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**News for Immediate Release**

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## **Dauphin County Commissioners appoint cross-section of residents to a steering committee determining the future of Detweiler Park**

**MIDDLE PAXTON TOWNSHIP** (May 15, 2019) – What does a high school student, township manager, hunter, forester, tourism expert and a business owner have in common?

They are all part of the 16-member Detweiler Park Master Site Plan Steering Committee appointed by the Dauphin County Commissioners today to help decide the best recreational improvements for the 400-acre park over at least the next decade.

The commissioners introduced the committee at an evening picnic in one of Detweiler’s wooded groves and stressed they are looking for continued public input throughout the 12- to 18-month planning process.

“We received interest from more than 70 residents asking to serve on the committee, and it wasn’t easy making the final selection,” said board Chairman Jeff Haste. “I want to thank the 16 members for agreeing to serve, and I hope those who were not selected will remain involved as we move forward.”

Since Detweiler Park in Middle Paxton Township opened in the summer of 2017, more than 600 visitors have provided feedback, with suggestions ranging from keeping it natural and adding more hiking trails and restrooms to a fenced-in dog park and trails for bicycles. There have also been requests to allow hunting, which will be considered along with other potential activities.

“Detweiler is a true gem and we want to make sure what we do now can be appreciated and enjoyed by our children and their children,” said Commissioner Mike Pries. “The process we’re starting is really creating an owner’s manual for the park that will decide how we phase in the improvements people want to see.”

“We’ve said from the start that this is the ‘people’s park’ and we welcome all ideas,” said Commissioner George P. Hartwick, III. “This truly is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.”

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The steering committee's first job will be working with county officials to select a consultant to help gather public input, analyze the park's features and draft the master plan. At least three public meetings are planned, with the first likely occurring in the fall to present a report about the park and seek further public input. The next meeting would go over a draft of the master plan with a third held to review the final draft before it is submitted for Commissioners' approval.

The county received a \$75,000 grant from the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for the planning process, which the commissioners matched with a \$75,000 gaming grant.

Detweiler Park already features seven miles of walking trails through various habitats and a fish hatchery maintained by the Dauphin County Anglers and Conservation Club on Clark's Creek, which borders the park's western edge. Additionally, there are two fields, each approximately 75 acres, that some have suggested could be used for festivals and events.

About 1,500 visitors a month have come to Detweiler Park since its grand opening in June 2017, or about 50 guests per day.

The park was made possible in part by a generous donation from the Detweiler Family, who once operated the Harrisburg Telegraph, WHP and Stackpole Books. Members of the family lived on the property for almost a century and wanted to see it preserved.

Last year, the commissioners unveiled a unique "Adopt-A-Chair" fundraising campaign to help maintain and care for the park that features beautiful Adirondack chairs, handcrafted by E&S Vinyl in Millersburg. Each \$200 chair features a personalized plaque of the donor's choosing and will provide beautiful seating areas at the park for years to come.

**For more information about the Adopt-A-Chair campaign or to suggest what you would like to see at the park, go to [www.detweilerpark.org](http://www.detweilerpark.org).**

**The following were appointed to the Detweiler Park Master Site Plan Steering Committee:**

- Sally Zaino, president, Manada Conservancy
- Julie Seeds, Middle Paxton Township manager and park neighbor
- Vera Cornish, community speaker and facilitator
- Joe Sherrick, president, Dauphin County Anglers & Conservationists, which operates the E.J. Stackpole Memorial Fish Nursery in the park
- Eric Naguski, director, Dauphin County Conservation District
- Deb Everly, member, TriCounty Regional Planning Commission
- Chris Rebert, naturalist and manager of Dauphin County's Wildwood Park
- Amy Young, Middle Paxton Township resident and community recreation advocate
- Paula Zankel, president, Clarks Creek Watershed Preservation Association and adjoining property owner
- Justin Goa, student, Central Dauphin High School
- Amma Johnson, owner of Amma Jo, a local business

- Justin Warren, vice president, Central Dauphin School District Board of Directors
- Josh First, member, Dauphin County Planning Commission and hunting advocate
- Gregg Cook, executive director, Hershey Harrisburg Sports & Events Authority
- Andy Brought, forester, state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Forestry
- George Connor, executive director, Dauphin County Department of Community & Economic Development

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