

LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP  
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
HELD AT THE TOWNSHIP HALL

October 16, 2019  
Workshop Meeting  
6:00 P.M.

Tom Shuff opened the workshop meeting at 6:00 P.M.

Ellen Fitch presented a “Park Visitor Questionnaire” that might be used to solicit feedback park visitors. Dearborn suggested each commissioner visit a park. Becker suggested asking for visitor address or residency. Shuff suggested wearing name tags to identify themselves. Fitch said it should also be asked if the visitor feels safe in the park. Simmons asked how often Meshkin gets reports of unsafe conditions in the parks. Meshkin said not very often. Meshkin said park usage is down at this time of the year so suggested doing it over a span of a year, recording time and date of the survey. The main reason surveys were done in the past was for the Parks Recreation Plan. The current Parks Plan was just approved in January 2019 and is good for five years. Fitch said this isn’t meant to be a township wide survey but for the park visitors. Meshkin said the last township wide survey netted 86 respondents. Shuff wants to understand where people are coming from. Simmons said most people who respond to the township wide survey don’t use any of the parks. Meshkin suggested asking for an email address to generate a database and Becker said that might not be received very well. Meshkin said it could be optional to provide to provide an email if the person would like to receive information on the parks. Becker asked if there is a database of resident emails and Meshkin said there is not nor do many people subscribe to the electronic newsletter option. Dearborn asked if the survey could be done at voting times and Meshkin said that is not an option.

Shuff asked for feedback on the questions and Fitch said they are more social based questions. Becker suggested asking if they use any other parks in the township than the one they are in. Becker suggested what else would you like to see in the park. Simmons said to add a question about allowing alcohol in the parks. Dearborn suggested asking park specific questions if possible. Becker suggested condensing it to few questions and to have the surveyor add a note about the demographics of the visitor. Dearborn suggested throwing a “party in the park” in the spring and fall. In general, the survey could be placed on a clipboard with a pen/pencil attached. Further review of the questions occurred. Fitch said it is important to research what kind of interactions occur in the park. The following questions/order was agreed upon:

1. Why do you like this park?
2. How often do you visit?
3. How did you get here? (boxes with: walk; car; bike; other)
4. Do you meet others in the park?

5. Do you visit other parks and if so, which ones and how often?
6. What would you like to see in this park?
7. How do you think parks impact you and your community?
8. Are you a resident of Laketown Township?
9. Optional: email address

Surveyor would note demographics of the interviewee.

Shuff said to organize the campaign to visit the parks over a year. Meshkin said it would be nice to do it to capture four seasons. Becker said to evaluate the questions after the first few months to determine effectiveness. Fitch and Dearborn suggested having it available at the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Pancake Breakfast. Meshkin said there are certain times when the line is very long and it might be an opportune time to gather feedback. There will be a table for Parks and it could be available there. Simmons suggested starting the surveys as soon as the document is available. Meshkin will provide copies of the survey, clipboards and pens.

Shuff asked commissioners to review previous surveys. Dearborn would like to reach out to the City of Frankfort to review their park welcoming sign as a basis for what might be used. Dearborn will get a copy of it; commissioners will review and draft new Laketown signage. Shuff asked if there is an issue with noting alcohol allowed in the parks and Meshkin advised it would require a change to the ordinance which would have to come before the board. Shore Acres is the only park that currently allows alcohol consumption. Fitch is not in favor of making that change. Becker said just to note no glass receptacles allowed.

**Shuff adjourned the workshop meeting at 6:50 P.M.**