
TOWNSHIP OF
MIDDLETOWN
B U C K S C O U N T Y

Parks & Recreation Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes – April 14, 2026

Park and Recreation Board: Kristine Belser, Chair
Debbie Marchesani, Vice Chair
Dan Giacomelli, Secretary
Missy Kitzmiller, Member
Helene Ratner, Member
Dori Bower, Member

Others: Monica Tierney, Interim Director of Parks & Recreation
Joanne Morelli, Recreation Specialist
Ryan Leighton, Vice Chairperson, Board of Supervisors
Christian Gallardo, Secretary, Board of Supervisors

Absent: Bill Fuller, Member

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM in the Executive Conference Room at the Middletown Township Municipal Building.

2. Public Comment

Joseph Fitch, resident and member of the Stormwater Committee, addressed the Board regarding ongoing stormwater management concerns, deferred maintenance issues within township parks, and unauthorized vehicle use in park facilities, particularly at Delaware Park.

Discussion included:

- Continued issues involving dirt bikes and motorized vehicles entering township parks
- Concerns regarding trespassing, illegal dumping, and public safety hazards at Delaware Park
- The need for additional signage and increased police enforcement within park facilities
- Frustration expressed regarding delays in addressing recurring maintenance and safety concerns

Board members discussed the possibility of conducting a site visit at Delaware Park and the importance of long-term planning and infrastructure improvements.

Additional discussion referred to environmental cleanup efforts by the Environmental Advisory Council (EAC), including concerns regarding upstream trash accumulation near the Route 1 corridor.

3. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the March 10, 2026 meeting minutes.

Motion: Missy Kitzmiller

Second: Debbie Marchesani

Motion approved unanimously.

4. League and Partner Report:

a. Middletown Athletic Association (MAA)

Representatives from Middletown Athletic Association provided updates regarding spring sports participation and facility improvements.

Discussion included:

- Spring participation totals include:
 - 51 baseball and softball teams serving approximately 650 players
 - 238 soccer participants
 - 141 hockey participants
- Overall participation nearing 1,000 youth athlete's township-wide
- Recent improvements completed through volunteer efforts, including:
 - Replacement of benches and bleachers
 - Removal of a deteriorated wall
 - Repair of field netting
- Ongoing maintenance concerns related to field conditions, drought management, and responsibilities for repairs and upgrades
- Safety concerns regarding dirt bikes entering parks during athletic events and the need for enhanced signage and police presence

b. Lower Bucks Senior Softball (65+)

Representative Tom Crosgrove provided an update on league operations.

Discussion included:

- Current membership of 158 players across 11 teams
- Practices underway with games scheduled to begin May 4
- Positive field drainage performance following recent storms
- Submission of insurance certificates and minor issues involving field access fobs
- Discussion regarding low female participation within the league and opportunities to encourage broader involvement

5. Supervisors Report/Discussion

a. Bird town Initiative

Township representatives reported that Middletown Township has joined the Bird town Pennsylvania initiative as part of broader sustainability and climate action efforts.

Discussion included:

- Educational outreach opportunities
- Future signage and community engagement initiatives
- Coordination with environmental organizations and volunteers

b. Twin Oaks Park

Board members discussed disparities in maintenance and amenities at Twin Oaks Park compared to other township facilities.

Discussion included:

- High park usage despite limited amenities
- Lack of field lighting and ongoing flooding concerns
- Deferred maintenance and infrastructure needs
- Potential future grant opportunities and partnerships through DCNR and other agencies

c. Fourth of July Parade Discussion

Board members discussed the possibility of reinstating a township Fourth of July parade in recognition of the nation's upcoming 250th anniversary celebration.

Discussion included:

- Potential for a volunteer-led, low-cost event
- Participation by local organizations, sponsors, and car clubs
- Coordination needs involving police, logistics, and liability considerations

Motion: Recommend formation of a Fourth of July Parade Committee to the Board of Supervisors.

Motion Passed

6. Director's Report

a. Resolutions Passed

Staff provided updates regarding recent resolutions and ongoing departmental initiatives.

b. Events

Updates were provided on several upcoming community events.

c. Earth Day Event

The upcoming Earth Day celebration will include:

- Vendors and environmental organizations
- Tree giveaways
- Live music by Mojo Gypsies
- Food vendors including Curly's
- Tesla test drives and additional family activities

Staff noted that additional sponsorship support is still being sought.

Anna Payne Park Ceremony

Staff discussed plans for the May 1 Anna Payne Park renaming ceremony and opportunities to expand the event into a larger community celebration.

c. Program Data

Staff reported the following participation statistics and program updates:

- 832 families served year-to-date
- Continued high levels of in-person registration, indicating opportunities to improve online registration systems
- Summer camps at the Barn and Community Center currently full
- Lower enrollment at Core Creek Park programs, potentially related to scheduling format and post-COVID participation trends
- Basketball registrations currently below projections but expected to increase following Memorial Day
- New approaches to officiating and participant incentives under consideration

d. Capital Projects Update

Jones Park Playground

Staff reported that grant applications are being pursued for a new playground project at Jones Park due to project costs exceeding the current allocated budget.

Discussion included:

- Emphasis on accessibility and imaginative play features
- Estimated project costs exceeding \$300,000
- Current budget allocation of approximately \$100,000

Twin Oaks Park

Additional updates included:

- Ongoing stormwater and flooding concerns
- Higher-than-expected costs for fencing and netting improvements
- Continued exploration of grant layering opportunities and partnerships

Other Improvements

Recent maintenance and improvement projects included:

- Dugout repairs
- Bench installations
- Pothole filling
- Volunteer-led improvement efforts coordinated with MAA

Security Improvements

Staff discussed ongoing exploration of security camera installations in coordination with the Police Department.

d. New Employees

Staff introduced new department employees Alexandria and Cameron and discussed plans for their involvement in future projects and programming.

7. Program and Summer Recreation Update: Joanne Morelli, Recreation Specialist

a. Joanne Morelli, Recreation Specialist

Ms. Morelli provided updates regarding summer recreation staffing and programming.

8. Discussion included:

- Strong interest in counselor positions and successful seasonal hiring efforts
- Returning counselors joining summer recreation programs
- Continued popularity of youth camps and recreation programming

9. Discussion Items

a. Field Use Agreements

Board members discussed the development of standardized field use agreements between the Township and athletic organizations.

Discussion included:

- Review of sample agreements from neighboring municipalities
- Need for consistency regarding responsibilities, maintenance expectations, and facility usage terms
- Goal of preparing a draft agreement for Board review by June

Board members were asked to provide feedback prior to the next meeting.

b. Mural Proposal – Helene Ratner

Ms. Ratner presented a proposal for a community mosaic mural project in recognition of the nation's 250th anniversary.

Discussion included:

- An 8-foot by 8-foot indoor mosaic mural installation at Township Hall
- Participation by approximately 350 community members
- Potential involvement from local schools and community organizations
- Estimated project cost of approximately \$5,000
- Possible fundraising or donation opportunities tied to participation

Motion: Recommend the mural project to the Board of Supervisors.

Motion passed

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c. Family-Oriented Programming Discussion

Board members discussed opportunities to expand family-oriented community programming.

Suggestions included:

- Additional movie nights
- Scavenger hunts
- House decorating contests
- Family game nights
- Revival of past community traditions and events

Board members agreed that additional resident survey data should be collected prior to expanding programming efforts.

10. Action Items & Next Steps

- a. Board members to provide feedback on league agreements and special event ideas one week prior to the May 12 meeting
- b. Staff to compile feedback and prepare materials for future discussion
- c. Resident survey to be developed regarding recreational programming preferences
- d. Continued pursuit of grant opportunities and partnerships for parks and capital improvements

11. Adjournment:

Motion: Dori Bower.

Second: Debbie Marchesani.

Motion approved.

Title	Middletown Township P&R Board Meetings														
				13-Jan-26	10-Feb-26	10-Mar-26	14-Apr-26	12-May-26	09-Jun-26	14-Jul-26	11-Aug-26	08-Sep-26	13-Oct-26	10-Nov-26	HOI
Chair	Kris	Belser	2028	✓	✓	✓	✓								
	Dori	Bower	2028	✓	✓	✓	✓								
	Bill	Fuller	2027	✓	✓	☒	☒								
Secretary	Dan	Giacomelli	2027	✓	✓	✓	✓								
	Missy	Kitzmiller	2027	✓	✓	✓	✓								
Vice Chair	Debbie	Marchesani	2026	✓	✓	✓	✓								
	Helene	Ratner	2026	✓	✓	✓	✓								
P&R	Joanne	Morelli		☒	✓	✓	✓								
Public	Sports	Clubs			✓	2	2								
Public	Refer	to Notes				4	1								
Director	Monica	Tierney				✓	✓								
Director	Paul	Kopera	Mar-26	✓											
Asst Dir.	Patrick	Graham	Mar-26	✓	✓	✓									
P&R	Nicole	Tener	Mar-26	✓	✓	✓									
		Count		10	11	10	8	0	0			0	0	0	0
		Location		Muni	Muni	Muni	Muni	Muni	Muni			Muni	Muni	Muni	arking Lc
		BOS Dates		12-Jan	9-Feb	9-Mar	13-Apr	11-May	8-Jun	13-Jul	10-Aug	14-Sep	5-Oct	9-Nov	14-Dec
		Notes		13-Jan											