

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE
PARKS AND RECREATION MEETING
and
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Monday, August 27, 2007

2840 Fisher Avenue

Commerce Township, Michigan 48390

(Meeting held at the Richardson Community Center)

CALL TO ORDER: William Petsch, Chairperson called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present: William Petsch, Chairperson
Barbara Garbutt, Vice Chairperson
Michelle Holmes, Secretary
Tim Wichert
Marvin Lee
Robert Long

Excused: Mary Ston

Also Present: Nicole Parent, Clerk/Typist of Parks and Recreation
Kelly Knight, Deputy Supervisor

Township Board of Trustees:

Tom Zoner, Township, Supervisor
Sandy Abrams, Township Clerk
Susan Gross, Township Treasurer
Debra Kirkwood, Township Board Trustee
Daniel Munro, Township Board Trustee
Rick Sovel, Township Board Trustee
Jeffrey Bowdell, Building-Zoning Director

COMMUNICATIONS:

A letter received from Ellen Smith regarding the Township acquiring and relocating the Seeger house, located on South Commerce Road. She proposes the Township purchase the house for preservation purposes. The letter was read in its entirety to the attendees of the meeting.

August 27, 2007

A letter received on August 21, 2007 from the Lakes Area Hawks Football requesting an increase of the 2008 budgeted money for road grading and chloride applications.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOTION by Garbutt, supported by Wichert, to approve the July 23, 2007 Parks and Recreations Meeting Minutes with the following change: On page two, **ITEM 2: PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT REPORT**, second paragraph, change, “**Piazza**” to “**Pizza**”.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Frank Vigliarolo, President of the Lakes Area Athletic Association is present and thanks the Committee for allowing the use of their field at Hickory Glen Park. He reports the enrollment has grown to 850 participants. With a budget of \$28,000.00 for 2008, they are scheduling several improvements. Some of those improvements include providing new fencing, new dug outs, starting a new field and redesigning a ball field for smaller children.

ITEM 1: WAIVER OF USE FEE REQUEST: COMMERCE TOWNSHIP FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION CHRISTMAS PARTY, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2007.

MOTION by Wichert, supported by Lee, to approve the Waiver of Use Fee, but charge \$150.00 for the Cleaning Fee for the Commerce Township Firefighters Association, Friday, December 14, 2007.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ITEM 2: WAIVER OF USE FEE REQUEST: TOM SHEA, NEIGHBORHOOD PICNIC, MAPLE POINTE BEACH ASSOCIATION, SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2007.

Tom Shea, 9273 Tan Bay, Commerce, Michigan is present and explains the charitable event and presents a copy of the Richardson Center Policy and Procedure Guidelines and Codes regarding the use of the center for non-profit organizational events.

MOTION by Wichert, supported by Garbutt, to approve the Waiver of Use Fee Request but charge the \$150.00 Cleaning fee, for Tom Shea, Sunday, September 23, 2007.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

AYES: Holmes, Garbutt, Wichert

NAYS: Long, Petsch, Lee

ABSENT: Ston

MOTION DIED FROM LACK OF SUPPORT

WAIVER OF USE FEE REQUEST: TOM SHEA (Continued)

Discussion:

Barbara Garbutt-

Will you be raising money at the event?

Tim Wichert-

Is that day available for use? Is there a cleaning fee on that day?

Nicole Parent-

The day is available and there is a cleaning fee.

Marvin Lee-

Mr. Shea, you started this event with good and kind intentions but your belligerent attitude towards our Committee is not appreciated.

William Petsch –

The first time you made a request to use the center was for a fund-raising event, this request is not for the same purpose. Your attitude to this Committee and the rudeness to Nicole Parent, the clerk/typist of the Richardson Center are not appreciated. I believe you are looking for a way to get around us. I do not approve of the way you went about this.

ITEM 3: LEAGUE AND COMMUNITY SERVICE ORGANIZATION REPORT

Frank Vigliarolo, President of the Lakes Area Athletic Association reports the 2006/2007 Budget Report and the proposed 2008 Budget Report.

Tim Slabach from the MMBA is present and reports that as far as budget the MMBA spends approximately \$150.00 to \$250.00 per year on the trail, with the exception of the signs that were installed in 2003. In 2003 the MMBA funded approximately \$1,000.00 in total.

Gordon Glennie from the Interlakes Girls Softball League discussed the 2007 Budget and some of the improvements made in the last year. Some of the improvements included the installation of a new irrigation system to five of the fields, a new well, replacement of fences on six of the fields, three new bleachers and year-round maintenance. Enrollment is between 750-800 girls from kindergarten to eighth grade.

Gordon also announces this will be his last formal meeting. He will be resigning his position with the softball league. He thanks the Parks and Recreation Committee for the time spent serving the Girls Interlakes Softball League.

The Committee commends Gordon for all his dedicated work and efforts throughout the years.

ITEM 4: PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT REPORT

Nicole Parent is present to give the Parks and Recreation report.

The Free Fun Day in the Park was held on August 22, 2007, at the Richardson Memorial Park from 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. It turned out very well. We heard nothing but great news. There were about 200 children in attendance. We had three bouncing stations, a climbing tower that we were able to obtain from Oakland County Parks and Recreation with the two \$150.00 gift certificates for mobilized activities. We also gave away 250 stuffed animals and provided free ice cream for the children, from Carvel. She recommends holding this event annually.

Saturday September 22, 2007 is the date for the Commerce Settlement/Mill Race Park clean-up. Volunteers for the clean-up project can respond to Nicole by email.

They have added 100 new senior citizens to their mailing list, making it over 800 members.

We have 50 seniors signed up for the free Western Luncheon, being held on August 28, 2007 at 11:30 a.m.

Congratulations to Emily England, Director of Senior Parks and Recreation on the birth of her son, Aiden.

ITEM 5: TOWNSHIP BOARD REPORT

No report given.

ITEM 6: DODGE PARK UPDATE

Kelly Knight, Deputy Supervisor is present and reports they have started the Dodge Park project. Clearing will occur the rest of this week. B&V Construction will begin grading next week for a three week process.

We incurred some storm damage from last week's high winds. There is a lot of clean-up resulting from that storm.

The Road Commission approved permits for the entry way. There has been a delay in the waterway permit process.

Vandalism occurs often in this park. People walking through the park are upset that some of the trees are coming down. Wednesday night one of the machines was filled with wood chips and a gas tank filled with wood chips and dirt. I toured the site with Denny Davis, reminded him to park their equipment towards the front of the park at

night to prevent vandalism. I have also requested more visits from the Police Department to patrol the park.

DODGE PARK UPDATE (Continued)

Kelly Knight-

I am working with the project manager to order signs to post during the current construction progress. B&V Construction offered to provide a sign announcing one of the phase movements.

We have a Project Progress Meeting every two weeks on Tuesdays to direct the progress. We have created a log of photos to display the progress.

William Petsch suggests posting the photos on the Commerce Township website.

ITEM 7: MOUNTAIN BIKE KIOSK

Tim Slabach is present and reports that he is working with the MMBA (Michigan Mountain Bike Association) on the mountain bike and hike trail at Hickory Glen Park. Last year he proposed a park kiosk to be located at the mountain bike trailhead, next to the baseball diamond #1. REI Outfitters will be funding the kiosk and the MMBA will construct and maintain the kiosk. The specific size and other pertinent information was emailed to Jeffrey Bowdell, Building-Zoning Director who has approved the construction plans. He explains that a six-inch recognition plaque for REI Outfitters will be displayed on the kiosk. He requests the Committee's formal permission to proceed.

MOTION by Holmes, supported by Wichert, to recommend to the Township Board the approval for the construction of the MMBA Kiosk for Hickory Glen Park with the signage as presented.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Discussion:

William Petsch –

We have toured the park and selected the location for the kiosk.

We have to generate a policy for these requests. We have lost a tremendous amount of funds by not offering some sort of recognition and thanks for these contributors. The time has come to address the issue.

Tim Wichert –

We have a problem by not having a policy to address sponsorship recognition.

Michelle Holmes –

At this time we do not have a written policy for sponsorship recognition. In the past, we have made recommendations on an individual basis.

Susan Gross –

The Township's policy is that we don't allow advertisement. The Committee needs to draft a Sponsorship Recognition Policy for review by the Township.

MOUNTAIN BIKE KIOSK (Discussion continued)

Sandra Abrams –

To avoid any confusion or discrimination, a policy must be used.

Tom Zoner –

Without a policy, we have no way to regulate sponsorship advertisements.

Kelly Knight –

Nicole Parent can call other area parks to learn of their policy for sponsor recognition.

ITEM 8: INFRASTRUCTURE IN PARKS

Item tabled.

ITEM 9: REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

The Committee reviewed and discussed the Revenue and Expenditure Report.

ITEM 10: AGENDA REQUESTS

Parks Sponsorship Policy
Field Management

ITEM 11: OTHER MATTERS

Gordon Glennie questions the Committee regarding the playscape that was proposed for Maple Glen Park.

William Petsch comments that the plans for the playscape are in the hands of Beckett & Raeder and the final stage will be an approval by the Township Board.

ITEM 12: DISCUSSION SESSION WITH TOWNSHIP BOARD

The members of the Township Board are present for a Discussion Session with the Parks and Recreation Committee.

Tom Zoner, Township Supervisor called the meeting of the Township Board to Order and opened the discussion at 8:25 p.m.

a. Five-Year Parks Master Plan

Tom Zoner -

When considering what you want from the ballot proposal, your Master Plan must be up-to-date. You can review your Master Plan and adopt addendums for your vision for park improvements and plans.

We need everything possible to invest in Dodge Park # 5 and hire consultants to know the best way to preserve that land and work with the DNR to accommodate the process.

Michelle Holmes –

We are aware of the expenditures.

We need to look at other maintenance issues and forestry for our parks.

In the next five years we need to have information and a business plan. Our master plan must be structured differently to keep up with our community. We need a consultant regarding new technology and changing trends. We have come a long way in the last few years.

b. State Land

Tom Zoner –

Our funds must be in place when the land is obtained. We cannot drop below a five million dollar budget for that purchase. It is not easy purchasing land from the State. Their time frame and our time frame is not the same. We must keep in mind and be conscientious of the economy. State Revenues may fall. The CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) money may be lessened. Currently, property values are lower. This may not change in the near future.

Daniel Munro –

It behooves us not drop below the five million dollars budgeted for the acquisition for the State land. It would be irresponsible to not have the necessary funds available when the sale for the State land is procured, regardless of the purchase price.

Barbara Garbutt –

Are the monies that are not being used at the moment being invested or gaining interest?

State Land (Continued)

Susan Gross –

The available monies are invested and gaining interest.

William Petsch –

The majority of our budget is generally spent of the maintenance of our parks. If you have visited the parks you'll know that the parks are beautiful.

The State Tournament brought a lot of money to this community. We are doing some wonderful things for this community. We request from every league an itemized line-by-line budget, to be aware of how their income is used. They are raising money for some very expensive projects. We will run into expensive items with Dodge Park. Our projection will be to charge fees for the use of our fields.

c. League/Association/Township Relationship

Daniel Munro –

I have played in Wixom, Waterford and Novi and they are able as a mature community to have a Park and Recreation Department and the labor to invest in the different leagues. We know they are able to sustain themselves within their budget, including volunteer hours. Part of your Master Plan should include the research and funds for changes that are taking place here.

There are a lot of things available for children in our parks and I see a void in the Master Plan for adults. There are no men's league or co-ed leagues. Where can we introduce adult recreation in the plan?

I see other communities having other types of events like Movie Nights in the Park, Beach Day, Market Day, and would like to see more of that here.

The leagues that make investments in our parks with building permanent structures need to keep in mind that the Township owns the parks.

William Petsch –

The leagues are aware that their efforts and investments are for the sake of the community. As the Committee, we make sure that any structures built meet all the criteria of the Township Board because it ultimately belongs to the Township.

We need to coordinate our services. As a Board we have tried. The Senior Center is doing well and we cannot overload them. We do have to look at staffing or contracting.

All of our parks are non-alcoholic and that does prohibit some adult activity. This is a long process to bring Commerce up to that speed.

We do not have parks that are big enough to play adult ball games.

League/Association/Township Relationship (Continued)

William Petsch

We have had lighting engineers come to our meetings to inform us regarding lighting the parks. It is very well engineered and we need to look at where technology has brought us.

Barbara Garbutt –

We have overlooked activities for adults. We have discussed disc golf.

Gordon Glennie-

The budget reports do not reflect the hundreds and hundreds of hours of volunteer work.

The Walled Lake Community Education is filling a place for adult recreation.

Frank Vigliarolo –

One issue to remember is that we have two leagues that play by two different sets of rules.

We do survive on a \$100,000.00 budget. I watch the budget carefully. We are doing everything we can and we are thankful to have the fields. We are pouring all the money right back into the leagues for the sake of the children in the community. We realize it is an investment into the community and the parks belong to the Township for the sake of the community.

We are trying to make improvements to the fields. Before I leave this position, my goal is to have lights on the fields. When you talk about other communities, you see they have lights, their fields are beautiful. As a league, we are trying to compare to the better fields with our own money.

Tom Zoner –

The Township Board has not made a decision on having lights. It has been discussed for a long time.

I think there is a need for the baseball leagues to be assured of the field usage. A document may be needed between the Township and the leagues to assure them of field use.

Susan Gross –

I have served on leagues and I know the blood, sweat and tears that are put into the parks and recreation. The Master Plan should make use of the parks to its best use and advantage.

Michelle Holmes –

We are looking into some diversity. For some time we have only had ball leagues.

League/Association/Township Relationship (Continued)

Michelle Holmes -

We need to learn of the new technology available.

We need a survey of the community needs.

Robert Long –

Adult activity was brought up at our visioning session.

d. Dodge Park Soccer Fields-Administration/Usage

William Petsch –

The soccer leagues and lacrosse teams are looking forward to having a space to play.

Susan Gross –

When do you think these fields will be ready to use?

Kelly Knight –

The fields will probably be ready by Spring of 2009.

e. Byers

Susan Gross –

Do you have a vision about the Byers Property?

Michelle Holmes-

There is a Master Plan for Byers.

We are in the process of renaming the Byers Park. It is necessary to obtain grant money. We have to change the name to get the historic sign back and be able to apply for grants.

Tom Zoner –

The name change will be under discussion.

Barbara Garbutt-

Mr. Seeger died at 101 years old. The house is in fairly good shape for its age and will probably take considerable money to renovate that home. There are other historic homes to consider.

William Petsch –

Our immediate goal is to clean the area and stop any further deterioration.

f. DDA Park Area

William Petsch –

Does the Park and Recreation Department have any input in the DDA park area?

Do we generate money from the golf courses?

Tom Zoner –

You need to be aware of the plans and be abreast of the progress with the DDA. Keep in mind that it is being designed within a flood plane. You need to know what they have done so far and need to be able to talk to Wynn Berry regarding your ideas for the park.

The golf courses do generate revenue. It is better to let them utilize the land rather than having it completely unused.

We want our parks active and attractive. One of the most important items in our parks is safety. The safety for the people using the parks is very important and always considered.

Michelle Holmes –

The DDA is park area is very well planned.

Barbara Garbutt –

I have attended some of the DDA meetings regarding the progress. We have been pleased with their plans.

Tom Zoner has the following remarks in conclusion of the Discussion Session.

My intent was to meet with you tonight to discuss the direction for the Parks and Recreation Committee. I wanted to see that we are on the same page with the same intent and vision. I do see that the Parks and Recreation Committee have a similar thought process regarding development. We all realize we cannot accomplish our goals overnight. It is a progression and we need to adjust the handling of the parks and the needs of the community. We need to keep in mind of the changing demographics and the different nationalities in order to serve the entire public.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Holmes, supported by Garbutt, to adjourn the meeting at 9:33 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

TOWNSHIP BOARD – ADJOURNMENT APPROVED BY UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Michelle Holmes, Secretary

Sandra S. Abrams, Clerk

The next Park and Recreation Meeting will be held at the Richardson Community Center on September 24, 2007 at 7:00 p.m.