

PROPOSED MINUTES
LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
AT
TOWNSHIP HALL

March 15, 2017

ARTICLE I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Michelle Sall called the regular Parks & Recreation Commission meeting to order at 7:03 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Michelle Sall, Jim Johnson, Ryan Bosscher
MEMBERS ABSENT: Janice Lozon, Karen Simmons
STAFF PRESENT: Al Meshkin – Township Manager
Diane Ybarra – Recording Secretary

ARTICLE II. CITIZEN COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Mitra Delaney said the Parks Commission is doing a great job.

Michelle Sall stated she had a phone call regarding investigation of the Hemlock invasive species and the suggestion to use a specific provider.

ARTICLE III. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Approval of Minutes

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Bosscher and seconded by Johnson to approve the February 15, 2017 minutes as written. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

ARTICLE IV. APPROVAL OF TREASURER’S REPORT

Johnson reviewed the bills to be paid as of February 2017. Maintenance: Veldhof – \$460.00, Chef Container - \$1,429.18; Salaries: Robert Jerow - \$200.00; Contracted Services: John Kunkel - \$155.00; Capital Outlay: Laketown Electric LLC - \$553.75; Electricity: Consumers Energy - \$33.10; Taxes: \$15.30.

Johnson asked about the Chef Container invoice noted as annual. Meshkin stated it is an annual billing for all trash pickup at the parks. Johnson stated for the portable restrooms, some of the descriptions are clear and some not on the invoice. Meshkin clarified the details. Johnson mentioned a charge for a toilet tip over and urinal repair. Meshkin stated it is a common occurrence. Johnson suggested it be anchored and Meshkin stated it had been anchored in the past but did not totally deter the behavior. Sall commented on the billing of five trash containers at Shore Acres and Meshkin said he would look into that.

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

ARTICLE V. PUBLIC HEARING ON RECREATION GRANT APPLICATIONS

Michelle Sall asked Meshkin to do an overview of the applications. Meshkin stated there are two grant applications being considered, the Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant to purchase five small parcels of land adjacent to Laketown Beach and the other is a Passport Grant to erect a restroom at Sanctuary Woods. The beach property owners are being asked to contribute toward the match which is 25% of the selling price. If the application is accepted, two appraisals would be done and the grant would be based on 75% of the true market value. The estimated amount to be requested would be \$640,000, approximately 74% of the purchase price. The Michigan Passport grant is a smaller, a 75/25 match to erect a restroom at Sanctuary Woods and the ask would be approximately \$50,000 for a flush toilet restroom with running water and a holding tank. It would be connected to municipal water that runs past the park and potentially a heating option to keep it open during the winter.

Sall opened the public hearing.

Mitra Delaney of 6298 144th Avenue thanked the commissioners for the work they do.

Johnson asked if the in holding and the 1.12 acres that follows the road by the beach are owned by the same person. Meshkin responded that Neil King owns parcels 4 and 5; parcels 1, 2 and 3 are owned by sisters, one owning two lots and the other one lot. The lots are on the market right now for an asking price of \$85,000 each. It is uncertain what King will ask for his lots but he did agree to be documented as a willing seller as did the other property owners. It is difficult to determine what the lots will be appraised at because they are not lakefront but have access within 25 feet, albeit in the middle of a township park. Access to the lots is difficult but there are deeded rights to walk across the township property.

Delaney asked what the purpose would be. Johnson said it would be for expansion of the park. He and Bosscher visited the site and it appears that restroom and parking lot are on lot 5. Meshkin stated that is correct, it spills over to the King property. Bosscher asked if

the township has prescriptive easement due to maintenance that has been done over the years and Meshkin confirmed that is correct.

Delaney asked why lots 1, 2, 3, and section 4 should be purchased if people are walking across them now. Meshkin said for lots 1, 2 and 3 would be used for a park area for the beach and to put a more permanent restroom structure or picnic area. Sall added that the current size of the property is difficult to make it handicap accessible. Bosscher said his priority would be 4 lots and then a portion to the west for lot 5.

Delaney asked if we are here to approve the grant applications and if the public hearing was on the website. Sall responded that it was on the website and Johnson said it was also in the Holland Sentinel. Tom Crum said it was too short of a notice. Meshkin said the DNR and Open Meetings Act require only an 18 hour notice. The notice was in the paper and on the website almost a week before the meeting.

Bosscher asked if we have something in writing from each landowner stating they are willing to sell. Meshkin said we have statements from owners willing to sell three of the lots and they have been asked to consider making a 25% donation. They have also given the township first rights of refusal. King has given a verbal statement as willing to sell but nothing in writing. The entire process would take 18-24 months to complete.

Crum asked what the width of the lots is and Meshkin said only about 75 feet, a third of an acre each as plotted in the 1920's.

Delaney said she personally would not support buying lots 1, 2 and 3 and needs more details before making a decision.

Bosscher asked if a decision must be made tonight in order to meet the grant deadline and Meshkin said yes, the deadline is April 1.

Crum asked why the timing is so short and Meshkin responded that the state has limited staff and over 100 applications for these grant monies.

Delaney asked if the Trust Fund Grant is for restrooms and Meshkin responded it is for the land acquisition. Johnson added the Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant is from oil monies and the Passport Grant is from the DMV proceeds from the license plate renewal when you upgrade to a state park sticker. Meshkin said 11% of the DMV money must go toward grants and the remainder is for the state parks.

Delaney asked how the beach would be made handicap accessible. Sall said a ramping system could be created and Bosscher added a ramp could be started further to the east to make this possible with switchbacks. Sall said the Parks Survey results reflected requests for handicap accessibility at the beach and park restrooms.

Crum said after the grant is granted, is there another public hearing or then a done deal? Meshkin said this is the only public hearing. Meshkin said if the King in holding would

come back appraised at \$100,000 and he wanted more, the township would not move forward. Johnson stated that all monthly Parks Commission meetings are open to the public and comments are welcome.

Delaney said seven parks are enough but Meshkin stated at the meeting last week that one more park would be added, where will it be? Meshkin said not another park but more park land. We do really want to work on getting a dog park.

Sall asked if Meshkin received any written communications for the public hearing.

Meshkin read the correspondence into the public record. Emails received were as follows:

- Tom and Mary Boeve wrote in support of the grant to purchase lakefront property and thanked Meshkin for all that is done for the township.
- Aaron Rund of 6421 Hidden Hollow Lane wrote in support of both grants stating he frequently visits Sanctuary Woods and Laketown Beach. He feels this would be an investment for the entire township.
- Wendy Van Huis of 4079 65th Street commended the Parks Commission and supports the grant applications.
- Linda Dykema wrote in full support of the grant application to purchase property adjoining the Laketown Beach. She fully supports all parks grant applications and appreciates all that is done in the township.
- Jack Langeland wrote in support of the grant applications.
- Jan Langeland wrote in support of the grant applications.
- Linda Howell of 6443 Kingsway Court wrote in support of both grant applications.
- Clare and Melissa Langeland wrote in support of the grant application to improve the beach.
- Roger and Kathy Zeh of 3817 62nd Street wrote in support of the grant applications and thanked the staff for all their hard work.
- Brent Pollema wrote in support of the grant applications.

Crum said to quote Meshkin, does this agree with the complete whole township? In other words we are not in part of the township. Bosscher asked for clarification. Crum said a handful of people and only 18 hours if the notice had been in the paper for a month, you might have more people. Bosscher said in regards to resident input, he referred to the survey and several of the comments made by citizens. Crum said he is not opposed but transparency, 18 hours is a short notice and a handful of people don't really count. He would like people to know what is going on and come here. Bosscher said he put comments on the Facebook page and people made comments. Crum said if we do not have Internet, what do those people do? Sall said this was discussed last month as well and it was in the minutes. We apply for grants when we are able to. We have done quite a few and have to wait for a grant to close before we can apply for another and we just had one close.

Melissa Steenwyk of 6022 147th Avenue thinks all available things that can be done should be done to gain access to the beach especially to add a handicap ramp. Bathrooms would

also be a great thing. Delaney supported handicap accessibility. Bosscher views accessibility for everyone. Johnson said Mother Nature is in control of a very large and fast changing dune and the stairs are buried now more than ever before. We have a contractor that does a good job to make them usable but looking for better long-term solution because the changing dune is winning and the in holding would make a big difference.

Steenwyk said it has been discussed over time also been put in the newsletter and each meeting is announced in the newsletter. Plus the township did a survey of residents.

Delaney asked if lots 4 and 5 are owned by King and Bosscher said yes; and the property to the south as well.

Bosscher asked if the financing could be split between two fiscal years. Meshkin said it can be but we do not know what the township share will be yet. Bosscher asked to make sure the General Fund can absorb it. Meshkin said this would not be in until the 2018-19 fiscal year, 18 months from now. November or December we should know if we are in the running for the grants and then more financial planning would begin. Meshkin is confident the township will be able to make the match.

Steenwyk said if there is running water for the restroom, would it be separate from the tank or all into the same tank. Meshkin stated the wastewater would all go to the same storage tank and would probably get us a year before needing to be pumped.

Sall closed the public hearing.

Johnson asked about the draft of the grant application and Meshkin said it will be updated within the next two weeks in time for the April 1 submittal. The State of Michigan system is all on line so it is all electronic with a set format.

Bosscher asked about the cost of maintaining the restrooms, do we have an estimated monthly expense. Meshkin said he does not have all of the answers and suggested the gatekeeper could lock it; municipal water cost for water service might be \$20 per month; electricity would be a minimum charge of \$25 per month and cleaning would have to be determined. Johnson commented that we would be saving \$80 per month on the portable restrooms. Meshkin said for the service we are providing for one of our most used parks, it is a minimal cost. He would like to use it as a model for other parks; this model with a porch over roof, single stall unisex; skylight for natural lighting and heater; panel box to hook electricity and vandal resistant. The price on this particular model is probably about \$45,000 and the set up cost including a crane to set in place and extended walkway from the bike path to facility would have to be determined. The grant application is for \$51,000 and that number will be fine tuned before submittal.

Delaney asked if the Passport Grant is at 50% and Meshkin said it is 75/25. Bosscher commented that the township portion would be estimated at \$13,600 which is a good deal

for what we are getting. The placement of the unit would be close to the parking lot and bike path to allow for servicing.

A motion was made by Bosscher and seconded by Johnson to approve the Natural Resources Trust Grant application for all five parcels at Laketown Beach. Chair Sall called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED

A motion was made by Johnson and seconded by Bosscher to approve the Passport Grant application for the restroom at Sanctuary Woods. Chair Sall called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED

ARTICLE VI. TOWNSHIP STAFF REPORTS – MESHKIN

- a. Meshkin – reported that the township board approved the overall budget including the Parks Commission budget for next year.

ARTICLE VII. STAFF REPORTS

- a. Meshkin had nothing to report. Bosscher referred to outstanding work orders, a hole in the stairs at Sanctuary Woods and Meshkin asked that he send an email to get it added to the work orders for Dan Williams. Johnson commented on the bridge repair on 146th Avenue. Meshkin stated Williams has made one pass through all parks doing some clean up. Johnson said it appears that he removed downed trees in Sanctuary Woods.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. BEACH

Sall reported last month the contract was approved to remove the sand for 2017. Johnson said he and Bosscher visited the beach last Saturday to review the stairs and condition of the dune. He provided pictures of the stairs last year and this year where no stairs are visible compared to last year. Johnson reached out to Jason Schrotenboer regarding the work that needs to be done. Johnson is curious to see where he will put the sand far enough away. Delaney asked about fencing and Johnson said this has been done in the past. Meshkin said a lot of the issues are erosion from neighboring properties. Sall commented that we have also done dune grass but cannot be done on private property and another challenge is people hike up the dune which destroys the dune grass and damages the dune. Johnson shared that he was out about one month ago and as he pulled in the parking lot 3 young men were coming down the dunes with golf bags on their shoulders. He asked what was going on; they were hitting the balls into the water from the top of the dunes.

B. ADAPTIVE REUSE OF OLD TOWNSHIP HALL

Sall requested this be tabled.

C. HUYSER FARM

Bosscher contacted the West Michigan Land Conservancy sharing the possible projects are considered. The language in the conservation easement document would have to be updated to accept some of the uses. Improvements to the Huyser house do not require a special request to renovate it. Park rules signs are permissible; there is an easement on the property but it appears we can do the things we have discussed. Mehskin said one stipulation is there can be only one residence on the property. If we fix the Huyser house then the small green house must be removed. Delaney asked if would be rented. Johnson said we are in the middle of discussing what will be done at the Huyser house. The May meeting will be at the Huyser farm house. Delaney asked if the old township hall is moved, will the property be sold. Mehskin said it was discussed that the old township hall might be moved and the property potentially sold to fund the move of it to the Huyser farm.

D. INVASIVE SPECIES

Johnson stated that he heard from an expert that the hemlock pest is treatable with a product from Bayer Chemical Company that kills it through the roots. The process takes a couple of years for the pests to kill a full size tree. Sall asked if there was advise on what time of the year it should be done and Johnson said probably spring. Meshkin said we received an email from Black River Habitat, a Laketown resident, offered his services to the township; we may want to contact him to see if he would be willing to provide a plan for eradication. Sall will contact this person. Sall suggested a volunteer group. Meshkin suggested Williams learn and get certified to do the subsequent years. Sall asked about the knot weed if we have a plan and Meshkin said the biggest chunk of it is on private land. Johnson added there is invasion near Huyser farm close to the blueberries and parking lot. Meshkin said he would talk to the Black River Habitat rep and get a quote on that too. Johnson said there may be county money available as well.

E. DOG PARK

Sall requested this be tabled as money is earmarked for other projects. Bosscher agreed until we have responses on the grants it does not make sense to further discuss. He has been attending the City of Holland meetings and a 2.5 acre area for dog park is slated for Van Raalte Farm with fenced in areas to accommodate various breeds. The estimated cost for the fencing is \$36,000. They are applying for a grant to support this project. Johnson commented there is a public hearing for Holland tomorrow night detailing the items to be discussed regarding their Passport Grant. Delaney asked if we have purchased land for the dog park and Johnson said no. Delaney said Crum offered a section of his fenced in area for a dog park.

F. SAUGATUCK COMMUNITY RECREATION REPRESENTATIVE

Sall said we are still looking for a representative for this. She was unable to reach out to Brad Moore and more details are needed. Ideally, it would be someone with a connection to the Saugatuck Public Schools. Crum suggested Marcia Perry. Sall will put it in the newsletter to create awareness.

G. PICKLE BALL COURT

Johnson said he visited the Saugatuck/Douglas courts and could not see where the net is attached. Bosscher said perhaps it a removable bollard. City of Holland is making some at pickle ball courts at Moran Park. We should keep it on the radar. Bosscher knows the City of Holland requested bids for resurfacing their tennis courts and he would get estimates of cost. Sall said the intent is to put a pickle ball court at the Township Recreation Hall. Johnson said there is strong interest from residents to look into it.

ARTICLE VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. ANNUAL PARK REVIEW

Sall explained that commissioners volunteer to audit a park at the beginning of the year. The following assignments were made:

Bosscher – Wolters Woods

Johnson – Laketown Beach

Sall – Farview Farm

Lozon – Sanctuary Woods

Simmons – Shore Acres

Huyser Farm – this will be reviewed during when the May meeting is held on site

Township Recreation Park – Bosscher noted there is grass and gravel over the backstop

ARTICLE IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:32 P.M.