

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
PARK COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 2015

PRESENT: Commissioners: Jaramillo, McDonald, Wilson
Staff: Parks and Recreation Director LuAnn Maisner; Parks and Land
Management Coordinator Jane Greenway; Parks and Recreation
Administrative Assistant II Robin Faust

ABSENT: Commissioners Deschaine, Stephens

1. Call Meeting to Order

Chair Wilson called the regular meeting to order at 7:06 pm.

2. Approval of Agenda

The following items were removed from the agenda:
Item #5D, Public Hearing: Ferguson Park Extension/Grant Submission
Item #10D 2015 Grant Submissions: Ferguson Park Extension/Acquisition

COMMISSIONER MCDONALD MOVED, COMMISSIONER JARAMILLO
SECONDED, TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING AGENDA AS
AMENDED. Voice vote. Motion passed.

3. Presentations

- a. Ingham County Drain Commission (ICDC) – Hillbrook Park Proposed Drain
Improvements

Alan Boyer PE, from LSG Engineers and Surveyors is working with the ICDC on drain improvements to the Nemoka drain which runs adjacent to Hillbrook Park. The Drain Commissioner has determined that flood relief is needed in the Nemoka Drainage District. During the planning process, two options were considered: 1) additional underground piping or 2) a “daylighting” project consisting of an open meandering ditch approximately 60” wide. It is the Drain Commissioner’s recommendation to proceed with the daylighting option. The project would require relocation of the current easement and increasing it from 60’ to 80’ wide through Hillbrook Park from the east property line to the confluence with the Pine Lake Outlet Drain.

The Park Commissioners expressed concern for the existing trail system and impact to access.

4. Public Comment

None

5. Public Hearings

a. Meridian Riverfront Park/HNC Pavilion - Grant Submission

I. The public hearing open at 7:15 pm.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project proposes to construct an accessible pavilion (24' X 44') near the Harris Nature Center building in Meridian Riverfront Park. The pavilion will roughly be located in the location of the existing pole barn. The pavilion will include a stone wall that will be used as extra seating.

PROJECT GOALS

1. Create a shelter (24' X 44') that will help expand environmental educational programs to include more interactive opportunities
2. Provide a community shelter for planned picnics and drop-in visitors
3. Provide a vital amenity along the recently established Red Cedar Water Trail

GRANT REQUEST

\$50,000, Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund

PROJECT AMOUNT

\$100,000

Scope Items for Grant

Pavilion structure, concrete slab, seat wall	\$85,000
Site preparation/base for concrete slab	\$12,000
Engineering fee	\$ 1,000
Accessible grill and picnic table	<u>\$ 2,000</u>
TOTAL =	\$100,000

II. Staff acknowledge received items of communications

Parks and Land Management Coordinator Greenway read the following letters of support into the record:

Patty Robbins, President
Harris Nature Center Foundation

Margaret Holtschlag

Director of the BIG Lesson Programs
Clinton County Regional Education Service A Genday

Roxanne Truhn Witcher, Vice President
Harris Nature Center Foundation

Barbara Kissling
Harris Nature Center Foundation Member

III. Public comment

None

IV. Commissioners comment

Chair Wilson stated that construction of the pavilion will be a welcomed addition to Meridian Riverfront Park and the Harris Nature Center for shelter and activities.

Director Maisner stated that construction of the pavilion will allow for an outdoor picnic/gathering area as well as function as an outdoor classroom. With the inclusion of the live Red Tailed Hawk display, outdoor feeding area, 1/3-mile of paved trail system and new nature exploration area, this addition will greatly enhance visitorship

V. Chair declared public hearing closed 7:27 pm.

b. North Meridian Road Park Pavilion – Grant Submission

I. The public hearing open at 7:27 pm.

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

This project proposes to construct a pavilion (24' x 34') with a concrete slab and internal pathways for accessibility. The pavilion will have a green, metal roof and wood truss ornamentation to match the existing restroom building.

PROJECT GOALS:

1. North Meridian Road Park is a very popular park in our community and these additions will provide necessary park amenities.
2. The proposed pavilion and pathways will open up the park to a broader range of users, thus allowing for an increased use of the already popular park nature trails and increased opportunity for wildlife viewing.

3. The pavilion will provide shelter and shade in an area that has virtually no shade at all.
4. Provide amenities to move the park toward a “four-season” facility.

GRANT REQUEST:
\$50,000, Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund

PROJECT AMOUNT:
\$100,000

SCOPE ITEMS FOR GRANT:

Pavilion structure & slab	\$66,000
Engineering	\$ 5,000
Accessible pathways	\$10,000
Accessible grill	\$ 300
Site preparation	\$12,000
Accessible picnic tables	\$ 2,000
Electricity	\$ 4,000
Signs	<u>\$ 700</u>
TOTAL =	\$100,000

III. Public comment

None

IV. Commissioners comment

Chair Wilson stated when the restroom building was developed, we choose this type of structure in order to add a pavilion in the future. It is needed for this Park.

Director Maisner stated sand volleyball courts are in the process of being constructed there to complement existing soccer fields, sledding hill and play structure. This Park is in need of shade.

VI. The public hearing closed 7:32 pm.

c. Hillbrook Park Tennis Court Renovation – Grant Submission

I. The public hearing opened at 7:32 pm.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

- Renovate the existing two tennis courts and the attached half-court basketball area.

- Process: The existing asphalt courts will be pulverized, re-graded, and compacted. New acrylic colorcoat and play lines will be added to the courts.
- Fencing: The project will also include the installation of new fencing and gates that will accommodate wheelchairs.
- Pickleball and tennis: The court striping will be modified to accommodate both pickleball and tennis.

PROJECT GOALS

1. Replace hazardous and aging tennis court and basketball surface and fencing. (The courts were originally constructed in 1972 and the township has resurfaced them with various repair methods numerous times, but they continue to fail.)
2. Maintain/rehabilitate the only tennis courts within Meridian Township's park system.
3. Improve the accessibility of the parks.
4. Modify courts to include pickleball, an up and coming sport that is being requested.
5. Improve the aesthetics of a popular (but aging) neighborhood park.

GRANT REQUEST

\$50,000, Land and Water Conservation Fund

PROJECT AMOUNT

\$100,000

SCOPE ITEMS FOR GRANT

Renovated tennis courts	\$67,000
Site preparation	\$ 6,000
Replace fencing	\$15,500
Engineering fee	\$ 2,000
Replace net and poles	\$ 2,000
Accessible pathway	\$ 6,000
Signage	<u>\$ 1,500</u>
TOTAL =	\$100,000

II. Public comment

None

III. Commissioners comment

Chair Wilson stated children have tried to play on these courts and they are not playable.

Director Maisner stated there is a loyal group of users of the tennis courts and they have inquired about resurfacing on numerous occasions. We are excited to also add pickle ball stripping which is becoming a very popular sport. Additional improvements to the Park currently include a new play structure and the Drain Commissioner's proposal of creating an open ditch drain to better accommodate water flow from surrounding neighborhoods. This new proposal will improve the vegetation, wildlife habitat and improve the trail system in the Park.

Parks and Land Management Coordinator Greenway stated the current pathway is too steep a grade and the gate into the courts is too narrow. An asphalt tennis court has a life of 20 years and this court is much older. We will be following the method used by Michigan State University to pulverize and reseal the courts and they should last 20-25 years. Also, we are following the City of Lansing's lead to offer a shared use of the new courts with the combination of tennis and pickle ball.

VI. The public hearing closed 7:39 pm.

d. Ferguson Park Extension – Grant Submission

This item was removed from the agenda.

6. Commissioner Reports and Comments

None

7. Approval of Minutes

- a. February 10, 2015 Work Session Minutes
- b. February 10, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes
- c. February 20, 2015 Special Meeting Minutes

COMMISSIONER MCDONALD MOVED, CHAIR WILSON SECONDED, TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 10, 2015 AND FEBRUARY 20, 2015 MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED. Voice vote. Motion passed.

8. Communications

A. Items to/from the Public

1. From: Former Park Commissioner Teri Banas; RE: Thank you

B. Commission Information

1. March Calendar of Events for Parks & Recreation
2. Towne Courier: Feb 8: Meridian ice fishing derby set; Mall to host Chinese New Year event; Feb 15: Nature center hosts exercise classes;

- preschool class explores science of rain; Feb 22: Join Harris Nature Center hunt for skunk cabbage; Harris Nature Center hosts wildlife identification; Nature center hosts exercise classes; preschool class explores science of rain; Attract birds, butterflies, with native plants; March 1: Legal Notice of 2015 DNR Grant Applications Public Hearing Notice; Snowman contest deadline March 6; Skunk cabbage at Harris Nature Center; Pre-school class explores rain
3. State Journal: Jan 31: Winter Wonderland features dog sledding, ice sculpture; Feb 9: 8 active date ideas for Valentine's Day (Harris Nature Center go cross-country skiing or snowshoeing; Meridian Township Ice Fishing Derby); Feb 10: Ingham County starts looking into parks millage spending
 4. Capital Gains Media: March 4: Slowing but surely connecting parks and trails systems in Ingham County
 5. Red Cedar Watershed 2014 Stream Monitoring Report

C. Staff Inquiries/Response

None

Commissioner McDonald thanked staff and Commissioners for their involvement in the Ingham County Trails Millage meetings. This will be a lengthy process to set up and there will be no more meetings until the consultant firm has been chosen to develop the plan.

Chair Wilson reported two long-standing volunteers at the Harris Nature Center Winter Wonderland event will be moving their dog sled team to South Carolina. They will be missed.

COMMISSIONER JARAMILLO MOVED, CHAIR WILSON SECONDED, TO ACCEPT AND PLACE THE ITEMS OF COMMUNICATION ON FILE. Voice vote. Motion passed.

9. Director's Report

- Attended Michigan Recreation and Park Association Conference on February 11-13 at the Lansing Center; it was also attended by Commissioner Stephens and McDonald and staff; excellent exhibit hall and presentation topics
- In the process of reviewing and interviewing candidates for summer employment; people may still apply on-line on the Township website
- New full-time opening in Parks and Grounds Maintenance; will be interviewing next week
- Met with Ingham County Parks & Recreation Director Tim Morgan, Ingham County Commissioner, Teri Banas, and Director of Engineering Ray Severy to discussed the new Trail and Park Millage and possible projects in Meridian Township

- In the beginning stages of creating a smart phone app in conjunction with the Township's GIS system for pathways and park amenities..
- The Commissioners interviewed five (5) consulting firms on the development of the Central Park Master Plan; this will be a great opportunity to work with local business, groups and residents to create a wonderful destination area.
- Conducted three (3) Grant Application public hearings earlier this evening; resolutions have been presented for action later in the meeting; the applications are due April 1
- The Okemos Road Pedestrian/Bicycle Pathway Bridge is being constructed to provide safe north/south access on Okemos Road over the Red Cedar River. Funding is provided by the Pedestrian/Bicycle Pathway Millage and is scheduled for completion in late April.
- With the resignation of the Director of Engineering Ray Severy and the retirement of long-time employee Water and Sewer Superintendent Larry Ondrias, the Township has hired Derek Perry as the new Assistant Township Manager/Director of Public Works. He will start on Monday, March 16 and we are excited to have him join our team.

10. New Business

PUBLIC COMMENT

a. Towar Gardens Controlled Burn Request

Director Maisner reported the Ingham County Drain Commissioners Office is requesting to conduct a controlled burn in the rain gardens in Towar Park sometime in March or April, depending upon the weather. Controlled burning in these areas has been done since 2010 and have been very successful. They are proposing the same program as in years past and they work in conjunction with our Fire Department and a licensed contractor. This is a safe and controlled management measure of the rain gardens in this area.

CHAIR WILSON MOVED, COMMISSION MCDONALD SECONDED, TO APPROVE THE REQUEST FROM THE INGHAM COUNTY DRAIN COMMISSIONERS OFFICE TO CONDUCT CONTROLLED BURNING IN THE RAIN GARDENS NEAR SNELL-TOWAR RECREATION CENTER AS AN EFFECTIVE WEED CONTROL MEASURE IN 2015. THE ICDC IS RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING REQUIRED PERMITS AND FOR FOLLOWING STANDARD SAFETY MEASURES AND WILL INFORM THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT OF THE EXACT DATE AND TIME OF THE PROPOSED ACTIVITY. Voice vote. Motion passed.

b. Hillbrook Park Drain Improvements

Chair Wilson stated representatives from the consultant team from the Ingham County Drain Commissioner's Office (ICDC) offered a proposal to construct a daylighting drain improvement project through Hillbrook Park. The ICDC current have an easement for a pipe drain through the park but an

improvement is needed to address water flow and erosion issues. During the Work Session, the construction and placement of this project were discussed and Commissioners expressed the need to maintain a dry accessible pathway through the Park during high water times and with the present proposal, the pathway will need to be relocated. There is currently a 60 foot easement and ICDC are asking to relocate and increase the easement to 80 feet. The ICDC were asked to bring an updated proposal addressing the Commission's concerns of easement location and pathway location and accessibility to the next meeting for further consideration.

c. Central Park Master Plan Consultant Contract

Director Maisner stated on Friday, February 20, 2015, the Park Commission heard presentations from five (5) consulting firms on their qualifications to assist with the development of a master plan for Central Park.

- VIRIDIS Design Group Inc.
- Spicer Group
- O'Boyle, Cowell, Blalock & Associates, Inc.
- Landscape Architects & Planners, Inc.
- The Mannik & Smith Group, Inc.

After the presentations, the Commission voted to request proposals from the following two (2) firms with a Monday, March 9, 2015 deadline:

- VIRIDIS Design Group Inc.
- O'Boyle, Cowell, Blalock & Associates, Inc.

The Commissioners reviewed the proposals during their work session and found both firms to be well qualified to develop the master plan. Central Park is in the center of the Township, is adjacent to both commercial and residential uses and the Commission wants to make this a destination park thereby making public input a necessary component of the Master Plan. Both proposals came in within the estimated budget of \$16,000 which is shared between the General Fund and Park Millage funds. Both proposals were very well done but the Commissioners favored the public engagement proposal submitted by the O'Boyle firm.

COMMISSIONER JARAMILLO MOVED, CHAIR WILSON SECONDED, TO AWARD THE CONTRACT FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES TO O'BOYLE, COWELL, BLALOCK AND ASSOCIATES, INC. IN THE AMOUNT OF \$14,450 FOR DEVELOPMENT OF A MASTER PLAN FOR CENTRAL PARK WITH THE FUNDING BEING SHARED BETWEEN PARK MILLAGE AND GENERAL FUND

Roll Call:

AYES: Mike McDonald, Melanie Jaramillo, Todd Wilson

NAYS: None

The motion passed.

d. 2015 Grant Submission Request
1) Meridian Riverfront Park/HNC Pavilion

The following resolution was moved by Chair Wilson and supported by Commissioner Jaramillo:

WHEREAS, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources accepts grant requests from local units of government to assist in the acquisition and development of recreation properties; and

WHEREAS, it is possible to have up to 75% of the total project cost funded by the Natural Resources Trust Fund program; and

WHEREAS, the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund is comprised of revenue generated from gas and mineral rights on public lands; and

WHEREAS, the Park Commission is interested leveraging local Park Millage Funds by obtaining supplemental grant funding for park improvement projects whenever possible; and

WHEREAS, Meridian Township has prepared a grant application for submission to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant Program for an estimated \$100,000 of improvements to Meridian Riverfront Park/Harris Nature Center consisting of a universally accessible pavilion facility and access sidewalks to improve and expand recreation opportunities and accessibility for visitors of all abilities; and

WHEREAS, the grant request is outlined and justified in the 2011-2015 Parks and Recreation Master Plan adopted by the Meridian Township Board and Park Commission, and is on file with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources; and

WHEREAS, the grant request is outlined and justified in the 2015-2020 Capital Improvements Program adopted by the Township Board and Park Commission; and

WHEREAS, park improvements and development are supported by Township Board Policy and 2015 Goals and Objectives; and

WHEREAS, this grant request was open to public review on March 10, 2015.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PARK COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY, MICHIGAN, as follows:

To support submission of a grant application to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund for a universally accessible pavilion facility and access sidewalks in Meridian Riverfront Park/Harris Nature Center with an estimated total project cost of \$100,000 with a 50% local match of \$50,000 from the Township's Park Millage Fund

Roll Call:

AYES: Todd Wilson, Melanie Jaramillo, Mike McDonald

NAYS: None

Resolution passed.

2) North Meridian Road Park Pavilion

The following resolution was moved by Commissioner Jaramillo and supported by Chair Wilson:

WHEREAS, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources accepts grant requests from local units of government to assist in the development and acquisition of recreation properties; and

WHEREAS, it is possible to have up to 75% of the total project cost funded by the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant Program; and

WHEREAS, the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Program is comprised of revenue generated from gas and mineral rights on public lands; and

WHEREAS, the Park Commission is interested in leveraging local Park Millage Funds by obtaining supplemental grant funding for park projects whenever possible; and

WHEREAS, Meridian Township has prepared a grant application for submission to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund for \$100,000 of improvements to North Meridian Road Park consisting of a universally accessible pavilion facility and access sidewalks to improve and expand recreation opportunities and accessibility for visitors of all abilities and ages; and

WHEREAS, the grant request is outlined and justified in the 2011-2015 Parks and Recreation Master Plan adopted by the Meridian Township Board and Park Commission, and is on file with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources; and

WHEREAS, the grant request is outlined and justified in the 2015-2020 Capital Improvements Program adopted by the Township Board and Park Commission; and

WHEREAS, park improvements and development are supported by Township Board Policy and the 2015 Goals and Objectives; and

WHEREAS, this grant request was open to public review on March 10, 2015.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PARK COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY, MICHIGAN, as follows:

To support submission of a grant application to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund for construction of a universally accessible pavilion facility with access sidewalks in North Meridian Road Park for an estimated project cost of \$100,000 with a 50% local match of \$50,000 from the Township's Park Millage Fund.

Roll Call:

AYES: Mike McDonald, Todd Wilson, Melanie Jaramillo

NAYS: None

Resolution passed.

3) Hillbrook Park Tennis Court Renovation

The following resolution was moved by Commissioner McDonald and supported by Chair Wilson:

WHEREAS, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources accepts grant requests from local units of government to assist in the acquisition and development of recreation properties; and

WHEREAS, it is possible to have up to 50% of the total project cost funded through Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant Program; and

WHEREAS, the Land and Water Conservation Fund is a Federal Grant Program consisting of revenues generated from offshore oil and gas leasing and managed by the National Park Service; and

WHEREAS, the Park Commission is interested in leveraging local Park Millage Funds by obtaining supplemental grant funding for park improvement projects whenever possible; and

WHEREAS, Meridian Township has prepared a grant application for submission to the Land and Water Conservation Fund program for an estimated \$100,000 of improvements to Hillbrook Park consisting of tennis court renovations and ADA access improvements to provide and expand recreation opportunities and accessibility for visitors of all abilities; and

WHEREAS, the grant request is outlined and justified in the 2011-2015 Parks and Recreation Master Plan adopted by the Meridian Township Board and Park Commission, and is on file with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources; and

WHEREAS, the grant request is outlined and justified in the 2014-2019 Capital Improvement Plan adopted by the Meridian Township Board and Park Commission; and

WHEREAS, park improvements and development are supported by Township Board Policy and 2015 Goals and Objectives; and

WHEREAS, this grant request was open for public review on March 10, 2015.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PARK COMMISSION OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN, INGHAM COUNTY, MICHIGAN, as follows:

To support the submission of a grant application to the to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund for tennis court renovations and ADA access improvements in Hillbrook Park with an estimated total project cost of \$100,000 with a 50% local match of \$50,000 from the Township's Park Millage Fund.

Roll Call:

AYES: Melanie Jaramillo, Todd Wilson, Mike McDonald

NAYS: None

Resolution passed.

4) Ferguson Park Extension - Acquisition

This item was removed from the agenda.

11. Unfinished Business

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

12. Other Business

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

13. Discussion Items

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

14. Final Comments

Parks and Land Management Coordinator showed the submissions to the 2nd Annual Snowman/Snow Sculpture Contest. To see all of the submissions, please visit the Parks and Recreation Facebook page. Winners will be announced later in the week.

15. Announcements

- a. Next Regular Meeting Date: Tuesday, April 14, 2015 Town Hall
- b. Farmers' Market – Saturday, March 21, April 4 & 18; 10am-2pm Meridian Mall
- c. Township Offices will close at 12 Noon on Friday, April 3rd in observance of Good Friday.

16. Public Remarks

None

17. Closed Session

None

18. Adjournment

COMMISSIONER JARAMILLO MOVED, CHAIR WILSON SECONDED, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

The meeting adjourned at 8:09 pm.