

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
PARK COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, JUNE 24, 2014

PRESENT: Commissioners: Banas, Jaramillo, Stephens, Wilson (left at 9 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 regular meeting to order at 8:02 pm.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

Remove item #9 New Business, #a, Eagle Scout Project Presentation by Thomas Laub. This item will be on the next meeting agenda.

Move agenda item #9 New Business, #b, Eagle Scout Project Presentation North Meridian Road Park proposed boardwalk by Ryan Nussdorfer to item #3

Add new item #10 Unfinished Business, #a Orlando Park improvements

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

**3. Presentations/New Business**

**a. Eagle Scout Project Presentation** – North Meridian Road Park proposed boardwalk

Eagle Scout Candidate Ryan Nussdorfer proposed constructing a 12'x6' boardwalk in North Meridian Road Park in three (3) sections (see distributed plan). He has reviewed the plan with Parks and Land Management Coordinator Greenway, who suggested the project, but has not meet with Facilities Superintendent Antone yet but will if project is approved. Concerns expressed by Commissioners: needs to be wide enough for mowing equipment; may need to look at ramp approach (wooden decking versus use of gravel and/or rocks for stabilization); use of hot dipped galvanized screws; having it close to the ground so the water goes over it instead of under it (it will be like his brother's project in the same area); suggested one or two of the posts could be higher to add a blue bird box to it; great addition to the park.

Candidate Nussdorfer stated he will be fundraising for the project costs; he needs to present the project idea to the Scout Council and if approved, would like to begin construction soon with plans to complete the project by the end of July.

**4. Public Comment**

None

**5. Commissioner Reports and Comments**

Commissioner Stephens reported the June Fishing Derby was well attended and Intern Brad Arnett did a great job. It was a lot of fun. He is currently working on a planting project along the buffer strip around the Central Park pond. He is incorporating this into a Grand Learning Network training session and will utilize the proposed butterfly garden as part of the project with the instructors. He has talked with three schools who will each be receiving a \$400 grant in the fall for plants. He also spoke with the Land Preservation Advisory Board about their participating with purchase and planting of the plants to create a seed bank for the land preserves (growing and studying them in this area and in the future, harvesting and relocating the plants to land preserves). This will be an educational tool including signage and onsite teaching sessions and learning about the monarch butterflies with Kalamazoo Nature Center. This project can also keep the geese from coming onto the lawn once it comes in. This is a two to three year self-sustaining project with some maintenance monitoring of invasives. The Meridian Garden Club and Okemos Kiwanis have also volunteered to assist. He will bring additional information to the next meeting.

**6. Approval of Minutes**

- a. May 13, 2014 Work Session Meeting Minutes – page 1, the url address is [www.yesformeridianparks.com](http://www.yesformeridianparks.com)
- b. May 13, 2014 Regular Meeting Minutes – no corrections

CHAIR WILSON MOVED, COMMISSIONER BANAS SECONDED, TO APPROVE THE MAY 13, 2014 WORK SESSION MINUTES AS AMENDED AND THE MAY 31, 2014 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED. Voice vote. Motion passed.

**7. Communications**

- A. Items to/from the Public
  1. From: Larry Harb; Red Cedar National (Natural) Area wish list projects
  2. From: Mark Kieselbach; To: Township Board; RE: 2005 Master Plan Goals and Objectives
  3. From: James Wessinger; To: Associate Planner Brown; RE: Zoning Board of Appeals #14-05-28-1 (Meridian Township)—concerns with proposed pathway location

4. From: P. David Fisher; To: Associate Planner Brown; RE: Zoning Board of Appeals #14-05-28-1 (Meridian Township)—had questions and comments
5. To: Legg Park Neighbors; From: Jane Greenway; RE: summer park maintenance activities in Legg Park
6. From: Bruce Cohen; RE: Meridian Township Birds
7. Kiwanis Club of Haslett and Student Leadership Programs Day of Caring event on Saturday, June 21 in Orlando Park at 10 am

#### B. Commission Information

1. June Calendar of Events for Parks & Recreation
2. Tree Climber play activity
3. Lansing State Journal: **April 20:** Friends of Historic Meridian (nonprofit spotlight)
4. Towne Courier: **March 30:** Fishing guru honored by state assoc; Harris Nature Center offers native plants; You can build song bird box March 30; Stories in the Garden at HNC will occur April 8; Look for wildflowers at HNC April 22; Meridian Twp to host community clean-up; **April 6:** Stories in the Garden at HNC to take place April 22; **April 13:** Preschoolers can explore amphibians at HNC; Stories in the Garden at HNC; Walkers to see wildflowers; Look for wildflowers at HNC April 22; HNC offers badge for Scouts; **April 13:** Community clean-up April 19; Meridian Twp hosts Flashlight Easter Egg Hunt; **April 20:** Celebrate trees at HNC April 26; **April 27:** Stories in the Garden at HNC; **May 4:** Garden Club plant sale May 16; **May 11:** Meridian Garden Club plant sale set for May 16; Forage for frogs at HNC May 31; Preschoolers discover insects at nature center; Enjoy bird watching May 25

#### C. Staff Inquiries/Response

1. From: Richard Brown, Meridian Township Associate Planner; RE: ZBA Case No. 14-15-28-1 / Wonch Park – 4555 Okemos Road – proposed pathway variance request denial

When asked how other communities are managing fallen trees in wooded community parks, Director Maisner reported she sent an inquiry out through the National Recreation and Park Association website and Nick Sanchez is also researching the issue as he has a forestry background. It was suggested to speak with Anthony Witherspool, DNR Urban Forestry Program about ash tree lumber removal.

### 8. Director's Report

Director Maisner distributed her Director's report and due to the lateness of the meeting hour summarized the following: Parks and Grounds Division Lead Worker Scot Stillman will be retiring on August 14; Steve Brunner will be working on the bicycle pump track in Eastgate Park; and although the canoe landing will be constructed by the Ingham County Road Department on the Harris Nature Center side of the Red Cedar River, the handicap accessible access

improvements will be completed by the Township after its construction by the Ingham County Road Department.

**a. Wonch Park Pathway**

**1. May 28, 2014: Zoning Board of Appeals**

- a. Meeting for variance (variance is needed for work within a 50 foot water features setback from the Red Cedar River and for those areas where the proposed pathway enters the required 25 foot natural vegetation strip that is part of the setback from the river). The ZBA denied the variances. We plan to return to the ZBA on July 9 with a revised plan that will be acceptable to the ZBA.

**2. Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Permit**

- a. Approved

**b. Legg Park**

**1. Entry Drive:**

- a. Working with Engineering Department for design plans and specs. Hope to complete work this summer. The entry drive improvements will include the replacement of two culverts, one of which will be replaced by the Ingham Dept of Roads.

**2. Erosion – site restoration project (Red Cedar Glen Land Preserve)**

- a. Staff and the Ingham Co Drain Comm visited the land preserve and park for a final punch list walk through. The stream that crosses Legg is dry, as it is designed to be. The design is functioning well and we only lost one out of the 52 trees that were planted.

**c. Historical Village**

1. Meridian Garden Club conducted their garden clean up and planting on May 19. The irrigation is operational and the gardens look gorgeous. There are always visitors in the Village and on the fishing dock. A fishing derby was held on June 7 and 55 people attended. Largest fish was 9-1/2” and the most caught were 30 fish
2. Monarch Garden: On hold until 2015

**d. Newton Road Park**

1. Ready to bid work for gravel driveway, landscaping and fencing.

**e. Orlando Park Maintenance**

1. June 21, Haslett Kiwanis Club and Student Leadership Programs “Day of Caring” at the park from 10 am – noon. The volunteers weeded, spread mulch, and planted flowers. Hot dogs and snacks were provided.

- f. **Salmon-in-the-classroom:** Salmon releases were held at Ferguson Park and at Legg Park. Hundreds of salmon were released and almost 200 kids participated, over the course of three days.

- g. **Snell Towar Recreation Center – Break ins** – working with Police Department
- h. **Brush Pick-up** – is finally complete
- i. **Eastgate Park**
  - 1. Bicycle pump track – working with Ingham Co Dept of Roads to move excess soil from the Davis/Foster Preserve to Eastgate Park, for the purpose of enhancing the pump track
  - 2. **Church Volunteer Groups:** met with pastors from New Hope, St Lukes, and Faith Lutheran. Planning a church group volunteer park makeover project for Sept 6. Different churches can work on different parks. Park Pick-up Palooza
- j. **Harris Nature Center**
  - 1. **Memorial Tree:** Planted a beautiful, large, sugar maple in memory of a former Okemos resident, Yousun Lee, who loved the center. The tree and plaque were paid for by Michael Moore and the Nancy Moore Park Beautification fund. Yousun’s family from Korea attended a beautiful memorial. HNC foundation members provided refreshments.
  - 2. **Natural Exploration Area:**
  - 3. Volunteers mulched under turtle and are beginning plans for gravel pathway that will lead to individual natural play elements. Received \$5000 grant from Jackson National Life.
  - 4. **Canoe Landing** – I have been working with Ingham County Road Department and the contractor on the design of the canoe landing. It will be 20’x8’ in size. Once constructed, we will need to construct an accessible pathway to the dock.
- k. **UPCOMING EVENTS**
  - 1. July 4 – Fireworks in Central Park – no pre-events
  - 2. June 18 and 25 – Music in the Park in Historical Village
  - 3. July 2 – Farmers Market summer Market begins Saturdays and Wednesdays, 8am-2pm

**9. New Business**

PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. **Eagle Scout Project Final Report** – Legg Park reset bridge – Eagle Scout Candidate Thomas Laub

This item was removed from the agenda.

- b. **Eagle Scout Project Presentation** – North Meridian Road Park proposed boardwalk – Eagle Scout Candidate Ryan Nussdorfer

COMMISSIONER BANAS MOVED, CHAIR WILSON SECONDED, TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED PLAN TO CONSTRUCT A BOARDWALK IN NORTH MERIDIAN ROAD PARK AFTER HE HAS DISCUSSED CONSTRUCTION SPECIFICATIONS WITH FACILITIES SUPERINTENDENT DENNIS ANTONI. Voice vote. Motion passed.

- c. **Park Commissioner Recommendation**

Commissioners discussed the results of the interviews conducted during the work session.

COMMISSIONER STEPHENS MOVED, COMMISSIONER BANAS SECONDED, TO RECOMMEND MIKE MCDONALD TO THE TOWNSHIP BOARD FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE PARK COMMISSION FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE TERM OF OFFICE HELD BY FORMER COMMISSIONER ARONOFF.

Roll Call:

AYES: Mark Stephens, Melanie Jaramillo, Teri Banas, Todd Wilson

NAYS: None

Motion passed.

**10. Unfinished Business** (green)

PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. **Orlando Park Improvements**

Commissioner Banas stated the cleanup last weekend was attended by nine people and expressed her appreciation for Nick Sanchez coming out to cook hotdogs and also assisting with the cleanup.

Discussion:

- Weeded the right side of the sidewalk, leave the area natural and plant more butterfly weed
- Remove the black plastic
- Need to shrink the flower bed on the right side
- Need to spray the thistle

- Appreciate the hydro-seeding but it may have been too late in the season and need to do again; want the area to be like a lawn
- Kiwanis Club volunteers will go out again in the fall and asked staff to send out a press release, send out a email asking for volunteers
- Director Maisner asked to have communications forwarded to Parks and Land Management Coordinator Greenway for coordination

**11. Other Business** (cherry)  
PUBLIC COMMENT

None

**12. Discussion Items** (lilac)  
PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. Park Millage Ballot Proposal  
Commissioner Banas distributed an information sheet outlining projects that need to be completed. Commissioners discussed the projects.

**13. Final Comments**

None

**14. Announcements**

- a. Next Regular Meeting Date: Tuesday, July 8, 2014 Town Hall  
b. Farmers' Market – Saturdays 8am-2 pm Central Park  
c. Van Atta Road closed from Grand River south to bridge; access to Harris Nature Center from Jolly Road

**15. Public Remarks**

None

**16. Closed Session**

None

**17. Adjournment**

Hearing no objection, Vice Chair Banas adjourned the regular meeting at 9:45 pm.