



COUNTY OF DELAWARE
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COUNCIL
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CHAIR

PARKS AND RECREATION
MARC J. MANFRE
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ELAINE PAUL SCHAEFER
VICE CHAIR

Delaware County Park Board Meeting

March 8, 2023

12:00 p.m.

KEVIN M. MADDEN
CHRISTINE A. REUTHER
RICHARD R. WOMACK

Location: Zoom meeting

Attendees:

- **Board:** Marc Manfre, Director of Parks & Recreation; Stephanie Gaboriault; Trish McFarland; Kathy Lopez; John McMullan; Parker Snowe; Barron Lacy; Bridget O’Donnell
- **County:** Councilperson Elaine Paul Schaefer, County Council Liaison; Francine Locke, Executive Director, Chief Sustainability Office; Steven Beckley, Planning manager, Open Space and Trails
- **Guest:** Danielle Floyd, Director of Public Works
- **Not present:** Beth Chapman, Kelly Johnson, Nicholas Furman, Nicholas Hoyt
- Minutes by Carol Tustin
- **Call to Order:** 12:03 pm

Meeting Minutes from January 11, 2022 were approved by the board.

- **Call to Order**.....Chair Stephanie Gaboriault
 - The March Park Board Meeting has been established as the annual meeting, so that is when we will elect our new chair, and we have also established the role of vice chair, who will be the presumed nominee to become chair when the chair steps off.
 - Stephanie Gaboriault is starting her 6-month sabbatical on March 10.
 - Kathy Lopez has been elected as the new Chair and John McMullin has been elected as the new Vice Chair, so the meeting was turned over to Kathy Lopez.
- **Directors report**.....Marc Manfre
 - Marc welcomed the 3 new board members, Parker Snowe, Barron Lacy and Bridget O’Donnell, who all come to the board with very impressive resumes. He explained how the board works under the sustainability umbrella and with different departments and groups.
 - Marc wanted to say how appreciative he is of Councilperson Elaine Schaefer and Francine Locke, Executive Director Chief Sustainability Office and how much his department has grown under their leadership, also thanks to Steve Beckley, Planning manager, Gina Burritt, Director of Planning and Ed Magargee, Director of Soil & Water Conservation, Danielle Floyd, Director of Public Works, who is our guest speaker today, the Green Space

Task Force, and the Chamber of Commerce, of which one of our members, Trish McFarland, is the President. I want to thank them for working with us and the different park friends' groups that work with us.

- The Senior games start in June. We partner with COSA and Delaware County Council to bring this together. We had over 700 participants pre Covid and are hoping to bring the number of participants back up to that number.
- Marc wanted to thank his administrative staff for the work they do. Beth Chapman, who is the marketing and communication manager for Parks, Ruby Jones, who is Marc's administrative assistant, Norm Bennet, Superintendent of Parks, who heads the Maintenance division, and Derrick Ford, who is the manager of Redwood and handling all the activities at the Redwood Community Center. We are working with the Penn State Cooperative Center, their Master Gardener program, and the Pennsylvania Resources Council, who shares office space with us.
- At Don Guanella, which was a huge acquisition, it's the largest facility that we're going to manage, there is a lot of work to do. It is mainly the buildings, there's 5 or 6 buildings, that need to be addressed. We're going to have to look at those buildings and see if they can be used, or what needs to be done with them. We are working with our consultant, recreation, and urban planners, we have a landscape architect on staff with them.
- This is a very busy time for Parks in preparation of athletics, the start of sport seasons, softball, soccer, lacrosse, getting fields ready. The schedule for the Summer Concert series at Rose Tree is getting worked on constantly. The Earth Day celebration is on April 18th at the Redwood Center.
- We are doing an upgrade of the electrical system here at Rose Tree soon.
- I just want to say that our mission is quite simple. The mission of Delaware County Parks and Recreation is to be a source of pride and connection to the outdoors for all residents of our county with equitable access to high quality and sustainable recreation programs.
- We are working closely with the Chester Creek Trail organization and we're trying to move forward with Stage 2 of the Darby Creek Trail and the Chester Creek Trail. We are working to expand these two trail systems.

- **Discussion**

- Councilperson Elaine Schaefer joined in to discuss The Woodburn mansion at Little Flower Manor. The county needs to decide what to do with it. There is a historic group that is very interested. Could the Park board come up with a recommendation for this building. Marc suggested that he and Danielle go look at the condition of the building and other buildings on the property, maybe before the end of April.
- Steve Beckley, Planning Manager, Open Space and Trails joined in the conversation. He has been involved in several park facilities projects and was heavily involved in the master planning process for Little Flower Manor. The planning department has been talking internally about doing some outreach to the community before moving on in design and planning so it would be helpful to know the decisions being made with Woodburn mansion before these community meetings.
- Trish McFarland wanted to let the board know that the Chamber of Commerce is honoring Marc and his team at the Delaware County Parks and Recreation Department.

The Chamber is planning their Community Impact Award at the Chambers Small Business Awards on Friday, March 31st. Marc is very deserving of this award for all the things that he does and the way he juggles his time with all that he accomplishes, especially with the increase of the parks.

- Marc stated that one of the things he's most proud of recently is the work at the Upland project. It is an underserved community, and the new field and playground was much needed. He is very proud of County Council for getting behind this project and of all the work that Danielle Floyd and the crew from Public Works has done there.
- Kathy Lopez asked the new board members to introduce themselves and for the other members to introduce themselves to the new members.

- **Guest Speaker.....**Director of Public Works, Danielle Floyd
 - Danielle has been the Director of Public Works for the last year and has prepared a brief slide show to give updates on some of the critical capital improvement projects that the county is working on in support of the parks and recreation department right now. The Public Works department is under the sustainability umbrella and are responsible for the county's physical infrastructure. Danielle has her department working on partnering with local municipalities. Overall, Public Works is responsible for implementing the multi-year capital improvement programs.
 - Delaware County now has 70 buildings, 17 parks and 14 bridges that Public Works is responsible for in terms of design and construction. Danielle wanted to share that she is starting her budget and planning process for 2023 and sustainability, accessibility and being an equity are the absolute drivers moving forward.
 - During the study which looked at all the county's infrastructure in its parks, Upland Park was identified as the location with the greatest immediate need, followed by Little Flower Manor and then Rose Tree Park. Under the budget, 9 million dollars was committed to parks and open space.
 - Upland Park is currently getting a new playground installed, also a multi-purpose field, a walking loop with new porous pavement and a new roof on the Redwood Center. The field should be available for football practice for fall of this year. Multiple sources of funding have been utilized to make investment in this site, and planning helped with getting some of the funds.
 - Rose Tree Park is the second project. This is probably the largest project, especially with the creation of a destination playground, which will overlook the amphitheater. Equipment was bid out and purchased and is now being stored. We are now evaluating the bids for installation.
 - Finally, improvements for Little Flower Manor Park are going to start moving forward. This includes clean up, new walking pathway, parking, landscaping, and stormwater management, also planning for a community garden, new signage and fixing the deteriorating wall and sidewalk.
 - We are looking to get 88 accessible restrooms installed in the county parks and start our conversion to EV's with the installation of EV charging stations in Rose Tree Park and

looking to see what other parks could support installation of charging stations. We are also looking to improve lighting and paving for improved access.

- **Old Business**

- County Park Visit: In February we had our visit to Mineral Hill in Middletown. The Media Borough contingency and some of the Delaware County people from Planning joined the Board to look over the property. It is a beautiful park in terms of scenery. There are some issues that need to be addressed, removing some of the structures that are caving in. It's a 43-acre property and the master plan that was done in 2014 has been unimplemented to this day. It was a cooperative master plan done with the municipalities that own the adjacent parks that touch Mineral Hill. On April 12th, we will meet at noon at Little Flower.
- Stephanie, Kathy, and Mark met with County Council in February to present a year-end review of what the Parks Board accomplished in 2022.
- Don Guanella update: There was a big open house at Cardinal O'Hara. It had community participation and stations for information to give input on community wants for the new park. There were also 2 other pop-up sessions, one in Upper Chichester and one in Chester proper. They were smaller sessions, but with the same ideas of participation. Kathy shared a video which, in time, will be shared with the public that gives information on the Don Guanella master plan. It's very exciting, the park is in a central location and has a lot of open space but will also provide amenities of a wide variety and will accommodate a lot of different users.
- The survey link was shared by Kathy Lopez. It's a very interactive survey with information on every page. It will give people a chance to share what they want in the park and what they think the priorities should be for the park amenities. It allows you to show where you think money should be invested. There is a free text area for typing in your comments. Steve Beckley shared that the video and survey are on the project website.
- The park board would like to set up some sort of administrative foundational support to help park friends groups get started. So, there will be an email sent out for input for that.

- **New Business**

- It was nice to see that 3 new park board members were already appointed. We are still soliciting applicants from District 6, which is Chadds Ford, Bethel Township.
- Park visits for 2023 are listed at the bottom of the minutes. In April we're going to Little Flower and Darby Creek Trail and in June we're going to Catania and we are potentially going to have a picnic for our board members. In August we were going to revisit Don Guanella and in October we'll visit Upland.
- We want to outline the permit process to make sure that nobody is being given preference, so we agreed to do a write-up of the process. It is basically that you can call, or mail in, or you can do it online. There is no access issue and there is no charge to use the parks. There is a first come, first serve basis program in place. We do have a waiting

list for our garden program here at Rose Tree. There were no turnovers this year or last year for picnics. It's all about customer service. There are no plans to implement fees.

- We are going to hold off on discussing the board picnic until we have more members in attendance.

- **Meeting adjourned: 1:25pm**

Meetings:

January 11 – Zoom

March 8 – Zoom

May 10 – Hunt Club

July 12 – Hunt Club

September 13 – Hunt Club

November 8 – Zoom

Park Visits:

February 8 – Mineral Hill

April 12 – Little Flower & Darby Creek Trail

June 14 – Catania

August 9 – Don Guanella

October 11 – Upland

December – Rose Tree Festival of Lights on opening night