

PROPOSED MINUTES
LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
AT
TOWNSHIP HALL

April 15, 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, Jim Johnson
MEMBERS ABSENT: None
STAFF PRESENT: Al Meshkin – Township Manager
Diane Ybarra – Recording Secretary

ARTICLE II. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Michelle Sall opened for the discussion of officer opportunities. Michelle is offered to step down from the Chair seat if someone else is interested however the commissioners requested she remain in the position. Jim Johnson offered to take on the Vice Chair position. Following discussion, **a motion was made by Karen Simmons and seconded by Bill Snyder to retain Michelle Sall as Chairperson and appoint Jim Johnson to the role of Vice Chair. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

ARTICLE III. CITIZEN COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Michelle Sall reported an email was received from Dr. Robin Clay of Hope College asking to allow dogs at Wolters Woods Park. Michelle Sall responded stating this has been designated as a family park and at this time would maintain its “no dog” rule. Information about the Saugatuck Township dog friendly park was provided. Michelle will include this request in the next 5-year plan.

Michelle reported that two other emails were received requesting a park use permit. One was to use the ball field but cancelled because they needed a regulation field. The other was to use the park for a small family graduation party.

ARTICLE IV. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Approval of Minutes

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Chuck Strabbing and seconded by Jim Johnson to approve the March 18, 2015 minutes as written. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

ARTICLE V. APPROVAL OF TREASURER’S REPORT

Bill Snyder reviewed the bills to be paid as of March 2015. Maintenance: Veldhof Septic - \$960.00, Advantage Building - \$140.00; Salaries: Robert Jerow - \$155.00; Supplies: Robert Jerow - \$8.00; Electricity: \$45.22.

Bill Snyder highlighted stated that invoices from Advantage Building were submitted for both February and March. Following discussion, **a motion was made by Karen Simmons and seconded by Chuck Strabbing to approve the Treasurer’s Report as submitted. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

ARTICLE VI. TOWNSHIP BOARD REPORTS – No report.

ARTICLE VII. TOWNSHIP STAFF REPORTS – AL MESHKIN

Al Meshkin stated that Dan has been working at the mansion and starting to work in other parks as the weather permits. Al reported that the newsletter will include a short survey to assess interest in broad band access.

ARTICLE VIII. OLD BUSINESS

A. PARK USE APPLICATION AND PROCESS

Al Meshkin provided a copy of the current application that was drafted. He has received one application already for the use of the pavilion. It is for a small family graduation party with no alcohol involved which is not allowed here. Another application is requesting the use of the softball field for two Thursdays, April 16 and 23 from 7-9pm for practice. Al has approved both applications and there has been some use of the facility already. Bill Snyder asked if there is a mechanism to post if a park will be in use. Al said he has an internal mechanism for the township calendar but he does not have an external mechanism for public access. He recognizes that it is necessary. Along with that Al commented that the fields might also be used for Little League practices and potentially games. Al ordered

a chalking tool and rake to keep the lines in place. It was agreed that the application will be used in its present form with a fillable pdf version on the Township website. Amendments to the form and process will be made as needed.

Following discussion, it was agreed that a trash receptacle would be placed near the edge of the parking lot for easy access by Chef for a cost of \$10.00 per month. There will also be a port'o'potty placed between the softball field and the pavilion for a cost of \$80.00 per month. Ideally, a more permanent restroom facility would be installed in the future.

B. PARKS COMMISSION VACANCY

Michelle Sall welcomed Jim Johnson to the Parks Commission.

ARTICLE IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. GOALS FOR 2015-16

Michelle Sall asked for feedback on goals for the upcoming year. Bill Snyder suggested a row of strawberries at Huyser Farm and volunteered to relocate some of his plants to the farm. The Commissioners agreed it would be a nice addition. Michelle spoke of an article she read regarding the development of Monarch Waystations. There is a decreasing population of the species and there are initiatives underway locally to obtain certification as a Monarch Waystation through an organization called Monarch Watch. The milkweed is the one plant that the monarchs lay eggs in and they too are depleting. There is potential to plant milkweed at Huyser Farm. Al Meshkin said the lakeshore is a migratory path for the monarchs. Michelle will further research this as a goal.

B. PARKS SURVEY

Michelle Sall asked if there should be a survey done prior to the next 5-Year Plan being done. The current template is geared to ask residents what they want to see in the township parks from a recreation perspective. Al Meshkin suggested including topics of sustainable farming, natural habitat, a dog park, etc. Michelle will draft a survey for review at a future meeting with plans to distribute in the fall in preparation of the 2017 5-Year Plan.

Jim Johnson thanked the Commissioners for the opportunity to serve on the board. He reported that he has walked a number of the parks, particularly those he was not familiar with. He noted that the port'o'potty at Farview Farm was in bad shape as was the picnic table. Michelle asked if the picnic table in front of the Huyser Farm house could be relocated to Farview Park. Jim stated that he had visited Huyser Farm and noticed the doors had been jimmed open on the house. Jim also asked about the property at Laketown Beach that appears to be private but an area that is well traveled by park visitors. Al responded that it is indeed private property. There was also some discussion of the precautions that should be taken to avoid ticks which run along most areas of the lakeshore.

Al explained that the Parks Commission does not have a millage and operates on a limited budget depending on grants and some necessary debt to maintain and improve the parks in the township. Jim asked if there has been a thought to put on a ballet or has thought been given to approach private sponsorship. Michelle said there was consideration given to start a fund at the Holland Zeeland Community Foundation but it requires a minimum of \$10,000 to start which was not available at the time of inquiry.

Michelle asked if we have any open grants and Al responded that we do not have any at this time partly due to the debt taken on for the Township Hall Recreation Park. Most grants require matching funds and those monies are not available now. Bill Snyder asked if the Huyser Farm house would qualify for any type of grant and Michelle asked if restrooms for the park would be an opportunity. Al responded that most grants need match money and those that do not are typically much harder to get. Al stated that the beach stairs would be eligible for a grant soon so that may be an option.

ARTICLE X. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 P.M.

Assignments:

Al –

1. Order a new picnic table for Farview Park.
2. Order a port'o'potty and trash receptacle for the Township Hall Recreation Park.

Michelle –

1. Research the process for the certified Monarch Waystation.
2. Draft a Parks Survey.