



CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
PARK COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
Location: Town Hall Room, Meridian Municipal Building  
Okemos, MI 48864

**DATE:** January 14, 2020

**PRESENT:** Amanda Lick, Vice Chair; Michael McDonald, Chair, Commissioners Mark Stephens, Ami VanAntwerp

**EXCUSED:** Commissioner Mary Nardo Farris

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

**1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Chair McDonald called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

**2. WELCOME TO NEW PARK COMMISSIONER MARY NARDO FARRIS**

Chair McDonald announced the appointment of Mary to the Park Commission. She was unable to attend this meeting but will be present in February.

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Remove item 9a. Commissioner Stephens moved **TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED**  
Seconded by Commissioner Lick.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

**4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jim Buecetta, president of Harris Nature Center Foundation shared the new fundraising effort of selling bricks for the patio addition to the new pavilion. He also shared the upcoming construction of the new bird viewing platform that is being funded by the Foundation and a grant from the Capital Region Community Foundation.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. December 10, 2019 Regular Meeting Minutes  
ITEM 8-A Motion corrected amounts of bid award Restroom amount = \$155,000 and pavilion amount of \$179,700.

Commissioner Lick moved **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 10, 2019 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES AS AMENDED**. Seconded by Commissioner VanAntwerp

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

**6. COMMUNICATIONS**

A. Items to/from the Public

None

B. Commission Information

1. Park Commission Membership List
2. Park Commission Meeting Resolution
3. Harris Nature Center Foundation Membership List
4. Land Preservation Advisory Board Membership List
5. Green Gazette, January 2020
6. Press Releases:
  - a. Celebrate Century Old Traditions with Chinese New Year - “Chinese Spring Festival Hosted in Meridian Township”
  - b. Get Active Start to 2020 with Annual Winter 5K – “Township to Host 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Polar Bear 5K Run/Walk”
  - c. Look and Listen for Owls at the Harris Nature Center – “Enjoy Learning About Owls Around the Campfire”
  - d. Harris Nature Center hosts Snowshoe Classes – “Embrace Winter with Snowshoeing”
  - e. Harris Nature Center Hosts Chipmunk Story Time – “Chicory Chipmunk Presents ‘Pout, Pout Fish’”
7. Addition: Skate Park Planning Guide

C. Staff Inquiries/Response

None

Commissioner Lick moved TO ACCEPT AND PLACE THE ITEMS OF COMMUNICATION ON FILE with the addition of item 7. Seconded by Commissioner VanAntwerp.

VOICE VOTE: MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**7. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- A. Pre-Construction Meeting was held on Monday, January 6, 2020 for Marketplace on the Green. Construction will begin on Monday, January 13. The pavilion will be delivered March 1-15 for installation.
- B. The Sander Farm Preserved Natural Area has been available for public use through an open space easement for over 20 years. Dr. Maureen Sander passed away in 2019 and left the 31.9-acre parcel to Parks to remain in its natural state in perpetuity. The property transfer occurred prior to the end of 2019. A thank you letter will be drafted for Park Commission consideration and sent to her family.
- C. Chris Buck, Economic Development Director, and I are looking at new Welcome to Meridian Signs and new Park Signs that coordinate/complement each other. We are also completing a grant request to LEAP for their Public Art Grant (due end of Jan). for Marketplace on the Green
- D. Friday, January 10 was a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new fitness room at Meridian Senior Center funded by the Rotary Club. Three pieces of equipment.
- E. New employee starting next Monday – Emma Campbell, Stewardship Coordinator replacing Kelsey Dillon.
- F. New Recreation Intern starting Tuesday, January 21. Lauren Fletcher CMU-30 weeks.
- G. In the process of completing contracts for development of the pavilion and rest room project at Harris Nature Center.

- H. Bids will go out by the end of January for the central Park Projects (Central Meridian Regional Trail Connector and Bridge/restroom projects for 2020 construction.
- I. 2020 Work Plan for Parks

## 8. ACTION ITEMS

### A. **Park RX Program:**

Park Rx America is a non-profit organization whose mission is to decrease the burden of chronic disease, increase health and happiness, and foster environmental stewardship, by virtue of prescribing nature during the routine delivery of healthcare by a diverse group of health care professionals. The process of using Park RX is outlined in Staff's memorandum.

Meridian Township parks are currently listed through the database at [www.parkrxamerica.org](http://www.parkrxamerica.org) which physicians can access to prescribe parks to patients. There are various promotional resources available on the Park RX America website that can be used to promote the program to physicians in the area. My goal to promote this program to area physicians and community members will be completed by creating a letter and informational brochure using the Park RX America promotional materials provided to give to area physicians to review for a potential partnership of this program. There is no cost to Meridian Township or physicians for this program. As we develop partnerships with local physicians, there could be potential opportunities available to host special events and programs that support these prescriptions.

The commissioners discussed the program and asked Director Maisner to research further the MOU language for possible HIPA and/or liability issues. No formal action was taken.

## 9. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. **Towner Road Park Parking Lot Use Request** –Removed from Agenda
- B. **Acquisition Grant Status – MNRTF (Michigan National Resources Trust Fund) -**  
Director Maisner shared the results of the grant awards that were announced in December. The acquisition application for the Okemos Road Parcel was not approved for funding. The Commissioners requested to schedule a closed session to discuss next steps at their next meeting.
- C. **Projects for 2020 Grant Consideration** – The Commissioners reviewed the items recommended by staff for possible 2020 grant applications. Items that were considered included: Towner Road Park Playground, Overflow parking at Towner Road Park, Skate Park in Central Park. The topic will be discussed again in February.
- D. **Township Signs and LEAP Grant Applications** – Chris Buck, Director of Economic Development and I have been working on new signage for Welcome to Meridian as well as similar ones for Parks. We are in the process of obtaining cost estimates currently. Also, Lansing Economic Area Partnership (LEAP) is offering a grant program for community art. Chris has been working on the application for submittal in January. If awarded the sculpture will go to Marketplace on the Green. More to come later.

## 10. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

## 11. OTHER MATTERS AND COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

- A. Commissioner Comments

B. Events Calendar:

1. Meridian Skates, Saturday, January 18, 5-6:30 pm, Suburban Ice East Lansing
2. Meridian Moonlight Sledding, Saturday, January 25, 6-9 pm, North Meridian Road Park
3. Polar Bear Run, Sunday, January 26, race time 10 am, pre-registration at 9 am, Central Park
4. Chinese New Year, Sunday, January 26, 1-4 pm, Meridian Mall
5. Meridian Skates, Sunday, February 2, 5-6:30 pm, Suburban Ice East Lansing
6. Farmers' Market:
  - a. Winter Market, 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday, December – April, 10 am – 2 pm, J. C. Penney Corridor, Meridian Mall

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair McDonald adjourned the meeting at 8:08 pm.

- 13. NEXT MEETING:** The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 11, 2020 at the Meridian Service Center, 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Haslett, at 6:30 pm.