

MINUTES

RECREATION AND PARKS BOARD:

LOWER ALLEN TOWNSHIP

REGULAR MEETING

FEBRUARY 25, 2026

The following were in ATTENDANCE:

BOARD MEMBERS

Megan Klenzing, Chair
Lauren Casselberry, Vice Chair
Scott Duncanson
Rick Grove
Greg Mahon

TOWNSHIP PERSONNEL

Helen Grundon, Administrative Assistant
Tom Stambaugh, Park Operations Supervisor
Renee' Greenawalt, Recording Secretary
Ben Powell, P.E., Public Work Director

LIAISON

Commissioner Amanda Mutchler

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Klenzing called the February 25, 2026, Regular Meeting of the Lower Allen Township Recreation and Parks Board to order at 7:00 pm.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Duncanson motioned to approve the minutes of the January 28, 2026 Regular Meeting. Ms. Casselberry seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Yellow Breeches Park

Resident Sarah Bowers addressed the Board regarding the Lower Allen Community Garden located at Yellow Breeches Park. She has been a garden plot member for approximately five years and expressed enthusiasm for the garden's continued success. She noted a decline in usage of garden plots in recent years. Ms. Grundon confirmed that of 16 available plots, approximately four to five were used last year.

Ms. Bowers offered several suggestions for improvement. First, to improve visibility and outreach she suggested making the garden a more prominent feature on the township website and distributing flyers at local garden centers and township buildings. Staff noted that the information was available on the Township website, but that more specific words could improve searchability. Staff also confirmed that information on the garden plots would be included in an upcoming newsletter. Second, suggested an earlier seasoning opening, noting that the current opening (end of May) leaves insufficient time for a productive growing season. She requested consideration of an April opening date, noting that recent years have seen more rainfall in May than April. Staff explained that rototilling depends on ground conditions after snow and rain. A proposed solution is to set a target April opening date with the option of communicating a delay if the ground is too wet. A third idea was smaller plot options. She said the current 40×40 plots may deter new or beginner gardeners. Offering smaller plots (e.g., 20×20) could attract new members. Staff indicated smaller plots are worth exploring. Eligibility is limited to Lower Allen Township residents. Last, she suggested improved water access, noting that existing hand pump is located down a hill, making it difficult for elderly or disabled gardeners to carry water to their plots. She suggested a closer water source or rain barrels as a potential solution. Staff noted the township currently has some rain barrels available that may be allocated for the garden. The county is also hosting a rain barrel workshop in May. Staff agreed to research the rain barrel option and follow up via email within approximately one week.

Board members also discussed promotion of the garden plots at upcoming events. A suggestion was made to have a Board/staff table at upcoming events (e.g., Easter Egg Hunt, Yappy Hour) with informational flyers for garden plots and other programs.

Park Tour Monthly Reports

Yellow Breeches and Sheepford Parks

Ms. Klenzing reported a recent visit to Sheepford Park. Conditions were soggy but generally better than anticipated. Key observations included:

- Some soft/spongy ground areas, attributed to seasonal conditions.
- A profane word was found carved into the top of the playground structure near the slide. Staff will be asked to sand/repair the area. A photo was taken for reference.
- Basketball courts looked good; tables in fair condition.
- Paint chipping on some equipment has been identified as a future replacement candidate.
- Outdated event flyers (Yappy Hour) were still posted; staff will remove outdated materials.
- Overall condition was described as surprisingly good given recent weather.

Ms. Casselberry reported on her tour of Yellow Breeches Park. Conditions were very wet with some snow remaining. Key observations included:

- Trails were very muddy; the full trail could not be walked. The area near the creek was flooded.
- Signs of erosion near the creek, particularly near the bridge area. The slope appears to be worsening compared to previous visits. Some post-winter damage is anticipated.
- Active construction area related to the bridge project was roped off; the area appeared clean and organized.
- Garden plots appeared to be in acceptable condition; signage was fine.
- The informational kiosk at the park entrance appeared to be in order; however, the contact directory listed on the kiosk may need to be reviewed and updated as it was unclear if the listed contacts were current.
- The parking area was partially occupied by construction materials related to the bridge project but remained accessible.

Ms. Grundon noted that next month's tours were assigned to Ms. Parry and Ms. Casselberry for Beacon Hill Park and Beacon Hill Radar Site.

COMMISSIONER LIAISON REPORT

Commissioner Mutchler did not have anything to report but offered suggestions for consideration of future events. It was suggested that the Commissioner's report would be a good avenue to publicize the community garden plots and other recreation programs to a broader audience.

TOWNSHIP STAFF REPORT

Ms. Grundon presented the Recreation and Parks Staff Report, and referenced the written report provided in the meeting packet. Key updates included:

- General winter maintenance activities have kept public works staff busy, including snow removal and cleanup from recent storms.
- New bleachers have been installed.
- Repairs completed at the barn.
- The lower level of the barn has been repainted in a rustic style using dark brown; the upper level is currently in progress and expected to be completed within two weeks.
- The Sheepford Park Pavilion roof replacement proposal has been received; a brown roof was selected to match other township facilities.

OLD BUSINESS

Township Easter Egg Hunt

Ms. Grundon provided an update on the planning for the upcoming Easter Egg Hunt, scheduled for March 28, 2026 at Lower Allen Community Park. Flyers are distributed and posted at the parks. A candy request was submitted to Hershey and is still pending approval, which is unusually long. Cargill is donating hats. Dave & Buster's are preparing goodie bag donations as in prior years. Both Weis Markets donated \$25 gift cards, which will be used to purchase golden egg prizes. Members 1st Credit Union is also donating for goodie bags and will set up a table at the event. The Woods at Cedar Run residents will stuff eggs again this year; timing planned for early-to-mid March. Ms. Grundon noted she would reach out to additional potential donors; Macy's was suggested as a likely contributor. A pop-up tent with the Lower Allen Township logo will be set up near the concession stand for the Board/staff table. Suggested materials include informational flyers for garden plots, upcoming events (Yappy Hour, etc.), and other township services. Volunteer assignments will be coordinated, and staff will set up on Saturday morning.

NEW BUSINESS

Sheepford Park Playground Letter of Support

Director Powell reported that staff are preparing a DCNR grant application to replace the Sheepford Park play structure, including the swing set and all equipment. He noted that the grant is a dollar-for-dollar match; funds would be drawn from the fee-in-lieu-of recreation fee funds. The application for grant is due in April, and a formal letter of support will be requested from the Board at their next meeting. The replacement project would include excavation of old wood carpet and installation of modern impact-absorbing rubber matting. Additionally, staff are awaiting a decision on the outstanding LSA grant for Wass Park play structure; an update is expected before next month's meeting.

Gateway Park (Corner of 18th and Hummel)

Director Powell reported provided an update on the new "Gateway Park" project. He noted that preliminary work would begin the following week with the removal of concrete pillars from the old Hempt Brothers sign, clearing of bushes, and installation of conduit for a new sign. Bids are expected to open in mid-March. New Enterprise has leased the land to the township for \$10/year with a requirement for an annual meeting. The completed site will feature a welcome sign, park benches, sidewalk, and a walking path. It is intended as a passive park and gateway feature, and work should be completed by late May.

Highland Park Improvements

Director Powell reported provided an update, noting sidewalk construction, planting of mature trees, and a single, ADA compliant parking area next to the tennis court.

Ms. Casselberry introduced a proposal for a potential spring "Picnic in the Park" event in May 2027, featuring food trucks, small business vendors, and live music. Discussion included potential locations, parking considerations, and scheduling conflicts with sports programming. Lower Allen Community Park was identified as the most feasible location due to parking and facilities. Further planning will continue.

Highland Park Greenhouse Group

Ms. Casselberry discussed the group, noting they meet every other month at the township building and are a non-profit organization seeking an opportunity to give back to the Township. They offer plant donations and maintenance at no cost. Discussion included potential beautification at the new Gateway Park, Beacon Hill Radar Site (which has planters/benches), and Highland Park. The group also has tree enthusiasts available to maintain semi-mature trees. Staff expressed interest and Ms. Casselberry also offered to teach a gardening class or host a gardening demonstration if space is available.

Future Events and Programming Ideas

Members discussed future programming ideas. The Fall Fest, which is in its third year, may feature a petting zoo, food trucks, live music and craft activities. Fireworks for the 4th of July were also discussed as a possibility, however members expressed safety and cost concerns, as well as the availability of volunteers.

ADJOURN:

The Regular Meeting of the Recreation and Parks Board was adjourned at 7:57 PM. The next meeting will be held on March 25, 2026 at 7 PM.