
MINUTES OF SYMMES TOWNSHIP SPECIAL MEETING

JANUARY 31, 2012

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Elected Officials (Trustees and Fiscal Officer) present were: Mr. Phil Beck, Mr. Kenneth Bryant, Mrs. Jodie Leis, and Mr. John Borchers.

Also present: Brian Elliff - Township Administrator; Robert Malloy - Township Law Director; Carol Sims - Township Assistant Fiscal Officer; Bill Pitman - Director of Public Works.

The purpose of this Special Meeting was to receive public input regarding the potential use of Hopewell Park for organized sports and for the purpose of entering Executive Session to discuss the employment of a public employee.

MRS. LEIS thanked everyone for attending the meeting and taking an interest in tonight's discussion. Mrs. Leis advised that the Board received a request at the January 3 meeting from a baseball team for the use of the Hopewell Park field. The Township Administrator was directed to invite the surrounding property owners to a public meeting in order to receive input regarding this request.

MR. BECK provided additional background information on the purpose of this meeting. Mr. Beck advised that the Board is not interested in redesigning Hopewell Meadows Park or creating a sports complex. The subject of organized sports came up at the January meeting. A representative from a local baseball team stated they are looking for a field they could use during Spring/Summer 2012. This team would probably move to the new Home of the Brave Park once the fields are opened. Mr. Beck noted that the baseball diamond is under-utilized and the Board felt this request should be considered.

Mr. Beck stated that the current Board is aware of the effort that went into the planning and design by the Township Park Committee and surrounding neighborhoods. Therefore, the Board agreed that it was important to receive input and comments from the surrounding property owners before considering this request.

Mr. Beck thanked everyone who took time to communicate with the Board and noted that the majority of these comments were against organized sports at Hopewell Meadows Park. Mr. Beck suggested that the Board allow time for all groups to have a chance to voice their opinions. Mr. Beck recommended that the Board then take formal action on organized sports.

MR. BRYANT stated he agreed with the previous comments made by Mrs. Leis and Mr. Beck. Mr. Bryant noted this Board is willing to listen to comments by Township residents.

BOB DEAN - Advised he was the person who made the request for use of Hopewell Meadows Park field. Mr. Dean noted that some players reside

in Symmes Township, with the majority living in Indian Hill, Loveland and Sycamore Township. This is a new baseball club and the hardest part is locating fields to use. They have contacted various communities and no one had space for them. They are encouraged that space will be available at the Home of the Brave Park. It was hoped that Hopewell Meadows Park could be used until that time. It was brought to his attention that this field was not used and that prompted the request. Mr. Dean stated he would understand any decision made by the Board.

JEFF FIELY, 9142 WITHERS LANE - Advised he was President for "People for Passive Park" and had served on the Park Committee. Mr. Fiely stated there are six neighbors impacted by usage and requested each representative be allowed to speak to the Board.

RAY LO, STEEPLECHASE HOA - Noted there are over 250 residents who utilize and enjoy this park. Mr. Lo asked the Board to listen to the representatives.

MIKE POWERS, SADDLEBACK HOA - Agreed that this park is a very special place and the residents want to work with the Board. Mr. Powers noted that his neighbor did not receive notice of this meeting. Mr. Powers stated that any organized sports will create parking and safety issues within this area.

GARY TRICK, HOPEWELL MEADOWS HOA - Advised he has lived in this area for 30 years and has watched the development of this park. Mr. Trick expressed concern regarding the safety of people walking on the trails and playing basketball. Mr. Trick stated this park was not design for organized sports. There is only one entrance which will create congestion.

RABBI BARR, HOPEWELL ROAD - Advised he lives across from the park and noted that there were many meetings with the residents to discuss the original design. Many safety issues were considered when the plan was developed. Rabbi Barr requested the Board to formalize the previous Board's policy of making Hopewell Meadows a passive park.

KATIE MAHER, TANAGER HILLS HOA - Advised her family has enjoyed the benefits of this park and expressed safety concerns. Mrs. Maher stated her neighborhood is opposed to organized sports.

ROB CHUEY, JOHNSTON FARM HOA - Stated that this park is a financial asset to the surrounding residents. Mr. Chuey expressed concern regarding the value of the homes if organized sports are permitted. Mr. Chuey noted that this baseball field is not suitable for organized play due to poor drainage.

MRS. LEIS moved not to allow organized sports at Hopewell Meadows Park. Mr. Beck seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows: Mrs. Leis - 'aye'; Mr. Beck - 'aye'; Mr. Bryant - 'aye'.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MRS LEIS moved that the Board enter Executive Session to discuss the employment of a public employee. Mr. Beck seconded the motion and the roll call vote was as follows: Mrs. Leis - 'aye'; Mr. Beck - 'aye'; Mr. Bryant - 'aye'. The meeting adjourned for Executive Session at 7:49 p.m.

The meeting reconvened from Executive Session at 10:10 p.m.

No further action was taken and the meeting adjourned at 10:10 p.m.