

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

October 15, 2008

ARTICLE I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson 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, Ray Buursma, Laura Canaan

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kelly DeWitt

STAFF PRESENT: Al Meshkin – Township Manager  
Charlene Fields – Recording Secretary

ARTICLE II. CITIZEN COMMENTS – None

ARTICLE III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Commission members reviewed the minutes of the September 17, 2008 meeting. Following discussion, the minutes were approved as submitted.

ARTICLE IV. TREASURER’S REPORT - - Chuck Strabbing

Treasurer Chuck Strabbing reviewed the bills to be paid as of September 2008. Maintenance: Heavener Property Services - \$5,004.00, Advantage Building Maintenance - \$110.00, Veldhof Septic Service - \$150.00, Overisel Lumber Co. - \$240.09, Stingers Pest Control Inc. - \$65.00, Al Weener - \$200.00; Contracted Services: Gene Teusink - \$155.00, Julie Buursma - \$460.00; Electricity: Consumers Energy - \$82.08; Capital Outlay: Al Weener - \$1,865.58. Following discussion, the Treasurer’s Report was filed.

Chuck Strabbing noted the Commission is about one-half of the way through the budget and most items are below or at 50% of the budgeted amount.

#### ARTICLE V. COMMUNICATIONS

Al Meshkin reported Consumers Energy will be trimming trees and clearing brush along the power lines at Sanctuary Woods.

#### ARTICLE VI. TOWNSHIP REPORTS

- a. Staff -- No Report
- b. Board -- Chuck Strabbing reported on comments regarding the bike path and encouraged residents to visit the parks and fall festivities at the mansion.

#### ARTICLE VII. OLD BUSINESS

##### A. HUNTING

Karen Simmons reported she attended the drawing, all winners had been notified, the first group of hunters just completed their hunt and the next group started this week. Follow up surveys are scheduled to go out. Nick Otting reported many signs are being removed. Al Meshkin reported all winners were very excited to be selected. He also reported receiving two calls opposed to the hunt and suggested visitors wear appropriate colors during the hunting season. Linda Howell requested all names and addresses be maintained and added to the volunteer database.

##### B. DAY OF CARING – SEPTEMBER 18<sup>TH</sup>

Laura Canaan reported two groups volunteered. One group worked at the Laketown Beach clearing sand from the steps, trimming grass and picking up trash. The other group worked at Farview painting and working on the walking trails. Thank you notes have been sent to both groups. Laura also noted that the LETA met out at Farview and constructed two new horse trail bridges. Most of the work should be completed at the next Saturday work day.

Chuck Strabbing mentioned while doing additional cleanup at Farview, he came upon a group from Hope College doing a fish inventory at one of the ponds. He noted the inventory tracks the size, type and number of fish, and then releases them back to the pond. Chuck did request the Parks Commission receive a copy of the report for future grant applications.

### C. REHAB OF SMALL HUYSER HOUSE

Al Meshkin reported the furnace and water heater were turned on today, the lease agreement is signed and the caretaker moved in this past week. Al also reported approximate expenses thus far of just over \$8,000. This included the roof repairs, furnace and water heater with installation, driveway and painting. Al suggested the Commission develop a list of daily, monthly and annual duties for the resident caretaker. Linda Howell questioned the need for securing windows and doors at the main house and if any cleaning should be done in time for the fall cleanup. Chuck Strabbing and Nick Otting volunteered to handle the cleaning and disposing of unnecessary items. Any items of historical significance will be kept for others to review.

### D. PARK MAINTENANCE EMPLOYEE

#### i. Contract

Al Meshkin submitted a job description for review and comment. He noted he would handle the employee contract. The employee's time will be split between the Parks Commission duties and assistance at the Felt Mansion. The employee will work approximately (13) hours per week for the parks to offset the rental fee and will also work approximately (10) to (15) hours per week at the mansion. The employee currently has about (120) hours of time banked.

#### ii. Job Description

As noted above, a job description was submitted for review and comments.

### E. DISC GOLF STATUS

Al Meshkin reported he spoke with Ben Barton and he has enough money for about half of the baskets and he plans to further develop this project next spring.

## ARTICLE VIII. NEW BUSINESS

Al Meshkin asked if the Commission would like him to seek bids for improving the drive off 64<sup>th</sup> Street and down the hill to the blueberry field and expanding the turnaround area. Al noted all material is on hand and the bid would be for trucking and bulldozing only. The Commission approved the solicitation of bids.

Linda Howell requested all Commission members consider the future plans for the main Huyser house. She asked they consider stabilization and/or preservation and be prepared to discuss at the next meeting. Linda also noted the caretaker may have time during the winter months to assist in this area.

Ray Buursma stated he would like to see the home preserved for its historical significance. Ray also noted the home could be used for educational opportunities or as a possible residence upgrade for the caretaker.

Chuck Strabbing discussed future plans at the mansion and expressed concern for competition between the two facilities. Chuck also stated he would like to see more improvements with the blueberry fields and relocating the old township hall. Al Meshkin noted any improvements to the Huyser Farm would be a natural extension of the proposed Shore Acres project.

Ray Buursma noted there might be a local resident that would be interested in heading a Preservation Project at the Huyser Farm similar to the efforts of Pat Meyer and the Felt Mansion.

Karen Simmons reported the sand on the steps at Laketown Beach continues to be an ongoing problem, as it appears the dune may be shifting.

Chuck Strabbing reported an inquiry regarding horse trails around the mansion and in the township. He provided maps and noted interest in coming from areas as far away as Grand Rapids and Lowell.

Laura Canaan asked for clarification on the tax-exempt status of the Huyser house if the home is occupied with a renter. Al Meshkin reported all rental monies will be paid through payroll deduction and noted he would check with the Assessor for clarification on the tax-exempt status. Laura asked about health insurance for the resident caretaker. Al Meshkin discussed the township's health plan and noted that the caretaker employee may become eligible as a half-time employee in the future if a consistent (20) hour workweek is established.

#### ARTICLE IX. ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting will be held on November 17th at 7:00 P.M. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.