

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN

LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 14, 2011
7:00 p.m. Meridian Service Center

Members Present: Tom Woiwode Chair, Mary Helmbrecht Vice Chair, Members Dave Caszatt, Frank Hatfield, Margo Smith, Mark Stephens, Jim Kielbaso

Members Absent: Steve Webster

Staff: Jane Greenway, Land Management Coordinator

Public Present: Pat Witte, Leslie Kuhn, Nick Sanchez, Michael Thomas

1. Call meeting to Order

Chair Woiwode called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm., Land Manager Greenway requested the following items be moved up on the agenda: 8.b, Old Business, Leslie Kuhn, Pat Witte, Nick Sanchez, Lake Lansing North Stewardship Plan and Prescribed Burn Proposal. Hearing no objections, Chair Woiwode accepted the changes to the agenda and moved item 8.b., to the next item on the agenda.

3. Approve Minutes for September 14, 2011

MOTION was made by Dave Caszatt, seconded by Margo Smith to approve the minutes of September 14, 2011 Land Preservation Advisory Board. MOTION carried unanimously.

(The November 9, 2011 meeting minutes were not approved because there was not a quorum at that meeting; therefore, minutes did not need to be taken.)

4. Communications: none

5. Presentations: none

8. Old Business (taken out of order)

b. Lake Lansing North, Stewardship Plan – Leslie Kuhn and Pat Witte

1. Pat Witte, Ingham County Parks Manager, requested approval to conduct a prescribed burn on 30 acres of the 120-acre portion of the property. The purpose of the burn will be to control the invasive species such as the native red maple seedlings, barberry, autumn olive and to benefit the park's oak woodlands. The biodiversity in the park is being suppressed by the lack of fire because the maples are dominant. The oaks are more important for wildlife and the acorns need sun to germinate.
2. Leslie Kuhn, Friends of Lake Lansing North Stewardship Group, distributed the draft of the Lake Lansing North Stewardship Plan, dated December 5, 2011. The Stewardship Plan includes a prescribed burn program, which will run for two years. Ingham County will be responsible for the site preparation, which includes clearing downed trees and creating firebreaks. The Friends group is covered under Ingham County's liability insurance policy. The LPAB funding for the prescribed burn will go to the Friends group, which is a 501c3 organization.
3. LPAB members discussed the proposed prescribed burn. The discussion topics included natural succession of maples, questions about management technique, the benefit of treating invasives such as barberry and autumn olive, and the effects of fire as a regeneration tool. LPAB members questioned the need for fire, considering that red maples are native, and will eventually shade each other out. They would like to see exclosures to document the "before" and "after" effects of the fire. Concerns were expressed about the deer simply eating the new plants that are generated. The best way to grow oaks may be to plant them and protect them with cages.
4. The LPAB discussed the funding of the prescribed burn and ultimately determined that they will give a grant to the Friends group.
5. Mike Thomas, Chair of the Environmental Commission, requested that the LPAB fund an educational presentation on prescribed burns by David Mindell, Plantwise, at the February Environmental Commission (EC) meeting. The EC meetings are televised, so the presentation will serve as public education for the prescribed burn.
6. LPAB also discussed the proposed native plant restoration planned for the Oakpark pond area. Suggestions were made to have local schoolchildren grow and install the native seeds. The LPAB could make a grant to the school with the condition that they will plant the seeds in 2013.

- a. To date, 29 antlerless deer have been harvested from township properties.

3. Prairie/Savannah Book

- a. Per Margo Smith's request, Jane will order a copy of "Prairies and Savannahs in Michigan", O'Conner, Kost, Cohen, for each LPAB member.

7. New Business

a. 2012 Land Preservation Advisory Board Meeting Schedule

MOVE that the Land Preservation Advisory Board meeting schedule as outlined in the December 8, 2011 memorandum be accepted, the attached meeting resolution be approved and adopted and copies of the meeting schedule and/or resolution be forwarded to the appropriate individuals. **MOTION** carried unanimously.

8. Old Business (taken out of order)

a. Terms of Office

1. Vice-Chair Clerk Helmbrecht distributed existing zoning code language relative to LPAB terms of office.
2. Two new LPAB appointees were made at the December 2011 Township Board meeting: Steve Webster and Ken Sink.
3. No other boards or commissions have term limits.
4. The procedure and policy state that the Chair and Vice-Chair are selected at the January board meeting.

9. Other: None

10. Public Comment: None

11. Closed Session

MOTION was made by Dave Caszatt, seconded by Frank Hatfield, to enter into closed session to discuss the possible purchase of real estate.

Roll Call Vote: Caszatt, Stephens, Smith, Woiwode, Helmbrecht, Hatfield and Kielbaso

9:50 p.m. Return to Open Session: **MOTION** was made by Mark Stephens, supported by Mary Helmbrecht, to leave the closed session and return to open session.

MOTION was made by Dave Caszatt, seconded by Jim Kielbaso to take such action as was discussed during closed session.

MOTION carried unanimously.

12. Adjournment

Hearing no objection, Chair Woiwode adjourned the meeting at 10:00 pm.