



CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
PARK COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING  
Meridian Service Center  
2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Haslett, MI 48840  
TUESDAY, MARCH 8, 2022 4:30 PM

**1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER**

Chair Nardo-Farris called the meeting to order at **4:33 pm**.

**2. ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Chair, Mary Nardo-Farris; Commissioner, Mark Stephens; Commissioner, Mike McDonald

ABSENT: Commissioner, Amanda Lick; Vice Chair, Ami Van Antwerp

STAFF: LuAnn Maisner, Director of Parks and Recreation; Jane Greenway, Senior Parks & Land Management Coordinator

**3. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None

**4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Commissioner Stephens moved **TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS SUBMITTED**. Seconded by Commissioner McDonald.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner McDonald moved **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF January 11, 2022 as written**.

Seconded by Commissioner Stephens.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

**6. COMMUNICATIONS**

A. Redeemer Church Food Bank Thank you

B. DNR Five Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan Approval Notice

C. Deer Management Appreciation Letter

Commissioner Stephens moved **TO ACCEPT AND PLACE COMMUNICATIONS ON FILE**. Seconded by Commissioner McDonald.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

**7. ACTION ITEMS**

None

## 8. DISCUSSION ITEMS

### Roundtable Discussion on Various Topics

- **Okemos Road Acquisition, demo, site planning** – Acquisition of land located at 5280 Okemos Road was completed in December with assistance from a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant. A condition of the grant is that any structures not used for recreation purposes must be taken down. We have contracted with Michigan Demolition and Excavation to remove the structure in the spring. Now is the time to review the site to determine a site plan that makes best use of the property. It was decided to walk the site as a group during the May 10, 2022 regular meeting prior to discussing possible plans.
- **Grant Programs Final Reimbursements (4)** – we are happy to report that all four DNR grants have been officially closed and final reimbursements approved for the following projects: Gateway Footbridge and Restroom in the Historical Village; Central Meridian Regional Trail Connector in Central Park; New Pavilion at HNC; New Restroom Building at HNC. Congratulations Jane on completing and successfully reporting these grant requirements.
- **Deer Management Final Report** – this document was distributed during the meeting.
- **Celebrate Meridian Festival** – This event is returning on June 25, 2022 to Central Park and Marketplace on the Green. The day will be filled with children's activities, food, live music and fireworks!
- **Meridian Heritage Festival**-Plans are underway to once again present the Meridian Heritage Festival on Saturday, October 1 in conjunction with the Friends of Historic Meridian and Nokomis.
- **Floating Islands in Central Park South Pond** – Staff is researching companies to request proposals for 2 floating purification islands for placement in Central Park South pond. These islands will be planted with live plants and anchored in the pond to improve water quality. This is a budgeted project in 2022
- **Build Back the Buffer Demonstration Project – Eagle Scout Project** – Staff is working with an Eagle Scout candidate to create a demonstration buffer at an area around the pond's edge in Central Park South.
- **Love a Park Day – April 20** – Kati Adams and her staff are managing this project that will take place in 8-9 park locations from 5-7pm on the 20<sup>th</sup>. A volunteer appreciation pizza party will follow at Marketplace. Volunteers will be able to register online.
- **Drain Office Prescribed burns** will take place again this spring in Towar Gardens Neighborhood in the rain gardens including in Towar Park.
- **ARPA Funding** – Meridian Township has received 4.5 million dollars in American Rescue Plan funds from the Federal Government. The Township Board will be meeting soon to determine the process for deciding how to best use these funds.  
Possible Park Projects for consideration include:
  - Historical Village Building Maintenance
  - Wind Screens at Marketplace
  - Restroom Upgrades at Marketplace
  - WIFI at Marketplace
  - Skate Park
  - Universally Accessible Playground Project

I will keep the Park Commission posted as more details become available.

- **25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of HNC July, 23, 2022** – A celebration will take place this summer to recognize the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Harris Nature Center! The nature center has been a valuable element in our park system that connects thousands of schoolchildren with nature annually. A formal recognition ceremony is scheduled for Friday, July 22 for the media and elected officials with an all-day open house set for Saturday with free programs and activities throughout the day.
- **HNC Native Plant Sale Fundraiser** – this annual event is taking place now where people can place their orders online and pick them up at the Nature Center in April.
- **Emma- Native seed collection project-** As we work to plant a “Native Meridian”, Stewardship Coordinator, Emma Campbell organized multiple events last year where volunteers harvested seeds from native plant in our land preserves. These seeds have been given to local native plant specialists to grow for us. In the spring, they will return the plants to us for planting in restoration areas on township properties.
- **RecPro Registration Software** – Our department has utilized a company named ActiveNet as our recreation registration provider for over 15 years. We are now moving to a new company from Michigan called RecPro. This system is used nationwide in other communities and will save us an estimated \$5,000 annually plus also provide additional services that were not available to us with our current provider.
- **July is Parks and Recreation Month** – Parks and Recreation has become more popular since the pandemic as many people realized the value of parks for their mental and physical health; and longing for special events for social gathering that were paused for nearly two years. Let’s look at creative ways to celebrate Parks in 2022 during July.
- **Farmers Market Hours and Summer Concerts-** Since the pandemic, the Farmers Market has operated outdoors year-round. The winter hours are expanding to 10am-2pm until May 1. Starting in May, the hours will expand to 8am-2pm. Starting in June, the Wednesday Market will resume along with live concerts on the Marketplace stage in June, July and August.
- **Community Services Millage Renewal** – this millage supports Human Services, Recreation and the Meridian Senior Center. The Township Board has voted to place a renewal request on the August Ballot in 2022.
- **Parking lot work NMRP and CPS** – Also budgeted this year is the expansion of the parking lot at North Meridian Road Park and to resurface the entry drive in Central Park South. Our Engineering Department is assisting with this project.

9. **DIRECTOR’S REPORT** – All items were covered during the roundtable discussion

10. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** - None

None

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Nardo-Farris adjourned the meeting at 6:46 pm.

The next scheduled meeting is **May 10, 2022** at the Meridian Service Center, 4:30 pm.