

Benton Township Board Meeting

February 8th, 2023

7616 E State Road 45, Unionville, IN, 47468

Attendance

Board Members

Joe Husk, Chair

Sean McInerney, Secretary

Jake Dodds, Board Member

Trustee

Michelle Bright, Township Trustee

Public

Jessica Parry

Ashlie Kehrberg

Meeting called to order at 6:34 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

- The minutes from January 11th, 2023 were provided in advance. The board discussed potential updates to the minutes.

Action proposed: Table approval of the minutes for the January meeting to the February meeting.

Motion: Jake Dodds

Seconded: Sean McInerney

Result: Approved unanimously

Agenda Change

- Request made by Chair Husk to move up the Danny Smith Memorial Park Presentation in the agenda.

Action proposed: Move the Danny Smith Memorial Park Presentation to next in the agenda.

Motion: Sean McInerney

Seconded: Jake Dodds

Result: Approved unanimously

New Business

Danny Smith Memorial Park Presentation

- Jessica Parry (President) and Ashlie Kehrberg (Community Liaison and Engagement) gave a presentation on Danny Smith Memorial Park.
- Danny Smith Memorial Park
 - DSP 2022 Highlights

- Surpassed previous record in number of participants with 221 players.
 - Reintroduced softball to the league, opened up to 9- to 11-year-olds.
 - Sponsors for all 3 fields as well as all 25 teams.
 - Awarded grants totaling over \$36,000.
 - New play space and updated playground equipment.
 - Replaced all three scoreboards.
 - Leveled field 2 and updated fencing. Special thanks to Benton Township.
 - Continued to reach out to food trucks and others in the community.
 - Fixed the flag pole and landscaped the memorial area.
 - Held first league-wide ice cream social in three years.
 - Continued open sandlot games in the fall, open for everyone.
 - Started an equipment exchange to try out many of the sports.
 - Held second annual safe trick or treat event the weekend of Halloween.
- 2022 Park Improvements & Projects
 - Replaced Scoreboards
 - Thanks to Smithville Communications for a \$9,000 grant.
 - Removed and replaced all 3 scoreboards.
 - New Play Space Near Field 2 and Updated Playground
 - Grant from Community Foundation of Bloomington and Monroe County for \$17,000 [and \$2,800 donated by community members].
 - Able to purchase a lot of playground equipment, create a new play space near field 2, and update the playground equipment on the original playground.
 - Added a climbing structure.
 - Removed the teeter-totters and other non-functioning playground equipment.
 - Mulch provided by Bear Hardware.
 - Variety of community volunteers helped to install all of the playground equipment.
 - Replaced Basketball Goals

- Replaced the old and worn wooden backboards that have been around for a very long time.
- Leveled Field 2 & Replaced Fence
 - Thanks to funding from Benton Township, Young Trucking, and REMC.
 - Leveled field 2 and replaced some of the fencing due to drainage issues.
- 2022 Sponsors
 - [Bethel Lane Farm Stop, The Scroggins Team Carpenter Hills O’Brein, Bear Hardware, Young Trucking, Anderson Builders, Richards Small Engines, Commercial Services, Keystone Construction, Dick’s Sporting Goods, Tommy D’s, All American Storage & Pakmail, Bloomington Soil Farm, Amish Roofers, Steele Family, Grupenhoff Family, Parry Family, Parry/Williams Family, Quirk Family, Sherlock Homes Inspection Services, Royal on the Eastside, CarpetPlus Color Tile, Wings Xtreme, Penny Lane Daycare, Bloomington Hardware, Superior Insealators, and Keystone Construction]
- 2023 Plans, Dreams, & Needs
 - How It’s Going So Far ...
 - As of January 31, there were 50 more registrations than that time last year.
 - Currently, there are 123 registered players. Registration is open for another month or so.
 - Softball division for 9–11-year-olds that was started last year is seeing growth. Up to 2 full teams already. There were 3 full teams last year. Expectation is a total of 4 full teams for the year.
 - Softball division for 11–12-year-olds is seeing similar growth. Up to 2 full teams already. There were 3 full teams last year.
 - Reaching out to team sponsors and researching additional grants.
 - This year, changed language in the registration form on how people can donate to the park from general donation to scholarships.
 - Last year, the registration form raised around \$300 in donations. This year, already at \$354. This means that 3 players are already covered for the year.
 - Update Field Lighting
 - Field lighting continues to be an issue.
 - Two years ago, Benton Township helped replace some of the bulbs that were out. The bulbs can be quite expensive.

- This year, looking to replace the actual fixtures and the wiring on field 1 and field 2.
- Raised and saved around \$3,500 for the project so far.
- Total cost of the project is around \$7,000.

- **Batting Cages**

- Batting cages are in dire need of help.
- One set of functioning batting cages, the other set has just been sitting there for a long time.
- Fix the set on the batting cage that's not being used and then fix the netting on the ones that are.
- Total cost of the project is around \$15,500.

Trustee Bright asked if the batting cages that are being used were the ones funded by Benton Township in 2014.

Jessica Parry replied that she believed they are.

- **Field Conditioner**

- An annual expense is the field conditioner.
- Helps keep the playing surface consistent throughout the season and also helps with drainage.
- Total cost of the project is around \$2,500 to \$3,000 each year.

- **Reseal Basketball Court**

- To go along with the new basketball goals, the next step would be to reseal the basketball court.
- Total cost of the project is around \$2,500.

- **Looking Ahead To 2024**

- Looking into ways to make the park accessible.
- Could include updating the bathrooms to ensure they're wheelchair accessible, adding disabled parking spaces, creating additional cement paths to make it more feasible for people to get to the concession stand from the parking lot, etc. Looking into it to see how much things are going to cost.
- Looking at what grants might be available.

- **Danny Smith Memorial Park discussion**

Trustee Bright asked if a financial snapshot for the year was available and offered what was provided in a last year as an example.

Jessica Parry didn't have a snapshot readily available.

Ashlie Kehrberg provided additional information on accessibility, including a temporary option for renting an accessible portable bathroom for 3 months (April, May, and June).

Chair Husk asked if there was an estimate on grants for the year.

Jessica Parry replied that no grants have been applied for so far this year. Currently researching what grants are available to fund the projects mentioned.

Trustee Bright recalled a discussion with Ryan Steele about a former project of building a walking path (pavement or gravel). She said that DNR has some grants as well as a Hoosier hiking group that will do a lot of the labor and that it was something to think about.

Chair Husk asked what the annual rental fee would be on an ADA-compliant portable bathroom.

Ashlie Kehrberg replied that it depends if we're renting it for the 3 months vs renting it and servicing it. Will look into getting a cost estimate for the available options.

Board Member Dodds asked what the park makes as far as the total income versus what it spends on its own projects.

Jessica Parry said she'd get those numbers and added that there isn't a lot of difference between those two numbers each year. That's the goal, the money should go back into the park.

Board Member Dodds asked if the light bulbs that were replaced are bad already.

Jessica Parry clarified that the fixtures themselves need to be updated. The existing fixtures are very old and need to be updated to LED lighting.

Board Member Dodds followed up and asked for confirmation that lifespan of the new lights would be a lot longer.

Jessica Parry provided confirmation.

Chair Husk clarified that the existing fixtures are not LED and just the bulbs had been replaced.

Jessica Parry confirmed and said the bulb replacement was just a quick fix.

Trustee Bright asked if there was any protection around the lights in case a ball goes up and hits it.

Jessica Parry replied that there are screens around the lights. The goal is to have the wires underground.

Board Member Dodds asked if the power lines were all overhead.

Jessica Parry said yes for the most part.

Board Member Dodds asked if the \$7,000 for the lighting project was for all the fields or just field 1 and field 2.

Jessica Parry replied primarily on field 2 and a little on field 1. This time last year it was \$3,500 per field. Costs have increased so it's now \$4,000 to \$4,500 per field.

Board Member Dodds asked if both fields would be done, or if field 1 would need some additional [work] eventually.

Jessica Parry replied that field 1 would still need some additional [work].

Chair Husk asked if it would be beneficial to roll both field 1 and field 2 into a single project at the same time to potentially cut down on costs and that all the bulbs would be the same. He asked if an estimate to complete both field 1 and field 2 could be provided.

Jessica Parry replied yes, and that they're working with Electric Plus and they've been very helpful over the years. The larger expense is that a couple of poles for field 1 would need to be moved.

Chair Husk asked if an estimate could be provided for phase 1 (existing estimate) and phase 2 (where the poles would be moved and rewired).

Jessica Parry replied that she would get estimates.

Trustee Bright mentioned that the estimated cost for the project was \$7,000, but that \$3,500 was already saved. She asked if the total cost would be \$3,500 or \$10,500.

Jessica Parry clarified that they're looking for an additional \$3,500 to support that project.

Board Member Dodds asked what the operating costs are for the park and if it's all utilities and insurance.

Jessica Parry replied that it's uniforms for the kids, insurance on the players, utilities are the big costs. Field maintenance, conditioner. The only paid positions are umpires and concession stand workers during the summer, everyone else is a volunteer. She also mentioned that the park tries to keep registration fees low so that everyone that wants to play ball, can play ball.

Board Member Dodds asked if there are opportunities for other revenue streams.

Jessica Parry replied they've considered other opportunities like charging for the fall ball league for kids or adults. At the moment that would probably require hiring people to help maintain the park and maintain the fields. Mowing on the weekends, done by the board and volunteers. By the end of the regular season, the board is ready for a break. If more leagues were added on, it would probably mean a paid position, possibly more than one.

Reports

Financial Report

- The board reviewed Trustee Bright's Financial Report. A summary of that report is attached to this document.

Action proposed: Approval of the Financial Report.

Motion: Sean McInerney

Seconded: Jake Dodds

Result: Approved unanimously

Trustees Report

- Trustee Bright presented her Trustee's Report.
 - We are currently undergoing a routine audit for fiscal years 2018-2021.
 - Trustee Bright noted that the Township owns a 4.16-acre parcel near Unionville Elementary School.
 - We have signed a contract with a new company for generator repair and maintenance. Our generator at the Township is currently broken and may need to be replaced.
 - As of this point, there is relatively little in the Indiana legislature in regards to Townships. One bill that might be of interest is in regarding training new officials before taking office, and ongoing certification/training for elected officials. Trustee Bright is in support of this.
 - Trustee Bright has completed multiple December and year-end reports.
 - A new dishwasher has been installed at the Senior Center
 - We have received a quote for restoration work on Stepp Cemetery (\$23,635) and Brock Cemetery (\$10,460). This is slightly higher than our other two cemeteries that were completed in 2018 and 2019.
 - The logistics of how to proceed forward with Monroe County Planning is still in flux about the transferring of Township fire station property to the Monroe Fire Protection District. Parties involved continue to try to move this forward.
 - The Volunteer Firefighter Corporation donated their remaining funds to the Township (\$3,378.70) with some conditions.
 - We will solicit feedback from community contacts if they prefer a 10/28 Saturday Halloween event as proposed by the District or the traditional 10/31 date. We would like to continue offering the Mother's Day event of some sort in the future.

Action proposed: Approval of the Trustees Report.

Motion: Sean McInerney

Seconded: Jake Dodds

Result: Approved unanimously

Township Assistance Report

- Mary McInerney submitted her Township Assistance Report for December. A copy of that report is attached to this document.

Action proposed: Approval of the Township Assistance Report.

Motion: Sean McInerney

Seconded: Jake Dodds

Result: Approved unanimously

Old Business

None

New Business

2022 Annual Report

- The trustee and board certified the 2022 Annual Report with no changes.

Resolution to treat TS/TA Transfer as temp loan

- Refunding \$5,000 from the Township Assistance Fund into the Township General Operating Fund as a repayment of the prior inter-fund loan.

Action proposed: Refund the amount proposed from the Township Assistance Fund into the Township General Operating Fund as a repayment of the prior inter-fund loan.

Motion: Jake Dodds

Seconded: Sean McInerney

Result: Approved unanimously

Transfer to Rainy Day (15% of total budget)

- Request to transfer \$12,750 from the Township General Fund to the Rainy Day Fund.

Action proposed: Transfer \$12,750 from the Township General Fund to the Rainy Day Fund.

Motion: Sean McInerney

Seconded: Jake Dodds

Result: Approved unanimously

Additional Appropriation (TS/Rec) for generator replacement

- Increasing the budget by \$7,500 in the Township Fund, Capital Outlays and \$7,500 in the Recreation Fund, Capital Outlays to cover the cost for the generator to be repaired or replaced.

Action proposed: Additional appropriation of \$15,000 total; \$7,500 to the Township Fund and \$7,500 to the Recreation Fund.

Motion: Sean McInerney

Seconded: Jake Dodds

Result: Approved unanimously

Transfer of Appropriation for Recreation

- Increasing the budget by \$750 in the Recreation Fund, \$700 in Capital Outlays for the dishwasher and \$50 in Supplies for cleaning supplies. Decreasing the budget by \$750 in the Recreation Fund, Other Services & Charges.

Action proposed: Increase funding to Supplies and Capital Outlays by \$50 and \$700 for a total of \$750 from the Recreation Fund and decreasing the Other Services & Charges in the Recreation Fund by \$750.

Motion: Sean McInerney

Seconded: Jake Dodds

Result: Approved unanimously

Public Comment

- There was no public comment

Adjournment

- Request to adjourn made at 8:22 p.m. The next meeting is to be held March 8, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

Action proposed: Adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Sean McInerney

Seconded: Jake Dodds

Result: Approved unanimously

FINANCIAL REPORT

DECEMBER 2022	2022 Budget	Month to date Expense	Year to date Expense	Remaining Approved Budget	Cash Balance	Deposits	Local Income Tax	Trust Indiana	General Property Tax	License Excise Tax	Comm Veh Excise Tax
Rainy Day Fund	\$ 20,000.00	\$ -	\$ 19,215.00	\$ 785.00	\$ 57,289.16	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 140.42	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Township Fund	\$ 58,000.00	\$ 42,122.22	\$ 46,560.77	\$ 11,439.23	\$ 288,449.07	\$ 10.00	\$ 11,642.33	\$ 695.08	\$ 11,757.06	\$ 1,061.42	\$ 937.03
Welfare Admin/Direct Asst	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 2,463.39	\$ 15,734.65	\$ 9,265.35	\$ 82,012.31	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 309.75	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Firefighting Fund	\$ 80,794.00	\$ -	\$ 80,557.73	\$ 236.27	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Cumulative Fire Fund	\$ 2,800.00	\$ -	\$ 2,800.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Recreation Fund	\$ 7,200.00	\$ 398.47	\$ 5,508.40	\$ 1,691.60	\$ 14,821.73	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 41.20	\$ 1,141.46	\$ 103.05	\$ 90.97
COVID Donation Fund	N/A	\$ -	\$ -	N/A	\$ 510.68	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
COVID Reimbursement Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Township Donation Fund	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$ 79.45	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
FEMA Grant Fund	N/A	\$ -	\$ 7,261.64	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 11,642.33	\$ 1,186.45	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
TOTALS				\$ 443,162.40							
JANUARY 2023											
Rainy Day Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 57,439.60	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 150.44	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Township Fund	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 3,204.01	\$ 3,204.01	\$ 56,795.99	\$ 290,417.17	\$ 5.91	\$ 4,360.08	\$ 744.40	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Welfare Admin/Direct Asst	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 1,186.75	\$ 1,186.75	\$ 18,813.25	\$ 81,157.31	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 331.75	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Recreation Fund	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 937.75	\$ 937.75	\$ 4,062.25	\$ 13,870.37	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 44.11	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
COVID Donation Fund	N/A	\$ -	\$ -	N/A	\$ 510.68	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
COVID Donation Fund	N/A	\$ -	\$ -	N/A	\$ 79.45	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Volunteer Fire Dept Donation Fund	N/A	\$ -	\$ -	N/A	\$ 3,378.70	\$ 3,378.70	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
TOTALS				\$ 446,853.28							

Township Assistance Report

January 2023

Benton Township, Monroe County, IN

1. A resident requested rental and utility assistance. They were directed to the paper application in the mailbox outside of the township office as well as the online application on our website. They have not applied for assistance as of 02/08/2023.
2. A hospice social worker called regarding our process on applying for funeral benefit. After going over the application process, she said that if the appointed Health Care Representative was interested in applying they would be in contact after the person died. The person died within a few days, and we have not heard from anyone since then.
3. A resident called to inquire about applying on behalf of her grandson (car insurance, car payment) as well as elevated utility bills for herself. This need is following an unexpected death of a young person in their family. As of 2/8 this person has not applied.
4. A resident called to inquiring about applying for heating and rental assistance. As of 2/8 this person has applied.
5. A request was funded for the cremation of a Township resident. This was granted and processed.
6. The 2022 Annual Report for Township Assistance was completed. We had 34 requests for assistance and 23 applications were completed for 14 households.
 - a. 2021 – 15 requests for applications, 5 households approved for assistance
 - b. 2020 – 29 requests for applications, 11 households approved for assistance
 - c. 2019 – 21 requests for applications, 12 households approved for assistance
 - d. 2018 – 35 requests for applications, 12 households approved for assistance
 - e. 2017 - 37 requests for applications, 6 households approved for assistance