



CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
PARK COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
Location: Service Center Building  
Okemos, MI 48864

**DATE:** October 8, 2019

**PRESENT:** Amanda Lick, Michael McDonald, Annika Schaeztl, Mark Stephens, Ami VanAntwerp

**EXCUSED:** None

**STAFF:** LuAnn Maisner, Director of Parks and Recreation

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair McDonald called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

2. PRESENTATIONS

A. Okemos Road Bridge Replacement Project

Deputy Township Manager/Director of DPW Derek Perry reported the Township has been participating in informational meetings with the Ingham County Road Department on the upcoming bridge replacement project on Okemos Road. Deputy Township Manager Perry summarized the four alternatives for the replacement project. The proposals contained options utilizing a single span bridge and two-bridge alternatives.

Discussion:

- Need to include a safe ingress and egress to and from Wonch and Ferguson Parks
- Safe pedestrian crossings
- Desire an under-bridge pathway to provide safe crossing opportunities between the two parks
- Improved water flow by removing the Camelback abutments that would result in less flooding in Ferguson Park.
- The single span would provide greater separation of pedestrians and cars on the eastside of the road
- The single span would not require relocation of park entrances.

It was the consensus of the Park Commission to choose Alternative #1.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Stephens moved TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED WITH THE OKEMOS ROAD BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT PRESENTATION. Seconded by Commissioner Lick.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. September 10, 2019 Regular Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Schaetzl moved TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 10, 2019 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES AS WRITTEN. Seconded by Commissioner Lick.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Items to/from the Public

None

B. Commission Information

1. Press Releases:

- a. Music in Nature Concludes with Final Concert at Harris Nature Center – Series Featured Trios Playing Live Music
- b. Preschoolers Discover Animals – Preschool Science Exploration Class Investigates Animals in Autumn
- c. Family Special: Tails of Michigan Wildlife – Harris Nature Center helps Families Enjoy Time in Nature
- d. Autumn Color Walk – Harris Nature Center Leading Walk in the Autumn Woods
- e. Blue and Grey Event Transports Visitors to Civil War Era – Go Back in Time with the War Between the States
- f. Meridian Township Deer Management Program Continues – Program Continues for 9<sup>th</sup> Consecutive Year
- g. Howl at the Moon – Guided Evening Walk for People and Dogs

C. Staff Inquiries/Response

None

Commissioner Lick moved TO ACCEPT AND PLACE THE ITEMS OF COMMUNICATION ON FILE. Seconded by Commissioner Schaetzl.

VOICE VOTE: MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

7. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- A. **Marketplace on the Green** – The contract for construction was awarded to Gordon Construction Services for entire project. Initially, we awarded the entire contract to Gordons but have since amended the agreement with them removing the pavilion and awarding that to Mid-States Recreation. We are hoping for site work to begin by the end of the month. We are still looking at a May-June 2020 opening.
- B. **Central Park Projects** – Bids were received for the Central Meridian Regional Trail Connector, Gateway footbridge and restroom in Central Park/Historical Village on September 17. A total of 23 general and sub-contractors took out plans but only three bids were received – (two for the trail and one for the restroom/bridge). All three bids were much higher than anticipated. Came in very high, therefore, we have rejected the bids and will put the projects back out in December/January.
- C. **Meridian Senior Center** – Members of the Senior Center now have a beautiful place to enjoy the out of doors while visiting the Center. The paved patio is now home to new

furniture, umbrellas, raised garden boxes and landscaping. A new loop trail has been installed for small walks that can also host future memorial trees and benches. A ribbon cutting ceremony was well attended today by Township Trustees, Park Commissioners, seniors and public. This past summer the Center scheduled various outings that were extremely popular. Activities included Summer Barbeque at Wonch Park, Bad Brewing/Keans/Courthouse and ice cream in Mason and Stahl Automotive Museum in New Baltimore. They also hosted their annual Rummage Sale and made \$1,414.50 and held their first-ever Arts and Crafts show utilizing their talented members art projects.

- D. **HNC Pavilion and Restroom** – The projects were put out to bid and are due later this month.
- E. **Small Dog Park** – This new facility in Nancy Moore Park has been a huge success with 123 members currently with an average use of 15 visits a day.
- F. **Large Dog Park** – The fencing and entry control systems have been purchased and have been delivered to the Service Center. The site has been graded and seeded in preparation of construction this spring. The parking lot in Central Park South is also slated for expansion as well in spring 2020.
- G. **Hartrick Park Soccer Field Renovation** – Because of the heavy wear and tear of the soccer field area in Hartrick Park, the turf is in dire need of attention. The Field is closed this fall and next spring as renovation activities are taking place adding new topsoil and seed.
- H. **Adult Sports Fall Season**
  - 1. Kickball – 9 teams
  - 2. Sand Volleyball - 13 teams
  - 3. Pickleball Players 50 individuals
  - 4. Sr. Fitness at Mall Approx. 50/day (90 registered)
- I. **Youth Sports Fall Season**
  - 1. Soccer - 667 participants/70 teams
  - 2. Playmakers Running Club - 31 participants
  - 3. Sporties for Shorties - 18 classes at maximum enrollment (360 kids) June - September
  - 4. Flag football - 242 Meridian Township participants with a total of 45 teams including teams from Williamston and Bath
- J. **2019 Deer Management Program:** Meridian Township's ninth year of deer management will officially commence on October 1, 2019 and will run until January 1, 2020. This popular program places volunteer archery hunters on select Township and County owned properties to manage the deer population. The 2019 program involves managing 85 hunters on 38 properties. We continue to receive complaints from residents regarding the high deer population.
- K. **Acquisition Grant** - 5280 Okemos Road Acquisition (Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund) 170k total (WE PAY \$42,500). We received a very good preliminary score and will receive final notification in December. This acquisition, if approved, will provide a safer and more visible entrance to Nancy Moore Park and will serve as a parking area/ trailhead for the Interurban Trail, MSU to Lake Lansing Trail, and other nearby park and land preserve trails.
- L. **Stewardship** – A total of 55 volunteers engaged in restoration projects in Land Preserves with three more workdays planned for fall.
- M. **Japanese Knotweed** – This extremely invasive plant has been successfully treated on two Land Preserve properties.

- N. **Consumers Energy Tree Grant** – Consumers Energy offers a street tree grant each year and we have been successful recipients of 20 native trees that are scheduled for planting along Central Park Drive during the month of October.

8. ACTION ITEMS

None

9. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. Work Plan for 2019 & 2020 – Director Maisner shared the project implementation plan for the rest of this year as well as budgeted projects for 2020.
- B. Helen and Howard Tanner Memorial Recommendation  
Commissioners discussed options for honoring the Tanners such as:
- Constructing a bait shop next to the fishing dock “Tanner Bait Shop”
  - Plant a wildflower patch in the Historical Village where visitors could pick a flower. No decision was or final recommendation was made at this time.
- C. Staffing Update
- A. Lead Worker in Parks, Matt Foreman moved to become Lead Worker in the Sewer Division
- B. Open Positions:
1. Parks and Recreation Specialist to replace Darcie
  2. Assistant Park Naturalists – HNC
  3. Recreation Intern
  4. Senior Fitness Program Leader
  5. Parks and Land Preservation Superintendent
  6. Lead Worker in Parks and Land Preservation
- D. Wish List  
Commissioners were asked to review the list contained in the meeting packet and send updates to Director Maisner.
- E. Historical Village Request
- F. MNRTF Scoring updates
- G. Michigan State Park Advisory Board Openings

10. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

11. OTHER MATTERS AND COMMISSIONERS’ COMMENTS

- A. Commissioner Comments
- B. Events Calendar:
1. October 11: Howl at the Moon, Harris Nature Center, 7-8 pm
  2. October 12: Stewardship Morning, 9-11 am
  3. October 13: Autumn Color Walk, Harris Nature Center, 2-3 pm
  4. October 16: Fire Prevention Open House, Central Fire Station, 10am-1pm
  5. October 18: Meridian Cares Benefit Night at Old Chicago, 4-9 pm
  6. October 19: Halloween Adventures at the Harris Nature Center, 10am-5pm
  7. October 26: Halloween Adventures at Meridian Public Safety Building & Historical Village (10am-1pm), Farmers Market (8am-2pm)
  8. November 2: Nighttime Family Scavenger Hunt, Harris Nature Center, 7-8:30pm
  9. November 8: Howl at the Moon, Harris Nature Center, 7-8 pm

10. Farmers' Market:

- a. Saturdays, 8 am-2 pm, Central Park Pavilion, through end of October
- b. Wednesdays, starting July 10, 3-7 pm; through the end of October.
- c. Thanksgiving Market, November 27, 10am-2pm

12. ADJOURNMENT

Chair McDonald adjourned the meeting at 8:11 pm.

13. NEXT MEETING: The next meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, November 12 2019**, in the Town Hall Room, Meridian Municipal Building, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, with a non-televised work session at 6 pm and a televised regular meeting at 7 pm.