

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
PARK COMMISSION WORK SESSION MINUTES
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2016

PRESENT: Commissioners Baker, Lick, McDonald, Schaetzl, Stephens

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Parks and Recreation Director LuAnn Maisner, Parks and Land Management Coordinator Jane Greenway; Stewardship Coordinator Kelsey Dillon; Administrative Assistant II Robin Faust

1. Call Meeting to Order

Acting Chair McDonald called the work session to order at 6:07 pm.

2. Approval of Agenda

COMMISSIONER BAKER MOVED, COMMISSIONER STEPHENS SECONDED, TO APPROVE THE WORK SESSION AGENDA. Voice vote. Motion passed.

3. Election of Officers - Discussion

Director Maisner stated officers (Chair and Vice-chair) serve one-year terms and are usually selected at the December meeting. Officers can serve in the position for multiple years if desired by a majority of the Commissioners.

4. Park Commission Role and Responsibility

Chair McDonald and Director Maisner summarized items in the Park Commission Policy Notebook

5. 5 Year Parks and Recreation Plan Update

The Parks and Recreation Department is in the process of updating the current Parks and Recreation Master Plan for 2017-2021. The plan is due to the MDNR by March 1, 2017 to become grant eligible. The Department has contracted with Rowe Professional Services Company to manage the public input portion of the Plan. When completed, the 5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2017-2021 will be incorporated into the Township's Master Plan.

Rowe Professional Services representative Doug Schultz distributed the draft public input summary and offered the following comments:

- Was contracted to conduct the community engagement/public input portion of the Plan, develop goals and objectives and action plan recommendations.

- 22,000 postcards and 16,000 emails were sent to encourage community input in an on-line survey and open house event. Over 1,100 responses were received from the survey. Comments were also obtained from a third grade Bennett Woods Elementary Class, vendors from the Farmers' Market, Parks & Recreation Department staff and Park Commissioners
- A draft copy of the Plan was created and will be available for public review for a minimum of 30 days followed by a public hearing and adoption by resolution by the Park Commission and Township Board before its submission to the MDNR by March 1
- Key findings include:
 - ✓ Top parks based on visitor frequency include #1 - Central Park (including Nancy Moore Park, Meridian Historical Village and Farmers' Market) and #2 – Harris Nature Center
 - ✓ 70-90% are satisfied with park maintenance but listed parking, restrooms and trail signage as a significant need
 - ✓ 80% have visited the Farmers' Market
 - ✓ 88% enjoy walking and hiking with 40% listing biking, using playgrounds, nature observation and picnicking
 - ✓ 75% use the Township website and Family Fun Guide as their source of information
 - ✓ Most list customer service as good or excellent
 - ✓ Top picks for potential park projects include new Farmers' Market relocation (strong support for its relocation, river access, restroom buildings, ice rink and trail signage (ice rinks are hard to keep open and maintenance is a big issue; could look at having during special events or using synthetic ice)
 - ✓ 89% proud of where they live
 - ✓ 84% feel comfortable and accepted at programs and events
 - ✓ 80% of non-white respondents indicated parks and programs adequately address the community's cultural diversity
 - ✓ 45% respondents were from Okemos zip code and 29% respondents from Haslett zip codes
- National trends indicate people want to recreate on their own time (Be a tourist; reacquaint yourself with Meridian; Park Yourself Here; offer a place to do homework or hold a meeting, self-directed park tours)

Director Maisner reported the public input; goals, recommendations and action plan will be incorporated into the Master Plan and will have it ready and open for public review by the end of the month.

6. Comments

None

7. Adjournment

Hearing no objection, Acting Chair McDonald adjourned the work session at 7:52 pm.