

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

PRESENT: Commissioners: Deschaine, McDonald, Stephens
Staff: Parks and Recreation Director LuAnn Maisner; Parks and
Recreation Administrative Assistant II Robin Faust

ABSENT: Commissioners Jaramillo, Wilson

1. Call Meeting to Order

Vice Chair McDonald called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm.

2. Approval of Agenda

COMMISSIONER DESCHAINE MOVED, COMMISSIONER STEPHENS
SECONDED, TO APPROVE THE MEETING AGENDA AS PRESENTED. Voice
vote. Motion passed.

3. Presentations

Melissa Allen, We Love Kids N Dogs, presented a proposal to develop a balance bike course in a Meridian Township Park. Balance bikes aka Strider Bikes do not have pedals and teach children ages 6 and under to balance thereby eliminating the need for training wheels. She is recommending developing a partnership between the community (We Love Kids N Dogs, Balance Bike Parents, Haslett Kiwanis, etc.) and the Township to develop a safe environment for balance bike riding. She requested the opportunity to make a more formal presentation on the development and implementation of the course which would be the first one developed in the greater Lansing area. When asked the type of terrain needed for balanced bikes, Ms. Allen replied a dirt track because concrete is too dangerous. The nearest track is in Davison, Michigan at Ridgefield Park. The group would like to locate near the Mall because of its affiliation with the We Love Kids N Dogs store. When asked how much room is needed, Ms. Allen replied approximately 200 square feet. Ms. Allen was directed to contact Director Maisner when she had the presentation ready for the Commission.

4. Public Comment

None

5. Commissioner Reports and Comments

Commissioner Deschaine reported Ms. Allen has made this presentation to the Haslett Kiwanis Club and they support the idea. He attended one of the “take apart” nights at the We Love Kids N Dogs store and it was fun and believes this would be a great partnership for Parks.

Commissioner Stephens reported on his recent work with the Grand Learning Network utilizing Haslett School classes on the expansion of the Mary MG Helmbrecht Butterfly Garden planting and fishing project in the Historical Village.

Vice Chair McDonald reported he attended the public meeting on October 15 in the Town Hall on the Regional Trails and Parks Plan and that there is still time to attend an upcoming meeting at Foster Community Center in Lansing, Vevay Township Hall in Mason and Northeast Ingham Emergency Services Authority in Williamston. At the meeting he attended, there was a lot of discussion but no real plan and it is very important for Township residents to be involved because approximately \$750,000 a year will be collected from Township for a total millage contribution of \$4.5 million over the next six years for the Regional Trails and Parks Millage. Commissioner Deschaine reported he too attended the meeting and it appeared the County ignored the Township’s suggested proposal. The County did not address how they plan to spend the funds or even have an overall plan for its development or management. Vice Chair McDonald spoke about the Genesee County grant program for their trail development but did not feel this was well received by the County. When asked, Director Maisner reported she has been attending the meetings and the community forum. She felt the information on connectivity was very important but when putting the stickers on the map, the audience did not know about the Township’s priorities. It was noted that many communities have paths with gaps that need to be connected and when this subject was brought up, the County stated this topic would be addressed at a later date. Vice Chair McDonald reported he has had conversation where it has been stated that this Plan has become very political, believes a majority of the funds are being directed to the Lansing River Trail and need to explore ways to get some of the funds spent in the Township and asked the residents to voice this concern at the remaining community forums or on the County’s website

6. Approval of Minutes

- a. September 8, 2015 Work Session Minutes
- b. September 8, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes

COMMISSIONER STEPHENS MOVED, COMMISSIONER DESCHAIINE SECONDED, TO APPROVE THE SEPTEMBER 8, 2015 MINUTES AS PRESENTED. Voice vote. Motion passed.

7. Communications

A. Items to/from the Public

1. From: Michael Chuff, Financial Specialist, DNR Grants Management; RE: Wonch Park Pathway Development Grant final payment
2. From: Robert Deans; Re: work in floodplain area in Wonch Park
3. To: Robert Deans, RE: response to concerns about work in floodplain area in Wonch Park

B. Commission Information

1. November and December Calendar of Events for Parks & Recreation
2. Towne Courier: **Sept 6:** DNR asks hunters to aid assessment; Exploration of Red Cedar River Sept 13; Chinese Qigong exercises occur each Monday; Meridian Heritage Festival Sept 19 in Historical Village; **Sept 13:** Meridian Heritage Festival Sept 19 in Historical Village; **Sept 20:** DNR spotlights Meridian's role in dealing with CWD among deer population; **Oct 4:** Gathering Circle at Harris Nature Center celebrated; **Oct 11:** Guided autumn walk at HNC Oct 18; Waterfowl focus of Nature Discovery on Sunday; Guided moonlit walk at HNC Oct 30; Meridian Twp hosts special Halloween events; **Oct 25:** Turtle Time at Harris Nature Nov 5; Guided moonlight walk at HNC Oct 30; Turkey campfire program set Nov 14; **Nov 1:** Turtle Time at Harris Nature Nov 5; Turkey campfire program set Nov 14
3. Lansing State Journal: **Oct 18:** Halloween Adventures at Harris Nature Center
4. Press Releases: **Oct 26:** Meridian Township Celebrates Halloween; **Nov 3:** Meridian Township offers Day before Thanksgiving Farmers' Market

C. Staff Inquiries/Response

1. From: Martha Wyatt, Associate Planner/Landscape Architect; RE: Site Plan Review#15-14051 (Meridian Township Parks & Recreation); 4555 Okemos Road; work in floodplain associated with new pavilion construction in Wonch Park

COMMISSIONER STEPHENS MOVED, COMMISSIONER DESCHAINÉ SECONDED, TO ACCEPT AND PLACE THE ITEMS OF COMMUNICATION ON FILE. Voice vote. Motion passed.

8. Director's Report

Director Maisner reported as follows:

- **2015 Park Projects:**
 - ✓ **Nancy Moore Park** - Driveway was re-paved, new siding on pavilion, new volleyball pole systems, ball diamond safety fencing, foul poles, completion of Paul Peterson Memorial garden area
 - ✓ **Wonch Park** – parking lot re-paved and striped, new parking blocks, loop pathway ribbon cutting ceremony, new fencing, former pavilion

demolished, new footings and foundation to be poured next week, electrical and water lines already installed for new pavilion.

- ✓ **Ferguson Park** – new fencing
- ✓ **Newton Road Park** – paved parking lot, striped, with added drop-off loop, gates, new fence along Lake Lansing Road and ordering a new sign
- ✓ **Harris Nature Center** – sealed and striped entry drive and parking lot, three new doors; Harris Nature Center Foundation fundraising for development of gathering circle and spider web
- ✓ **Central Park Trail repair** – installed a culvert on trail along the Mud Lake drain to replace a failed footbridge.
- ✓ **Legg Park** – footbridge repair over Sloan Creek Drain
- ✓ **Ted Black Woods and Brattin Woods, Historical Village Parking lot** – crack filled, sealed and striped parking lots
- ✓ **Tower Road Park** – cleared structures in preparation for spring construction
- ✓ **North Meridian Road Park** – new sand volleyball courts with Michigan beach sand
- ✓ **Central Park Master Plan** – developed and on agenda for Commission approval
- Wonch Park Loop Pathway Project Grant: is officially closed and reimbursement has been received
- At the September meeting, the Commission voted to approve funding to extend the sewer lead into Central Park from the new Aldi development but this request was too late to be completed
- Greenfield Outdoor fitness equipment Grant: looks like the Commission is going to get approved
- New Playground Equipment installation in Spring for Hillbrook and Orlando Parks
- New utility worker – Ryan Moore
- Kelsey Dillon – Part-time Stewardship Coordinator
- Congratulation to Larry Bobb, Lead Worker in parks and Grounds – is now a certified playground safety inspector through the National Recreation and Park Association, this is a three-year certification
- December 8 meeting will be held at the Service Center. Agenda items include:
 - ✓ Honoring Tony Bauer and Mike Lenkowski for their dedicated service on the Harris Nature Center Foundation Board
 - ✓ Election of officers
 - ✓ Appointment to Land Preservation Advisory Board

9. **New Business**

PUBLIC COMMENT

a. **Boundary Correction – Braemoor Subdivision**

Director Maisner reported in 2005, the Commission acquired a 5.09 acre parcel with frontage on the Red Cedar River through a State of Michigan tax

foreclosure sale. It is located in the Braemoor subdivision off of Grand River Avenue adjacent to 4444 River Glen Drive. It has recently been determined that the boundary description on the Township parcel includes a small area in front of the home located at 4444 River Glen Drive between the residence and the roadway that has created an inadvertent trespass. Property owner, Brian Fleming has submitted a request to acquire .09 acres to correct the boundary.

The deed for this parcel stipulates that any resale of this property must be at a dollar per acre ratio of the purchase price, therefore making the sale price \$106.29. The Township Attorney has reviewed the proposal and did not have any concerns.

COMMISSIONER STEPHENS MOVED, COMMISSIONER DESCHAIINE SECONDED, TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF TRANSFERRING .09-ACRES OF PROPERTY LOCATED ADJACENT TO 4444 RIVER GLEN DRIVE TO BRIAN FLEMING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$106.29 WITH PROCEEDS DEPOSITED INTO PARK MILLAGE REVENUE.

Vice Chair McDonald read Chair Wilson's statement into the record:
"I support the Motion for the transfer of .09 acres to Brian Fleming in its entirety."

Roll Call:

AYES: Mark Stephens, Philip Deschaine, Mike McDonald, Todd Wilson (by statement)

NAYS: None

The motion passed.

b. Central Park Master Plan Adoption

Director Maisner reported during this past year, the Master Plan for Central Park was developed which included public participation and input from stakeholders, local business, boards and commissions, the general public and staff. The final result was a comprehensive plan that will guide renovation and development in the future. The plan was formally presented to the Park Commission on September 9, 2015 by O'Boyle, Blalock, Cowell and Associates who detailed the planning process, and explained the plan in detail.

COMMISSIONER DESCHAIINE MOVED, COMMISSIONER STEPHENS SECONDED, TO ADOPT THE CENTRAL PARK MASTER PLAN AS PRESENTED BY SANDY BLEISENER, O'BOYLE, BLALOCK, COWELL AND ASSOCIATES ON SEPTEMBER 9, 2015.

Vice Chair McDonald read Chair Wilson's statement into the record:
"I support the Motion to Adopt the Central Park Master Plan in its entirety."

Voice vote. Motion passed unanimously.

c. Towner Road Park – Plan Amendment

Director Maisner reported in 2012 the Commission contracted with Viridis Group to design the 22 acre parcel of Towner Road Park with a proposed project cost of approximately \$2 million. After the adjacent 1.6-acre parcel was purchased, the Commission contracted with the Viridis Group to re-design the area. The updated proposal has increased project cost to approximately \$2.6 million. During the work session, the Commissioners discussed the pros and cons of building the project in phases or in its entirety.

Discussion:

- There will be two separate parking areas.
- Replace the proposed sand volleyball courts with 4 pickle ball courts
- Is a formal vote needed to move ahead with the bid documents (yes, time is of the essence since it is a large project, there is a lot of work in developing the bid documents and would like to begin construction in early spring)

COMMISSIONER STEPHENS MOVED, COMMISSIONER DESCHAIINE SECONDED, TO DIRECT STAFF TO MOVE FORWARD WITH PREPARING THE BID DOCUMENTS WITH THE CONSULTANT.

Vice Chair McDonald read Chair Wilson's statement into the record:
"In regards to the Motion to proceed on bidding document preparation for the amended Towner Road Park project plans, I support their preparation as an entire project with no deletions from the project scope as it is known today."

Roll Call:

AYES: Mark Stephens, Mike McDonald, Philip Deschaine, Todd Wilson (by statement)

NAYS: None

Motion passed.

10. Unfinished Business

PUBLIC COMMENT

a. None

11. Other Business

PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. None

12. Discussion Items

PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. None

13. Final Comments

Commissioner Deschaine asked if the Love A Park Day event will be in the Family Fun Guide. Director Maisner replied yes, the Guide is in the final stage of design and will be sent out to resident after the first of the year.

14. Announcements

- a. Next Regular Meeting Date: Tuesday, December 8, 2015, Service Center
- b. Farmers' Market – Wednesday, November 25, 10 am – 2 pm. In December, the Market will move indoors to the J C Penney Corridor inside the Meridian Mall. It will be held on the first and third Saturday of the month from 10 am – 2 pm from December 2015 to April 2016.
- c. Meridian Blood Drive, Thursday, November 19 from 10 am – 2:45 pm; Town Hall Room, Meridian Municipal Building
- d. Meridian Cares Emergency Needs Fundraiser – selling raffle tickets to win a basket worth \$50 from area business owners; tickets are \$10 each or 3/\$20; winners will be notified by December 16

15. Public Remarks

None

16. Closed Session

None

17. Adjournment

COMMISSIONER STEPHENS MOVED, COMMISSIONER DESCHAIINE SECONDED, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

The meeting adjourned at 8:14 pm.