

PROPOSED MINUTES
LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
4338 BEELINE ROAD
ALLEGAN COUNTY
HOLLAND, MI 49423
TELEPHONE (616) 335.3050

August 20, 2008

ARTICLE I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Linda Howell called the regular Parks & Recreation Commission meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Michelle Sall, Linda Howell, Karen Simmons, Chuck Strabbing, Kelly De Witt, Ray Buursma, Laura Canaan

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Al Meshkin – Township Manager
Diane Ybarra – Recording Secretary

ARTICLE II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Commission members reviewed the minutes of the July 16, 2008 meeting. Following discussion, the minutes were approved as submitted.

ARTICLE III. TREASURER'S REPORT - - Chuck Strabbing

Treasurer Chuck Strabbing reviewed the bills to be paid as of July 2008. Maintenance: Heavener Property Services - \$105.00, Advantage Building Maintenance - \$110.00, Veldhof Septic Service - \$150.00, Virg's Refuse - \$528.00; Supplies: Graafschap Hardware - \$28.27; Salaries: Kelly DeWitt - \$120.00, Ray Buursma - \$120.00, Chuck Strabbing - \$210.00, Michelle Sall - \$180.00, Karen Simmons - \$180.00, Linda Howell - \$225.00; Contracted Services: Gene Teusink - \$150.00; Electricity: Consumers Energy - \$13.30. Following discussion, the Treasurer's Report was filed.

Chuck Strabbing noted that electrical charges have increased. We will not meet our budget at this rate of energy increases. Other than the energy costs, we are below budget.

ARTICLE IV. COMMUNICATIONS

There was one letter from the Nature Conservancy relative to their annual visit. Marjorie Wolters called in regards to the need for the shuffle board to be resurfaced at Wolters Woods. There was also a call from Joyce Teusink with concerns about Wolters Woods.

ARTICLE V. TOWNSHIP REPORTS

a. Presentation by on Shared Use Path by Prein & Newhof

Scott Post from Prein & Newhof introduced himself. He is the engineer working on the shared use path for the Township. All easements have been obtained where necessary and the plan is under review by MDOT with all requested amendments made. Scott explained that when doing a project with MDOT, it is necessary to follow their process schedule as it relates to their guidelines and grant dates prior to the State's actual obligation for funds. The work gets bid at MDOT once all plans are in place. The material used will be concrete versus asphalt due to the increased cost for asphalt. Concrete is more durable at four inches deep versus the softer asphalt and it will have a lifespan triple that of asphalt. The MDOT requires the ten foot wide path for two way traffic and in order to obtain monetary support from the State, it is critical to follow their requirements. Bridges and walkways must be fourteen feet wide. Al Meshkin noted that the concrete path will be smoother as it will be laid in solid sections with minimal interruptions. The build time completion would be approximately September 2009.

Cal De Maagd of 3719 64th Street stated that there are several residents on 64th Street that are disputing the width of the road right-of-way and have hired lawyers to do so.

Linda Howell confirmed with Scott Post that MDOT and the Allegan County Road Commission have affirmed the correct right of way for the path. Cal De Maagd responded that is not how the residents understood based on the historical plans.

Mary De Maagd of 3719 64th Street stated that they are not opposed to the bike path but the width of the right-of-way.

Scott Post reiterated that the County states that there is no debate concerning the right-of-way.

Pat Dorn of 3707 64th Street stated that she has asked the County Commissioner for a copy of the paperwork accepted by the County in 1938. She would like to see that document.

Ray Buursma asked the residents if there is something else of concern relative to the installation of this path.

Mary De Maagd stated that the rights of way are of concern.

Linda Howell asked that the residents look at the actual plans for better understanding.

Scott Post showed the drawings wherein the right of way is 60 feet from the center of the road. Due to various structures, there are some variables in the actual width of the right of way.

Ray Buursma asked if the residents found it disagreeable that the path is too close to their homes.

Cal De Maagd stated that proximity is of concern. He also stated that the Township engineer maps are incorrect. He suggested the Old Interurban as an option or several other areas that had been previously mentioned. The traffic and speed at which people travel down 64th Street make this an unsafe plan.

Linda Howell reiterated that the Commission is not able to confirm the validity of the rights of way but the County engineers and attorneys are well versed in this area.

Mary De Maagd noted again that the removal of the trees and impact to home owners is of concern.

Scott Post stated that he has certain guidelines that he is required to follow.

Ray Buursma stated that he appreciates the comments of the residents.

Scott Post stated that he is willing to meet with any concerned resident.

Linda Howell recommended that the residents continue to work with Al Meshkin and Scott Post on their concerns.

b. Staff – Al Meshkin

Al Meshkin reported that the shuffle board at Wolters Woods has been damaged for quite some time. He presented information from a Canadian company that manufactures a plastic version of a shuffle board. Ray Buursma asked how many people use the shuffle

board. Al Meshkin stated that he has seen minimal usage at the park. He also noted that the gate is getting repaired by Heavener and the new posts will be made of heavy locust wood.

There were 20 steps at Laketown Beach that were removed by vandals and used for firewood. Heavener will repair these steps.

Ben Barton called to apologize that he does not have an update on the Disc Golf Course but at this point he has raised approximately \$2,500.00 for the project.

c. Board – No report.

ARTICLE VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. HUNTING REGULATIONS

Al Meshkin distributed a sample permit application used by Ottawa County for their controlled hunting regulations. Linda Howell compiled a document providing rules and regulations for the Archery Deer Hunting Program. Karen Simmons stated that Graafschap Hardware will support the plan and post information at the store. Linda Howell also mentioned that Ottawa County has a tracking mechanism that she has reviewed. Ray Buursma asked if a fee is necessary. Linda Howell responded that a small fee might be a good tracking mechanism. Karen Simmons asked if the Commission had time to review the document.

Both Michelle Sall and Laura Canaan objected to the suggestion to allow hunting at Farview Park.

Laura Canaan noted that the trails at Huyser Farm should be marked.

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Karen Simmons and seconded by Chuck Strabbing to approve the Archery Deer Hunting Program. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

Laura Canaan asked if charging a fee would be a burden on the Township. Al Meshkin responded that it would not be a burden. Linda Howell confirmed that there would not be a fee for the permit for the first year and it would be re-evaluated.

B. PARK COMMISSION ELECTIONS

Linda Howell stated that more write-in candidates are necessary at this time. Phil Bohlander stated that he is interested in being a write-in candidate. Bill Snyder has submitted his document for write-in. Chuck Strabbing stated that 20 signatures are

required for write-in candidates. Please report back to the Commission with any other interested parties.

C. REHAB OF SMALL HUYSER HOUSE

Al Meshkin reported that the water and electrical is functioning and has been inspected. There are some roof repairs that are necessary, which would cost approximately \$5,000.00. This would include the shingles and labor. The gas hot water heater and the furnace must also be repaired or replaced. Natural gas is available in the road. Nick Otting offered an alternate temporary suggestion for heating. It is estimated that repair work would not exceed \$6,600.00 to make the home livable. Nick has cleaned the stove and found that it is functional but there is no refrigerator, however there may be one available at the Felt Mansion. Chuck Strabbing stated that the appliance in question would have to be cleaned very well. Nick will look into the feasibility of using the refrigerator.

Laura Canaan asked why we are considering this. Linda Howell responded that the plan is to have an individual live in the house in trade for parks maintenance and labor. Karen Simmons asked if minimum requirements for the work have been established. Ray Buursma stated that his motivation is to either save the house or destroy it. He feels that the home is salvageable and feels that it would be beneficial to save it as part of the original farmstead. Laura Canaan questions if the Township needs another asset. Al Meshkin stated that vandalism decreases greatly when someone is living on the property. Linda Howell asked how much of a decrease in contract labor would occur with the addition of Nick Otting's services. Al Meshkin estimated that \$3,000-\$4,000 might be saved annually. Ray Buursma feels that a written agreement is necessary prior to entering into this arrangement. Linda Howell agrees that this is necessary and is willing and qualified to create such a document along with a job description. Karen Simmons feels this should be created and voted on by the Commission prior to moving forward with the repairs of the house. Al Meshkin stated that based on the previous approval to research the feasibility it should not be necessary to postpone it for another month. Linda Howell can commit to having the document available this week. Ray Buursma asked if we have a handyman or not, does that change the intention of renovating the house. Linda Howell stated that her concern is how the asset would generate income for the Township. The availability of maintenance support might be beneficial to the Township. Laura Canaan asked if Nick Otting would be committed to this work. Nick responded that he has already worked in the parks for approximately a year and enjoys this kind of work immensely. Ray Buursma asked where the \$6,600.00 would come from to renovate this house. Chuck Strabbing stated that there are funds in the budget available to cover the expenses. Chuck agreed that if we don't renovate the house it would be lost. He noted that in the last eight years, he has spent 15 hours a week in the parks and he can no longer do that with the 20 hours a week he spends at the mansion. He feels that the Township needs someone to take over that responsibility. Chuck stated that he can speak

to the fact that Nick Otting is reliable and responsible and would be a good candidate for the job. He would like to see the Township employ Nick in some capacity.

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Kelly De Witt and seconded by Laura Canaan to approve not more than \$8,000.00 to make the improvements at the small Huyser Farm house. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

Al Meshkin asked for the Commission's permission to allow the assignment of a temporary permit to Nick Otting for the placement of a 22-foot camping trailer on the property while working on the house prior to occupancy.

D. PARK MAINTENANCE EMPLOYEE

See above notes on item C.

E. GRANT STATUS

Linda Howell reported the State DNR grant requires more information by the deadline of October 1, 2008. The State asked for more information on the Huyser Farm with great detail. This grant will not be pursued at this time. Laura Canaan offered to help with the Holland/Zeeland Foundation Grant. Linda Howell will provide information to both Laura and Karen Simmons.

ARTICLE VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. NEXT PARK WORK DAY

The next park work day will be at Farview Farm on August 25 at 6:30 P.M. Michelle Sall asked if a telephone pole could be installed for a hitching post. Laura Canaan requested funding for two additional bridges for the trails. Al Meshkin stated that the cost of materials for the bridges would be approximately \$1,500.00. This will be reviewed at the park's work day. Laura and Al Meshkin will collaborate on estimating the cost for materials. Nick Otting will measure the distance to assess the needs.

B. DAY OF CARING

September 18 is the United Way Day of Caring. Linda Howell asked if any of the Township staff is available. Al Meshkin responded that the staff would not be available. Laura Canaan volunteered to work on that day. Michelle Sall will coordinate a team from her employer. A list of projects will be established prior to the date.

ARTICLE VIII. CITIZEN'S COMMENTS

Phil Bohlander of 4625 Forest Lane agrees that the small house on the Huyser Farm should be renovated and saved.

ARTICLE IX. ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting will be held on September 17 at 7:00 P.M.. The meeting adjourned at 8:37 PM.

ARTICLE X. ASSIGNMENTS

Karen – Work with Laura Canaan on the Holland/Zeeland Foundation Grant.

Linda – Generate agreement for the Township park maintenance employee.

Al – Work with Laura Canaan on estimating the material costs for bridges at Farview Park.

Issue a temporary permit to Nick Otting for placement and occupancy of a camping trailer on the grounds of the Huyser Farm while renovating the small house.

Laura – Work with Karen Simmons on the Holland/Zeeland Foundation Grant.

Work with Al Meshkin on estimating the material costs for bridges at Farview Park.

Volunteer for the United Way Day of Caring on September 18th.

Michelle – Coordinate a team of volunteers from Davenport College for the United Way Day of Caring on September 18th.