

PROPOSED MINUTES
LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
AT
TOWNSHIP HALL

March 18, 2015

ARTICLE I. CALL TO ORDER

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chuck Strabbing, Michelle Sall, Bill Snyder,
Karen Simmons
MEMBERS ABSENT: None
STAFF PRESENT: Diane Ybarra – Recording Secretary
Al Meshkin – Township Manager

ARTICLE II. CITIZEN COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Michelle Sall reported receiving correspondence from Alan Kunkel offering to open and close the gate at Sanctuary Woods Park. Michelle reported receiving an email from Ellie Brownridge regarding a fundraiser at Sanctuary Woods and Al Meshkin stated that he responded to the inquiry. Michelle noted that two surveys were received regarding the archery hunt at Huyser Farm.

ARTICLE III. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Approval of Minutes

Following discussion, **the January 21, 2015 minutes were approved as written. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

b. Approval of Treasurer's Report

Bill Snyder reviewed the bills to be paid as of January and February 2015. Maintenance: Veldhof Septic - \$480.00 (Jan), \$480.00 (Feb), Advantage Building - \$70.00 (Jan), \$70.00 (Feb), Chef Container - \$1,459.92 (Feb); Salaries: Robert Jerrow - \$155.00 (Jan), \$155.00 (Feb); Capital Outlay: Keystone Ridge Design - \$1,210.00; Electricity: \$22.61 (Jan).

Bill Snyder highlighted the Chef Container expense for the annual refuge service and the cost of the memorial bench for Sanctuary Woods and two additional benches for the mansion.

Chuck Strabbing questioned why there was not a line item for Dan Williams' salary. Al Meshkin responded that Dan is charged to the Building and Grounds budget. He has been working primarily at the Township Hall, the mansion and fire station so his wages come out of the General Fund. His parks activity will resume as the season begins. Following discussion, **a motion was made by Chuck Strabbing and seconded by Bill Snyder to approve the Treasurer's Report as submitted.**

ARTICLE V. TOWNSHIP BOARD REPORTS – Linda Howell

Linda Howell reported that it was the Annual Meeting and Bill Snyder gave a full report on the year's events. Linda introduced Jim Johnson adding that he is interested in the activities of the Parks Commission. Jim commented that he reviewed the 5-year plan and said it was very comprehensive.

ARTICLE VI. TOWNSHIP STAFF REPORTS – No report.

ARTICLE VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. BASKETBALL COURTS

Al Meshkin stated that the parking lot expansion was approved at the last board meeting. Two of the hoops from Shore Acres Park will be moved to the recreation project at the Township Hall. Karen Simmons asked if it would be regulation to play actual games. Al said he will look into it once the draft of the parking lot is done. An expansion of the sprinkling system will also be done this year. Bill Snyder asked about the Shore Acres parking lot. Al said he will work on that next. The concept he wants to propose is to put bollards in the center of the lot and a white fence to the north side of the lot near the chapel to improve the aesthetics of that area. The bollards in the center would create an island with cars facing the center to deter reckless driving in the lot. He has also asked the Allegan County Road Commission to consider recycling their mill and grind material to be used in this lot. Chuck Strabbing asked if the lot is used for weddings and activities at the mansion. Al explained that the parking lot is used for the weddings, which is why the disc golf events have to be coordinated around the mansion schedule. We also hope to expand the parking to the north of the carriage house and east of the mansion. Karen Simmons asked if anything of the area would be paved and Al said maybe crushed concrete but not paved. Al announced there are five concerts on Thursdays beginning in June through July 2. Karen asked if there will be different vendors for food and Al said it will be Salt of the Earth for all concerts and beverages will be sold by the Friends of the Felt. Michelle Sall suggested taking out the basketball hoops and then work on the design.

ARTICLE VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. SANCTUARY WOODS GATE

An email was sent by Terry Vanden Berg stating that he and Adam Kunkel are interested in being able to close the gate and volunteered their time. Al Meshkin's concern is that it gets opened at 7:00am every day. Al said in the past we locked it but stopped doing so to save money and the deputies wanted it open. We will not have a deputy as of April 1. Jim Johnson asked if there have been issues in the parks. Al said a little vandalism and some drug activity. Chuck Strabbing said there is some of that activity in the park as he was approached and asked if he wanted to buy marijuana. Chuck asked if it would be a paid situation and Al responded at this point it would be as a volunteer. Chuck said he wouldn't have a problem paying for it to be done like we do for Wolters Woods. Karen Simmons agreed since there is not a deputy right now. Jim asked what the park hours are and Al said from dawn to dusk. Following discussion, **a motion was made by Karen Simmons and seconded by Bill Snyder to have the gate at Sanctuary Woods opened and closed on a daily basis. Chairperson Sall called for a vote on the motion.**
UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED

B. DISC GOLF TOURNAMENT POLICY

Al Meshkin explained that he combined the disc golf and regular park use permit draft together. This was prompted by someone advertising a disc golf tournament at Shore Acres Park that includes a \$40 entry fee. There has been no contact with the township office nor is it being organized by Ben Barton. Al feels that a policy should be put in place to deal with people hosting events in the township parks. The concept is acceptable but organizers must contact the township office if the event involves more than 20 people. This same concept could be used for the ball diamond. No fees would be charged but it would allow for the township to ensure adequate refuge pick-up and also provide contact information should damage occur. The policy is not intended to be restrictive but just create awareness and provide guidelines.

Linda Howell suggested including a statement that approval for events would be at the Township Manager's discretion. Bill Snyder understands and supports the reason for the policy. Karen Simmons noted that Ben Barton has done a great job being a partner with us. Jim Johnson commented that there is a disc golf course near the old Holland Country Club and it is amazing how many people use it. Chuck Strabbing said the disc golfers pretty much police themselves with cleaning and maintenance of the course. Linda said the mountain bikers do the same. Jim asked if there would be consequences for not getting a permit. Al said the document would also include a signature page to accept conditions and consequences for penalties.

Al said regarding the organized golf tournament they have to contact us and if not, the course will be closed. Ben Barton found out about it on line. Bill said if they are charging for the events, we should get a percentage of that. Linda Howell said in Kent County park use is chargeable with required deposit. Chuck asked if there will be a deposit for cleaning up the park after use. Al said he hasn't put anything in for dollars and has no staff to support that right now. He's open to it but it would have to be the same for everyone then. Chuck said he thinks we should consider it because with events someone will have to clean up afterwards. Bill suggested a security deposit and Al said credit card hold that expires in 72 hours would be the most efficient method. Jim asked if residents would be given a discount. Al said no, because the property was purchased from the state and all must be treated equal. Al said this is a draft and asked that the commissioners review for further discussion at the April meeting.

C. USE OF BALL DIAMOND POLICY

Al suggested using the same form for the ball diamond. We are starting to get activity and would like to entertain little league groups and teach Dan Williams how to stripe it for regulation play. Karen Simmons asked if it will be in the newsletter and Michelle noted that she will mention the availability and also that the township is looking at a park use permit policy.

D. DEN UYL MEMORIAL BENCH

Chuck Strabbing asked if we should all make a trip to Sanctuary Woods to decide where to put the bench. Michelle Sall suggested near the base of the steps. Al Meshkin stated that it is a one piece steel construction weighing about 400 pounds. It is six feet wide and will be bolted to a concrete pad. The bench should arrive in early April.

E. HITCHING POST AT FARVIEW PARK

Michelle Sall said there has not been a hitching post placed at Farview Park. Chuck Strabbing said there is a telephone pole on the grounds at the Felt Mansion that could be used or he has one on his property that he would be willing to donate. Al Meshkin will speak to Dan Williams about putting one in place. Michelle will provide direction on the structure and placement.

F. PRIORITY FOR YEAR'S GOAL

Michelle Sall stated that she would like the Commissioners to give consideration to a goal(s) to be accomplished this year. She suggested completion of a trail around the new Township Hall Recreation Facility.

G. HUYSER HOUSE

Bill Snyder mentioned trying to get a grant for the Huyser Farm house and Al Meshkin said he cannot think of a grant that would apply to such a project. He plans to have Dan Williams begin working on it and if there was a grant opportunity it would likely be a 50/50 grant. Michelle asked about Eagle Scout projects as a potential. Currently there is no water or sewer and the electrical is questionable. Jim Johnson asked if the blueberries are part of the parks. Michelle advised that the blueberries are part of the Huyser Farm, grown organically and little pruning is done. Michelle said during the Day of Caring event, the volunteers did a great job in the blueberries this year.

ARTICLE XI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 P.M.

Assignments:

Al -

1. Continue work on the Park Use Application and Policy
2. Begin work on the design of the parking lot at Shore Acres Park
3. Direct Dan Williams to begin work on installing a hitching post at Farview Park

Michelle –

1. Provide direction to Dan Williams on the structure and placement of the hitching post at Farview Park
2. Include information about the ball diamond and potential park use policy for the next newsletter

All –

1. Give consideration to a goal to be accomplished in the parks for 2015-16