MINUTES

RECREATION AND PARKS BOARD: **LOWER ALLEN TOWNSHIP**

REGULAR MEETING **October 28, 2026**

The following were in ATTENDANCE:

BOARD MEMBERS
Megan Klenzing, Chair
Lauren Casselberry, Vice Chair
Scott Duncanson
Rick Grove
Jim Kaiser
Greg Mahon

TOWNSHIP PERSONNEL
Helen Grundon, Administrative Assistant
Tom Stambaugh, Park Maintenance Supervisor
Ben Powell, Public Works Director
Reneé Greenawalt, Recording Secretary

LIAISON
Commissioner Amanda Mutchler

CALL TO ORDER
Ms. Klenzing called the October 28, 2026, Regular Meeting of the Lower Allen Township Recreation and Parks Board to order at 7:00 pm.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES
The Board reviewed the minutes of the July 22, 2026, Regular Meeting. Two edits were requested: (1) correct the list of Board members who completed the Wass Park and Windsor Open Space tour, and (2) clearly distinguish the items in the park tour report that refer to Wass Park from the single item that refers to Windsor Open Space. Mr. Duncanson motioned to approve the minutes with the discussed edits, seconded by Mr. Grove. The motion passed 6-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT
Phil Broder, a Township resident expressed concern regarding the condition of the Lower Allen Community Park (LACP) dog park and provided photographs taken in July and August. Concerns included:

- The perimeter fence has reached the end of its usable life; large sections need replacement, there are gaps from the original installation, and dogs have been seen escaping under the fence.
- The gate is broken and the picnic tables are deteriorating.
- The decorative fire hydrant has never been secured and has tipped over several times, creating a safety hazard.
- Wood chips are applied once a year and wash downhill quickly due to the slope; twice-yearly application was requested.
- The resident suggested a solar-powered, fob-access gate with paid membership to generate revenue for park upkeep and noted that the dog park is among the most heavily used features in the park while receiving the fewest resources.

Ms. Klenzing thanked the resident for expressing their concerns and encouraged community members to report park issues directly to the Township office, noting the limited number of maintenance staff. Director Powell explained that replacement and relocation of the dog park to an adjacent area further down the slope had been included in the proposed capital budget but was cut this year. Solar power for a gated entry would be part of the new dog park design; the existing solar panels in the parking lot are included in the Township's security camera subscription. Staff agreed the fire hydrant would be addressed and that the dog park would be discussed further during the budget agenda item.

PARK TOUR MONTHLY REPORT – Lower Allen Community Park

Mr. Grove, Mr. Kaiser, Mr. Duncanson, and Ms. Klenzing toured Lower Allen Community Park (LACP) in August; written notes were included in the meeting packet. The group divided the park, covering the top lot, walking trail, upper pavilion, courts, Field of Dreams, and the softball fields. Key items included:

- Several minor short-term items were noted, including a missing electrical cover and an item on the trail that has since been addressed.
- Replacement of outdated bleachers at the ball fields and longer-term improvements to the courts were identified.
- The trail along the north side of the creek was in better condition than on any previous tour, including the small wooden bridge that has frequently been damaged in the past.
- The ball fields had Diamond Tex well placed.
- The campsites were significantly improved and in good condition.

COMMISSIONER LIAISON REPORT

Commissioner Mutchler reported the following:

- In August, the Commissioners approved Phase One of the Liberty Forge development (193 dwelling units), which will include a crosswalk across Lisburn Road and a future path to LACP. Because the water company has not yet begun work on Lisburn Road, construction at the property is not anticipated until approximately 2028; a trail connection from the crosswalk into the park could then be budgeted for 2028 or 2029.
- The driving range property has been sold and will continue to operate as is. It will no longer hold a full liquor license but has a specialty license allowing sale of Pennsylvania-made products.
- The Beacon Hill Park tennis court fencing was approved and has been completed.
- The West Shore Historical Society reported that the Sheepford bridge will be rebuilt; timing is not yet known.
- Updated rental fees for the barn and pavilions were approved, with minor adjustments for consistency between resident and non-resident rates.

TOWNSHIP STAFF REPORT

Ms. Grundon presented the Recreation and Parks Staff Report. Key updates included:

- Routine monthly maintenance continued; baseball and softball seasons are wrapping up and mowing has slowed.
- Trail cleanup and tree trimming were completed at LACP and several other Township parks, including cutting back trees along the trail to the campsites.
- Diamond Tex was applied to the LACP ball fields.
- Staff cleaned up the dog park ahead of Yappy Hour, and wood chips were placed at the bottom of the trails.

OLD BUSINESS

Yappy Hour Follow Up

Ms. Grundon reported that the event went well overall. Scoop of Chaos was the most successful food vendor to date, as attendees purchased ice cream for themselves and their dogs. Vendor feedback requested more advertising, noting the event was difficult to find on social media and that the comment feature on the Township website event listing was turned off. It was noted that the Township website calendar does not appear in Google search results or in the website's own search function, and this is on the staff to-do list.

The Board discussed ensuring a guaranteed food option at future events, as food trucks in the past two years have had low sales and one scheduled for this year backed out. Options discussed included Board members serving hot dogs using the Township's hot dog roller, roasters, and generator (subject to insurance and food-service considerations), or partnering with a booster group or youth sports organization as a fundraiser, provided the

proper certification is in place. The Board also discussed lining vendors and trucks along the drive back to the Fernlawn Pavilion, which has electricity and seating, so attendees can park in the Dog Park lot remains available.

Fall Craft Harvest Festival Follow Up
Ms. Casselberry reported that 54 vendors attended, roughly double the prior year and above her goal of 50, despite cold and windy weather. Vendor feedback was positive; food trucks reported strong sales, and the coffee truck reported the best sales at any craft show. Of five food trucks scheduled, three attended, so future events will continue to be overbooked. Animal rescue participants and food vendors would like to return. The football team volunteers were a great help.

Items discussed for next year included:

- Possible alternate layouts, including placing vendors on the field behind Field One rather than on the hill near the upper pavilion; the barn area was felt to limit vendor space and parking.
- Vendors parked in the Fernlawn lot instead of the designated lot, reducing visitor parking; next year's vendor map will clearly mark vendor parking.
- Recruiting more volunteers, including from outside the Board, and asking for a Community Service Officer or fire police to assist with traffic so Board members can help elsewhere.
- Increasing portable toilets from one to three or four.
- Creating a shared Gmail account (e.g., LAFallFest@gmail.com) so organizers can share vendor communications.
- Sending a follow-up survey to vendors on what went well and what could be improved.
- Adopting one consistent event name, as several variations have been used. The 2027 event will be the fourth annual event.
- The 2027 event will be held on the third Saturday in October, with a goal of 70–80 vendors.

Mr. Mahon publicly thanked Ms. Casselberry for her outstanding work organizing and growing the event.

Gateway Park Update
Director Powell reported that Gateway Park is essentially complete and invited Board members to visit. Sidewalk work at the intersection will be completed in the spring as part of a separate pedestrian crossing project; the traffic signal box located in the line of sight of the park sign will not be relocated as part of that project. Gateway Park will be added to the park tour list.

Wass Park Update
Director Powell reported that the remaining audit flags on the playground grant are expected to be removed in November, allowing equipment to be ordered in December and the playground to be constructed in the spring.
He also reported a shortage of available ball fields, worsened by school construction that eliminated baseball fields. The United Methodist Home, which adjoins the Wass Park ball fields, has agreed to move forward with exploring a sale of land to the Township. The Township would also need to negotiate with Bethany Village, which owns a strip of land between the road and the Methodist Home property, potentially including the Township taking over the Hope Lane access drive as a public street. The site could accommodate one full-size baseball field with dugouts, fencing, and a parking lot. Funding would likely be pursued through a DCNR grant in the spring, along with land donation options. Surveying, appraisal, and grant preparation will occur over the winter; the proposal has not been fully vetted and would require Commissioner approval. A longer-term multi-field complex near the quarry was also noted as a future consideration.

Beacon Hill Radar Site Update
Director Powell reported that the site has been cleared, construction has begun, and the stormwater pond is being built. The contractor is targeting substantial completion of grading by the end of November so the site is stabilized for winter; paving and planting will be completed in the spring.

Highland Park and Beacon Hill Park Updates
Director Powell reported that sidewalk work at Highland Park is complete, providing accessible access to the facility. Extension of the sidewalk to the second gate and paving of a small accessible parking area will be completed in the spring. Replacement of the Beacon Hill Park tennis court fencing was completed in September.

NEW BUSINESS:
The Board agreed to move the Recreation and Parks Board Recommendation Letter to the end of New Business so that it could reflect the budget discussion.

2027 Parks Budget
Staff reviewed the proposed 2027 parks budget, which has not yet been approved by the Commissioners:

- $1,000 is included for Board events: $500 for the Easter Egg Hunt and $250 each for the Fall Craft Harvest Festival and Yappy Hour.
- General park maintenance is largely unchanged from 2026, with an increase in the tree line item. The West Shore Recreation Commission fee has increased slightly.
- Beacon Hill Radar Site Phase 2 is funded by a $350,000 LSA grant. Once the grant audit flags are removed, a landscape architect will be engaged for design over the winter (fitness stations or a small playground), with construction possibly in fall 2027. Phase 1 continues, funded by fee-in-lieu funds, with approximately $250,000 of the roughly $700,000 total expected to be completed this year.
- Approximately $1.5 million was proposed for park capital projects. A $20,000 mower is included; the $105,000 Avant utility loader and the $30,000 dog park relocation were cut. The remaining items are still in the budget, though the Township faces a significant shortfall.
- Sheepford Park playground: the DCNR grant application (50% match) was not awarded. The $300,000 playground replacement will be funded entirely from fee-in-lieu funds.
- Wass Park playground: total cost of approximately $260,000, with $123,000 from the LSA grant and the remaining $137,000 from the General Fund.
- Miscellaneous park improvements: $150,000 ($107,000 fee-in-lieu and $43,000 General Fund), which could fund items such as rubber safety matting under swings, acrylic resurfacing of the Beacon Hill tennis and basketball courts, or dog park improvements. Staff will ask the Board for priorities in the spring.

The Board discussed the dog park at length. Director Powell explained that the fence would need to be fully replaced rather than patched, and that spending $10,000–$15,000 on repairs would be difficult to justify if the dog park is relocated within a year or two at a cost of $30,000–$40,000 or more. The fire hydrant will be removed. Other issues include the curling fence, escaping dogs, the gate, and mulch washouts. He recommended that if the dog park relocation is cut again, the Board consider using the miscellaneous park improvement funds to relocate it to the grass area between the main access road and the lower pavilion, where wetlands have been roughly delineated.

LACP Pipe Replacement, Future Pond Reconstruction
Director Powell reported that a cross pipe near the barn at LACP will be replaced and set at a shallower depth, requiring the park to close for one to two days. Raising the pipe will allow the pond to be enlarged in the future. Staff will seek quotes over the winter for reconstruction of the pond, which leaks due to tree roots, for possible consideration in late 2027 or 2028.

2027 Meetings and Event Dates
Ms. Grundon presented the 2027 meeting and event schedule, which was included in the packet. Event dates include the Easter Egg Hunt on March 13, Yappy Hour on September 16, and the Fall Craft Harvest Festival on October 16. The Board agreed to keep the 7:00 PM meeting time, and the meeting dates were confirmed for advertising.

Ms. Casselberry proposed a movie or music in the park event that would also give Township small businesses an opportunity to connect with residents. Discussion included that the Ms. Casselberry has a projector and screen, that musicians are harder to book, and that a local food truck has given back to community groups in the past. Some members expressed concern that a business-focused event is more aligned with economic development than the Board's parks mission and suggested the Township's Economic Development Authority or the Chamber of Commerce as possible partners, or that small businesses could have a dedicated section at the Fall Craft Harvest Festival. The Board will decide in January whether to pursue the event.

2027 Park Tour Assignments
The Board agreed to keep the same monthly park rotation. Gateway Park will be added to the Highland Park and Highland Estates month. Yellow Breeches Park will remain in February, as the creek trail is more accessible with fewer insects and less overgrowth. New "Park of the Month" yard signs are being created for each park inviting residents to share comments; each sign will be posted the month before that park is discussed. Mr. Kaiser and Mr. Grove volunteered for Beacon Hill; remaining assignments will be made in November and January. The Board noted two upcoming vacancies, and recruitment was to be advertised in the Township newsletter.

Tree Dedication Inquiries
Director Powell reported three recent requests to dedicate trees. He proposed directing dedications to the Beacon Hill Radar Site, where trees are being planted under the approved planting plan. Families would pay the cost of the tree and, if desired, a plaque matching the existing plaque at Highland Park. There was no objection, and staff will proceed.

Eagle Scout Projects
Director Powell asked Board members to direct any Eagle Scout project inquiries to staff. A recent project proposal was denied. Board members were encouraged to share any ideas for suitable projects with staff.

Local School Field Day
Director Powell reported a request from a local charter or private school to host a weekday field day at LACP for approximately 200–300 students, likely in the spring. The Board expressed general support, and staff will invite the school to present its request to the Board for formal approval. It was recommended that the school be asked to rent the pavilions, as is done by other organized groups.

Recreation and Parks Board Recommendation Letter
Ms. Klenzing presented a draft recommendation letter compiled from the 2026 park tour notes, omitting items already completed. The Board agreed to the following changes:

- Revise the LACP item to "replace outdated bleachers at ball fields" without specifying a field.
- Add to short-term goals: address safety concerns and repairs at the LACP dog park.
- Add to long-term goals: relocation of the LACP dog park.

During discussion, staff encouraged the Board and Commissioner Mutchler to make the Commissioners aware of the significant needs in the Township's parks, noting that fee-in-lieu funds will be nearly depleted after this year's projects and that future fee-in-lieu funds from new development (approximately $300,000) are not expected until around 2029. Ms. Grundon noted the dog park has close to 500 registrations and receives three to four applications a week. The Board discussed a fob-based annual membership like Upper Allen Township, and seeking private sponsorships or donations (for example, from pet companies) for dog park relocation. Staff estimated fencing alone at about $20,000 and construction at about $30,000, with total costs possibly $40,000–$50,000 with engineering. Staff and the Board will collaborate on a plan and a letter of support for sponsorship outreach, with general information to be brought back in November or January. The letter will be revised and brought to members for signature.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The November meeting will be Mr. Mahon's last. Board members are invited to an event on December 14. The Commissioners will formally recognize Ms. Parry and Mr. Mahon for their years of service at an upcoming Board of Commissioners' meeting; formal invitations will be sent, and Board members are encouraged to attend.

ADJOURN:

The Regular Meeting of the Recreation and Parks Board was adjourned at 8:06 PM. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 18, 2026, at 7:00 PM.