

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
PARK COMMISSION WORK SESSION MINUTES
TUESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2016

PRESENT: Commissioners: Deschaine, Jaramillo, McDonald, Stephens, Wilson (left at 7:45 pm)
Staff: Parks and Recreation Director LuAnn Maisner; Parks and Recreation Administrative Assistant II Robin Faust

ABSENT: None

1. Call Meeting to Order

Chair Wilson called the work session to order at 6:31 pm.

2. Public Comment

None

3. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was amended to:

#4, Presentations, Eagle Scout Candidate Jacob Conklin Final Report

#5, Communications

#6, CIP 2017-2022

#7, Central Park Master Plan Priorities

#8, Grant Proposals 2016 Projects

#9, LEAP Request for Proposals of Public Art for Communities 2016

#10, Doggie Playground Proposal

#11, Public Comment

#12, Adjournment

Hearing no objections, Chair Wilson accepted the agenda as amended.

4. Presentations

a. Eagle Scout Project Final Report

Director Maisner reported that she gave approval for Eagle Scout Candidate Jacob Conklin from Haslet Troop 97, to construct a gaga ball pit in Nancy Moore Park.

Jacob distributed pictures of the project and explained that the pit is 25-feet in diameter with 10'x3' walls with one wall containing a short gap for easier access. Mulch was added around the outside walls to make mowing around it easier. The project took approximately 27 hours, was completed mostly by himself, his dad and a few scouts. His proposed budget was \$750 but with

ending costs was \$850. He was able to cover the project costs through donations and a can drive.

The Commissioners thanked Jacob for his efforts.

5. Communications

- a. December 8, 2015 Park Commission Minutes
- b. 2016 Township Goals
- c. January 19, 2016 Meeting of the Planning and Community Outreach Committee of the Ingham County Parks & Recreation Commission
- d. 2015 Meridian Township National Citizen Survey Results
- e. Tri-County Regional Planning Commission Newsletter, Winter 2016

Director Maisner reported that Township Manager, Frank Walsh has assigned her to be the Township's liaison to the Ingham County Park and Trails Millage. She will be working to get the County to invest some of the Trails Millage funds in Meridian Township and will be enlisting assistance from engineering Director, Derek Perry and Chief Engineer, Younes Ishraidi. Commissioner McDonald volunteered to assist Director Maisner with this project. She will keep the Park Commission informed of her progress.

6. CIP 2017-2022

Chair Wilson stated that the proposed 2017-2022 CIP Summary by Park and Year was completed by staff and contains edits based on relevance and completed projects. Once Towner Road Park is developed, it is estimated that approximately \$400,000 will be available for the remaining capital projects that have an estimated cost of \$8,560,000.

Discussion:

Director Maisner reviewed the Summary

- Central Park Improvements – leave as stated
- Harris Nature Center – leave as stated
- Hartrick Park – remove the maintenance/concession building and paved trail;
- Hillbrook Park – leave as stated; would like to see this park as a priority
- Land Acquisition – remove; can be added if property becomes available
- Legg Park – remove the restroom and pavilion
- Marshall Park – remove the Skate Park
- Meridian Riverfront Park Improvements – leave as stated
- Nancy Moore Park – leave as stated; highly used park and there is a need for an accessible playground
- Newton Road Park – remove the playground and loop trail
- North Meridian Road Park – remove the gage ball/disc golf item; researching a new location for disc golf, and Gaga Ball pit scheduled for installation in 2016
- Orlando Park – remove trail to Mud Lake; it is not desired by the school

- Ottawa Hills Park – leave as stated
- Snell-Towar Recreation Center – remove new roof, shelter and patio
- Wonch Park – remove the plaza since a patio is being added to pavilion; fitness equipment will be installed this spring
- Eastgate Park – leave as stated, very needed
- New Farmers' Market Relocation – remove from Park Commission items. As it is not a Park Millage project

Commissioners were asked to list their top three projects for 2017 and 2018 for additional discussion at the February meeting. If possible, send priorities to staff for tabulation prior to the meeting.

Director Maisner reported Haslett Librarian Ann Chapman discussed a story book trail grant she would like to see developed at Orlando Park and the first story could be about Clifford the Big Red Dog since that will be one of the new playground items to be installed this spring. This story book trail can have interchangeable stories and tied into programs out of the Haslett Library.

Commissioners briefly discussed their desire to hold a meeting with the Harris Nature Center Foundation Board to review Park Commission priorities for the Center and surrounding grounds. The Commissioners discussed the need for a picnic pavilion. Director Maisner will speak with HNC Foundation Board President about a future meeting.

7. Central Park Master Plan Priorities

Director Maisner discussed the need to prioritize projects for implementation of the Central Park Master Plan. This will assist in identifying grant projects in the coming years. Now that the plan is complete, the Commissioners suggested presenting the final plan to the Township Board at a future meeting. The estimated cost for construction is \$5,047,000. Add this item to the February agenda for future discussion

8. Grant Proposals 2016 Projects

By consensus, this item will be tabled to the February Park Commission meeting.

9. LEAP Request for Proposals of Public Art for Communities 2016

Director Maisner reported on her discussion with Associate Planner Menser, on their submission of a grant proposal for public art. In the past, the Okemos DDA was awarded a grant for the sculpture located adjacent to the Woods Marathon. The grant proposal for 2016 is proposed for Wonch Park. This project will tie into the sidewalk planned for pedestrian entry into the Park. The grant will be prepared by Associate Planner Menser and requires a small local match either in-kind, cash, or in combination. After a brief discussion, it was the consensus of

the Commission to proceed forward with the proposed project and to have this item added to the February agenda for formal approval.

10. Doggie Playground Proposal

Director Maisner proposed developing a unique facility for pets and their owners located across from the Meridian Service Center in Central Park. The "Doggie Playground" would be Meridian's first off-leash dog facility accommodating both large and small dogs. The playground would consist of both trails and agility equipment and would be a great "first step" in interacting with pet owners on future facilities. Staff is also looking into creating a loop trail for off-leash dogs between the Post Office and new Central Fire Station on Central Park Drive and Okemos Road.

The Commissioners asked for a formal plan and motion for discussion and action for the February 9, 2016 meeting.

11. Public Remarks

Madeline Masterson, President, Meridian Garden Club (MGG), stated they are very interested in participating in the development of the Central Park Master Plan and the Historical Village. She requested clarification of the location of the proposed "Pink Garden" as it is in the wrong location on the map. They are suggesting it be moved closer to the Brick House so the irrigation system can be extended to it. The Garden Club is proposing to cover the costs for the "Pink Garden" and extension of the irrigation system. The Garden Club would like to proceed with the "Pink Garden" development in 2016. Director Maisner stated that the garden could move as long as the promenade could accommodate access and suggested she work together with Parks and Land Management Coordinator, Jane Greenway on the project. MGG President Masterson stated the Pink Garden is part of a nation-wide effort to raise awareness of breast cancer and the Club members have been speaking to area businesses to get their support for this effort. Pink Zinnia seeds have been ordered and will be planted by girl scouts from East Lansing, Haslett and Okemos and the Garden Club will be furnishing signs. Currently there are 82 members in the Club and when she joined 12 years ago, there were 35 members.

Commissioner McDonald spoke about the need for owners to clean up after their pets at the Davis/Foster Farm. Also there is a need for signage on the site and a way to keep cars from driving along the firebreak trail.

Commissioner Deschaine thanked staff for the wonderful Family Fun Guide. It is a great publication and he especially enjoyed the tribute to Park Friend of the Year Bobbi DuByne, the "Love a Park" information, and volunteer activities and efforts.

Director Maisner reported on Township Administrative Staff attending the recent public hearing on House Bill 5219 prohibiting communication regarding a millage

request within 60 days of an election. She also reported on the upcoming Chinese New Year event in the Meridian Mall on Sunday, February 7 from 1:30 to 4:30pm and that the "Celebrate Meridian" event will take place on Saturday, June 11.

12. Adjournment

Hearing no objections, Vice Chair McDonald adjourned the work session at 8:46 pm.