

**LANCASTER COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**

**Speedwell Forge County Park Advisory Council**

**Meeting Minutes of 04/19/2017**

**7:00 P.M., Penn Township Municipal Building**

**APPROVED**

Board Members Present

Helen Farrington  
Eileen Lieberman  
David Wood  
Richard Pohner  
Boyd Sponaugle, Jr.

Others Present

Lancaster County Department of Parks & Recreation:  
Paul Weiss, Parks & Recreation Administrator & Officiator  
Deborah Werner, CPS, Senior Secretary/Public Relations Specialist

Board Members Not Present

Dawn Darlington  
Steve Mohr, Jr.

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The meeting began at 7:00 P.M.

I. Welcome:

- A. Boyd Sponaugle, Jr., was introduced as a new Advisory Council member. Previously Mr. Sponaugle managed the real estate program for the National Parks Service and supervised four offices specializing in land acquisitions within Federal Park boundaries.
- B. Paul Weiss provided a brief overview of the Park and the Advisory Council:
  - o Speedwell Forge County Park that spans 412 acres in Elizabeth and Penn Townships.
  - o Hammer Creek flows along the eastern edge of the Park.
  - o The Park contains 3+ miles of primitive hiking trails and is used for passive recreation (e.g. hiking, bird watching, fishing, etc.).
  - o The Park includes successional forests, wetlands and several acres of agricultural land.
  - o The Lancaster County Conservancy holds an easement on the wetland portion of the Park.
  - o The Advisory Council was created to provide input on both a Natural Resource Inventory and Historical Resource Inventory of the Park. These projects were completed in 2003.
  - o The Advisory Council continues to meet twice per year to provide input on the operation and management of the Park.

II. Old Business:

- A. As the September 2016 Advisory Council meeting was not held, Dave Wood moved to approve the April 20, 2016 meeting minutes as submitted while Richard Pohner seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved and will be posted online at [www.lancastercountyparks.org](http://www.lancastercountyparks.org).

III. New Business:

- A. Lancaster County Commissioners reappointed Advisory Council members Helen Farrington and Dave Wood for additional 3-year terms ending 12/31/2019.
- B. Speedwell Forge Park Updates
  - 1. The County Parks Department consists of three divisions: Administrative, Ranger and Environmental Education. Many environmental education programs are held in our nine parks. Speedwell is utilized for popular programs such as wetland studies, adventure camp, hiking and treasure hunting. That being said, the

Department will place a port-a-pot in the Speedwell Forge parking lot this summer from approx. July 15 – August 15. The unit will remain unlocked and will be anchored against vandalism.

2. The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is a destructive, non-native beetle that destroys all species of ash tree. Since its discovery in the U.S. (in Michigan in 2002), 8 billion trees have been lost, and the insect invasion spread to Pennsylvania in 2014-2015. It takes 3 to 4 years for the beetles to kill a tree. So far, 40 ash trees close to mortality have been removed at the Conewago Recreation Trail and evidence of EAB has also been found in Chickies Rock Park, Speedwell Forge Park and along the Lancaster Junction Trail. The County Parks Department has a three-fold approach for dealing with EAB infestation:
  - a. Trees in remote locations (i.e. those in dense wooded areas and away from trails and facilities) will face natural mortality.
  - b. Infested trees along trails, where access for commercial removal equipment is difficult and where such equipment would cause excessive damage, will be removed by in-house arboriculture staff.
  - c. In open areas where ash trees are in close proximity to Park buildings, playgrounds, roads, etc. (i.e. Buchmiller and Lancaster County Central Parks), infested trees will be proactively removed by a third party. The revenue derived from the marketable lumber of removed trees will be used to offset removal costs and to attempt to save select specimen trees in the Park system.

#### C. Other Park Updates

1. Park Department Budget for 2017 - The Parks Department was approved for a flat budget for 2016.
2. County Re-assessment - County-wide property re-assessment is being completed in 2017. Final re-assessment letters will be sent in June at which point property owners may appeal their assessment value.
3. Bradley Property Update - Based upon re-assessment, it is hoped that the current owner of the Bradley Property adjacent to Speedwell Forge County Park may re-consider selling the land to be included as part of the Park.

#### D. Ranger Update

1. The new ranger liaison for Speedwell Forge County Park is Ranger Alex Manwiller; if there are concerns regarding park matters, council members may contact him at [amanwiller@co.lancaster.pa.us](mailto:amanwiller@co.lancaster.pa.us). Alex has a background in environmental studies. Alex and Chief Ranger Ben Arnold will be present at the September meeting of SFAC.
2. Park Rangers are now equipped with car computers; rangers are also armed with Tasers, pepper spray, batons and firearms.
3. Chief Arnold evaluated Speedwell Forge during the 2016 hunting season and concluded that the deer population is down due to thinning-out of the herd by hunters.

#### IV. Other Business:

1. Richard Pohner motioned for meeting adjournment at 8:11 P.M. Dave Wood seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.
2. The next Speedwell Forge Advisory Council Meeting is scheduled for 7:00 P.M., Wednesday, September 20, 2017, at the Penn Township Municipal Building.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deborah H. Werner, CPS