mentioned so all are

similar in appearance and the public would know where to dispose of trash. This falls under Infrastructure's responsibility.

- ii. Sanitation picks up residential waste while Public Works handles Borough-owned trashcans. Receptacles are emptied on a M/W/F schedule during warmer months when parks are visited more, M/F in cooler months.

#### **INFORMATIONAL UPDATES**

- i. The Borough is working on getting estimates for private contractors to maintain Gateway Slope due to a lapse in care by the installing contractor; the Borough is not formally maintaining the park due to contractual agreements. Installing contractor did weed whacking and treatment but the aesthetic is not satisfactory. White concrete blocks are going to be stained as per original plans; unsure as to whether or not installing contractor is going to complete or if the Borough is going to need to outsource. Staining was included in the contract but payment has not been released.
- ii. Reservoir Park's contract ends in January. From that point, the Borough will maintain it more regularly. Like Gateway Slope, installing contractor is not coming out as frequently to maintain.
- iii. McKinley Tot Lot is continuing construction. The fencing is complete and play equipment is being installed. Contractors are getting work done and doing a good job.
- iv. Naming contest will go back to Borough Council for re-opening.
- v. One estimate was received for the basketball equipment installation at Interboro Park. Original estimate was \$5k in late 2019 and new estimate from the same contractor is \$8k. Another contractor gave a verbal estimate. Installation includes stem, backboard, rim, and footing. Other contractors were contacted but did not return calls.

#### **QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, AND INPUT FOR DIRECTOR**

- i. Ms. Berner had questions regarding park maintenance and whether or not the Borough is at capacity for what can be maintained well, especially considering more projects are in progress and being proposed. Hiring more staff and budget were discussed.
- ii. Mr. Grubb asked if there was money in the budget for fencing and/or seating in Marlyn Park.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

*Meeting was adjourned at 8:21 PM.*

The next Parks and Recreation Board meeting is scheduled to take place on October 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM at the Twentieth Century Club (85 S. Lansdowne Ave) and via Zoom.