BUTLER COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION
ADVISORY COMMISSION
OCTOBER 20TH, 2026

ATTENDANCE:

Jen Rottman, Eau Claire
Dave Blair, Cranberry Township
Commissioner Leslie Osche
Lisa Campbell, Butler County Community College
Dustin Drew, Moraine and McConnells Mill
Virgil Cousins, Karns City
Heather Cuyler, Pashek Representative
Michele Gebhart, Butler County Planning Commission
Tom Knights, Butler Township
Leo Rosenbauer, Jefferson Township
Lance Welliver, Butler County Parks and Recreation, Director
Ashley Helmstaedter, Butler County Parks and Recreation, Assistant Director
Colleen Elwell, Butler County Parks and Recreation, Administrative Assistant

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 12:02pm. There was a quorum present. The President of the Park Advisory Board, Lisa Campbell, conducted the meeting by asking if anyone would motion for the approval of the September 15th meeting minutes. Motion by Virgil Cousins, second by Dustin Drew. The motion carried.

REPORT OF REPRESENTATIVES

Virgil Cousins - Mr. Cousins had nothing to report.

Dustin Drew- Mr. Drew reported McConnell's Mill Heritage Festival took place in the last week in September, with beautiful weather and an excellent turnout.
Mr. Drew reported the Mill will be closing for the season at the end of October, and winterizing at Moraine will begin in early November.
Mr. Drew reported the waterline projects at Moraine continue, however, the sewage lines are up and running.

Leo Rosenbauer- Mr. Rosenbauer reported the SEBCO pool rehabilitation in Jefferson Township is on track to be completed the first week in November.
Mr. Rosenbauer reported the patching of the fall surface in the playground has been completed.
Mr. Rosenbauer reported that Jefferson Township is looking into resurfacing the baseball field. The township would like to bring back Knoch High School Baseball and are looking into options for artificial turf.

Open discussion on artificial turf.

Tom Knights- Mr. Knights, reported that construction is well underway at the blue fields in Lyndora. He is hopeful that the final building near the fields will be completed within the next three weeks. Site preparation has begun for the walking trail and parking lots.
Mr. Knights reported that access roads are being widened at Preston Park to accommodate triaxles for the dredging of McCormick's Pond. This should take 60 days to complete.
Mr. Knights reported Trick-or-Treat at Preston Park will take place on Friday, October 30th.

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Commissioner Osche- The Commissioner reported that the S'more's event at Preston Park was a success, with beautiful weather and a great turnout.
The Commissioner reported that the Rotary is getting ready to apply for 5-year grants.
The Commissioner reported that it is budget season for the county.

Open discussion about tree removal.

Dave Blair- Mr. Blair reported the position has been posted for the Director of Parks and Recreation at Slippery Rock. This position is open and they are actively seeking a candidate.
Mr. Blair reported on the upcoming of the PRPS meeting and the importance of networking. This meeting will take place on Tuesday, November 17th, 9:30am – 3:30pm at Fun Fore All in Cranberry Township.
Mr. Blair reported on the NRPA conference in Philadelphia in September. He stated this event had many vendors and well-prepared classes.
Mr. Blair reported on the upcoming Pumpkin Festival. This is a free community event. The pumpkins from this event were grown on Cranberry Township's farm. Mr. Blair stated that the farm had a bountiful pumpkin harvest this year. Excess pumpkins that are not needed for the festival have been donated.
Mr. Blair reported the Township's Christmas event, Santa's First Stop, will take place the Friday before Thanksgiving.

Jen Rottman – Ms. Rottman reported Eau Claire's Trick-or-Treat and Halloween Parade will take place on Sunday, November 1st. There is expected to be roughly 250-300 children participating in the parade.
Ms. Rottman reported Eau Claire will be hosting a free community dinner on November 7th. This dinner is sponsored by a local thrift store and will be held at a community church. There are expected to be 250-400 people taking part in this dinner.
Ms. Rottman reported the community will be hosting Breakfast with Santa in December.

Lisa Campbell – Ms. Campbell reported the AM Rotary's 5k and Car Cruise last weekend was success, and she thanked Tom Knights for Butler Townships partnership in the event.
Ms. Campbell reported Butler Downtown will be hosting a Holiday Event in Diamond Park in December.
Ms. Campbell reported the Rotary's Carved in Ice event will take place in February.

THE REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR
Mr. Welliver reported that Butler County Parks and Recreation Department has ended the search for two 1,000-hour, part-time Program Coordinators. One has been hired; another has been selected and awaiting approval.
Mr. Welliver reported the County Bridge Crew has made repairs to a manhole collapse on Alameda Park Rd.
Mr. Welliver reported he attended the NRPA conference in Philadelphia and found the classes to be valuable.
Mr. Welliver reported he has an upcoming meeting with the Agency on Aging regarding usage of their new building.
Mr. Welliver reported that issues regarding the Local Park Renovation Grant for Petrolia have been resolved.
Mr. Welliver reported on meeting with Slippery Rock Township as well as Slippery Rock High School to discuss grant opportunities for renovating their baseball field.
Mr. Welliver reported on the ongoing electrical project at Alameda Park has not yet been completed.
Mr. Welliver reported the sewar project at Alameda Park has been completed, and now the crew is working on repairing the damage done to the roadways in the park.
Mr. Welliver reported that phase one of the grant funded playground project at Emily Brittain Elementary School has been completed. The application for phase 2 of the project was not awarded a grant.
Mr. Welliver reported the project at Father Marinaro is almost complete. Some cracking has occurred in the floor of the pavilion and will need to be repaired.
Mr. Welliver reported the project at Forward Township will go back to bid due to a miscalculation by the contractor.
Mr. Welliver reported Harmony's construction will be completed with the construction of an ADA parking spot. This is expected to be completed in November.

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Mr. Welliver reported Harcrest Park's project will also be completed in November, with the construction of an ADA parking spot, as well as a concrete connection to the walking trail.

Program Report

Ms. Helmstaedter reported on events, hosted by outside organizations, that have happened at Alameda Park since the last meeting, including PICA race (Pennsylvania Interscholastic Cycling Association), Month of Mud, Tuff Tornado, and Soccer Shots.
Ms. Helmstaedter reported Alameda Park's Monster Mile was sold out this year, with 150 participants.
Ms. Helmstaedter reported on upcoming events at Alameda Park, such as Safe Sitter, Candy Cane Cruise, and Run, Run, Rudolf 2 Miler in November; and North Pole Floats in December.

New Business

Mr. Welliver reported board members Dave Blair, Brian Perry, and Leo Rosenbauer are up for reappointment. Motion to reappoint all three by Dustin Drew. Second by Jen Rottman. The motion carried.

Heather Cuyler, representative from Pashek, addressed the board regarding the Comprehensive Plan for Butler County. Online Surveys have not been fruitful, despite the board members posting QR codes online, in office, and passing out flyers at events.
Open discussion about how to engage the public to take the surveys. Ideas such as paper surveys handed out in senior centers, libraries, board meetings, or in classrooms were discussed; as was having incentives for completed surveys.
Ms. Cuyler brought everyone's attention to the recommendations from when this was last discussed in 2014. Many of the items on the list of recommendations have been addressed, such as mountain bike trails – trail Pittsburgh volunteers have built 20 miles of mountain bike trails at Alameda Park.
Ms. Cuyler cited accessibility as an area that needs addressed. There was an open discussion about accessibility, adult changing stations, and an accessible trail at Moraine in the future.
Ms. Cuyler addressed the trails. She suggested they be evaluated to find and close the gaps in connectivity, and to identify priority areas where efforts should be focused to interconnect trails with each other as well as potentially shopping centers and parks.
Ms. Cuyler spoke on conservation. She asked the group to identify special areas for species of concern where efforts should be focused.
Ms. Cuyler suggested thinking about agricultural areas that could potentially be acquired as park property, as well as other suggestions for improvements for butler county parks.
Ms. Cuyler extended the survey deadline to the beginning of December.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:37pm, motion by Dustin Drew, seconded by Virgil Cousins. The motion carried. The next meeting will be held on November 12th, 2026.

Respectively Submitted,

Colleen Elwell

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