

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES

May 5, 2025

The regular meeting and public hearings of the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Upper St. Clair, duly advertised and posted in accordance with law, was called to order at 7:30 PM on Monday, May 5, 2025, at the Township of Upper St. Clair Municipal Building, Board of Commissioners' Meeting Room, Upper St. Clair, PA. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

PRESENT: Commissioner Burlingame
Commissioner Enck
Commissioner Graves
Commissioner Pardini
Commissioner Thomas

Matthew R. Serakowski	Township Manager
Mark Mansfield	Assistant Township Manager
Mark P. Romito	Director of Finance
Adam A. Benigni	Director of Community Development
Irving S. Firman	Township Attorney
Craig Jubic	Township Engineer
Missy Fenster	Network Deposition Services
Prudence Cooper	Recording Secretary

EXCUSED: Commissioner Paoly President
Commissioner Plutko

PUBLIC: 32 people attended.

ELECTION OF PRESIDENT PRO TEM FOR THE PURPOSE OF PRESIDING AT THE MAY 5, 2025 BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING

Mr. Serakowski stated that it is necessary to elect a President Pro Tem to proceed with the meeting this evening.

In accordance with the Home Rule Charter, it sets forth that "in the absence of the President and Vice President, the Board of Commissioners shall elect a President Pro Tem, who shall have all the powers of the President."

This can be accomplished with the following procedure:

1. One Commissioner nominates a Commissioner for President Pro Tem of the Board.
No second is required, but may be given.
2. The Township Manager asks for additional nominations.
3. If none, a simple motion is made and seconded, with a voice vote following.

Mr. Serakowski then asked the Board for nominations for President Pro Tem for the purpose of presiding over this evening's meeting.

Commissioner Burlingame nominated Commissioner Enck as President Pro Tem.

Mr. Serakowski asked if there were additional nominations and there were none.

**MOTION AND VOTE FOR ELECTION OF PRESIDENT PRO TEM FOR
THE PURPOSE OF PRESIDING AT THE MAY 5, 2025 BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS REGULAR MEETING**

Commissioner Pardini moved to elect Commissioner Enck for President Pro Tem for the purpose of presiding over the May 5, 2025 Regular Meeting. This was seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried with a 5-0 voice vote.

RECOGNITIONS

Commissioner Pardini presented a Proclamation to Mr. Keith Morse, Chief of EMS Operations for Tri-Community South, in recognition of National EMS Week, May 18 – 24, 2025. The theme for this year is “*EMS WEEK: We Care. For Everyone*”.

Commissioner Enck presented a Proclamation recognizing the Upper St. Clair High School Speech & Debate Team for their win for the sixth time and the fourth year in a row at the Pennsylvania High School Speech League Championship.

Commissioner Graves presented a Certificate of Achievement to the Upper St. Clair High School Boys Basketball team for their second win in a row at the Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic League (WPIAL) Championships.

Commissioner Burlingame presented a Certificate of Achievement to the Upper St. Clair High School Girls Basketball team for their win at the Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic League (WPIAL) Championships.

**REVIEW OF BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS’ REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF
APRIL 7, 2025**

Commissioner Thomas moved to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of April 7, 2025. This was seconded by Commissioner Burlingame and carried with a 5-0 voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

OLD BUSINESS

**CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING RE. PLC25-0001 – ST. CLAIR COUNTRY CLUB
PADDLE COURTS – UNIFIED CONDITIONAL USE PRELIMINARY AND FINAL LAND
DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL**

Commissioner Enck introduced the Continued Public Hearing Re. PLC25-0001 – St. Clair Country Club Paddle Courts – Unified Conditional Use Preliminary and Final Land Development Approval.

Commissioner Thomas recused himself since he is a member of St. Clair Country Club which is the applicant in this matter.

Mr. Benigni reviewed the recommended continued public hearing procedures and recommended that the hearing be closed and action taken.

Commissioner Enck asked if there was anyone wishing to testify who were not previously sworn at the initial public hearing and there were none.

Mr. Benigni then entered Township Exhibit #14 into the record.

Mr. Benigni added that since the last Board meeting, there were questions raised regarding temporary structures and the Township's policy on lighting. Section 130.50 of the Township Code stipulates that temporary structures are allowed to be located on a property for up to 12 months. To give some perspective on lighting on Township recreation properties, the lighting at Boyce Mayview Park stays on until 10:00PM, unless there is a baseball game that goes into extra innings, then the lights stay on until the end of the game. The lights at the Township's Paddle Courts turn off at 10:00PM and the paths stay lit until 10:45PM.

Mr. Benigni then gave the opportunity to representatives of St. Clair Country Club ("Club") to address the temporary structures, lighting, and hours of operation pertaining to their project before the Board this evening.

Mr. Joe Hackett, LaQuatra Bonci Associates, 95 S. 10th Street, Pittsburgh, PA, stated that he is the landscape architect for the Club and has no new information to provide and the presentation shown last month still stands.

Mr. Hackett continued that regarding the temporary structures, a temporary paddle hut and temporary restrooms are being proposed. These would only be rented or installed during the paddle court season which is October through April.

Mr. Hackett submitted a letter to the Planning Commission stating the hours of operation of the paddle courts and that the lights will be turned off by an automatic timer at 10:00PM. The lights can be turned off manually if a game ends earlier.

Mr. Hackett then opened up the discussion for questions.

Discussion ensued between Mr. Hackett, the Board of Commissioners, Mr. Firman, and Mr. Benigni confirming the following information:

- The temporary restrooms and paddle hut will be rented and installed during the same time frame from October through April each year. The temporary paddle hut can be folded and put away for the next season.
- The Township Code stipulates that the Zoning Administrator can approve installing a temporary structure for this project for up to 12 months. The Code does not address whether a structure can be put up for six months, then taken down, then constructed again six months later. Further research is required for any other provisions in the Code. The Club confirmed that it will abide by the Code; if its interpretation says that it can only construct the temporary structures for only one year, they will be only up for six months and will not be installed the next year.

- Although the lighting can be manually turned off, lighting will not be able to be extended past 10:00PM.
- The Club can adopt a tree replacement plan that will include replacing mature trees with ones with an equal amount of caliber. Replacing tall pine trees with ones of equal height will be problematic and expensive. Planting mature trees has a much lower success rate than younger trees. Trees planted along Washington Road and the Club's upper parking lot will consist of 60% evergreen, and 35% pine trees, with maple and oak trees mixed in. This will create a more naturalistic screen.

Ms. Mary Robinson, 2354 Old Washington Road, stated that she lives in the house next to the Club overlooking the proposed paddle courts. Mr. Hackett confirmed for Ms. Robinson that landscaping will be installed right away after Board approval of this project and before a construction permit is granted.

Ms. Ann Gentry, 2315 Old Washington Road, asked why the structures are temporary and whether the Club will build something else eventually. Mr. Hackett responded that the Club does not know what they plan to build permanently. Their goal is to construct the paddle courts in time for the fall season and then develop a plan for the best use of that land. Club membership has not made a decision of a permanent paddle hut or what it might look like.

Ms. Gentry continued that the residents of this community have expectations and rights to peace and quiet, privacy and protection of their property values. She does expect lights and noise late at night. The time for end of play is 10:00PM, which has changed since the last meeting. She emphasized for the Board that the Club is a business operating in Upper St. Clair and does not have more rights than its residents.

Mr. Serakowski answered Ms. Gentry's questions by stating that hours of operation for construction equipment in the Township are 7:00AM to 7:00PM. Mr. Benigni previously mentioned the hours of operation of Township athletic facilities. Enforcement of setting the hours for the paddle courts can be accomplished through the approval ordinance which will be under consideration of the Board. The applicant will be held to those standards. Noise complaints can be reported to the Police Department and they will follow up accordingly with Code Enforcement during daylight hours. If approval of this project occurs, the Club will be held to the approved hours of operation.

Mr. John Gentry, 2315 Old Washington Road, stated that the paddle courts will be built adjacent to a neighborhood zoned R-1 which is not the proper use for that site. They do not wish to hear the noise, see the lights, hear the traffic or screaming and yelling from members playing paddle ball late at night. Although the hours of play ending at 10:00PM is better than 11:00PM, play should not be past 9:00PM.

Mr. Hackett confirmed for Mr. Gentry that the noise study was conducted on all four current courts that were all in use at one point in time. Mr. Gentry doubted that the noise study concluded that most of the noise came from Route 19 which is far away and through hilly terrain.

Mr. Gentry continued that any lighting in a dark space will be harmful to his property and to his wellbeing. It is a well-known secret that the paddle ball courts are the first step to installing pickleball courts and he does not want to see that happen. He would like to know the long-term development plans for the Club. He is requesting that the Board vote no on this project.

Mr. John Gillen, 2354 Old Washington Road, asked for clarity on the Club's long term plans. Mr. Hackett shared that the Club has a masterplan for many different improvements, some of which may not happen. Each project goes before the Board membership who votes to advance the project, which is then funded, and then it goes before the Township's Board of Commissioners for approval. No project in the area of the paddle ball courts has been approved or funded. Although the master plan may show other project or activities, none have been approved by the Club membership.

Ms. Jessica Hrabovsky, 2325 Old Washington Road, stated that the Club is asking for approval of a temporary structure, not a permanent one, with no size given. Mr. Hackett clarified that the temporary structure will not house paddle courts; it is a hut where players can wait for the start of their games. Ms. Hrabovsky shared that the temporary structure can be moved anywhere and could end up being larger than what is depicted. In addition, the new path will have lighting, and it is unknown how they will be set up or how bright they will be. It is also unknown where the entrance and exit will be to the temporary structure or to the paddle ball courts. Regarding landscaping, there have been six trees that have been removed on the Club's property, in front of Ms. Hrabovsky's house, that have not been replaced, causing debris to come into her yard, killing the grass, as well as trees, on her property. She is asking the Club to be good stewards of the surrounding residents' time and patience.

Mr. Hackett responded by sharing that after discussions with the Club, it was decided that the path and stairs from the paddle ball courts up to the parking lot have been eliminated. There are other ways to access the courts: around the pool, the golf cart path, and a lawn path between the existing parking lot and the pool. This will eliminate the path lighting.

In response to Mr. Firman's request for clarification of the location of access to the paddle courts, Mr. Hackett stated that there is a path on the western end of the pool, and next to the fenced lawn area of the pool. The proposed stairs next to the pool will be eliminated.

Mr. Hackett confirmed for Ms. Robinson that the paddle courts will be located at the end of the driving range tees and pointed that out on the plans. He also showed the stairs that will be eliminated and the paths and lawn ramp down from the parking to the proposed courts, which are 43 feet lower than Old Washington Road. In addition, Mr. Hackett pointed out the temporary hut and courts on the plan.

Mr. Hackett verified for Mr. Serakowski that no proposed landscaping will be eliminated. Ms. Robinson countered that the landscaping will not block the lighting into the front of her home's floor-to-ceiling windows. Commissioner Burlingame shared that the topography drops down to the courts; however, Ms. Robinson claims there will still be light pollution coming into her windows.

Mr. Hackett then reviewed the following pages of the plans for the paddle courts:

- Page 8 depicted a cross-section of the surrounding houses on Old Washington Road, and the proposed paddle courts that will be down the slope from the parking lot.
- Page 10 shows a cross-section from a different view that includes Ms. Robinson's house, which is approximately 500 feet away from the proposed courts. Lights will be seen from her house.
- Page 12 shows the light poles which are 20 feet high and the lights are underneath a box that shines downward.

- Page 14 depicts a photograph of the lighting of the existing courts taken from 150 feet away. Mr. Gentry interjected that the area of the proposed courts is totally dark, so when the courts are built with the lighting, even from 500 feet away, there will be a worse, noticeable change.

Mr. Tom Hrabovsky, 2325 Old Washington Road, disagrees with Mr. Hackett that deciduous trees will help block the lights and noise between October and April, since there are no leaves on trees during that time of year. He is not confident that there will be 10-foot trees planted because it has never happened before. He is asking specifically what trees will be planted along Old Washington Road. At the last meeting, it was mentioned that dogwoods would be planted; however, they do not grow to be 15 feet high. No types of trees have been specifically mentioned in the plans. The minimal amount of trees and bushes depicted in the plans along Old Washington Road and on the other side of the parking lot will do nothing to block the proposed courts.

- Mr. Hackett continued with Page 9 of the plans which shows multiple sizes of trees being planted on a slope, including dogwoods, evergreens, bushes, and deciduous trees. When looking down the slope, underneath the canopy of a maple tree, something at eye-level is preferred. Something small, planted down the hill will block the view.
- Page 21 depicts a mixture of evergreen and deciduous trees, with more evergreen than deciduous, along Old Washington Road and the top of the parking lot. Both areas are sloping down to provide a multi-level screening.
- Page 20 shows a tree that is 50 years old which blocks the view 40 feet up, but does not block the view while driving by. This is the reason that the proposed plantings are multi-level because they will block the view.

Jerry Cipriani, 220 Lucca Lane, shared that his home was built as a result of a mixed-use ordinance about ten years ago. Mr. Firman confirmed for Mr. Cipriani that there will be no ordinance being passed this evening.

Mr. Cipriani shared that there is a swimming pool in area of the proposed courts that is open until 9:00PM to 10:00PM all summer that generates noise, music, and lights. Neighbors are not losing pastoral land across from their property. For decades, there were paddle courts on the other side of the Club property and there were not an array of complaints from the nearby neighbors, who are similarly situated to the houses near the new courts. There will not be ambient lights floating up in the air from the courts. The trees lining the driving range were 10-foot trees, not five-foot trees. The Club, which has been a great and generous neighbor to this Township is asking to utilize their property as a country club. There has been no mention of pickleball; the noise study has been done legitimately, and there is no controversy with respect to the lighting.

Mr. Cipriani understands that there is fear of the unknown and shared that when the Siena development was presented to the Board it took three or four meetings and three years of litigation to deliver one of the crowning jewels of this community that generates many thousands of dollars in tax revenue. There have been no complaints from the neighbors in Springfield once it was built. Mr. Cipriani understands the concerns of the adjacent neighbors of the Club, but the impact will be far more benign than is feared.

Ms. Hrabovsky agrees that the Club can do what they want with their property, and it was mentioned that there are further plans for development. She is asking for those plans to be presented, if they are

already in motion. She asked for more clarity as to the trees and bushes that will be planted to block the noise and lights as those plans are not complete.

Mr. Justin Hollingsworth, 2333 Engelwood Drive, is on the Board of the Club, and his property is next to the Club's golf course. There are 467 families who are residents of Upper St. Clair and who are members of the Club that come together as a body to recreate and enjoy each other's company. The Club is not going to "pull the wool over anyone's eyes"; they are considering some capital projects, but nothing is concrete except what has already been presented to the Board. Mr. LaRocca, the General Manager of the Club, and Mr. Hollingsworth met with Mr. and Mrs. Gentry to discuss the paddle court plan, took their feedback into consideration, and will incorporate more evergreens as a result.

Mr. Hackett clarified for Commissioner Pardini that the Terrace Nine course is being built on the location of the current paddle courts. The Terrace Nine course had been previously approved by the Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Benigni stated that there are two options to consider this evening as explained on page two of the Staff report:

1. If the Board of Commissioners determines that it has sufficient information to render a decision, Staff recommends that the Board close the public hearing and render a decision at the June 2, 2025 Regular Board meeting. The motion to close the public hearing can be accomplished by a simple motion and voice vote.
2. If the Board of Commissioners determines that it does not have sufficient information to render a decision, the Board should advise Staff and the Applicant of the specific information required to render a decision and table the public hearing to the June 2, 2025 regular meeting with the consent of the Applicant. This can also be accomplished by a simple motion and voice vote.

Mr. Firman stated that the Club should be given the option to present additional information and continue the public hearing or to close the public hearing.

Mr. Hackett requested five minutes to discuss these options with his colleagues. Recess was granted at 8:45PM.

The public hearing was resumed at 8:47PM.

Mr. Hackett stated, on behalf of his client, St. Clair Country Club, that they would like to keep the hearing open to consider the residents' concerns regarding landscaping and trees and to provide additional information. Mr. Hackett requested to continue the public hearing until June 2, 2025.

Mr. Hackett confirmed for Mr. Firman that he has full authorization from St. Clair Country Club to speak on their behalf and wishes to continue the public hearing until June 2, 2025 or a continuance of time thereafter in accordance with the Municipal Planning Code.

Commissioner Enck asked if there were any additional questions or comments from the Board or the public and there were none.

MOTION AND VOTE TO CONTINUE PUBLIC HEARING RE. PLC25-0001 – ST. CLAIR COUNTRY CLUB PADDLE COURTS – UNIFIED CONDITIONAL USE PRELIMINARY AND FINAL LAND DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL

Commissioner Burlingame moved to continue the Public Hearing Re. PLC25-0001 – St. Clair Country Club Paddle Courts – Unified Conditional Use Preliminary and Final Land Development Approval to the Board of Commissioners' Regular meeting on June 2, 2025. This was seconded by Commissioner Pardini and carried with a 4-0-1 voice vote. Commissioner Thomas recused himself from voting.

NEW BUSINESS

PUBLIC HEARING RE. PLC25-0002 – PITTSBURGH BASEBALL LAB – NONRESIDENTIAL – CONDITIONAL USE APPROVAL

Commissioner Enck introduced the Public Hearing Re. PLC24-0002 – Pittsburgh Baseball Lab – Nonresidential – Continued Conditional Use Approval.

Mr. Benigni reviewed the recommended public hearing procedures.

Those wishing to testify were sworn in by Commissioner Enck.

Mr. Benigni then entered Township Exhibits #1 through #9, and Applicant Exhibits #1 through #4 into the record.

Mr. Max McDowell and Gary Herbert, representing Pittsburgh Baseball Lab, introduced themselves. Mr. Herbert stated that the property is located at 1341 McLaughlin Run Road in the RM, Restricted Light Industrial District, and they are seeking conditional use approval to allow a baseball training facility, a recreational enterprise use. Previously, the property was used as a recreational enterprise designed and operated as a racquet club and fitness center. It was then purchased by Fairfield Southpointe LP who received approval to change the use to a mini warehouse and storage facility in January, 2022. Fairfield Southpointe will be selling the property to Pittsburgh Baseball Lab, so they are looking to change the use back to a recreational enterprise use. Instead of a racquet club, it will be a baseball training facility.

Mr. McDowell shared his professional background which includes playing professional baseball, and owning a baseball facility in North Huntington Township for the past eight years. His goal is to give back to youth baseball by opening up a baseball facility in the Pittsburgh area. He has partnered with Matt Martin and their goal is to help kids by providing a big league, world class experience which is lacking in the Pittsburgh region in the areas of technology away from Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) baseball. It will be a training center for athletes to come to train, and lift and will be a "one stop shop" with professional baseball players, trainers, and scouts.

Mr. McDowell continued by sharing photos of his other baseball facility. He has been giving lessons for 15 years and has devoted his life to youth baseball and plans to remain in this realm in the Pittsburgh area. Matt Martin has experience with personal instruction with some of the best athletes in the area.

Mr. McDowell stated that his vision is to have a top-of-the-line facility that focuses on youth baseball, to include softball as well, by serving the local programs and help grow the game by having the best instructors, technology and the best building in Western Pennsylvania. The facility will include a world class weight room, and equipment and technology to improve players' skill.

Mr. McDowell covered the revenue and business plans which include memberships provided with instruction, access to cages, and technology assessments. There will be rentals available for Little Leagues, high school softball and baseball teams, along with access to cages in the winter months. With their professional connections, they are planning to have college showcases, scouting events, instruction, personal lessons, group training and personal weight training available.

What separates Pittsburgh Baseball Lab from other facilities are the professional experiences and connections, and commitment to community, with emphasis on youth baseball. There will be a large investment in technology, not just cages and machines, but motion capture, slow motion cameras, similar to the big-league level.

Mr. McDowell shared artist renderings of the interior of the proposed 16,000 square foot building, which includes seven to eight cages, including two full-size cages; and, a technology cage for assessment, motion capture, and force play lab. Most of the space will be open turf with netting and the ability to open up the space more for larger access and visibility. A cement wall will separate the weight room from the cages. The top mezzanine area has no current plan except to house a small office or small viewing area.

Mr. Herbert explained that the exterior of the building already has an existing parking lot, lighting and signage on the building which will not be changed. Landscaping will be added to wrap around the building to the front door. Line painting will be completed and an ADA compliant ramp to the front door will be added. There will be no changes to how the building looks on the outside.

After Mr. Wayne Herrod, 89 Long Drive, was sworn in, he shared that he managed a professional baseball team for 11 years and that he is impressed with Pittsburgh Baseball Lab's plans. This type of business is needed in this community and should be an asset to Upper St. Clair.

In response to Commissioner Burlingame's questions, Mr. Herbert stated that once Board approval is achieved, the plan is to open in late fall because it will take five to six months to complete the interior renovation and bring in all the equipment. He confirmed that there will be no changes to the exterior of the building, except the sign name and landscaping. Mr. Herbert will comply with the Township's signage requirements.

Mr. McDowell confirmed for Commissioner Thomas that all the activities will occur on the inside of building, not the outside.

In response to Mr. Serakowski's inquiry, Mr. Herbert stated that all the lockers in the mezzanine will be removed and the office that is currently planned for the first floor will be moved to the mezzanine. There is also an overlook for parents and family to view the activities below.

Ms. Hrabovsky asked if there will be any locker rooms or showers in the facility, to which Mr. Herbert replied that there will be none. Girls leagues and players will be welcome and by ordinance there will be the required number of male and female restrooms.

Mr. Benigni stated that it is recommended that the hearing be continued to Monday, June 2, 2025 for the purpose of taking Staff testimony. This can be accomplished by simple motion and voice vote.

Commissioner Enck asked if there were any additional questions or comments from the Board or the public and there were none.

MOTION AND VOTE TO CONTINUE PUBLIC HEARING RE. PLC25-0002 – PITTSBURGH BASEBALL LAB – NONRESIDENTIAL – CONDITIONAL USE APPROVAL

Commissioner Burlingame moved to continue Public Hearing Re. Re. PLC25-0002 – Pittsburgh Baseball Lab – Nonresidential – Continued Conditional Use Approval to the Board of Commissioners' Regular meeting on June 2, 2025. This was seconded by Commissioner Thomas and carried with a 5-0 voice vote.

RECOMMENDATION RE. APPROVAL OF CONTRACTS

Mr. Mansfield stated that Staff recommends the following contracts for the Board's approval in accordance with Township Code:

KONE, Inc.	Emergency Repair to Library Elevator	\$ 67,540.00
JB Mechanical, Inc.	Municipal Building Heating & Cooling Upgrades	\$ 61,750.00
JB Mechanical, Inc.	Route 19 Fire Hall Boiler Replacements	\$ 93,750.00
General Recreation, Inc.	Morton Fields Complex Playground Structure	\$355,066.00
Tri-Star Ford	One (1) 2025 Ford Explorer Staff Vehicle	\$ 51,343.00
Stephenson Equipment, Inc.	Two (2) 9' Aluminum Dump Body Upfits with stainless steel tailgate spreaders, salt & Liquid dispensing systems and 9' snowplows (for two (2) previously approved Ford F600 Cab & Chassis)	\$143,934.50

A simple motion and voice vote will authorize these contracts.

In response to Commissioner Pardini's inquiry, the new Staff vehicle will be assigned to the Township Manager whose current vehicle is eight years old.

Commissioner Enck asked if there were any questions or comments from the Board or the public and there were none.

MOTION AND VOTE TO APPROVE CONTRACTS

Commissioner Pardini moved to approve the above contracts. This was seconded by Commissioner Burlingame and carried with a 5-0 voice vote.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Following a motion for adjournment by Commissioner Burlingame and a second by Commissioner Graves which carried with a 5-0 voice vote, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:10PM

Prudence Cooper
Recording Secretary
May 5, 2025