

**BAINBRIDGE TOWNSHIP PARK BOARD MINUTES
JULY 15, 2009**

Members Present: Marty Sfiligoj, Chairman; David Jones; Henri Preuss; Linda Spiros; Clyde Whaley and David Mitchell, Property Superintendent

Mr. Sfiligoj called the regular meeting to order at 7:05 P.M.

MINUTES

Mr. Whaley made a motion to approve the meeting minutes dated June 24, 2009 as written.

Mr. Jones seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

SPORTS CONDITION AND FIELD USE INITIATIVE (COACHES & TEAM REPS)

Mr. Sfiligoj reported that the wrong date was given for the meeting with the coaches and team reps regarding the Sports Condition and Field Use presentation that was to be held tonight so a subsequent special meeting with the interested parties should be held prior to the August 19, 2009 regular meeting.

PROPERTY SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Mr. Mitchell reported on projects that need to be done on various township properties such as painting of the Tucek house, the bollards/posts need to be replaced at Settlers Park, and he noted that two new part-time employees will be starting along with the two employees from the stimulus package and explained what their duties will be.

Centerville Mills Park Swimming Pool

Mr. Mitchell reported that Mr. Steve Ciciretto, Township Project Manager will be handling the specs for the pool demolition and added that he is considering turning the pool area into a parking area.

Township Mowing and Landscape Contract

The board discussed the conditions of the township properties as a result of the current mowing and landscape contractor. Mr. Preuss suggested that the bid package be put together and sent out in October to avoid what happened this year.

Proposed Auction

Mr. Mitchell stated that he is trying to get the auction set up for August.

SPORTS FIELDS CONDITION, USE AND MANAGEMENT REVIEW

Mr. Jones presented the following report that was given on July 13, 2009 to the Board of Township Trustees regarding Sports Fields Condition, Use and Management.

BAINBRIDGE TOWNSHIP REVIEW OF SPORTS FIELDS USE

REPORT OF BAINBRIDGE PARK BOARD July 13, 2009

INTRODUCTION

There are a range of issues related to the playing fields in Bainbridge Township, Ohio such that fair and equitable services for children playing sports are provided. Yet, the operational cost of all parks and facilities is absorbing a greater share of the Township budget each year.

Further, the share of Bainbridge Township parks and facilities budget funds spent on junior sport has been skewed and is not reflective of the demographics of the township.

Further, the survey results of 2001 commissioned by the Township indicated that the residents sought to develop passive parks.

In an attempt to control and allocate Township Budgets, such that fair and equitable resources are expended in such a way that is reflective of the needs of all Bainbridge Township residents, the Park Board was asked to review the status of park utilization, particularly the sports fields, and make recommendations as to the future of the park system.

IDENTIFICATION OF CURRENT ISSUES

These issues are recognized in no particular order but rather as these issues were brought to the attention of the Park Board;

1. Overuse of parks

This is misleading as the parks are not being overused but rather the playing fields are being overused.

While the parks are for the preferred use of township residents, there has been increased use by sports groups within and beyond the township.

Further, the period of use has lengthened each year with greater pre-season and post-season use by sports groups.

4. Unauthorized use of playing fields

There are many instances where unsanctioned use of the fields has occurred by team practices outside of the booking schedule.

This has become more frequent as the number of teams for each sport increases. In addition, this is compounded by;

- Use of baseball outfields by other sports,
- Use of fields during and following heavy rains,
- Use when fields are still covered with snow, and
- Removal of field goals causing safety issues.

3. Use by Kenston School District

A meeting has shown confusion caused by the general use of the term “Kenston Bombers” which has now been adopted by several leagues and sports groups with no affiliation with the Kenston Schools. School use is less than 10% and predominantly on baseball fields.

After discussions with the school district, the philosophy of school sports using only school fields will be initiated

4. Increase in demand for Bainbridge Township playing fields

This has been caused by;

- i. the formation of more sport bodies in existing sports,
- ii. increases in the participants in each sport and
- iii. requests for facilities for newer sports.

Sports groups requests would indicate need for eighteen to twenty fields with specific sports facilities.

5. Limitation of field availability in Bainbridge Township

At this time, the township has twelve (12) fields;

- i. Six (6) dedicated baseball/softball fields,
- ii. Six (6) general purpose fields.

In reviewing available township land holdings, the township could accommodate a further two possibly three additional general purpose fields.

6. Lack of availability of fields in Auburn Township

To understand our concerns about the lack of fields in Auburn, it is necessary to look at the growth rate of both Townships as this defines our user group.

	BAINBRIDGE	AUBURN
Housing Increase 1970-2001	55%	225%
Housing Increase 2001-2008	15%	28%
Property Tax Rate/\$1000	68.97	52.59
Average Age of Housing	31 years	15 years

CENSUS DATA

	1990	2000	2008	2010 Projection
BAINBRIDGE				
Total Population	9694	10,916	11,192	11,602
% Rec District	74.6%	67.9%	65.2%	60.1%
Average Family		3.19		2.87
AUBURN				
Total Population	3,298	5,158	5,961	6,800
% Rec District	25.4%	32.1%	34.8%	39.9%
Average Family		3.14		3.14

On figures available to us, Auburn residents represent upward of 40+% of participants using the Bainbridge Township playing fields, yet Auburn has not offered to provide fields to accommodate their residents' needs. This is compounded when it is realized that the average family is decreasing in Bainbridge while Auburn family average remains the same. There is also increasing amounts of data that suggests that Bainbridge population will be aging in the 2010 Census while the average age of Auburn residents will be falling.

There is a plan for fields in Auburn Township at some stage, but the Auburn Trustees stated that the project would require \$500,000 before their township could proceed with the plan.

It should be noted that in a 1998 Survey of Auburn residents,

- 64% of respondents wanted more playing fields
- 45.3% of respondents would accept a levy to fund the fields

The above should be seriously considered against the current break down of funding for Bainbridge playing fields used by Auburn and Bainbridge residents;

2008	BAINBRIDGE	AUBURN	USERS
Cost for field maintenance	\$70,400	\$ 0	\$ 17,600
% Share of Costs	20%	0%	80%

7. Lack of cooperation between and within sports

Development of breakaway groups and alternative groups offering specific sports has caused competition for fields for fixtures.

This becomes further complicated by sports not cooperating with each other re;

- i. use of fields,**
- ii. tearing up common goal areas,**
- iii. moving staked equipment and**
- iv. adding lines for team practices.**

Attempts to attain preferred bookings and block bookings, and lack of responsibility for the care and upkeep of playing fields.

8. Township staffing limitations

Bainbridge Township recently appointed one person to handle all park and facility management in place of two personnel who had some of these duties in their job description.

During the appointment process, many off-season duties were either ignored or only partially completed. This resulted in under prepared field serviced by a decreased employee base.

9. Review of level of service to be provided

The Board of Trustees is reviewing the degree to which the township is willing to expend to prepare sports fields as part of the total parks and township budget.

The expectation is that the township will provide fields that are well grassed, mowed, fertilized and maintained to a passive parks standard.

Sport bodies are, however, seeking fields of high competition quality fully marked as part of the Township rental fee.

This is causing conflict as the two standards are widely separated in user philosophy.

10. Rental fees – comparative levels – costs Vs revenue

Rental field rate per hour is \$16 at this time, which generated total rental revenue from fields for 2008 of \$17,600.

Costs for field preparation for 2007 was approximately \$70,000 increasing to \$88,000 in 2008 – approx \$75 per hour

An external contract for field services for 2008 - two quotes were received of \$78,000 and \$82,000 or approximately \$68 per hour.

A review of field rental costs in neighboring and equivalent townships ranged from \$40 to \$60 per hour of play.

11. Selection and funding for additional fields

There appears to be a need for additional fields. The Board of Trustees must review this need and allocate a priority to such in the budget.

This requires the availability and selection of sites as well as funding in whatever time frame.

12. Renovation of existing fields

The existing fields are in poor condition and need of recuperation and rejuvenation. This will need a period of rest and care for the fields at a time of high demand.

Further, some of the fields need major work on drainage and have suffered severe turf damage.

13. Time delay in creating fields

There is a three (3) year delay before the fields are ready for use.

The failure to give fields time to mature will result in damage – early deterioration, failure to create a full root base, and drainage problems.

14. Lack of township control over scheduling

Scheduling duties are maintained by Kenston Community Education - the major user of the fields. There have been concerns such as;

- **block bookings accepted prior to the application date,**
- **non-resident groups bookings fields, and**
- **An unwritten priority booking system.**
- **The number of complaints re scheduling are increasing.**

15. Access to facilities and equipment

There is a proliferation of keys and broad access to storage areas equipment rooms and even buildings.

Field equipment considered permanent is being moved during practice sessions by other sports.

Teams and sports are storing in township rooms on a permanent basis.

16. No time between games

The current scheduling allows no time between matches for marking, warm up activities or repair.

This causes difficulty in parking, practice/warm-up, trash removal and crowd control during the changeover period.

17. Clear rules related to use of facilities

The township needs clear enforceable rules re use of township parks as well as field specific user rules.

At this time, we have little control of responsibilities for the user including crowd control, garbage, soliciting on the premises, advertising as well as other issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the preceding issues and concerns and to meet the aim of fair and equitable use of Bainbridge Township fields and parks, Park Board would recommend and adoption of the following to the Board of Trustees;

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

All teams and leagues wishing to use township fields for practice and/or competition must consist of at least 80% Bainbridge/Auburn residents.

Traveling teams can only book fields for competition when it is a home game.

All requests for use of fields will be submitted on the appropriate form to the Parks Supervisor by January 15 of each year for Spring/Summer sports and June 15 for Fall sports.

FIELD RECOMMENDATIONS

All fields be brought up to minimal standard of fully grassed and free of obstructions to mowing.

Township fields will be closed for organized activity from October 31 to March 31 unless permission has been granted by the Parks Supervisor.

If fields have not recovered sufficiently for use, the township may institute one or more of the following actions to protect the quality of fields. Recovery time could take the form of;

- (a) fewer sessions scheduled on a daily basis,**
- (b) rotation of field availability,**
- (c) closing of specific fields for all practices,**

- (d) closing of specific fields for a season, and/or**
- (e) delay in the start date for rental for each season.**

Fields be prepared and allocated to specific sports as follows;

- (a) Soccer – 2 fields**
- (b) Football – 2 fields**
- (c) Lacrosse – 2 fields**
- (d) Baseball/Softball – 6 fields**

The Township begins an investigation into the creation of three (3) additional general purpose fields to be developed over the next two years. These fields will be allocated as need exists at the time of completion.

Allocated fields will be for the exclusive use for practice and competition in the sport and will be managed by a committee of users for that sport created for this purpose (here forward to be referred to as the Sports Management Committee for that sport). Use by other sports will require permission of the relevant management committee and the Park Supervisor confirmed in writing.

Fields will be available for recreational use by Bainbridge in times not allocated for practice or competition. To meet the resident need, any field cannot be allocated for team practice or competition for more than 35 hours per week.

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Park Board recommends that the Board of trustees adopt the following options for overall management of sports fields in the Township.

Fields will be allocated on a sports specific basis as previously stated.

The township will be responsible for initial field preparation and will maintain a minimal quality standard which will include but not be limited to;

- (i) Mowing of fields and spectator area**
- (ii) Fertilizing of fields**
- (iii) Aerating of fields annually**
- (iv) Collection of trash from bins**

All other and/or additional field preparations such as and not limited to marking, alternative cultivation, and/or field repair will be at the cost of the sports specific group.

A committee of user groups – hereafter referred to as the Sport Management Committee for each sport - will be formed to manage the operation of the fields including and not limited to field maintenance and/or improvement (over and above that by the township), dispute resolution as discussed later, and scheduling.

The Sport Management Committee for each sport must, at all times, meet existing township rules for field use.

In return for the performance of these duties, teams playing in competition or practice under the auspices of each Sports Management Committee will not be charged a user fee by the township. However the Sport Management Committee may establish its own fee structure to meet all costs that may be incurred in field management.

For all other teams using township parks, the fee schedule will be increased to \$60 per hour per field (the true cost of field preparation) plus a \$10 office fee.

The fee structure established by the Sport Management Committee must be approved by the Parks Supervisor and cannot exceed \$40 per hour per field for teams from Bainbridge and Auburn and/or \$70 for other groups and programs). The field must be allocated to their own specific sport as priority one. However, the township recognizes that there may be times when other sports may need additional field space due to rain delayed matches, scheduling clashes or other type urgent situations on an intermittent basis. These can be scheduled and the fees charged will be as if the team was doing a normal booking, but only with the approval of the Sport Management Committee and the Park Supervisor.

The township will provide, via its website, access to scheduling software for the Sport Management Committees with password access to book and manage fields allocated to the relevant sport. The password will be under the control of the Sport Management Committee who will nominate the scheduler annually. The township will have an additional master password to oversee bookings to assist in scheduling Township maintenance for the fields.

The township will provide a financial management procedure for the Sport Management Committees that will allow invoicing, collection of fees and payment of accounts. Funds collected will remain in separate but specific accounts for each Sport Management Committee within township accounts.

Grants and donations received for the further development of the fields will also be accepted into these accounts with the costs of all financial reporting being met by the township.

All committees agree to abide by a structure that would penalize individuals, teams and leagues, and sports for inappropriate use of the township fields. Infringements may include but are not limited to;

- **Unscheduled and/or unauthorized use of fields for team practices or Competitions**
- **Damage to fields over and above expected normal wear and tear.**
- **Failure to leave the area in good condition in relation to cleanliness.**
- **Failure to meet township rules of use for fields.**
- **Inappropriate and excessive blocking of fields preventing fair access to other teams and/or leagues.**

Penalties for the above infringements may include but are not limited to;

- **Letter of warning re the issue at hand.**
- **Recoup of costs incurred by the township or the Sports Management Committee to rectify any damaged caused by the issue at hand.**

- Being considered as a non-resident team and/or league with the application of relevant priority for booking and fees charged.
- Suspension of use of township fields for periods ranging from one week to a full season until the situation is rectified and assurances gained that the issue at hand will not be repeated.

Removal of all rights of usage of all township fields.

All teams will sign a contract agreeing to all rules and rulings made by the township and their Sport Management Committee.

A dispute process will be established to arbitrate issues and rulings at the following levels;

- Issues between individuals, teams and/or leagues in the same sport will be arbitrated by the Sport Management Committee. If resolution is not attained, it will then be referred to the Park Supervisor and then the Park Board of Bainbridge Township.
- Issues between teams/leagues in different sports will be arbitrated by the relevant Sport Management Committees. If resolution is not attained, it will then be referred to the Park Board of Bainbridge Township.
- Issues between Sport Management Committees will be arbitrated by the Park Board. If resolution is not attained, it will then be referred to the Board of Trustees.
- Issues between one or more Sports Management Committees and the Park Board will be arbitrated by the Board of Trustees.

Discussion on Sports Field Use

Mr. Sfiligoj stated that the people at the trustees's meeting seem very interested and he is looking forward to getting feedback.

Mr. Jones stated that he received five emails on the subject and only one was negative.

Also discussed was the use of the pavilion by the sports teams, bookings and priority schedules and how to handle pavilion rentals by residents with the fields being used at the same time.

The board discussed Settlers Park and the fact that the fields need to be shut down to install drainage, re-grade and re-seed.

The board discussed the safety of the fields. Mr. Bill Astalos (Kenston Futbol) said that they play in leagues that is a higher level of play that requires the fields to be in a certain condition or they get fined and added that his teams cancel in bad weather and they play from mid-April to the first week in June and again from late August until the end of October.

A general discussion regarding sports field use was held.

MEETING SCHEDULE

The board was in agreement to schedule a special meeting on August 5, 2009 at 7:00 P.M. for the purpose of meeting with the user groups of the township parks. An invitation along with a request for an R.S.V.P. will be sent.

OLD BUSINESS

By-Laws

The board members reviewed a rough draft proposal of the By-Laws submitted by Ms. Linda Spiros and was in agreement that it was ready to be accepted.

Mr. Preuss made a motion to accept the By-Laws as written and that it be made a matter of record and kept by the secretary.

Mr. Whaley seconded the motion.

Secretary's Note: A copy of such By-Laws is attached to and will become a permanent part of these minutes.

Mr. Sfiligoj will provide a copy of the By-Laws to the board of trustees along with a cover letter.

Bathroom Facilities at River Road Park and Settlers Park

The board discussed the proposed chemical toilets and water fountains at the parks. Mr. Sfiligoj will notify the board of trustees regarding these items and the township project list.

River Road Park - Cracksealing and Striping

Mr. Mitchell will develop a scope of work for this project.

Since there was no further business, Ms. Spiros made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Jones seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:16 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

**Linda L. Zimmerman
Secretary to Park Board**

NEXT REGULAR MEETING: August 19, 2009 - 7:00 P.M.