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Friends of Boyce Park – Meeting Minutes November 29, 2022

Call to Order was made at 6:00 pm.

Attendees: Andree Baechle, Karly Bitsura-Meszaros, Ed Bouchette, Rick McIntyre, Councilwoman Michelle Naccarati-Chapkis, Jim Pottinger (via phone), Tim Sandstrom, and Linda Wilkins.

Introductions and Review of Friends of the Parks Ordinance

- Fundraising protocol
- Minutes posted on website
- Chair Nomination and Robert's Rules
- Notice to public 72 hours in advance for meetings - County social media pages to advertise
- Submit Minutes to Ken Varhola, Council's Chief of Staff
- Majority vote for decision-making
- Reports to Council per ordinance

Meetings are to take place every 2-3 months.

New Business

A discussion on fundraising projects that have occurred in other County parks including: acquisition of land; ponds in South Park needing rehabilitation; and installation of benches, trees, exercise course, solar power lights, and fountains. Two County parks are net zero (Deer Lakes and White Oak) and run on solar.

Members led a discussion on low cost and no cost park projects considering the following: invasive removals, park surveys, and tree plantings. Contractor, trail crew, and rangers help maintain trails. The Parks Department has a goal of 30-50 acres meadow a year and right-of-way (ROW) friendlier habitat.

An update on current Boyce Park projects was provided:

- Upgrade to four full size tennis courts and installation of 6-8 pickleball courts in 2023
- Addition of a new climbing wall
- Hillcrest fence replacement
- New roof on the main building and ski lodge
- New flooring in the ski lodge
- New groomer for slopes
- New belt on magic carpet that is used for tubing
- New rain gardens-signage
- Update to ranger headquarters (there are three naturalists)

The following items below are a list of new ideas, discussion, questions/concerns from all attendees in the meeting:

- Consideration to rent baseball fields for softball leagues. A deposit would be required to ensure cleanliness. Also, an option for a reduced rental rate for the baseball fields was discussed.
- To improve trail development:

- Create walking paths on the flat section of Pierson Run Road.
- Timers on the light poles need adjusted (maintenance).
- Opening the dog park when maintenance opens the park.
- Evaluation of location for dog waste stations.
- Volunteer project of blazing trails.
- Opportunity to rent equipment for cross country skiing (challenge is location for skiing).
- Naming rights (such as on shelters) could be considered to raise funds.
- Sled riding on Meadow Lane by Hillcrest.
- Ice rink – suggestion to enhance winter activities at the park.
- Open grass for recreation.
- Development of an events calendar on the Friends page would help park visitors and community members and bring more participation.
- LED signage for county park events is highly suggested.
- The availability of more food trucks throughout the seasons, especially in the summer.
- Speed humps highly suggested.
- Eagle Scout and Gold Star projects still occur and could be highlighted.

A description of the hunter program in the parks was shared. Each year 5-7,000 pounds of venison is donated to food banks.

A discussion on signage and maps of the park trails occurred. New kiosks allow for updated and consistent signage. Using the County's trail app is more accurate than the printed map. The app reflects the trail assessment work. The park trail is a looped system and questions were raised regarding revisiting the trail system to ensure it is user friendly. Refer to Trail PGH.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Next meeting will take place on January 18, 2023 at 6 pm at the Lodge. At that time, a Chair will be selected.

Friends of Boyce Park – Meeting Minutes (DRAFT)

Wednesday, January 18, 2023

Call to order was made at 6:08 pm

Attendees: Max Bader – Senior Park Ranger, Karly Bitsura-Meszaros, Ed Bouchette, Lisa Carlucci, Miranda Gray, Rick McIntyre - District Recreation Supervisor, Braden Meiter – Lead Supervisory Park Ranger, Councilwoman Michelle Naccarati-Chapkis, Linda Wilkins, Tim Sandstrom

Introductions and Review

Minutes from last meeting were approved
72 hour advance public notice for meetings
Minutes to Ken Varhola, Council’s Chief of Staff, within two weeks of meeting

New Business

Election of officers Karly Bitsura-Meszaros - Chair, Linda Wilkins – Vice-Chair,
Lisa Carlucci – Secretary
Agenda item(s) is/are to be submitted prior to the meeting
Members are approved for a 3-year term
Money may be raised through special events but not donation boxes
Minutes are posted to the website by Ken Varhola, Chief of Staff
Possible projects include: Organizing our own projects, volunteer day, park steward or
Independent volunteer program, identification and remediation of invasive species
Any project should be vetted to ensure all requirements are met and approvals provided
Employment opportunities for lifeguards with paid training reimbursed at the season’s
end
Possible wish list includes: trail maintenance with a volunteer kick-off event, bridges on
trails, trail improvements
Enforcement for speeding in park
Possible events: Oktoberfest, plant sale, events at the fire pits located outside of the Ski
Lodge
Upcoming events: Cardboard Box Derby

Future completion and opening of climbing wall and track

There are an additional 6 member openings. Signs will be posted at Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC), Monroeville Library, Monroeville Community Cares, Plum Library, Plum Community Center, Penn Hills Library, and four kiosks at Boyce Park

Discussion of possible logo designs

Discussion of possible need for additional garbage cans due to large areas without them and trash collecting in these areas. New generation garbage cans were mentioned as to avoid

access by animals. Pile of uncollected garbage without a nearby garbage can collecting near the airplane gate that is closed. Call 724-327-8798 Monday to Friday to advise of litter or other issues.

General fundraising may be done but not for specifically defined projects. FoBP is non-tax-exempt. Any activities must be authorized by the county. No donation boxes allowed. Any events with alcohol require the merchant to obtain and provide a license, proof of insurance, and permits. No games of chance are allowed. Fundraising is to be done by the Allegheny County foundation and not Friends of Boyce Park.

Pittsburgh Resource Council (PRC) provided removal of hazardous wastes for \$20 a car load
Trees were removed and others planted to fill gaps to prevent invasive species from taking over

Meeting adjourned at 8:06 pm

Next meeting will take place on Thursday, March 16, 2023 at 6:00 pm at the Lodge.

Friends of Boyce Park – Meeting Minutes March 16, 2023

In Attendance:

- Karly Bitsura-Meszaros, Linda Wilkins, Ed Bouchette, Tim Sandstrom, Jim Pottinger -Friends of Boyce Park
 - Andy Baechle, Rick McIntyre, Braden Meiter - Allegheny County Parks Department
 - Joey-Linn Ulrich - Allegheny County Parks Foundation
1. Call to Order - 6:26 pm
 2. Allegheny County Parks Department Report - Andy Baechle
 - a. VOPP Trail Connector
 - i. Trailhead through park likely to be at the graveyard, off of New Texas
 - ii. Andy has been asked to be member of the steering committee
 - b. Ski Slopes closed early due to warm season
 - c. Tennis and Pickleball courts to be done by the end of the year
 - d. Climbing wall is out to bid, hopefully done by November. Will be located by pumphtrack and will be the first climbing wall among the county parks
 3. Allegheny County Parks Foundation Report - Joey-Linn Ulrich
 - a. Report on the small improvement projects program that can facilitate tax-deductible donations to a friends group fund to aid in small projects approvedby Allegheny County Parks
 4. Allegheny County Park Ranger Reports - Rick McIntyre & Braden Meiter
 - a. Hiring lifeguards, seasonal Park Rangers and crew members
 - b. Cottontail event taking place on March 25
 - c. License plate event with Plum Police taking place April 29
 - d. National Trails Day coming up on June 3rd, 3 hour volunteer experience
 - e. Newly planted 115 trees
 5. Friends of Boyce Park Committee Affairs & Updates

- a. Karly Bitsura-Meszaros
 - i. Google Account for Gmail and Google Drive Collaboration
 - FriendsOfBoycePark@gmail.com
 - ii. Created a Facebook group which is steadily gathering members. In need of help creating and posting content.
 - iii. Karly to report to Allegheny County Council about our activities in 2022 on a phone meeting March 29
- b. Linda Wilkins
 - i. Events with Plum Community Library (Radio Club May 10th at the airfield; Volunteering with the Park Rangers in June and July 2023; Night Hike at Boyce Park August 1st 2023)
 - ii. Oktoberfest - Pour at the Park (South Park on May 20, 2023, North Park - was in the fall during 2022)
6. Upcoming Activities at Boyce Park & Other Pertinent Dates
 - a. March 25 - Cookies with Cottontail
 - b. April 29 - License Plate Exchange Event
 - c. June 3 - National Trails Day with Trail Pittsburgh
7. Adjournment - 7:52 pm
8. Next Meeting on May 18th at 6pm, Four Seasons Activity Center

Friends of Boyce Park – Meeting Minutes May 18, 2023

In Attendance:

- Karly Bitsura-Meszaros, Linda Wilkins, Ed Bouchette, Michelle Naccarati-Chapkis - Friends of Boyce Park
 - Andy Baechle, Rick McIntyre, Braden Meiter - Allegheny County Parks Department
 - Joey-Linn Ulrich - Allegheny County Parks Foundation
 - Members of the Public
1. Call to Order - 6:08 pm
 2. Allegheny County Parks Department Report - Andy Baechle
 - a. New natural stone retaining wall at Hillcourt Shelter
 - b. Tennis and Pickleball Courts starting in June
 - c. Climbing walls are currently being constructed off-site, will likely be installed in July with a ribbon cutting event planned. The highest one is 14 feet, and aiming for about 3 times a year for the holds will be rerouted for new routes.
 - d. Using \$300,000 from the PA Turnpike damage restitution to fix creek erosion from the slopes to Pierson Run, will be good for wetland species.
 3. Allegheny County Park Ranger Reports - Rick McIntyre, Braden Meiter
 - a. Seasonal rangers are almost through training, and will be in the field by Memorial Day
 - b. Seasonal trail crew members getting trained in Boyce Park
 - c. Currently fixing trailheads and adding sustainable rock retaining wall to the trails starting from the log cabin
 - d. The Nature Center is still undergoing changes to become Ranger Central
 - e. The Wave Pool opens on June 3
 - f. Free swim lessons and Summer Movie Series coming up
 - g. Installing 3 new sets of soccer goals and new hay bales at the archery range
 - h. Looking into incorporating black eyed susans back into the perennial wildflower meadow

4. Allegheny County Parks Foundation Report - Joey-Linn Ulrich
 - a. ACPF blog the week of June 12 will be on the Boyce Park meadows
 - b. Just finished their Earth Month campaign and it was the most successful one yet. The next campaign will feature animals.
 - c. Annual fundraiser at Hartwood Acres will be August 19
 - d. Pour in the Park benefit events: South Park on May 20, North Park on October 14
5. Friends of Boyce Park Committee Affairs & Updates
 - a. Linda Wilkins
 - i. Planning a Facebook photo contest, looking into best methods
 - ii. Fundraising: T-shirts & hats; Creative Silkscreen & DTE; glass vase donation
6. Adjournment - 7:02 pm

7. Upcoming Activities at Boyce Park & Other Pertinent Dates
 - a. **June 17 - Boyce Park Stewardship Day with Plum Library | 9 am - Noon**
 - b. June 24 - Fascinating Fireflies with Park Rangers | 8-10 pm
 - c. July 6 - Summer Movie Series, Puss in Boots | begins at dusk
 - d. July 8 - Fascinating Fireflies with Park Rangers | 8-10 pm
 - e. July 15 - Guided Hike - Hit the Trail with Park Rangers | 1-2:30 pm
 - f. July 17 + 21 - Free swim lessons, all ages
 - g. July 24 + 28 - Free swim lessons, all ages
 - h. July 25 - Dog Days of Summer | 6-8 pm
 - i. **July 26 - Volunteer - Invasive Plant Removal with Park Rangers | 5:30-7:30 pm**
 - j. **July 29 - Volunteer - Trail Maintenance with Park Rangers | 9 am - Noon**
 - k. July 30 - Guided Hike - Trees with Park Rangers | 1-3pm
 - l. August 15 - Guided Walk - Meadows with Park Rangers | 5-6:30 pm

8. Next Meeting on **July 18th at 6 pm, Four Seasons Activity Center**

Friends of Boyce Park – Meeting Minutes July 18, 2023

In Attendance:

- Karly Bitsura-Meszaros, Linda Wilkins, Ed Bouchette - Friends of Boyce Park
- Andy Baechle, Rick McIntyre, Braden Meiter - Allegheny County Parks Department
- Joey-Linn Ulrich - Allegheny County Parks Foundation

1. Call to Order - 6:11 pm
2. Allegheny County Parks Department Report - Andy Baechle
 - a. Lots of work has been done removing trees along trails, and weed/brush control on Archery trail and Eagle and Explorers' roads
 - b. Walking trails have been cut back at the wave pool
 - c. Acid mine project has been started to test and remedy 3 seeps
 - d. Job to build new natural stone retaining wall at Hillcourt Shelter has started
 - e. Tennis and Pickleball Court project has started beginning with removing 59 trees, aiming to be fully completed by the end of the year
 - f. Dog waste station has been installed at the wave pool parking lot
 - g. Climbing walls are still currently being constructed off-site, and will hopefully be installed before the end of the year. The highest wall will be 14 feet; individual components can be reconfigured about three times a year to give climbers new challenges
 - h. Using \$300,000 from the PA Turnpike damage restitution to fix creek erosion from the slopes to Pierson Run, will be good for wetland species
3. Allegheny County Park Ranger Reports - Rick McIntyre, Braden Meiter
 - a. Trail crew work has been done around the park, trail behind nature center redirected
 - b. Fixed trailheads and added sustainable rock retaining wall to the trails starting from the log cabin
 - c. The Nature Center is still undergoing changes to become Ranger Central
 - d. Starting to seek seasonal employees for various jobs (lift operation, cashiers, ski instructors, etc.) for ski slope opening mid-December

- e. Update on wildflower meadow: Braden talked to the landscape architect about reincorporating Black-eyed Susans into the meadow to look like the first year. Although they are perennials, they are actually biennial and better categorized as short-lived perennials. To reincorporate them, they would have to knock down current species and reseed. However, the bottom right quadrant of the meadow needs work and may have to be ripped out which would offer an opportunity to reseed with Black-eyed Susans in the future.
- 4. Allegheny County Parks Foundation Report - Joey-Linn Ulrich
 - a. Annual twilight fundraiser at Hartwood Acres will be August 19
- 5. Friends of Boyce Park Committee Affairs & Updates
 - a. Linda Wilkins & Karly-Bitsura-Meszaros
 - i. Plans for a Facebook group photography contest have been finalized. The contest will begin ASAP and conclude on October 8th.
- 6. Adjournment - 6:55 pm

- 7. Upcoming Activities at Boyce Park & Other Pertinent Dates
 - a. July 17 + 21 - Free swim lessons, all ages
 - b. July 24 + 28 - Free swim lessons, all ages
 - c. July 25 - Dog Days of Summer | 6-8 pm
 - d. July 26 - Volunteer - Invasive Plant Removal with Park Rangers | 5:30-7:30 pm**
 - e. July 29 - Volunteer - Trail Maintenance with Park Rangers | 9 am - Noon**
 - f. July 30 - Guided Hike - Trees with Park Rangers | 1-3pm
 - g. August 15 - Guided Walk - Meadows with Park Rangers | 5-6:30 pm

- 8. Next Meeting on **September 12th* at 6 pm, Four Seasons Activity Center**

* subject to change due to committee availability

Friends of Boyce Park – Meeting Minutes September 12, 2023

In attendance:

*Karly Bitsura Meszaros, Linda Wilkins, Lisa Carlucci – Friends of Boyce Park
Andy Baechle, Rick McIntyre, Braden Meiter – Allegheny County Parks Department
Joey Linn-Ulrich – Allegheny County Parks Foundation
Morgan Meehan, Jim Meehan – county residents*

1. Call to Order - 6:08 pm
2. Allegheny County Parks Department Report – Andy Baechle
 - a. New wall sandstone behind field
 - b. Construction will be starting next week on the pump track
 - c. New flush bathroom to be installed next year
 - d. Tennis court and pickleball courts – works continues with a slight delay
 - e. Approximately \$5 M of work
 - f. Gravity control – gravity-related sports
3. Allegheny County Park Ranger Reports - Rick McIntyre, Braden Meiter
 - a. September 4 – the pool was closed. Overall, the season was mediocre. June was relatively slow, but it picked up in July and August. There were approximately 170 lifeguards. For the dog swim, 260 dogs showed up.
 - b. Upcoming events include:
 - September 23 - The Music of Fred Rogers with Chantel Jones, R&B singer
 - October 14 – Camp fire Ghost Stories at the Ski Lodge
 - December 15 – Opening of Ski Season (skiing and snowboarding)
 - c. There was maintenance at the Cub Shelter
 - d. Complaint of horse defecation at the soccer fields

- e. Old tennis court building was torn down
 - f. Discussion of Ranger programs
 - g. October 25 – Plant removal
 - h. November 19 – Owl Prowl
 - i. Trail crossing stream to the log house
 - j. 10 M Trees for PA
 - k. Discussion of using the volunteer youth group
4. Allegheny County Parks Foundation Report - Joey Lynn Ulrich
- a. August 19 was the annual fundraiser/gala event
 - b. September 16 – 23 - Tree planting planned with the Rangers, Looking for volunteers
 - c. Benches were installed in some places. Bench Program is not solely for memorials but to commemorate other things like birthdays or special individuals
5. Friends of Boyce Park Committee Affairs & Updates
- a. Linda Wilkins & Karly Bitsura-Meszaros: Photography contest. October 8 is the contest deadline for submissions. Categories include: professional photographers, adults, and 17 and under. Invite friends to submit photographs and join Friends of Boyce Park to vote.
6. Upcoming Activities at Boyce Park & Other Pertinent Dates
- a. September 17 – Try Archery
 - b. September 30 – Guided Hike – Animal Habitats with the Park Rangers
 - c. October 1 – Try Archery
 - d. October 22 – Guided Hike – Hit the Trail with the Park Rangers
 - e. October 25 – Volunteer – Invasive Plant Removal with the Rangers
 - f. October 29 – Try Archery
 - g. November 12 – Guided Hike – Hit the Trail with the Park Rangers
 - h. November 19 - Park after Dark: Owl Prowl with the Park Rangers
 - i. December 10 – Guided Hike – winter Trees with the Park Rangers
7. Adjournment – 6:37 pm
- 8. Next meeting scheduled for Thursday November 16* at 6:00 pm, Four Seasons Activity Center**

Friends of Boyce Park – Meeting Minutes November 16, 2023

In Attendance:

- Friends of Boyce Park - Karly Bitsura-Meszaros, Linda Wilkins, Jim Kuhn, Ed Bouchette, Tim Sandstrom, Jim Pottinger
- Allegheny County Parks Department - Andy Baechle, Rick McIntyre, Braden Meiter
- Allegheny County Parks Foundation - Joey-Linn Ulrich
- Members of the Public - Photography contest winners (Donna Gardner, Brittany (Avenger) Beldham, Jim Meehan) Charles Anthony, Morgan Meehan

1. Call to Order - 6:02 pm
2. Allegheny County Parks Department Report - Andy Baechle
 - a. The wall behind Hillcrest Court is done.
 - b. Working on the top left of ski slopes where the creek is being turned into a wetland area through a Turnpike funded project to improve water quality.
 - c. Pickleball (6ish courts) and Tennis Courts are almost ready, waiting for a blue paint coat but weather prevents til Spring. Putting temporary lines on it now so that it can be used until then.
 - d. Ongoing work on the pump track and climbing walls. The pump track needs special asphalt that can only be done in warm temperatures, so on hold until spring. It will be all asphalt and have a play area with boulders and dirt as well. The climbing walls are still being fabricated in Bulgaria.
 - e. A radar-indicated speed sign has been put in.
 - f. A walking path for the main road is often brought up and wanted by all (the parks department, committee and visitors). However, the cost is exorbitant due to having to widen the road along the hills to make space. It is at the top of Andy's list, the department just needs to find somehow to pay for it.
3. Allegheny County Park Ranger Reports - Rick McIntyre, Braden Meiter
 - a. Rick McIntyre
 - i. Staff have been updating signs throughout the park.
 - ii. Ski season target opening will be around the weekend of December 16th. Most seasonal staffing is sufficient, recruiting at CCAC was useful.
 - iii. Still seeking ski instructors who are over the age of 18.

iv. Lifeguard certification classes are being held on December 29th and 30th at Wilmerding Community Center. Lifeguards hired by the department will have the cost of their class reimbursed.

v. Park Maintenance

- Lots of Silver Beaver trail work has been done.
- Vegetation around ski slopes was trimmed to prepare for the season.
- Lower dog park recently reseeded for the spring.
- Fall leaf cleanup is underway with buildings cleared etc.

b. Braden Meiter

i. Owl Prowl with Rangers on November 19th has spots left.

ii. There is a Winter Trees guided hike on December 10th.

iii. Introduction to Snowshoeing classes offered on January 17/18 and February 14/15. Starts at 10am, costs \$10 and comes with equipment rental.

iv. Guided hikes scheduled for January 27th and March 2nd at 1pm.

v. Resource Management Projects

- 400 trees were put in just before the meadow.
- Next week volunteers will put 200 more trees just below Cub Shelter.
- The trees are through the [Ten Million Trees](#) Grant funded by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. We received 1200 trees, tree tubes and stakes and are looking to get another 1000 this spring

vi. Hiring in January for seasonal rangers and trail crew who will work from mid-May to mid-November.

4. Allegheny County Parks Foundation Report - Joey-Linn Ulrich

a. The Foundation has been working on 6 stream assessments from 2023 and 2024 with the Penn State Master Watershed Stewards. North Park, South Park and Boyce Park will be completed in 2024.

b. The Allegheny County Parks Foundation would be a great consideration for anyone looking to contribute on Giving Tuesday to help them continue their work to protect, conserve and promote our park.

5. Friends of Boyce Park Committee Affairs & Visitor Issues/Concerns

a. Issues & Concerns raised by members of the public

i. There is a person repeatedly throwing corn from a car around 4pm in the lower lot of the wave pool.

ii. Someone is dumping what appears to be construction trash or things from a

remodel (i.e., kitchen sink, tiles, etc.) off the ramp by the flag.

- iii. The gate by the tennis courts makes some visitors believe the maintenance road is prohibited from any use, while it is only closed to vehicular traffic.
 - iv. The dog park sign at the main entrance is confusing because you can't actually drive to them from there due to the maintenance road only open to foot traffic and Parks Department vehicles.
 - v. There are a few chronic muddy areas along the red dot trail. Rangers are aware of them, however this trail is along an old railbed so fixing it will not be fast nor cheap. They will try to move it up the list.
 - vi. Benches for parents to sit on while watching their children play at Universal Playground would be nice. The only place to sit is at the picnic tables under the pavilion, but it is too far to supervise kids from there.
 - vii. Consideration for a crossing sign and road markings where the trail from the archery range passes across the street to continue onto the soccer field trail.
 - viii. Regarding the never ending pile of crap in the parking lot by the soccer fields and Universal playground: Allegheny County Public Works dumps it there. Officials are trying to get rid of it but have nowhere else to put it.
- b. Linda Wilkins
 - i. The photography contest is concluded. Linda presented the three category winners with a certificate and their 2 ski passes for this season.

6. Adjournment - 6:54 pm

7. Upcoming Activities at Boyce Park & Other Pertinent Dates

- a. November 19 - Park after Dark: Owl Prowl with the Park Rangers ([register](#))
- b. December 2 - Cookies with Santa (sold out)**
- c. December 10 - Guided Hike: Winter Trees with Park Rangers ([register](#))
- d. Ski Passes discounted until December 1st, tentatively set to open December 16
- e. January 17 & 18 - Introduction to Snowshoeing classes
- f. January 27 - Guided Hike at 1pm
- g. February 3 - Snowfest
- h. February 14 & 15 - Introduction to Snowshoeing classes
- i. March 2 - Guided Hike at 1pm

8. Next Meeting on Thursday, January 18th at 6pm, Four Seasons Activity Center