

MINUTES
LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
AT
TOWNSHIP HALL

November 16, 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, Jim Johnson
MEMBERS ABSENT: None
STAFF PRESENT: Diane Ybarra – Recording Secretary

ARTICLE II. CITIZEN COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Ryan Bosscher of 967 Laketown Drive commented regarding the Huyser Farm proposal, he likes the idea of having a caretaker on the grounds. This is a public park so would be concerned that the revenues get reinvested into the park and to pay the caretakers. He would not want the perception that a private family is coming in to operate the farm for personal gain. Bosscher asked if Griggs had provided a new proposal for the farm and also for the beach stairs. Johnson responded that Meshkin will reconnect with Griggs and perhaps other construction companies regarding the options for the beach stairs. Bosscher asked if there was an update regarding the property next to Wolters Woods. Simmons responded that there is not update and the grant work cannot begin until Meshkin speaks to the owner about potential match monies.

Sall reported that a letter and a donation check from Sharon Ellison regarding the stairs at Laketown Beach.

Sall reported that the Allegan County Deputy received notice through Silent Observer regarding the potential start of the fire in Sanctuary Woods. Johnson commented that it is unclear if it was an intentional act or carelessness. Johnson asked if there is an agreement with the gatekeeper regarding the time to open and close. Simmons commented that sometimes the gatekeeper will contact the officer that lives down the street if there are cars in the lot after dark. Lozon said it is somewhat arbitrary when dawn and dusk occurs, a set time may be advisable. Lozon also noted that the Wolters Woods gate is often open later in the evening. Sall will email Meshkin regarding installation of a more

prominent signage regarding the opening/closing of the gates. Bosscher suggested having a phone number for the gatekeeper.

ARTICLE III. CONSENT AGENDA

a. Approval of Minutes

Following discussion, **a motion was made by Simmons and seconded by Lozon to approve the October 19, 2016 minutes as written. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED**

ARTICLE IV. APPROVAL OF TREASURER’S REPORT

Snyder reviewed the bills to be paid as of October, 2016. Maintenance: Veldhof – \$515.00, Heavener - \$1,355.50, Holland Small Engine - \$40.48, Black River Habitats - \$400.00, Jason Schrottenboer - \$5,500.00; Supplies: Graafschap Hardware - \$94.09; Salaries: Robert Jerow - \$220.00; Contracted Services: John Kunkel - \$150.00; Electricity: Consumers Energy - \$22.57; Salaries: Michelle Sall - \$225.00, Karen Simmons - \$180.00, Bill Snyder - \$210.00, Jim Johnson - \$60.00, Jan Lozon - \$120.00, Robert Jerow - \$215.00; Taxes: \$77.27.

Snyder reported nothing unusual but the materials for Day of Caring and second bill from Schrottenboer for Laketown Beach stair sand removal.

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

ARTICLE V. TOWNSHIP BOARD REPORT – SALL

Sall reported she attended the meeting and basically each official present reported. Fire Chief Den Bleyker reported having smoke alarms available for residents.

ARTICLE VI. TOWNSHIP STAFF REPORTS – No report.

ARTICLE VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. BEACH STAIRS

Sall stated there is no update. Johnson mentioned there has been some correspondence between Meshkin and Schrottenboer and construction companies.

B. ADAPTIVE USE OF OLD TOWNSHIP HALL

Sall tabled for future discussion.

C. HUYSER FARM PROPOSAL

Sall stated she spoke with the Brad Moore, blueberry expert who said he would be out with a crew to do some pruning. Lozon asked if there is a way to get the maturing trees out of the rows of blueberry fields. Johnson said the Day of Caring volunteers worked to handsaw as much as they were able to. Lozon said that will not resolve the issue as the trees would have to be dug out and removed. Snyder suggested chemicals but could jeopardize the organic blueberries. Johnson said Moore said if the trees weren't there he offered to use his brush hog to clean the rows but not with sizeable trees in the way. Simmons said she is unaware of where the trees are as she recently walked the rows and didn't feel they looked too bad. Sall will evaluate this week-end and report to Moore. Johnson asked if anyone has had time to look at the house. Snyder plans to ask Meshkin what the cell service hotspot might be available for cameras to provide some level of security but electricity would be needed. Johnson also suggested putting trail cameras to identify the vandals. The cameras are battery operated and the cost is \$50-\$100 and motion activated. Snyder said the Verizon store - \$40 to install and \$10 a month to maintain and could be viewed in real time. Johnson asked if there is a township electrical inspector that might be able to advise or perhaps Consumers Power. Sall said the trail cam in the short-run might be a reasonable solution. Sall will follow-up with Meshkin and potentially put something in the newsletter to solicit for a volunteer that might have electrical skill set. There was discussion about where the trail cam could be installed and how it might be disguised. Lozon supports the idea of electricity and the real time surveillance. Snyder also suggested security lighting.

D. INVASIVE SPECIES

Sall reported there is no update. Johnson stated that Meshkin has been working with a company that specializes in removing the Japanese Knot weed.

E. PARKS SURVEY

Sall further discussed the highlights. Lozon stated it seems there is an educational problem, people seem unaware. Sall suggested including something in the newsletter, perhaps a one page sheet that pinpointed each park with address and one sentence description. Sall asked if upcoming Board member Ryan Bosscher would be interested in working on that project. Lozon commented that some respondents do not seem to understand how important the parks are to the township. She would like to further educate residents. Sall stated that with a survey it will provide feedback from both strong support and those who do not support the parks. Sall asked commissioners for ideas on what can be put in the newsletter. Johnson said he often thinks of Ottawa County and the great job they have done of promoting their parks and passing millage to support them. Lozon said their websites are

really good, too. Johnson suggested benchmarking or modeling after some of their work. Sall said a scale more our size, like villages or cities. Johnson said it would be interesting to see if Allegan County has other municipalities that are doing an outstanding job that we could research. Does the City of Allegan itself have something? Sall said she can't think of any other place in Allegan that has as many parks as we do. The survey showed 31 respondents said they would give a donation. Lozon suggested putting a list of needs or goals in the newsletter to solicit for funds and/or volunteers. Johnson asked if we could add a line to the tax bill asking if residents wanted to donate X amount of dollars to the parks.

Lozon asked what the status is of the Adopt-A-Park application. Sall stated that it is in a working state, available for use if a volunteer group becomes available.

ARTICLE VIII. NEW BUSINESS - None

ARTICLE IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 P.M.