

MINUTES
LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
AT
TOWNSHIP HALL

September 21, 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, Jan Lozon
MEMBERS ABSENT: Jim Johnson
STAFF PRESENT: Al Meshkin – Township Manager
Diane Ybarra – Recording Secretary

ARTICLE II. CITIZEN COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Sall reported receiving an email from Morrie Minnema regarding a request for an Eagle Scout project in the future. Linda Howell suggested the Adopt-A- Park page for potential projects. Sall will forward the “wish list” to Howell to share with Minnema. Snyder suggested the fishing dock at Farview be repaired or replaced. Meshkin suggested additional benches for any of the parks.

Sall received a letter from a student requesting to do an environmental study in one of the parks to study plants, animals and insects. Meshkin stated that in the past we have offered a 10 x 10 area of a park to study. Simmons suggested Farview Park.

Sall added that two letters were received regarding parking tickets at Laketown Beach with comments of objection for receiving the tickets.

Sall said a letter was received from Maria Ochas commenting on the blueberry fields at Huyser Farm and her suggestion to sell the property and use the proceeds to pay down township debt.

Sall asked for comments on the parking ticket issues. Snyder said the spots and signs are well defined.

ARTICLE III. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Approval of Minutes

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

ARTICLE IV. APPROVAL OF TREASURER’S REPORT

Snyder reviewed the bills to be paid as of August, 2016. Maintenance: Veldhof – \$755.00; Salaries: Robert Jerow - \$205.00; Taxes: \$15.68; Contracted Services: John Kunkel - \$155.00; Electricity: Consumers Energy - \$45.01; Taxes: \$15.68.

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

Snyder asked if the vendor was able to offer a suggestion for the flies and smells at the Wolters Woods restrooms. Snyder presumes there is a liquid chemical base in port’o’potty facilities. Meshkin responded that no recommendations were made.

ARTICLE V. TOWNSHIP BOARD REPORT – SALL

Howell stated that Sall was at the Township Board meeting to report on the Parks Commission. There were no other issues regarding the parks. Other items discussed were the Fiber Optic Project with the majority of the attendees speaking in favor of the project. Minor revisions to the MACC bylaws were approved and a second amendment to the Old Orchard P.U.D. was approved.

ARTICLE VI. TOWNSHIP STAFF REPORTS – MESHKIN

- a. The concrete has been completed at the Township Hall Recreation Park.
- b. Heavener and Williams will be working on cleaning and clearing the bike paths. Sall commented on how well Laketown Township maintains its bike paths compared to others in the area.

ARTICLE VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. PARKS SURVEY

Sall reported that she has reviewed the surveys but has not compiled all information at this point. Meshkin advised Sall to contact Staci Veldt to assist with the mechanics of Survey Monkey.

B. BEACH STAIRS

Meshkin provided and reviewed information on the Passport Grant document. The beach stairs project would potentially meet most criteria of the grant with the exception of the ADA accessibility but it may be possible to ask for an exception. The grant is geared toward renovation of an existing park. Applications are typically submitted in February with awards given in September/October timeframe. Drawings must be done by a professional architect so planning should begin soon if an application is submitted. Meshkin stated matching budget money would not be needed until 2018 fiscal year. Howell asked the status of the 5-year plan and Meshkin stated that it expires in December 2017. Lozon asked if the plan would be to continue with the current maintenance or something new. Meshkin responded that it would likely be a change in the stairs but not a tunnel due to funding constraints. Lozon asked if architects have looked at the problem for other options. Meshkin stated not at this time and the addition of property is really needed. Sall stated that the surveys show the beach is heavily used. Meshkin stated the West Side Park in Allegan has a barrier free boardwalk but the topography is different than Laketown Beach. Meshkin stated that contacting Halcyon Hills Association may be an option to consider regarding prevention work. Sall asked if this grant could also be used to fund the restrooms for the Old Township Hall and/or other parks. Howell asked if the Coastal Zone grant could be used for the stairs and Meshkin said it is possible but is typically for new projects. The grant work must begin now to meet the February submittal deadline. Snyder said if the beach stairs didn't work, replacing the restrooms at Wolters Woods might also be an option. Meshkin will contact Jim Johnson regarding potential support from GMB.

C. ADAPTIVE REUSE OF OLD TOWNSHIP HALL

Sall stated there has been discussion but no final decision made thus far. Snyder said if we renovate the Huyser Farm for a township maintenance residence, the small house could be removed and the Township Hall could be potentially moved to that location. Simmons and Sall revisited moving it to the Township Hall Recreation Park to be used for restrooms. Snyder and Lozon supported those comments. Meshkin feels a newer restroom would be more suitable for the Township Hall Recreation Park. Meshkin supported the move to the Huyser Farm site as a visible landmark and potentially be used as a classroom. Sall asked about Shore Acres as an option. Howell stated 142nd Street is on the map for future bike path trails and asked if it would qualify for a Trust Fund Grant if placed at Huyser Farm. Meshkin responded may be possible. Meshkin will send the multiple grant information (based on 2016) to Sall for review and tracking.

D. DAY OF CARING PROJECTS

Sall thanked the Commissioners for the support given on the Day of Caring projects. Seven companies and more than 50 volunteers participated in the project and all parks were covered. Sall shared a letter from Brad Moorer regarding the potential to do more work at Huyser Farm blueberries with progress he made removing brush in the rows. Sall has prepared thank you notes for all participating companies.

E. HUYSER HOUSE RENOVATION

Snyder reported that he and Johnson walked through the house and surrounding property. He commented on the power service that is accessible to the house, asbestos may be on the old furnace; septic and well and electrical would have to be done first. The main floor has wall covering but the second floor had exposed studs. The building must be better secured as doors are easily kicked in. Meshkin reported that Johnson shared a lengthy email regarding their findings suggesting that the Commissioners determine what the desired end result is. Snyder feels the preservation is the first thing to consider and if done, it would need to be occupied to deter vandalism. Snyder feels that it is structurally sound. It was again suggested to turn on the electricity to provide lighting and a security system. Howell suggested getting estimates from several contractors to better plan for its renovation and use. Simmons would like to continue conversation when Johnson is present.

F. DONATION

Sall will reach out to the couple who recently submitted a letter regarding a donation to the parks.

G. DOG PARK

Simmons asked if there was an update on the dog park partnership with City of Holland. Meshkin responded that he has not received a response from Ryan Cotton.

H. HUYSER HUNT

Simmons stated there were an exact number of lottery recipients as those submitted so all will have a chance to hunt.

ARTICLE VIII. NEW BUSINESS - None

ARTICLE IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:23 P.M.