

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE  
QUARTERLY JOINT MEETING OF THE TOWNSHIP  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND THE PARKS  
AND RECREATION COMMITTEE  
2009 Township Drive  
Commerce Township, MI 48390  
Tuesday, July 27, 2021, 7:00**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Supervisor Gray called the Township Board of Trustees Quarterly Joint Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:** Present: Larry Gray, Supervisor  
Melissa Creech, Clerk  
Molly Phillips, Treasurer  
Vanessa Magner, Trustee  
Rick Sovel, Trustee  
George Weber, Trustee  
Bob Berkheiser, Trustee

Also Present: Emily England, Senior and Parks and Recreation  
Director  
Jim Dundas, Fire Chief

Supervisor Gray moved Item 14 on the agenda to be addressed after Item 2.

**ITEM 1: Public Comments**

Supervisor Gray opened Public Comments.

Patrick Bevier, 2871 Lauryl Drive, expressed his concern regarding the abuse of wildlife at Long Park. He said people are destroying nests and eggs, removing turtles and eggs, littering, shooting off fireworks, and letting their dogs run unleashed. He brought his concerns to the Parks and Recreation Committee at its June meeting and felt dismissed by the Committee. He asks the Township Board to address his concerns.

Supervisor Gray responded that Mr. Bevier's concerns will be addressed by an ordinance and fines that are in the works at this time.

Debra Taylor, 1493 Marine Drive, Walled Lake, also attended the June Parks and Recreation Committee meeting and felt like her concerns were not heard and not addressed by the committee. She also has witnessed the same types of offenses at Long Park and has called both the Oakland County Sheriff and the DNR regarding the abuse of animals. She expressed her concerns to Director England and thought that the Long Park issue was on the Parks and Recreation Committee's June agenda and when she arrived at the meeting she was told she only had 2 minutes to speak under Public Comment. What does it take to get on the agenda? The Township must improve

**ITEM 1: Public Comments (continued)**

Communication.

Joanne Roberts, 2871 Lauryl Drive, said all these subjects on the agenda and we've begged three times for Long Park to be on the agenda. Does everyone else have to beg to get their topic on the agenda. Do we have to come back in August and September? The police show up and don't really care that someone is stealing turtle eggs and that dogs are running off-leash and killing animals.

Resident of 2589 Parkwood Drive, Huntington Woods, said she visits the parks in Commerce all the time and the pandemic seems to have resulted in bad human behavior. Calling the police when animals are abused is a problem because the caller has to stay there when the police arrive and the person committing the abuse must still be present. We need to do more to protect the wildlife. Dogs are scaring the cranes away. Animals have the right to be there.

Supervisor Gray seeing no other hands, closed Public Comment.

**ITEM 2. Sidecar of Commerce, LLC Liquor License**

Supervisor Gray asked Terri Hayosh, owner of Sidecar of Commerce, LLC to speak.

Terri Hayosh explained there was an ownership change and she updated that information with the MLCC and with the Township per the Township's liquor license ordinance. Ms. Hayosh also indicated she submitted an updated Plan of Operation to the Clerk's office.

**MOTION** by Weber, supported by Magner, to change the name on the liquor license from Sidecar of Commerce, LLC to Commerce Public House Bar and Grill.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**ITEM 14: Directors' Authority/Purchasing Maximums**

Trustee Magner said the current purchasing policy is too restrictive. If a Director's budget is approved including line items for purchases, then the Director should not have to appear before the Board for approval to purchase items already approved in their budget by this Board.

A discussion followed regarding the slow process of making purchases, the lack of Director autonomy, and how the policy should be updated. It was tentatively decided that purchases of \$150 to \$1,499.99 require a purchase order and must have the approval of the supervisor and either the Clerk or Treasurer would remain the same. Section II B (c) and (d) purchasing ranges would be changed to \$1,500.00 - \$4,999.99

**ITEM 14: Directors' Authority/Purchasing Maximums (continued)**

and \$5,000.00 - \$9,999.99, respectively. The trustees agreed that this should be placed on the August agenda.

Chairperson William Petsch called the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting to order at 7:37 p.m.

Roll Call by Clerk Creech:            Present:        William Petsch  
   Barbara Garbutt  
   Krystal Schwartz  
   Johnny Walker  
   Kathryn Duff

Absent:        Sarah Henderson

**ITEM 3: Scarlet's Smile Splash Pad Discussion**

Director England presented a power point throughout all the Parks and Recreation items on the agenda. She listed the Committee's 6 priorities as follows:

Byer's House  
Hickory Glen Park  
Bicentennial Park  
Richardson Center Park  
Wise Woods and Victory Park  
Mill Race Park

Director England and the Parks and Recreation Committee visited local splash pads as a fact finding mission. The Board of Trustees and the Committee discussed the pros and cons of well water versus city water and the cost, water usage regulation and recirculation, the possibility of hiring additional personnel, charging admission, fencing, crowd control and limiting practices, the location of the splash pad within the park, and the practical considerations of operating a splash pad. Also discussed was the Star Family's contribution and future maintenance costs to the Township.

**ITEM 4: Dodge Park South End Parking**

Director England presented 3 options for improving and increasing the parking lot at Dodge Park. Option 1 is the least expensive option and does not require the removal of healthy trees and maintains the required retention pond.

A discussion and review of all 3 options took place. The Board and Committee discussed traffic in the park, the potential for more park patrons after the splash pad is completed, sidewalks, availability of funds in the budget, and the time line for bidding the project out and commencing construction.

It was agreed that this item would be on the August meeting agenda.

**ITEM 5: Dodge Park North Pathways CDBG**

Director England said this project is to put pathways in the north section of Dodge Park and to make the boy scout pavilion accessible to park patrons. Director England said the estimated project cost was \$37,201.00 and the lowest bid came in at \$54,000.00 which is \$17,000.00 over the estimated cost.

A discussion followed regarding rebidding the project, construction time lines, and reprogramming additional CDBG money or using millage money.

Trustee Berkheiser said the consensus at the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting on 7-26-2021 was to ask the Board to approve the overage.

**MOTION** by Berkheiser, supported by Sovel, to authorize Director England to accept the low bid and take the balance out of millage money, not to exceed \$17,000.00.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**ITEM 6: Richardson Center Concept Plan**

Director England showed a design for the Center park and parking lot. There is not enough parking for senior activities and especially during concerts in the park.

A discussion followed regarding expanding the parking lot, paving pathways, and installing tennis courts and pickle ball courts. Making the improvements in phases was discussed as well as using CDBG money to fund portions of the improvements.

Director England asked for support for the concept plan and for approval to begin seeking funding for this as a 2022 project.

The Board indicated their support.

**ITEM 7: Richardson Center Catering**

Director England said the current catering policy and alcohol use is complicated and expensive for patrons of the Richardson Center. She wants to put the "community" back in the Community Center. She is proposing an RFP to re-bid the contract to be alcohol only so that patrons are allowed to have "pot luck" type gatherings again.

The Board and Committee discussed the current contract and caterer, the expense, and the Township's liquor license.

Director England said the Township Attorney is working on a new RFP for the caterer to provide alcohol only and she is asking for the Board's support to proceed.

The Board indicated their support.

**ITEM 8: Hickory Glen Park Concept Plan**

Director England presented the concept plan adding a second entrance/exit to the park, adding additional parking and drop off places, and create a better over-all flow for park traffic. She said Giffels Webster should manage this project and Jason Mayer will work up a cost estimate which should be between \$200,000.00 and \$250,000.00.

The Board discussed safety, cost, and paving versus crushed asphalt.

**MOTION** by Weber, supported by Sovel, to allow the expenditure of up to \$5,000.00 for the next phase. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**ITEM 9: Hickory Glen Park Windscreens**

Chairperson William Petsch discussed the need for wind screens as a safety measure on the fields where older players play.

A discussion followed regarding Township versus league responsibility, logos, and the sponsorship policy. The Board said no logos are allowed and wind screens are the responsibility of the league.

**ITEM 10: Wise Road – South Side Improvements**

Director England indicated the Township did not get the DNR Land and Water Grant for this project. She would like the Board's support to get a new estimate, add the dog park to the plan, and go after another Land and Water Grant in 2022.

The Board discussed the issues of dumping, encroachments, and vandalism, the grant application, the need to make improvements, getting people off Wise Road, and using the space for active recreation.

The Board indicated their support for the grant application to proceed.

**ITEM 11: Wise Road Phase I and ITEM 12: Wise Road Parking Lot**

Director England said this project was estimated to cost \$214,203.60 and the July low bid came in at \$295,778.30 which is \$81,574.70 over the estimate. Jason Mayer does not think waiting on this will result in a decreased bid. Once it's approved, the project can start.

A discussion followed regarding this as a priority project, the cost, and the fund balance.

Director England said there's \$2.3 million in the fund balance. There's enough money to complete all of the priorities.

**ITEM 11: Wise Road Phase I and ITEM 12: Wise Road Parking Lot (continued)**

**MOTION** by Weber, supported by Creech, to recommend moving forward with the Wise Wood Parking Lot Phase I at a cost not to exceed \$296,000.00

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**ITEM 13: Horse Farm Discussion**

Director England said a sub-committee was formed to determine the priorities at the horse farm. The priorities were determined by safety issues in public areas. Some were determined to be Township responsibility and some were determined to be Carrie Hancock's responsibility. The priorities were established as roof repair over the observation room, the drainage issue west of the parking lot (completed), to move the well bladder out of the house, perimeter fencing, observation room ADA accessibility and repair of the electric, ADA bathrooms, mobile home and trailer removal, and demolition of the house. The Board has already approved moving the well bladder and next month the roof over the observation room will be on the agenda for approval. The intent behind creating the sub-committee was to create a facility where Carrie can be successful in honoring her concession agreement and providing services.

A discussion followed regarding the ADA bathroom, marketing the facility and the timing of that marketing, the need for a strategic plan, the cost of the repairs, and Carrie Hancock's responsibilities and contributions to improving the horse farm.

It was agreed to put the horse farm on the August meeting agenda and ask Carrie Hancock to attend the meeting and submit a plan indicating when her improvement responsibilities would be completed.


**ITEM 15: Other Matters**

Chairperson Petsch indicated that the Parks and Recreation Committee did hear and respond to the residents who showed up at the June meeting with concerns about Long Park. Lt. Reyes has agreed to add Long Park to her patrol rotation.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** by Walker, supported by Garbutt, to adjourn the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting at 10:08 p.m. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**MOTION** by Sovel, supported by Creech, to adjourn the Board of Trustees meeting at 10:09 p.m. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

  
Melissa Creech, Clerk  
Charter Township of Commerce