



**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
PARK COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Central Fire Station
5000 Okemos Road, Okemos, MI 48864
TUESDAY, AUGUST 22, 2023 4:30 PM**

PRESENT: Chair, Mary Nardo Farris; Vice Chair, Ami Van Antwerp; Commissioner, Amanda Lick; Commissioner, Mark Stephens
ABSENT: Commissioner, Mike McDonald
STAFF: Bridget Cannon, Administrative Assistant; Emma Campbell, Land Stewardship Coordinator; Nick Wing, Sports and Recreation Specialist

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Nardo-Farris called the meeting to order at **4:27 pm**.

2. ROLL CALL

Chair Nardo-Farris called the roll of the Commission. All park commissioners present except Commissioner, Mike McDonald - Excused.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Lick moved **TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS SUBMITTED**. Seconded by Commissioner Van Antwerp.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

NONE

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Stephens moved **TO APPROVE THE JULY 11, 2023 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED**. Seconded by Commissioner Lick.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Snell Towar Rec Center August Schedule

Nick Wing has been coordinating monthly events at the rec center starting in July, 2023. The neighborhood residents have been excited about the recent calendar events and Nick welcomes all township residents of all age groups to the rec center for scheduled activities. Average of 15-20 attendants at scheduled drop-in programs... 5-10 attendants on slow days.

Gaga ball pit is on order and is a popular activity with kids and families. The new gaga ball pit will be utilized at Snell Towar Rec Center and other Special Events in the township.

Commissioner Stephens suggested a fly-tying workshop open to the public at Snell Tower in near future. He is willing to volunteer at a scheduled workshop.

- B. Summer Concert Series Line-Up
- C. Calendar of Events
- D. Follow us on Instagram @meridianparksandrec

Commissioner Stephens **MOVED TO PLACE THE COMMUNICATIONS ITEMS PRESENTED ON FILE**. Seconded by Commissioner Lick.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Nick Wing left the meeting at 5:15 pm.

7. ACTION ITEMS

A. 2024 Budget Requests-Parks

LuAnn Maisner, Director of Parks and Recreation joined the meeting via telephone at 4:47 pm to participate in discussion of Action Item 2024 Budget Requests – Parks.

MOVED BY COMMISSIONER LICK, SUPPORTED BY COMMISSIONER STEPHENS TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE 2024 BUDGET REQUEST FOR PARKS AS PRESENTED.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Lick left meeting at 5:20 pm; Director Maisner hung up from telephone call at 5:20 pm.

8. PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Michigan State University Targeted Anti-Tick Project – Emma Campbell

We are pleased to announce that Michigan State University will be partnering with Meridian Township conducting research on the deer and tick population utilizing the Deer Management Program. The goal of this research project is to potentially develop a deer-targeted oral drug delivery unit to reduce the environmental risk to humans due to tick-borne diseases, such as Lyme disease. The research with Meridian Township is based solely on gathering information on the deer and tick population and the potential dissemination techniques that could be used for future administration of anti-tick medication. As a result of this collaboration, Meridian Township will benefit from data received, which will provide information on our deer herd numbers as well as the rate of Lyme disease in the Township.

Objectives of the study:

- Quantify questing tick abundance and parasitism of deer.

- Quantify deer and non-target wildlife species use of field sites for potential deployment of oral medication delivery units.
- Quantify consumption rates of a food product designed to deliver medications to white-tailed deer at different times of year.
- Quantify uptake of a placebo biomarker (rhodamine B) by deer to examine theoretical uptake of medication.
- Communicate project goals and results to Township officials and public.

Michigan State researchers will begin the project in August of 2023, conducting field recon prior to the study to ensure study sites are chosen with little to no public activity. There will be six to eight sites of study total across Township lands. The study will remain in effect until May 2026. Township staff place high value on research collaboration with Michigan State University, and the benefits future studies will provide for the local wildlife, natural areas, and residents of Meridian Township.

Commissioners agreed the tick study is a great opportunity for education and are happy to partner with MSU.

9. LAND PRESERVATION REPORT – Commissioner Stephens

No quorum last regular scheduled meeting. Site visit to Red Cedar Glen to discuss signage issues at the preserves.

10. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Meridian Historical Village Building Repair Update:
 - New roof on Grettenberger Farm House
 - New roof on Barnes House
 - Updated electrical in Barn

Work scheduled for 2023 completion:

- Exterior painting of Chapel
- Exterior painting of School House
- New roof on the Barn
- Water damage repair on chapel ceiling
- Sidewalk replacement in needed areas
- New Park Signs
- Snell-Towar Programs – Vinyl Club, flower planting, drop-in play, story read-alongs with community volunteers
- Heritage Festival – October 7
- Nokomis – Resignation of John Ostrander
- Wednesday Summer Concert Series
- 2024 Deer Management
- HNC Summer Camps concluded with 492 children = \$40,350

Here is where we stand for the exterior project at HNC:

1. Painting contractor has been selected for painting the brick (majority of the building) a dark gray with blue tones:
Tony Grants Painting: \$4,375.00
2. Siding contractor has been selected for siding with board and batten vertical siding in lighter gray (flagstone) also with blue tones:
Palmer: \$11,280.00
3. Masonry contractor has been selected to do the front entrance and under the front windows with stone that matches the restroom building and pavilion:
5 Star Masonry: \$6,660

This will be roughly \$7,315 over the \$15,000 budget. Nothing is inexpensive anymore unfortunately and our crew does not have time to take this work on. They will be replacing 2 of the windows in house though which will save a little bit.

Can we do a budget amendment OR use money out of another line item? It's possible the paint company won't be able to paint until 2024, but we won't know that until September.

11. PUBLIC COMMENTS

NONE

12. OTHER MATTERS AND COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Van Antwerp inquired if we can spray the roots at Ted Black Woods. She feels they are dangerous as people run/walk and cause a trip hazard at this park. Emma Campbell states she has had other people request the same. Commissioner Van Antwerp asks if this would be a volunteer task as we are short handed in Parks department and do not have the manpower to accomplish during work hours. She notes that Lake Lansing Parks has the roots marked throughout the trails.

Commissioner Stephens inquired when there is a storm where the debris and fallen trees in the parks and preserves end-up. Is this an opportunity to cut and sell firewood to generate income for township? Could a sawmill be hired for education purposes? Commissioner Van Antwerp states fallen trees create natural habitats for wildlife. Lack of manpower does not make sale of firewood a feasible option. The public is not allowed to enter parks and preserves to cut up trees themselves as this is a liability issue.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Nardo Farris adjourned the meeting at 5:53 pm.

The next scheduled meeting is **September 12, 2023**, at Township Hall, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864, 4:30 pm.