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EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Moon Township Parks and Recreation Department offers a wide array of seasonal and year around programs and one-time special events. Table 6-1 lists the programming options that are available to township residents as well as the location, the dates offered and the age group targeted. As the township has not tracked participation activities for its recreation programming, this study can not adequately address participation levels or trends, nor offer a comparison to surrounding municipal programs.

Table 6-1: Moon Township 2004 Recreation Programs

Program	Location	Dates Offered	Age Group	Active / Passive	Individual / Team Oriented
Adult Flag Football	Moon Park-Galaxy	19 Sept-14 Nov	Adults	Active	Team
Adult Ceramic	Robin Hill Mansion	May	Adults	Passive	Individual
Adult Softball	Moon Park-Galaxy	16 June-1 Aug	Adults	Active	Team
Adult Volleyball	Moon Park-Volleyball Court	7 Sept-27 Oct	Adults	Active	Team
Art/Paint Class	Robin Hill Mansion	6 June-7 July	Youth	Passive	Individual
Babysitting	Robin Hill Mansion	Fall 2004	Teenag-ers	Passive	Individual
Basketball Shootout	RMU-Sewell Center	18 Sept	Youth	Active	
Buying a House	Robin Hill Mansion	17 March	Adult	Passive	Individual
Children Ceramics	Robin Hill Mansion	June 2004	Youth	Passive	Individual
College Financial Planning	Robin Hill Mansion	9 March	Adult	Passive	Individual
Computer Class		Summer 2004	Adult	Passive	Individual
CPR/First Aid	TBA	TBA	Family	Passive	Individual
Dance	Robin Hill Mansion	3 Sept-22 Oct	Youth	Active	Individual
Driver's Education	Robin Hill Mansion	4 Sessions	Teenag-ers	Passive	Individual
Dog Training	TBA	TBA	Adult	Passive	Individual
Earth Day	Robin Hill Park	April 22	Family	Passive	Individual
Easter Bunny Trail	Moon Park	3 Apr	Family	Active	Individual
Equipment Swap	Township Building	27 Mar	Adults	Passive	Individual
Family Fun Night	Moon Park Amphitheater	4 Jun-27 Aug	Family	Passive	Individual
Farmer's Market	Moon Park	6 July-28 Sept	Family	Passive	Individual
Fathers Day Fun Fair	Moon Park	20 June	Family	Passive	Individual
Firearm/Gun Safety	TBA	TBA	Adult	Passive	Individual

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Table 6-1 Continued

Program	Location	Dates Offered	Age Group	Active / Passive	
Foreign Language	Robin Hill Mansion	Fall 2004	Youth	Passive	Individual
Halloween Parade	Moon High School Stadium	26 Oct	Family	Active	Individual
Health Awareness Class	TBA	TBA	Adult	Passive	Individual
Health Examines	TBA	TBA	Adult	Passive	Individual
Holiday Movie Night	Township Building—Auditorium	22 Oct-10 Dec	Family	Passive	Individual
Independence Day	Moon Park	4 July	Family	Passive	Individual
Karate	Township Building	20 Sept-3 June	Youth	Active	Individual
Lacrosse	TBA	TBA	Youth	Active	Team
Learn to Bowl	Corpin Lanes	8 Sept-24 Nov	Youth	Active	Individual
Lunchtime Concerts	Robin Hill Park	23 July	Family	Passive	Individual
Master Gardner	Robin Hill—Mansion		Adult	Passive	Individual
Memorial Day/Veteran's Day Ceremony	Township Building	22 Oct-10 Dec	Family	Passive	Individual
Kinder Music	Robin Hill—Mansion	14 Sept-30 Sept	Preschool	Passive	Individual
Nature Camp	Robin Hill—Log Cabin	28 June-2 July	Youth	Passive	Individual
Start Smart	Moon Park	16 June-14 July	Youth	Active	Individual
Sat. Morning in Park	Robin Hill Park	5 June-31 July	Family	Passive	Individual
Senior Olympics / Luncheon	Robin Hill—Carriage House	13 Aug	Seniors	Active	Team
Self Defense	TBA	TBA	Adult	Active	Individual
Sign Language	TBA	TBA	Adult	Passive	Individual
Stroller Club	Moon Park	3 June-26 Aug	Preschool	Passive	Individual
Summer Camps	Moon Park	14 June-23 July	Youth	Active	Individual
Tennis Program/ Tournament	Moon Park—Tennis Courts	14 June-26 Aug	Youth	Active	Team
Walking for Seniors	Moon Park	1 June-30 Aug	Seniors	Active	Individual
Winter Basketball	Moon Middle School	3 Dec-26 Feb	Youth	Active	Team
Women's Volleyball	Moon Aux Gym	25 Feb-5 May	Adult	Active	Team
Yoga	Robin Hill Mansion	All year (Friday mornings)	Adult	Active	Individual

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Other Program Providers in Moon Township:

Felician Sisters of Pennsylvania

The Felician Sisters owns the Angela Activities Center (gym), which is available for their 111 members. They currently are collaborating with the Mooncrest neighborhood restoration and would like to see more athletic and activity programming in that neighborhood for children and seniors. They are also in discussions with the township and Allegheny County to provide access to the Montour Trail through their property. Representatives from the Felician Sisters would like to see a teen center, restoration of the Mooncrest play areas, and a senior walking course offered in the township in the short term and a multi-function community center and nature / environmental center in the long term.

Moon Area Senior Citizens Association

The 140 members of the seniors association currently have programs and meetings at the Carriage House at Robin Hill Park. Their activities include card clubs every Tuesday and Friday, lunch every month and organized craft programs four times a year.

Moon Area Soccer Association

This organization provides fall and spring soccer opportunities for its 600 members. Currently the association utilizes Hyde and Allard School fields for their games and practices. Representatives from the organization would like to see more coordination of the fields to provide more organized play.

Moon Area Softball League

This organization provides softball opportunities for girls ages 5-18 and has the following leagues:

- Wee Lassie (5 & 6)
- 8 & under
- 11 & under
- 12 & over

Moon Area Softball League utilizes Whispering Woods, Galaxy, Devenzio, Jupiter and Crane fields in Moon Park.

Moon Hockey

The hockey league has approximately 100 members in grades 7—12 and leases ice from the Airport Ice Arena in Moon Township. The hockey league currently does not partner with the township nor the school district to offer hockey activities to residents or students. Representatives from the organization stated that support from these two entities would be helpful.

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Moon Township Baseball Association

This organization provides baseball opportunities for boys ages 5-18 and has 700 members participating in the following leagues which play in both the spring and the fall:

- American Legion
- Colt League
- Pony League
- Little League
- Minor League
- Midget League
- T-Ball League
- Tournament Teams

Moon Township Little League owns the two little league fields at Baker Field and also utilizes Whispering Woods, Galaxy, Devenzio, Jupiter and Crane fields in Moon Park as well as Brooks Elementary field, Moon High School field and Moon Middle School field. The league also plays on various other fields around the region. Representatives from this organization felt that the cooperation from the township, the quality facilities and the large number of community volunteers were all positive aspects of the township. Representatives noted that facility maintenance could be improved and a more centralized location for the baseball facilities would be advantageous as they are currently scattered throughout the township.

Moon Crescent Athletic Association

This organization provides football, cheer, and dance opportunities for its approximately 300 members. The program offered from July through November to Moon and Crescent Township residents. They currently share facilities with Moon High School. Representatives from the organization stated that they would like to see additional facilities including practice fields in order to provide more opportunities for the football organizations.

Mooncrest Neighborhood Association

This organization holds monthly meetings at the Mooncrest Community Building as well as an after school program from 3-6 PM (in conjunction with the Felician Sisters). With the opening of the new Mooncrest Community Building in 2004, the association hopes to develop additional programs and services. Representatives from the association feels that Moon Park, Olson Park and Robin Hill Park as well as the knowledgeable Parks and Recreation staff are assets to the township. Underutilization of Robin Hill Park , the poor condition of the Delaware and Cedar Drive play lots, as well as the lack of indoor space are weaknesses facing the township according to representatives from Mooncrest Neighborhood Association.

West Hills Area Women's Club, Inc.

The 50 members in this organization raise money to support various causes in the West Hill's area including the food pantry, libraries, the fire departments, parks, shelters, etc. The organization meets monthly at St. Andrew Lutheran Church and at individual homes. Representatives from the organization felt that Moon Park is a very nice facility (especially the

amphitheater), but mentioned the following weaknesses: no indoor meeting or recreation facilities, outdated equipment at Moon Park and the lack of marketing of the current activities were weaknesses for the township.

West Hills Art League

The art league currently has approximately 50-60 members and utilizes the Nimick House for their annual art exhibit. In addition they have an invited artist demonstrate their work monthly from September through May as well as monthly meetings at Moon High School. Representatives from the art league felt more landscaping and improvement to the trails at Robin Hill Park would be beneficial to the overall appearance of that area.

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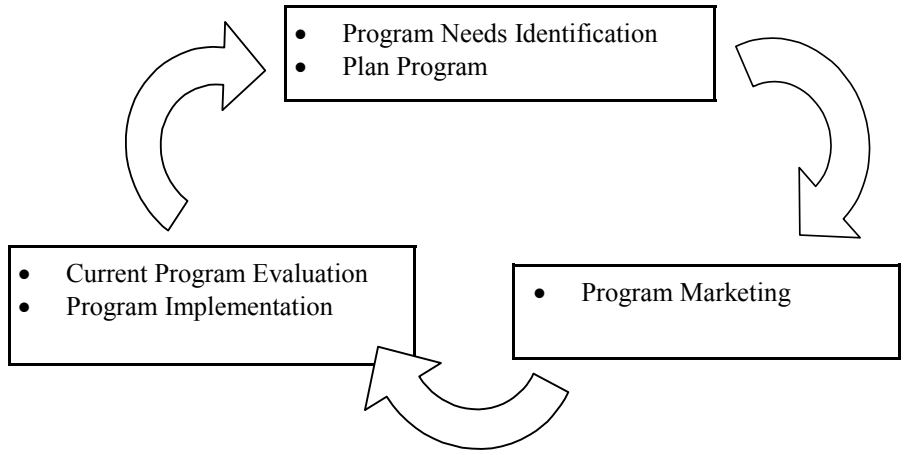
ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the various community stakeholder interviews and questionnaires, analysis of the Community Parks and Recreation Survey results, and meetings with the Recreation Staff and Township Administration, it is apparent that the community is ready for an increase in programming, especially winter programming. The residents, via the before mentioned needs survey, have indicated that a full age range (pre-school thru senior citizen) of programming is desired. The type of activities should provide for active / passive and group / individual participation.

As the parks and recreation staff continues to increase the number / variety of programming in accordance with the survey information, a formal program delivery system should be implemented via the adoption of a **Program Cycle,** a sample cycle can be seen in Figure 6-1. The use of a programming cycle will offer a more complete programming process, assessment of public relations efforts, evaluation of administration, evaluation of program staff, assessment of program affordability, assist with program staff recruitment and provide a continual survey of programming needs.

Figure 6-1: Sample Program Cycle



A major component of the program cycle is the utilization of a Program/Activity Evaluation form. It is always a challenge to identify future programming needs and evaluate existing offerings and therefore it is highly recommended a program evaluation form is used for the Moon Parks and Recreation Department programs. This form, completed by program participants, will provide an assessment of the satisfaction level of each recreation participant. As an added benefit, the evaluation tool will provide the township recreation staff an on-going means of communicating with its residents and assessing their recreation needs.

The participant should have the opportunity to evaluate the program from the start to the finish, because problems may lie with the publicity, registration or customer service. The following items should be included in the program evaluation form:

- Program instructor effectiveness
- Facility suitability
- Quality of program material
- Convenience of program time/day etc.
- Program publicity
- Administrative functions – cost, registration ease, customer service
- What participant liked most/least about activity
- Future program ideas
- Section for general comments

As the recreation participant is given the opportunity to evaluate the programming, so should the instructor. The instructor has first-hand knowledge and particular expertise regarding the activity and can provide invaluable advice on

ways to improve recreation activities. A form similar to the participants evaluation should be developed for completion by the instructor and, if so desired, by activity volunteers. As these forms are completed, the Moon Township Parks and Recreation Program Director should compile the data. The information from the evaluation forms will allow the township to identify patterns as they begin to emerge over time.

The township should adopt a policy for providing scholarships for economically disadvantaged residents. This will provide a greater opportunity for all members of the population to take advantage of recreation programs and facilities.

Program Methods

There are several program methods that could be undertaken by the township. Each of these methods have concerns that should be considered before any one method is chosen. The various program methods are listed below:

- Township Sponsored – This method will require the Parks and Recreation Director to identify and plan, recruit staff, publicize, implement, supervise and administer all Township sponsored programs. This method will provide quality assurance but will take longer to implement a full range of services due to program personnel and facility needs.

  Concern: At the present time, Parks and Recreation staffing capacity is not adequate to utilize this program method. The Director and Assistant Director's current work responsibilities do not provide sufficient time to adopt this type of method as its primary programming source.

- Township/Contracted Services- This method would utilize services of "outside" agencies to meet the community programming needs in Township owned facilities. The Director would be responsible for program identification, publicity, implementation and administration of activities. Partnership opportunities include contracts with Robert Morris University, Allegheny County for senior citizen services, and private enterprises to organize trips etc.

  Concern: Currently, the Township's indoor facilities limit what programs can be offered.

The construction of a Community Center should be reconsidered.

- Township/School District/Contracted Facilities- Utilization of this method would provide the Township an immediate tool to accomplish the identified program needs. The Township should consider entering into a Cooperative Agreement with Crescent Township, Moon School District and possibly Robert Morris University. Each entity has its own unique resources which could be shared by other signers of a Cooperative Agreement, which would reduce resource duplication. The Parks and Recreation Program Director would still have administrative responsibilities but programming would increase in its diversity due to additional facilities. This method would also allow the Township to respond to the residents' desire that more winter programs be offered. A sample cooperative agreement is located in Appendix B.

  Concern: When utilizing other agency's facilities, the question of liability always arises. It would be prudent for the Township to talk to their Solicitor prior to the adoption of this programming method.

Program Development

Once a program delivery method has been selected, the Township should develop activities geared to all age levels of its citizenry (pre-school through senior citizen). The survey information indicates programming diversity is desired with a strong emphasis on physical activities. During the development stage of future programming, the township is strongly encouraged to "go slow" and do not offer too many programs at one time. This is a frequent mistake which can extend staff and volunteers too far.

The programming staples which should be considered in the program initiation period are as follows:

- Pre-school physical/leisure activities (pre-gymnastics/story time/mom & me)
- Elementary age physical/leisure activities (athletic leagues/sport clinics/art mediums/ intro to "life-time activities)
- Teen activities – special events/high adventure (dances/concerts/rappelling/rafting/ lifetime sport inst.)
- Adult physical/leisure activities (aerobics/wellness classes/educational programs)
- Senior Activities
- Special Needs Population Programs
- P.R.P.S. Sponsored Programs (Discount tickets, Hershey Track & Field)
- Nationally Sponsored Programs (Pitch/Hit/Run, USTA Tennis and pass, punt and kick)
- Trips (Skiing, Special Local/Regional Attraction, Tours)

Accurate records should be maintained for all programs and should include the following information:

- Day, date and time – This will help to determine the best time to offer this program, as some programs are effective at only certain times.

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- Program Fee/Costs – Was it reasonable? Did you cover costs? What was your profit margin? Were the participants satisfied? Should you increase or decrease the fee?
- Location – Was it suitable for the program?
- Number of Participants- Documentation of this can be helpful in numerous ways in the future. (Possible grant information, nomination of program for awards, etc.)
- Program Publicity – What was most effective?
- Program Evaluation – Records should be maintained for each program.

An operational manual should be developed for each program. The manual would provide the necessary information for anyone to step in and effectively run any program. Included in the manual would be the following information:

- Date, time and location of the program
- Contacts for the program
- Detailed description of the program
- Detailed list of supplies needed to operate the program
- Timeline for developing each phase of the program
- Set up and clean up procedures
- Cost elements related to the program
- Potential revenues generated from the program
- Program records as addressed above
- Sponsorship, donations, etc. for the program
- Volunteers, staff needed to successfully operate the program
- Photos, news releases, newspaper/magazine articles of the program
- Follow up – Thank you letters, volunteer recognition, etc.
- Program review details – after reviewing the program with others, all ideas suggestions, changes should be properly noted

In addition to the operational manual, an annual program plan should be developed to ensure the success of the recreation programming in Moon Township. The program plan should include activities for each age group, costs, fees, prospective attendance, program income, and program sites. This plan should be updated annually based upon the success of the previous year's offerings and the community needs.

Accurate record keeping ensures the effectiveness and efficiency of recreation programs. The importance of proper record keeping can not be overstated as such methods eliminate the possibility of forgetting certain aspects of the program, especially if it is a special event. All records for each program should be uniform and should include a full report of participation, attendance, accidents, injuries, resources, materials used, personnel including volunteers and costs associated with the program. Computer software can be of great assistance in the record keeping process.

In order to accurately provide programs that will meet the needs of the residents in Moon Township, a survey should be given periodically to Township residents, those who use the programs as well as those who do not. Posting the survey on the Moon Township web site would be one method to distribute the survey in a cost effective manner. The survey should be

used as much as possible in order to accurately identify the needs of the community. The results from this survey can be entered into the program cycle. A sample survey is included in Appendix C.

Marketing

The Township Park and Recreation Department has recently developed a program brochure which is distributed to residents as are various program fliers / posters advertising program efforts and special events. The Park and Recreation Department's special events, programs and facilities are also highlighted in a publication produced by the township, which also lists services of township departments, township facilities and government personnel contacts.

As the Park and Recreation Department continues to provide the citizenry with more leisure opportunities, it is imperative that a sound marketing plan be developed. A marketing plan will increase community support for new facilities, open space acquisition and tax funded expenditures and program participation. The marketing plan should be inviting, informative and persuasive to entice the public to participate in the programs. A department logo and slogan should be incorporated into the marketing plan. As the recreation opportunities continue to grow in Moon, the parks and recreation department should develop seasonal program brochures/fliers to advertise the programs offered at various times throughout the year. To offset associated cost for this type of marketing, advertisement space in brochures could be sold to the business community.

Department staff should also maintain a relationship with media representatives. This will allow the parks and recreation department to receive adequate publication of its news releases, advertisements and event coverage. A quarterly update of media contacts should be completed by the department to ensure that promotional material developed will reach the correct individuals.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that all public entities operate each service, program or activity in a manner that is accessible to persons with disabilities. If the parks and recreation department offers a program or an activity that is in a building that is not accessible to person with disabilities, the department must (Mertes and Hall, 1996):

- Remove the barrier to access in the facility
- Shift the location to an accessible site
- Provide the service in some alternative method in an accessible facility
- Construct a new facility for park programs

It is recommended that the Moon Township Parks and Recreation Department develop checklists for use in planning for the accommodation of disabled residents in their programming. The checklists should cover all possible issues including but not limited to access, equipment, and safety. A referral service should be made available as well to identify

local and regional programs from which residents with disabilities may benefit. A final recommendation is that all brochures and marketing items contain a statement listing accessible facilities and programs as well as a contact for the referral program.