

PROPOSED MINUTES  
LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP  
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
AT  
TOWNSHIP HALL

March 16, 2016

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, Bill Snyder,  
Jim Johnson, Jan Lozon  
MEMBERS ABSENT: None  
STAFF PRESENT: Al Meshkin – Township Manager  
Diane Ybarra – Recording Secretary

ARTICLE II. CITIZEN COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Sall reported an email forwarded by Meshkin regarding the Michigan Mountain Bike Association. Sall will include the information in the next newsletter and also make note of the partnership in the 5-year Plan.

Meshkin also received a proposal from Jason Schrottenboer for work at Laketown Beach for the 2016 season.

ARTICLE III. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Approval of Minutes

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Simmons and seconded by Johnson to approve the February 17, 2016 minutes as written. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

ARTICLE IV. APPROVAL OF TREASURER’S REPORT

Michelle Sall reviewed the bills to be paid as of February, 2016. Maintenance: Veldhoff Septic - \$400.00, Heavener - \$225.00; Salaries: Robert Jerow - \$155.00; Contracted

Services: John Kunkel - \$155.00; Supplies: Robert Jerow - \$9.00; Electricity: Consumers Energy - \$27.12. Following discussion, **a motion was made by Simmons and seconded by Johnson to approve the Treasurer's Report as submitted. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

Treasurer Bill Snyder reported that there was nothing unusual this month. Johnson asked what the Consumers Energy invoice pertains to and Meshkin responded that it is for the electrical at the old township hall.

#### ARTICLE V. TOWNSHIP BOARD REPORT – SALL

Sall reported that there was much discussion about the fiber optic project. Meshkin stated that there will be a vote in May on the regular scheduled election date.

#### ARTICLE VI. TOWNSHIP STAFF REPORTS – Meshkin

Meshkin stated that Dan Williams is starting to get back into the parks. It appears that there was someone trying to drive through the gate at Wolters Woods and Williams is working on repairing that. The upright supports on the gate are an issue so we may take them out and replace them but use the same gate. The suggestion was made to replace with steel. Dan also cut down a tree that was across the trail at Sanctuary Woods. Simmons stated there are a couple of trees down at Huyser Farm. Sall provided park evaluation sheet forms and asked that the commissioners audit the parks and scan/email the information to Williams. Assignments are as follows: Lozon – Sanctuary Woods; Simmons – Wolters Woods; Sall – Farview Park; Johnson – Laketown Beach; Snyder – Shore Acres Park. Johnson asked what the gatekeeper does at Wolters Woods if there is a car in the lot and no one to be found when it is time to lock the gate. Meshkin stated she would leave the gate open and come back later. At Sanctuary Woods, the other gatekeeper will lock the gate and leave a number to call on the windshield of the car.

#### ARTICLE VII. OLD BUSINESS

##### A. PARKS SURVEY

Sall thanked commissioners for reviewing the document. Johnson asked if the Survey Monkey link would be added and she acknowledged yes it will be added for those wanting to take the survey on-line. Sall will have it ready for the April newsletter. Johnson noted that a shelter was discussed for the disc golfers and Meshkin is working on it with Ben Barton. There is an existing structure near the solar array that should be removed; a 32' x 40' pole barn structure without walls. Snyder asked if there was a concrete pad and Meshkin responded there is one there but not in good shape.

## B. ADOPT-A-PARK

Sall reported that she is still working on the Adopt-A-Park document. Lozon stated that her husband has offered photographs for use on the document. Simmons is working on the signs. Sall asked if Meshkin is comfortable using the current document for volunteer groups that call for projects.

## C. LAKETOWN BEACH PROPOSAL

The commissioners reviewed the proposal. Johnson asked if the contractor hires others and Meshkin stated that he does contract others and this year's cost is \$11,200. Snyder asked if Johnson has talked to the property owner of the in-holding piece. No contact has been made with King.

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Johnson and seconded by Simmons to approve the Jason Schrottenboer proposal of \$11,200 to remove the sand at Laketown Beach for the 2016 season. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

## D. MISCELLANEOUS

Johnson asked if there was any update on the City of Holland partnering on the property at the former Lakeview School site. Meshkin stated he has been talking with Ryan Cotton on collaborating. There was talk of working on a purpose for this property and also additional property for a future dog park. Sall if Meshkin would suggest applying for an acquisition grant. Snyder suggested Huyser Farm for a dog park and Meshkin stated there are some restrictions in areas of the farm but the north end would be an option. It is estimated that an adequate dog park would require 5-10 acres with segregated areas based on activities. Meshkin suggested the property east of Wolters Woods that is available for purchase which would be adjacent to an existing park which is approximately 20 acres.

Johnson asked if there is an update on the Huyser House and Meshkin stated there are monies earmarked in the 2016-17 Budget to begin work on it. Meshkin suggested one of the commissioners spearhead it to begin the process. Sall asked what would happen with the green house on the farm. Meshkin stated there was a suggestion to tear the small house down, move the old township hall to that lot and sell the old township hall parcel. A foundation and restrooms could be added and potentially used for classroom and school groups. Simmons asked if there would be fencing around the Huyser House to indicate that it is private property. Meshkin stated that there would be. There was discussion regarding additional maintenance support in the township. Lozon asked what kind of timeline Meshkin is proposing and he stated approximately two years for it to be habitable. Meshkin suggested putting this topic on the April agenda. Sall suggested the old township hall used for bathrooms at the Township Hall Recreation Park. Meshkin suggested walking the property at the April meeting to evaluate an appropriate location on the site.

## ARTICLE VIII. NEW BUSINESS

### A. FARVIEW HORSE TRAILS

Sall stated that she received feedback that the boardwalks at Farview were too high and people were not comfortable using the boardwalks for their animals. Sall visited the site, took pictures, shared them with the commissioners and agrees that the boardwalks are far too high. Lozon stated that they are also very slippery and it would be unsafe at that elevation. Snyder asked if they are in place to get across the muddy areas. Sall stated the boardwalk is in place for that reason but there is really no water under the area. The wettest section was on the pedestrian trail. It is uncertain how they original boardwalk was designed. Sall received a request to have the boardwalks removed. Meshkin stated there is no water today but it is uncertain what the future would be like. Sall stated if the boardwalk is wet, it will be too slippery for horses to travel on it. Suggestions were made to remove the horse trail bridges and reuse the boards for the pedestrian trails. It could be a Day of Caring project but Meshkin suggested purchasing new wood for new trails. Simmons suggested bringing in some material to build up the wet areas on the horse trail. Meshkin suggested getting feedback from more equestrian people. Sall suggested designating projects at Farview Park for Day of Caring groups. Johnson said it may be too laborious work for Day of Caring groups. Simmons stated Farview is a big park and would require a more specialized group willing to do the work.

Allegan Conservation District is getting grant money to take care of invasive species. Meshkin stated we will be partnering with them. Johnson will research for the Japanese knot weed invasive species. Meshkin stated Paul Smith, Township Assessor could be a resource for expanded work on invasive species, mustard weed, etc. as he and his daughter have been doing research and have a project already planned near the mansion.

Johnson asked if Allegan County has a parks millage like Ottawa County does. Johnson said there have been a lot of articles about Ottawa County Parks millage and the projects they are proposing. Meshkin stated they have a budgeted amount of about \$250,000 for parks with a director and staff. Allegan County has nothing budgeted. Meshkin asked commissioners for feedback on what would be a reasonable amount for parks in Laketown. Meshkin stated the township has an approximate \$360 million tax base so one quarter mil would generate \$90,000. The General Fund supported \$60,000 in capital outlay for parks in the upcoming budget year. Should this money be used for grant matching or projects? Grant cycles are estimated at about an 18 month lead time. Johnson said to reassess after the survey results are received.

## ARTICLE IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 P.M.