

**BUTLER COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION
ADVISORY COMMISSION
JANUARY 20, 2026**

ATTENDANCE:

Denton Zeronas, Slippery Rock Borough
Brian Perry, Adams Township
Leslie Osche, Commissioner Liaison
Rick Yarosz, Experience Butler County
Lance Welliver, Butler County Parks and Recreation, Director
Ashley Helmstaedter, Butler County Parks and Recreation, Assistant Director
Colleen Rhodes, Butler County Parks and Recreation, Administrative Assistant
Lisa Campbell, Butler County Community College
Tom Knights, Butler Township

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 12:07pm. There was a quorum present. President of the Park Advisory Board, Lisa Campbell, conducted the meeting by asking if anyone would motion for the approval of the October 21, 2025, meeting minutes. Motion by Brian Perry, second by Denton Zeronas. Motion carried.

REPORT OF REPRESENTATIVES

Denton Zeronas – Mr. Zeronas reported the building and planning of the programs for spring 2026. Mr. Zeronas also is beginning preparations for the July 4th festival in slippery rock, which will be on a Saturday this year. Mr. Zeronas will continue to work towards state certification for the play safe and child day camp.

Brian Perry – Mr. Perry reported that the pavilion rentals have gone online with their new software programming Recdesk. Mr. Perry reported working with DCNR to discuss the farm development plan/area. For the first time since covid, Mr. Perry reported the reintroduction of a large community program for America 250 to be held on July 1, 2026. Finally, Mr. Perry reported the possible merger of Adams Township and Mars Borough at the meeting on Thursday this week.

Commissioner Osche – The commissioner reported she will be attending the PRPS District 1 workshop virtually. This workshop is offering information on naming rights and non-profit friends' groups.

Tom Knights – Mr. Knights reported the rec complex has been filled with interest and the Rugby tournament in November went well. Rugby associations have been in contact with Mr. Knights for fields moving forward. March will be hosting division 2 and 3 qualifier tournaments at the fields. The building associated with the rugby field is looking to be completed by October 2026.

Rick Yarosz-Experience Butler County – Mr. Yarosz reported the grants to experience butler county will be due by March 15, 2026, one in amount of \$5,000 awards and one for historical and education up to \$10,000. Rugby received high revenue at housing at the Ramada, Comfort Inn and Spring Hill. Mr. Yarosz reported working with Placer AI to work on getting more efficient data on events and attendance.

Dustin Drew – Mr. Drew reported the Winterfest program with Moraine Preservation Fund will be hosted on January 31, 2026. Construction for the sewer lines are hoping to be completed by summer 2026 as well as the bike house/concession stand will be opening soon before spring as well as the soon hiring of the seasonal positions at the parks.

Lisa Campbell – Ms. Campbell thanked the Butler County Park Department for their work in helping to secure Diamond Park for the holiday display and lights. Ms. Campbell reported that the Carved in Ice event will be coming up on February 20th and 21st and left for display only on the 22nd.

THE REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR – Mr. Welliver reported Braden, program manager, received a scholarship from Recreation Alliance of North Pittsburgh for the attendance of the PRPS conference in March 2026. This scholarship will be applied towards the conference fee only.

Mr. Welliver reported working with the local communities on Local Park Renovation Grants, DCNR and DCED grants.

The director reported that the sewer lines should be completed in the lower park by no later than end of March 2026.

Mr. Welliver reported that Ashley has applied for an award through PRPS for a program hosted here at Alameda Park, Monster Mile.

Mr. Welliver reported that Ashley will be attending the PRPS District 1 workshop digitally while, Mr. Welliver will attend in person.

Mr. Welliver reported working with the Conservation District on grant work for the invasive species

Grants:

Mr. Welliver reported receiving one of two grants awarded to Butler County for the 10-year comprehensive plan. This grant will be worked on through the consultant and the park department visiting many municipalities to ensure the up-to-date information provided in the comprehensive plan.

Mr. Welliver reported the continuance of DCNR grants for Emily Britian School, Jefferson Township, Harmony Borough and Diamond Park, Butler County. Father Marinaro was awarded an additional \$25,000 for the turf and grass area and should be completed by spring.

Mr. Welliver reported that he has applied for grants through DCED for Jefferson Township, Evans City and East Butler Borough, in hope of being awarded or notified by the end of 2026. Projects include a playground, a pavilion, basketball rehabilitation, and a walking trail.

CAPITAL ITEMS

Mr. Welliver reported the purchases of the drains, lifejackets, umbrellas and controller board at the waterpark. In the park area working towards the electrical bid project for lower alameda. The park area needs water fountains, replacement of the Kiwanis pavilion and the repair of the roof at the masonic shelter. The waterpark area will have the slide evaluated by an Ohio company to determine the amount of work needed to repair the condition.

Program Report

Ms. Helmstaedter delivered the program report.

Ms. Helmstaedter reported on the close out of all fall/winter programs. These programs were well received and full.

Ms. Helmstaedter reported that the adapted programs that were new for 2025 will be presented again in 2026.

Ms. Helmstaedter reported that the concert series and outdoor programming are 75% booked at this point.

Ms. Helmstaedter reported the return of PICA – biking association will return for 2026.

Ms. Helmstaedter reported that a new program will be offered by the Butler Bird Watching club and the Audubon society for the wildlife reserve area. As well as a possible 5k offered for running the lighted light display in November of this year.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Helmstaedter reported the fees for 2026 for the shelters, pool and programs. Minimal requests for pricing increases were requested and reviewed by the park advisory board.

Motion for approval by Dustin second by Brian and motion approved. The fees will be presented to the Butler County Commissioners.

Ms. Helmstaedter reported that the Local Park Renovation grant needs new committee for the grants. Nominations were Brian Perry, Dustin Drew, Denton Zeronas and Tom Knights.

Ms. Helmstaedter reported board member Chris Zeigler has resigned. She also reported on the need to reappoint board members for the park advisory board. Reappointment for At Large representative, Virgil Cousins, At Large representative, Lisa Campbell and Region 1 representative Denton Zeronas. Motion for approval by Brian Perry, second by Tom Knights.

President Lisa Campbell announced the appointment of the president for the 2026 year. Nominated by Lisa for president is Denton Zeronas, first by Dustin Drew, second by Brian Perry. For the vice president position nomination for Lisa Campbell by Brian Perry, second by Denton Zeronas, motion carried. For the treasurer position re elect Tom Knights, motion by Brian Perry, second by Dustin Drew, motion carried.

Open discussion by Tom Knights and the park board for the local EMS and Fire to find access points on the trails here in Alameda Park for injuries on trails needing emergency response. This will be headed up by Scott the local fire chief in Butler Township.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:26PM, motion by Dustin Drew, second by Denton Zeronas. The motion carried. The next meeting will be held on February 17, 2026.

Respectively Submitted,

Ashley Helmstaedter