

PROPOSED MINUTES  
LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP  
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
HELD AT THE TOWNSHIP HALL

Regular Meeting at 7:00PM

April 18, 2018

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, Ryan Bosscher,  
Karen Simmons, Jim Johnson  
MEMBERS ABSENT: Tom Shuff  
STAFF PRESENT: Al Meshkin – Township Manager  
Diane Ybarra – Recording Secretary

ARTICLE II. CITIZEN COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Bosscher met with Mr. DeWitt to discuss his concerns and suggestions for the beach area. DeWitt is concerned about the erosion and containment of the sand; plans for the three parcels if purchased that butts up to his property and construction of a viewing deck at the midway point of the parking lot and beach; a property owner north of the beach at Laketown. Bosscher suggested a chain length fence to contain the public from the private road. Simmons asked the suggested location of the fence and Bosscher said east side of the parcels and near the parking lot. Sall thanked Bosscher for meeting with other residents of Halcyon Hills to address their concerns. Bosscher sent an invitation to 15 residents and 3 property owners came to meet at the township hall on April 17 to discuss their concerns regarding Laketown Beach. The main concern of the property owners is to keep the public off from the private property. Some residents are in favor of signage and others prefer fencing. There is also interest in creating a better turnaround radius in the parking lot for emergency vehicles and addition of handicap spaces.

Mary Lynn Webster of 6630 Halcyon Hills Drive asked if there will be more discussion on the signs. Who picks up litter at the parks, are there volunteers? Sall said there is a parks maintenance person that does pick up trash and last summer there was a youth group working in the parks for five weeks. Meshkin said there is an adopt-a-park program for those are interested in volunteering in the parks. Webster also suggested implementing a “Pack It In – Pack It Out” program in the parks to eliminate the need for garbage receptacles

suggesting it would reduce the amount of trash and the cost of the service. Meshkin questioned if it would increase the trash and noted the approximate cost of receptacles for all parks is approximately \$1500 per year. Sall explained this topic had been discussed at a previous meeting and due to the year around use of the parks, it was decided that the receptacles would remain in place. Webster stated that she does not feel the receptacles are aesthetically conducive to the parks and the practice has been used successfully in other parks.

### ARTICLE III. CONSENT AGENDA

#### a. Approval of Minutes

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Sall and seconded by Bosscher to approve the March 21, 2018 minutes with corrections as noted. Sall called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

### ARTICLE IV. APPROVAL OF TREASURER’S REPORT

The bills to be paid as of March 2018 were reviewed. Maintenance: Veldhof – \$650.00, Outdoor Discovery - \$1,800.00, Laketown Electrical - \$78.00; Supplies: Robert Jerow - \$10.00; Contracted Services: John Kunkel - \$295.00; Electricity - \$50.28; Salaries: Robert Jerow - \$165.00; Taxes: \$12.62.

Johnson questioned the replacement of the port of potty unit at Shore Acres Park. Meshkin said the unit was replaced due to its very poor condition. Johnson also questioned the invoice for cut stump application of oriental bittersweet and Meshkin said it was ordered from ODC last year to be applied at Huyser Farm adding that it will now be done on an annual basis.

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Sall and seconded by Simmons to approve the Treasurer’s Reports as submitted for the month of March. Sall called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

### ARTICLE V. TOWNSHIP BOARD REPORTS – Sall

- a. Sall and Meshkin reported that Aric Nesbitt, running for a state seat introduced himself; streetlight for 142<sup>nd</sup> Avenue; roads millage will be back on the ballot in November.

### ARTICLE VI. STAFF REPORTS – Meshkin

- a. Meshkin reported that he bought a brand new chain saw so Williams could remove a very large tree from Sanctuary Woods that fell across the stairs. Another large tree on the bike path also had to be removed.

## ARTICLE VII. HUYSER CARETAKER REPORT

Sherri Circo said the back door was kicked in again and she cannot fix it this time. The window in the back is still broken and she asked that it be replaced with Plexiglass as is the window in the basement is only a screen. The volunteer date is in May and she would like a can of white house paint to paint the yellow off the house; wondered if a dumpster will be put in place to remove items from the barn that keeps getting broken into. Leftover cans of chemicals are also in the barn and there is broken glass everywhere. Simmons commented that chemicals cannot be placed in dumpsters. Meshkin asked Johnson to review the items in the barn for proper handling. Johnson said the red barn does have items of potential interest. Circo would also like a can of red spray paint to identify problem trees that must be removed including those with invasive vines. This is also present in Wolters Woods. Johnson said it is probably the oriental bittersweet and Sirko said the Virginia Creeper is also present in several areas of the park. Simmons said there are some that are very close to the house that should be removed. Meshkin said do not touch the big holly tree to the north side of the house, it is unusually large. Circo said she spoke to a nature preserver from the state and he told her that it is an invasive species that are spreading and it is illegal to bring them into the state anymore. Meshkin said Huyser brought that tree onto the property. There was discussion as to the philosophy of invasive species versus purism. Sall asked Circo to email Meshkin with a list of supplies needed for the work day. Circo asked if the volunteer truck has tools and Simmons said the tools will be available for the work day. Circo and Johnson will walk the property to mark trees for Williams to trim/cut either before or after the work day. The work day is scheduled for Saturday, May 19 at 9:00am and will be published in the newsletter.

## ARTICLE VIII. OLD BUSINESS

### A. LAKETOWN BEACH AND PARKING

Bosscher shared that the first priority is to restripe the parking spaces on 142<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and he showed the plan for 43 parking spaces and Allegan County Road Commission is proposing 41 spaces for better turning radius. There will also be two parallel handicap spaces south of the boardwalk. Following much discussion, it was decided that Bosscher will submit a final drawing to Meshkin to submit to the Allegan County Road Commission. Bosscher presented options for signage identifying parking spaces and directive to alternate parks for beach access. The commissioners agreed on Option 2 of proposed signage. Signage to denote public and private beach areas was also discussed. There was question as to where these signs could be placed due to the absence of a current survey to denote township versus private property. Meshkin agreed to have the signs made but is not

comfortable installing them until a survey is done, pending the grant approval and/or current neighbor survey submitted.

## B. SPRING PARKS EVALUATIONS

Sall summarized the evaluations done by Shuff: Sanctuary Woods - upright barriers to be leveled; lots of graffiti; Wolters Woods - clean and remove the big sign and correct the sign for dogs; Farview Park - potholes in the driveway; a good cleaning; trash emptied; Shore Acres - parking lot needs a lot of attention, very large pot holes; Meshkin said some potholes are good to deter racing; old split rail fence between church and grounds is falling down; a trash barrel near the storage shed is full of trash and water; vandalism at storage barn; big tree limb in northeast side of park; garbage and debris outside of storage barn; broken pallets looks pretty trashy; near front of park a pile of debris where former barn was taken down; pile of debris near small green shelter; the white fence along the parking lot has broken rails and missing top caps. Sall will forward the report to Meshkin.

## ARTICLE IX. NEW BUSINESS

### A. HUYSER FARM BARN PROPOSAL

Terry Vandenberg of 4615 66<sup>th</sup> Street submitted a proposal to take apart the red barn at Huyser Farm haul away all barn materials; recycle the material for personal woodworking use; clean the entire barn site at no expense to the township.

Simmons asked about concrete and Vandenberg said it is brick and he will remove it as well. He would notify the township of any biohazard materials he might find for proper disposal. While working on the project, he would safely secure the site after each work session for general public safety. If approved, he would start work as soon as possible. Meshkin asked that Vandenberg secure any farm equipment that is found for review by the commissioners and township prior to removing. Circo said the barn wood is valuable and Meshkin said the wood does have value as does the cleaning up of the site. Bosscher asked if the Land Conservancy or the Huyser heirs should be consulted. Meshkin said the Land Conservancy does not have jurisdiction over that area and the only requirement of the family is that the land not be developed.

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Bosscher and seconded by Simmons to approve the Vandenberg proposal to remove the red barn at the Huyser Farm contingent on it being a total clean-up and removal of all waste from the site; the site secured for public safety after each work session to ensure general public safety; notification to the township of biohazard materials for proper disposal; township review of all farm equipment prior to removal and project completion within six (6) months of this date. Sall called for a vote on the motion. VOTE 3 to 1 – MOTION APPROVED**

B. BLUE STAR TRAIL MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Meshkin summarized the item from Saugatuck Township noting that its purpose of the memorandum is to illustrate the “Blue Star Trail”, a non-motorized trail linear park, will be shared, maintained and operated in a mutual beneficial and collaborative manner between the entities of Saugatuck Township and Laketown Township and the City of the Village of Douglas. The three entities will continue to collaborate on development, operation and maintenance of the “Blue Star Trail”. Meshkin added that such an agreement will also support additional points in future grant applications. The commissioners did not see any issue with the request and Meshkin will come back with a formal document once submitted.

C. PACK IT IN PACK IT OUT PARK

Sall said she likes Mary Lynn Webster’s idea for a “Pack It In –Pack It Out” park and proposed it be done at Farview Park. The commissioners agreed and signs will be ordered for placement at the entrance and on the horse trail.

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Sall and seconded by Johnson to establish Farview Park a “Pack It In – Pack It Out” park on a trial basis. Sall called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

D. SENIOR SERVE DAY – MAY 18 HOLLAND CHRISTIAN

Sall advised that she contacted Holland Christian for potential opportunities for work in the parks, potentially at the beach. Sall asked if Williams or Jason Schrottenboer could be available on that date. Johnson suggested planting dune grass as a project. Sall will confirm the arrangements upon notification from the school.

E. ODC.

Sall made a formal Thank You” to ODC for the work done at Shore Acres and Saugatuck State Dunes Park. ODC partnered with Saugatuck Brewing Company to coordinate volunteers for both work days in the parks.

ARTICLE X. CITIZEN COMMENTS - None

ARTICLE XI. ADJOURNMENT

**Sall adjourned the meeting at 8:43 pm.**