

**UPPER MACUNGIE TOWNSHIP PARKS AND
RECREATION BOARD Monthly Meeting
Minutes April 21, 2022**

The monthly meeting for the Upper Macungie Township Recreation Board was held on Thursday April 21, 2022, at the Upper Macungie Township building. Recreation Board members present: Matthew Bernard, Gwen McCurdy, Jaclyn Svetcov, Wes Schlauch. Also present: Recreation & Events Coordinator, Lynn Matula; Parks Team Leader Jim Soltis.

Other members of the public in attendance: Deb Soltis, Mr. and Mrs. Paul McNemar, Jocelyn Kessler, April and Angel Rodriguez, Stephanie Miller, Scott and Emily Johnson, Robyn Rassler, Laura Baranek, Liz McGirr, Rob Yule, Mark Miller, Jim Pasago, Kate Janice, Mike Christman.

Vice Chairman Matthew Bernard called the meeting to order at 7:08 PM. He asked all present to join in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America. Matthew made a motion to approve the minutes, Jackie seconded, all were in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENT -

Angel Rodriguez, a resident near Kaybrook and a father of 6 children, is concerned about the state of Kaybrook Park. He observes many people in the area utilizing this pocket park, including his family, SPYA teams, and pool visitors. The park means a great deal to his family and he would like to see it renovated. He would consider fundraising for new play structures for the park.

Jocelyn Kessler has two 6 year olds and they use the park and pool very often. She was very upset that the playground was torn down and sees the need for replacement due continued growth of young families into the area. She believes strongly that Kaybrook Park helps create a sense of community.

Rob Yule has lived around the park for 25 years and feels there is a perception that the park is not used very much but he has seen a huge increase in the numbers of people wanting to use the space. Many top high school athletes use the park for practice and he feels that this small park means a great deal to many people. He called it a little jewel in the township and that it would not take much to improve it. The community members are willing to take the time to help take care of the park. He feels the benefits are huge in keeping kids active and healthy and off their screens.

Mark Miller stood up to comment on how he moved into the neighborhood 3 years ago with small children. His family is out at Kaybrook Park year round, along with other residents, enjoying it in both sun and snow.

Emily Johnson moved to the neighborhood 4 years ago with small children and is at the playground everyday and would love to see something renovated in the space.

Robin Rassler has lived there for 8 years and moved there specifically because it was near a playground and pool. She loves the sense of community and the ability to connect with people.

Jim Pasago has lived in Green Hills for 32 years and the park is an extension of his backyard. He has raised his kids in the park as well as his grandkids. Jim is devastated that the playground has been torn down and sees the need for replacement since the park has been the busiest he has ever seen. He attributes it to the growth of young families and the use of the pool. He would love to see it fixed up since it serves a big purpose for the families in the community.

Kate Janice loves the closeness of the park and the ability to walk there. She is VP of Kaybrook Pool and commented that the pool is willing to donate money toward the park.

Laura Baranek moved to the Kaybrook community in 1997 and feels like the park is a true institution of the community. She feels now more than ever that children and teens need outdoor social interaction. This goes for adults as well and the park offers connections for community members.

Mike Christman commented that Kaybrook is the hub of the neighborhood and feels strongly that it should be renovated and taken care of like the other parks in UMT. Mike feels that the park may take some initial funds but if wise investments are made that it will take little upkeep each year.

Paul McNemar commented that a wish list from the township would be: 1. safety improvements 2. the replacement of amenities that were previously there (small playgrounds geared towards younger and older children would be ideal), and 3. maintenance of the fields and basketball courts.

Kaybrook is a public park that can be used by all residents and it is a township owned public park. Many community members commented that the park is observed to be used more than Ricky Park. It was also stated that the park is a representation and reflection of Upper Macungie Township.

NEW BUSINESS:

Jackie made a motion for the township to come up with a comprehensive plan for equipment replacement and maintenance improvements to Kaybrook Park. Gwen seconded the motion, but during discussion, Matthew felt the rec board needs a more detailed plan of ideas to present to the board of supervisors before voting. Matthew would like everyone on the rec board to come back with suggestions for what they would like to see replaced in the park. **Jackie amends her motion to ask the rec board to come up with a specific plan for Kaybrook Park for a recommendation to the BOS. Matthew seconds, all were in favor.**

Kaybrook safety update: One of the playground structures was removed and the area was mulched. The drainage area issues are being addressed. To add handicap accessibility they might need to move some structures or add a walkway, but this would need to be approved by an engineer. Jim commented that he was under the impression that the playground would be replaced but he needs to look into that more. Jim will update the rec board more next month.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Board member suggestions/recommendations:

Lynn discussed the following new ideas for UMT recreation programs and events:

1. Food truck festival sometime in 2023
2. Arts and Crafts Day where local businesses could showcase their art, music, dancers, garden designs, etc., and offer activities as well.
3. Glow/Splash event for the summer
4. Parks and Rec month is in July and is a National event. An idea to celebrate could be a food truck in a park each Friday in July as a way to draw people to different parks in UMT.
5. CSI camp 2023 for kids as another themed camp idea.
6. Jackie commented about having more tween programs offered in the community as there is a bit of hole in that area: dodgeball, volleyball, kickball, etc.
7. Lynn also mentioned we could use more senior idea programs.

It was suggested that all rec board members should come to the next meeting with 2 program or event ideas and/or something they think is missing.

Term limits for rec board members-What are the limits and should we amend? This item was tabled until a later date.

OTHER BUSINESS:

- UMT Recreation fund balance – \$1,705,795.65
- Friends of Upper Macungie Parks and Recreation, Inc. fund balance – \$30,712.43
- Lynn's updates (see unfinished business)

PUBLIC COMMENT-

ADJOURNMENT

Matthew made a motion to adjourn at 8:50 pm, Gwen seconded, all agreed. Next month's meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 19th, 2022, at 7:00 PM at the Township building.

Bret Spangler-Chair

Matthew Bernard-Vice Chair

UMT Parks and Recreation Board