

LAKETOWN TOWNSHIP
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
4338 BEELINE ROAD
HOLLAND, MI 49423

May 15, 2024
Regular meeting

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Laninga called the regular Laketown Township Parks & Recreation Commission meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Anne Brand, Dick Becker, Tom Hoekman, Brad Laninga, Karen Simmons

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Michelle Sall – Community development director
Bret Grams – Facilities operations
Jim Hayden – Public information coordinator

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Hoekman, second by Becker, to approve the April 17, 2024, minutes. Laninga called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED 5-0 VOICE VOTE.

III. APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT

The commission discussed the bills.

Motion by Simmons, second by Hoekman, to approve bills for April as presented. Laninga called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED 5-0 VOICE VOTE.

IV. TOWNSHIP BOARD REPORTS

No report.

V. STAFF REPORTS

Grams reported the following: steps at the beach are currently sound but will need attention soon, recommended removing them entirely. The pavilion roof at Wolters Woods is missing shingles and showing signs of rot, recommended replacing with a metal roof. The restroom at Farview should be replaced with a portable bathroom. A net has been donated for batting practice; frame needed. The UTV has been fixed and the bike path will be cleared soon.

Motion by Hoekman, second by Brand, to rent a portable restroom for Farview Park. Laninga called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED 5-0 VOICE VOTE.

Hoekman will look into decommissioning the current pit toilet.

VI. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Start: 6:09 p.m.

Mary Jo Bertolino, 5362 144th Ave.: Batting cages cost \$2,000 to \$3,000.

Chris Nolan, no address given: Grams needs an assistant; Invasives along the roads.

Rebecca Bruns, 4033 66th St.: Wants better portable restrooms and better cleaning of them.

Tom Drnek, 3964 65th St.: Ask the purpose of the bike trail on Blue Star Highway, wants the money used for the fire department instead.

Marcia Perry, 6248 Blue Star Highway: Blue Star Highway path has been in the works for many years, it's important for safety and future planning of expanded paths.

Steven Ringelberg, 6721 Vandermeulen Road: Agrees there are better portable restrooms that are not too expensive; the Blue Star Highway bike path is necessary for safety.

End: 6:22 p.m.

Hoekman said he has responded to a person who has issues with posts in the sand at the beach. Hoekman said the posts have to be removed.

VII. PUBLIC HEARING ON 2024 COMMUNITY PARKS & RECREATION PLAN

Laniga opened the public hearing at 6:26 p.m.

Kevin Stoike, 3734 64th St.: Correspondence received. Comments on Farview Park.

Marcia Perry, 6248 Blue Star Highway: The plan seems to be what the township needs; Maps should reflect Blue Star Highway bike path (pages 38-39); Should work more with neighboring townships including Saugatuck Township on getting land to connect paths.

Steven Ringelberg, 6721 Vandermeulen Road: Some goals are unrealistic because funding chances are remote; likes the goals; Commission should designate a person on the commission to get grants and private funding for projects.

Rebecca Bruns, 4033 66th St.: Township should maintain what it has; How are projects ranked and rated?

Hoekman said the commission needs to get grants; Surveys help the commission prioritize.

Simmons said not everything on the list will get done.

Brand said maintenance is not usually funded by grants.

Motion by Hoekman, second by Becker, to close the public hearing at 6:44 p.m. Laniga called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED 5-0 VOICE VOTE.

The commission discussed the master plan.

Laniga said the parks commission mission statement will be put on the cover of the plan. The mission statement will also appear on all agendas.

Becker OK with proposal.

Sall said the Blue Star Highway bike path is not done yet and will be an accomplishment in the next plan.

The commission agreed to change the priority date for the township hall tot lot to 2025-2029.

Motion by Becker, second by Brand, to send the 2024 Community Parks and Recreation Plan as presented with spelling corrections, tot lot dates change and addition of the mission statement, to the Laketown Township Board for approval. Laniga called for a vote on the motion.

UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED 5-0 VOICE VOTE.

VIII. PARK REPORTS

a. Farview – Hoekman

Asked about the status of the gate. Grams said nothing is done. An audience member asked who he should call when people are in the park after hours causing problems? Hoekman said to call 911.

b. Huyser -- Brand

Walked trails. OK.

c. Sanctuary Woods – Becker

Looks good.

d. Shore Acres – Brand

People playing golf; Parking lot OK.

e. Beach – Hoekman

Need to figure out what to do with posts in the sand; Noted the upcoming water testing by the Allegan County Health Department.

f. Wolters Woods – Hoekman

More woodchips needed; Playground equipment should be inspected.

g. Township Hall Rec Complex – Laniga

Paddle rack installed; No complaints about open play.

h. Historic Town Hall – Laniga

Painting the end of June.

“Bike Paths” should be put on the agenda under “Park Reports.”

IX. OLD BUSINESS

a. Beach Access task force.

Brand said she is waiting for replies from possible committee members, including a Hope College dune expert. Grams said he put up about 15 “Keep Off the Grass” signs.

b. Beach Parking task force.

Hoekman said committee members are George DeWitt, Carrie Rodgers-O'Neal, Stacey LeFevre. He is seeking a representative from the Allegan County Sheriff's Office. He expects committee to meet after the end of the month.

Grams said sand will be removed from the parking lot on Friday.

c. Huyser House timeline.

Laninga said the asbestos abatement is complete; Waiting for the demolition company to set a date for demolition.

Hoekman said he is working to get an estimate for work on the milkweed patch.

X. NEW BUSINESS

a. Outdoor Discovery Center (ODC) Park Programming 2024.

Hoekman said he has no questions.

Laninga would like the parks commission to give program input to the ODC.

Laninga said a list of ODC events and which parks commissioners will attend those events will be supplied to the commission.

b. Wolters Woods Playground Equipment.

Laninga said Wolters Woods needs to be cleaned and inspected.

XI. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Start: 7:14 p.m.

Mary Jo Bertolino, 5362 144th Ave.: Why doesn't the parks commission do its own programming, offer programs during the day, such as senior citizen walks and Michigan State University foraging at parks?

Laninga said the ODC is a great resource but the township can do other programs as well.

Hoekman said programs can be done during the day.

Steven Ringelberg, 6721 Vandermeulen Road: Said he volunteered to be on the Beach Parking task force but was not contacted, he would like to be on that committee. A tour bus stopped at the beach and let people off to go to the beach. There are many rules at the beach that are not being followed, notably that the beach closes at dusk and no dogs allowed on the beach.

End: 7:20 p.m.

XII. ADJOURN

Motion by Simmons, second by Becker, to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 p.m. Laninga called for a vote on the motion. UNANIMOUS DECISION – MOTION APPROVED 5-0 VOICE VOTE