

PROPOSED MINUTES
LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
AT
TOWNSHIP HALL

January 18, 2017

ARTICLE I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Michelle Sall called the regular Parks & Recreation Commission meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Michelle Sall, Karen Simmons, Jan Lozon,
Jim Johnson, Ryan Bosscher
MEMBERS ABSENT: None
STAFF PRESENT: Al Meshkin – Township Manager
Diane Ybarra – Recording Secretary

ARTICLE II. CITIZEN COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Sall reported an email from Krupka regarding falconry at the Huyser Farm. Late November an email was received regarding damage to the bike path on 146th Avenue. Meshkin stated that the repairs are pending availability of the contractors.

Greg Karbowski of 3955 Beeline Road asked how much the basketball hoops are used at the Felt Mansion. He suggested using the cement pad for pickle ball courts which is primarily geared toward seniors and baby boomers. He feels it would be utilized a lot more and could be built at a very low cost. Simmons asked for an explanation of pickle ball and Karbowski explained that it is a smaller version of tennis. The popularity is increasing in Michigan and the southern states particularly with retirees. Johnson confirmed the increasing popularity adding that the CEO of Evergreen Commons told him that there are many leagues at the center. Sall said she is only familiar with it being in an indoor court. Karbowski stated that the Schultz Park in Douglas has converted the tennis courts to pickle ball courts. Bosscher added that the City of Holland has discussed adding courts at Moran Park. Meshkin commented that it should be added to the 5-year plan for consideration. There was also discussion about putting courts at the Township Hall Recreation Park. Sall will research the size of courts and equipment for further discussion at the next meeting.

ARTICLE III. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Approval of Minutes

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Simmons and seconded by Johnson to approve the November 16, 2016 minutes as written. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

ARTICLE IV. APPROVAL OF TREASURER’S REPORT

Sall reviewed the bills to be paid as of November and December, 2016. Maintenance: Jim Scarlata - \$700.00 (Nov), Veldhof – \$480.00 (Nov), \$520.00 (Dec); Supplies: Robert Jerow - \$10.00; Salaries: Robert Jerow - \$210.00 (Nov), \$175.00 (Dec); Contracted Services: John Kunkel - \$155.00 (Nov), \$150.00 (Dec); Electricity: Consumers Energy - \$22.57 (Nov); Taxes: \$13.38.

Sall stated that she had seen nothing unusual in the report. Bosscher asked about the Maintenance overage of \$3,000. Meshkin said the beach expenses were higher than anticipated along with the mowing of the ball parks. Bosscher asked for clarification on the Township Hall Recreation Park expenses.

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Simmons and seconded by Johnson to approve the Treasurer’s Report as submitted. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

ARTICLE V. TOWNSHIP BOARD REPORT – MESHKIN

Meshkin reported that there was nothing specific to the Parks Commission mentioned at the meeting. The 2017 road resurfacing projects for 142nd Avenue and 64th Streets will include bike lanes that will be somewhat wider, specifically along the U.S. 35 Route. The route will include the path from Beeline Avenue to 64th Street. The 142nd Avenue bike route will go as far as the beach. Johnson asked if 142nd Avenue would be widened enough to add parking spaces for the beach and Meshkin responded there would not be additional parking spaces. Sall asked if it is resurfacing or improvement and Meshkin said resurfacing to widen as much as possible. Three subdivisions will also be resurfaced, all of which have original asphalt. The entire project is projected to cost \$325,000.

ARTICLE VI. TOWNSHIP STAFF REPORTS – MESHKIN

Meshkin reported Dan Williams has been cutting downed trees in the parks. Johnson noted that there is a large tree across the path west of the old water tower area at Sanctuary Woods. Lozon and Johnson both noted the stairs at Sanctuary have been very icy and treacherous due to the weather. Simmons mentioned there is a tree down at Huyser Farm,

too. Bosscher asked how Dan's wages are paid. Meshkin responded that he is paid an hourly wage and rent for the small house is deducted from his pay check.

ARTICLE VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. BEACH STAIRS

1. Maintenance Proposal – Meshkin reviewed the proposal from Jason Schrottenboer. Johnson feels Schrottenboer is very dedicated to the beach but hoped the stairs would be rebuilt this year to reduce the expense to clear the stairs which seems to be a futile exercise and not a good investment. Johnson would like to see an itemization of the quote and Bosscher would like to see a schedule of the work. Simmons asked if previous proposals provided more detail. Lozon questioned the amount of garbage pick-up that is done. Meshkin said there is a lot of clean-up done. He added that Schrottenboer often gets crews of workers and volunteers to support the work. Sall questioned the removal of the wire fence and posts and Meshkin stated that a private property owner put the fence in and it needed to be removed. Bosscher expressed concern about the new platform and building steps at a lower height is counter-productive. Johnson responded that it is to finish off the project that was started. Meshkin said there is no way a grant will be obtained for calendar year 2017 to clear the stairs. Sall asked if the commissioners would be more comfortable negotiating a smaller contract. Simmons asked for more detail and Sall agreed to get the itemization for more review. Johnson said it would be difficult to find a second quote but agrees it should be itemized and potentially reduced until a more permanent solution could be executed.
2. Grants – Meshkin stated he had no further contact with Griggs regarding Huyser Farm or the beach stairs. Meshkin will contact Land-Tech regarding the beach stair design. Meshkin discussed the Passport Grant application due April 1 with a 25% match for up to \$75,000 (\$100,000 project); Coastal Zone Management Grant is another option (built the original stairs) which is due October 1 at a 50/50 match with potential of \$50,000 (\$100,000 project and would be in 2018 budget); Johnson asked if both could be applied for and Meshkin said yes. Meshkin suggested the Passport Grant be considered for restrooms. Also with the beach is land acquisition potential, land that is on the market today. Meshkin provided a copy highlighting the six available parcels but speaking specifically to the three western parcels at \$85,000 per parcel. The King property is still an unresolved issue but Meshkin is hoping for support from a local realtor. A grant could be applied for with the Natural Restoration Trust Fund which would be due on April 1 with a 75/25 match not due until the next fiscal year. This grant funding has been used in the past for Wolters Woods and Sanctuary Woods at

substantial amounts. Access to waterfront is optimal and could score high on the grant application. Other property owners would potentially support the project but it would not be feasible without King's property. Bosscher expressed concern about the seclusion of the parking area and Meshkin responded that it would have to be designed for accessibility patrolling. Johnson suggested tabling until we get a response regarding King's property. Meshkin agreed and suggested considering a grant for land acquisition for the beach and/or the property next to Wolters Woods for a dog park asking commissioners what the focus should be. Johnson asked if there is a quote from the property owner next to Wolters Woods and Meshkin responded that he estimates the cost will be \$250,000-\$300,000 for 15 acres attached next to existing park. Johnson said he would like to prioritize the beach. Simmons asked if the stairs are separate from the land acquisition and Meshkin said the stairs could be done but more favorably with the acquisition of the land. Meshkin recommended making a decision in February on which project to move forward with.

Meshkin mentioned the Passport Grants could be \$75,000 with a \$25,000 match for restrooms at Sanctuary Woods or the Township Hall Recreation Park. The base price of a single stall unisex restroom with its own storage tanks for water/sewage, super low flush is \$30,000 or \$40,000 each for two nicer restrooms (\$60,000 grant / \$20,000 match). Restrooms should be in the action plan for every park in the new 5-year plan. Meshkin will generate the grants in March; decisions will have to be made at the February meeting (Al will not be at the February meeting).

B. ADAPTIVE USE OF OLD TOWNSHIP HALL

Sall tabled for future discussion.

C. HUYSER FARM PROPOSAL

1. Griggs Proposal – Meshkin had no further communication from Griggs.
2. Electricity – Meshkin reported electricity has been installed in the Huyser House. The line and meter were inspected for use and deemed usable but not grounded so he has asked the contractor for a quote to update the electrical. The proposal is to rewire the entire house for \$8,000 which could be budgeted for.
3. Security System – Meshkin received a proposal to install for approximately \$1,000 per year. Johnson asked if the Internet is needed to operate the system and Meshkin stated it would be cellular based and

does not need the Internet. Simmons said we have talked about the Huyser House for years and questioned what the use of the house would be. Sall said initially it would be to secure the house from vandalism. Simmons asked if there is historical significance and Meshkin stated that there is. Bosscher said if we are going to invest in the house he would like to see it rented. Johnson said the house is in very rough shape and would like to understand the ultimate use for the house. It was built with the cheapest materials and very basic so questions the historical significance. Lozon asked if there was a contingency when it was donated. Meshkin said the condition is structurally solid. Simmons feels it should be torn down. Sall would like to secure the house and record the issue of vandalism. Johnson questions why it should be secured, what is the ultimate use. He feels three to four contractors should provide quotes to bring it to livable standards. Simmons said it would not benefit many people if we renovated it. Bosscher sees the only investment would be revenue building to support the parks. Meshkin said it would be at least \$50-\$100,000 to renovate but it could be done over a number of years much like the Felt Estate. Bosscher said there is more benefit with the uses of the Felt Mansion and does not see the future benefit of renovating the Huyser house. Lozon would like to review the entire Huyser Farm for the future as it is beautiful property that could benefit many. Meshkin said the house has value but if you are not interested in the house go back to the heirs of the family and ask if we can sell the house as is with 2.5 acres and then use the money for the farm. Sall asked if the Land Conservancy is involved and Meshkin said not in that portion of the property. Until we decide what is done, it should be secured. Johnson asked if lights could be installed and Meshkin said it is feasible. Johnson asked if other security bids could be obtained but still questions what we are securing. Simmons asked if the security system would be connected to the electrical and Meshkin said it is primarily a wireless and battery operated alarm system. The security system is separate from the electrical system. Johnson asked if the security system alarm goes off who is notified. Meshkin said it can be coordinated to central dispatch or an individual(s). Sall asked if this is the minimum package available and Meshkin said we could probably reduce it to some degree but should be at least two motion detectors and smoke alarms, the siren/strobe could be deleted but is effective. Sall said it is a \$1,000 upfront and approximately \$400 per year to monitor it. Bosscher suggested a camera system and Meshkin said it is relatively costly and requires the Internet. Johnson suggested getting lighting, and other low cost deterrents. Sall suggested outdoor lighting and Meshkin stated it would be estimated at \$500-\$600 for wiring and units. Simmons continued to question the long-term outcome before supporting any future expenditure. Sall expressed concern about the chronic indecisiveness regarding this property.

Following discussion, the item was tabled for another month.

D. INVASIVE SPECIES

Johnson shared information on grants to address invasive species in the counties. Meshkin is going to a workshop on this and other grants.

E. DOG PARK

This item was discussed earlier in the agenda noting that a grant for the property adjacent to Wolters Woods may be an option to develop a dog park in the township.

ARTICLE VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. 2017-18 BUDGET

Meshkin provided a brief overview of the 2016 Amended Budget and 2017 Proposed Budget. There were no significant changes other than the removal of the money for the Huyser House. Johnson asked if the Passport Grant match money is budgeted and Meshkin responded it would be in the 2018 fiscal budget. Bosscher asked about the cost of the right of way for the bike lane and Meshkin explained how the bond for the bike path is budgeted. Sall asked if Jason Schrottenboer is budgeted as Maintenance and Meshkin responded it is an overlap between Maintenance and Contracted Services.

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Sall and seconded by Simmons to recommend approval of the Parks Budget to the Township Board. Sall called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

B. SAUGATUCK COMMUNITY RECREATION

Meshkin explained that 10-20 years ago Laketown contributed to Saugatuck Community Recreation as did Saugatuck and Douglas; part of the package of the ¼ mil for Saugatuck recreation school which has an advisory board but has not been active for 10 years. Scott Kierzek, Saugatuck Recreation Director would like to resurrect the board and has asked for a volunteer from Laketown. Meshkin asked for potential volunteers and Brad Moore was suggested. Sall said it would be nice to have a Parks and Recreation representative.

C. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Sall reported that the Treasurer position, previously held by Bill Snyder is open. Chair and Vice Chair roles must also be filled.

Simmons nominated Johnson as Treasurer. Nominations were closed. Johnson nominated Bosscher as Vice Chair. Nominations were closed.

Simmons nominated reappointment of Sall as Chair. Nominations were closed.

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Simmons and seconded by Lozon to approve the nominations as stated. Sall called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

D. SUMMER WORK CREW

Meshkin explained the cost of the five week program is \$5,500 which provides work for local at-promise youth. A supervisor is provided for the work crew. Meshkin said there is money in the budget to cover the labor. Sall asked if we could slightly reduce the beach contract and use these kids. Johnson suggested coming up with an exact plan for the work crew; everyone take a park and make a list of what needs to be done. Meshkin will get the dates the youth teams are available.

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Lozon and seconded by Simmons to approve the \$5,500 for the Holland Youth Connections Summer Work Crew. Sall called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

E. MAP

Sall provided a draft of the backside of the map which details each of the parks. Sall asked for more information on the Old Township Hall. For the upcoming newsletter it will be ODC schedule and the will include the map with park descriptions and other notable sites.

F. HEMLOCK WILLY ADELGIE INVASIVE SPECIES

Johnson spoke about the severity of the threat to the township parks, particularly in Sanctuary Woods. It is a parasite insect that attaches itself to underside of foliage and will kill the hemlock. There are treatments that you can save the trees but must be caught early. This could be a project for the youth work crews.

ARTICLE IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:27 P.M.