

Sept 30, 2025 – Meeting Minutes Addendum

- The Township Manager (Bob Z.) relayed the top park priorities for East Vincent Township as:
 1. Independence Park – Phase 1
 2. Park on the Ridge Improvements
- Monica K. Mullaji sent the County Authorization to Bid letter to Manager Bob Zienkowski, confirming that the draft bid materials are consistent with the project as approved by the Chester County Commissioners. She requested that EVT submit the bid tabulation and award recommendations for County review.
- Brian W. requested that the Park and Recreation Board be copied on the bid tabulation and award recommendations. Bob Z. confirmed this will be done.
- Resident Karen Neckar (Spring City Borough) sent a note thanking the Township for the hiking paths in Independence Park, noting how convenient and relaxing they are. Bob Z. replied with appreciation, crediting the Park and Recreation Board for their work and noting that more improvements are still to come.
- The discussion of Park on the Ridge as a possible dog-friendly park has been tabled.

Independence Park Project Schedule

- The schedule was revised by Pennoni. The project was advertised for public notice on **September 9, 2025 and September 16, 2025**, and it is currently in the vendor review period. Addendum No. 1 consisted of a pre-bid site meeting held on September 18, 2025, with contractors on-site. On September 26, 2025, a second addendum was issued with supplemental data amending the contract documents; this included multi-page modifications to the contract documents.
- The **Bid Opening is scheduled for October 8, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.**, with bid analysis and recommendation to follow one week later. The **Bid Award by the Board of Supervisors is set for October 15,**

2025, after which a notice to proceed and pre-construction meeting will take place.

- Groundbreaking is projected for **December 1, 2025**, reflecting a one-month slippage from the original date of November 1, 2025, due to granting vendors an elongated response in the hope of obtaining a higher quality bid.

Presentation – Forest Bathing (B. Wilde)

- **Overview**

B. Wilde presented on the concept of *Forest Bathing* (Shinrin-yoku), a Japanese practice originating in the mid-1980s. Forest Bathing is the act of slowing down in nature, engaging all senses, and becoming fully aware of the environment. It emphasizes immersion in the woods –sights, sounds, textures, air, and light.

- **Benefits**

Mr. Wilde noted scientific studies indicating health benefits of forest bathing, including:

- Lowering blood pressure and heart rate
- Reducing stress hormones
- Improving mood, decreasing anxiety, and supporting mental health
- Boosting immune function through tree-released oils (phytoncides)
- Enhancing focus and creativity

- **Event at Marsh Creek State Park**

B. Wilde described a Forest Bathing event conducted by DCNR at Marsh Creek State Park. Initially attended by 4–5 DCNR staff, several vans then arrived transporting residents from the Southeastern Veterans Center (SEVC), including individuals using wheelchairs and walkers. Two groups participated: one in guided meditation, the other

on a forest trail walk. Challenges were noted regarding accessibility, as one participant attempted the trail in slippers using a walker.

- **Engagement with SEVC**

SEVC Activities Director, Audrey Subian, has been surveying residents about activity preferences. A strong interest in outdoor activities was expressed. Mr. Wilde suggested that East Vincent Township consider including SEVC residents in future surveys and programming.

- **Discussion and Board Feedback**

The Park and Recreation Board was receptive to the concept of Forest Bathing as a potential activity for Township parks. Members suggested opportunities to host such an event at Independence Park, particularly along the Indy Trail. The Board discussed the possibility of introducing SEVC residents to Independence Park and developing more nature-immersion opportunities.

Motion:

T. Obara motioned that the Park and Recreation Board approve and accept the *Meeting Minutes Addendum* to the minutes dated **September 30, 2025** as submitted and entered in the meeting packet. D. Schmidt seconded. Vote was unanimous.