

**FINAL  
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE  
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING**

*Monday, February 23, 2026*

2009 Township Drive  
Commerce Township, Michigan 48390

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairperson Petsch called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

**ROLL CALL: Present:** William Petsch, Chairperson  
Johnny Walker, Vice Chairperson  
Krystal Schwartz, Secretary  
Ron Krueger  
Denise Vecellio  
Laura Waterworth

**Absent:** Bob Berkheiser (excused)

**Also Present:** Emily England, Director of Senior Services/Parks & Recreation  
Allison Kennedy, Asst. to Parks & Recreation Director  
Mark Schoder, Maintenance Director

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

None.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**MOTION** by Vecellio, seconded by Waterworth, to approve the November 24, 2025, Parks and Recreation Committee Regular Meeting Minutes.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**Chairperson Petsch opened to Public Comments.**

There were no comments.

**Chairperson Petsch closed to Public Comments.**

**ITEM 1: LEAGUE AND COMMUNITY SERVICE ORGANIZATION REPORT**

**Silo Ranch – Dawn & Joe Raye**

Ms. Raye shared the following with the Committee.

- My husband has the dates for the car shows. I don't know them offhand.
- We have our camp date, June 15<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>. If that one does well, we will add a second date, probably in August.
- We have a scheduled Derby Date on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, which is like people coming out for the Derby and they'll wear their hats. We're working on the logistics of that right now.
- Silo Fest is scheduled for September 12<sup>th</sup>.
- We have a horse show May 30<sup>th</sup> for the equestrian team kids. It's kind of a closed show. Then we will add another horse show later in the season.

- The roof was started today. They got a good portion of it done. They tore off the whole garage area. They're moving right along. It was freezing cold.
- Our trail rides are scheduled to open May 1<sup>st</sup>, and we will have them scheduled every Friday, up until the bugs get really bad, then we close them and reopen them when the bugs go away.
- The handicap bathroom was also started.

### **Friends of Byers – Dean & Karen Schantz, Mike Elick**

Mr. Schantz shared the following with the Committee.

- Our Christmas event way back in December was a huge success. We were at capacity and then some. We had a lot of compliments on the farmhouse. It turned out really well.
- I submitted our dates for our events to Emily.
  - Our Easter event is March 29<sup>th</sup>.
  - Our Vintage event is August 9<sup>th</sup>.
  - The Boo Bash is October 31<sup>st</sup>.
  - Our Christmas event is on December 13<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Schwartz – Have you done the Boo Bash on the 31<sup>st</sup> yet?

Mr. Schantz – Yes. It's kind of hit or miss that late in the month. Hopefully the weather holds out. We also held our elections. We retained our officers from last year. We're looking forward to the new year.

### **Lakes Athletics Association – Shaun Breuer**

- Registrations are looking really good for the year
- We're two away, as of today, from our total last year for spring registrations. We have another month to go. So, we're expected to be at least 40 to 50 more registrations in the spring than we had last year, so baseball is alive and well. That's when I speak of our recreational program, not our travel ball program. And keep in mind, 50 kids from our recreational program last year went into travel ball this year. That's very exciting. We're building a good program that is building the youth into advanced sports if they want to do that; 50 kids went to travel sports, and we replaced all that, and we think we're going to be 40 to 50 kids on top of that from last year, so numbers are really good. Total players; we're going to be approaching 650 to 700 kids in the spring for spring ball between travel and recreational ball.
- Key dates that we have coming up:
  - Registration for recreational baseball will end at the end of March.
  - Saturday, April 4th will be our field cleanup, throughout the field and the park, with all our volunteers, families, parents and players.
  - Saturday, April 18th will be the first game, so it'll be opening day for recreational baseball.
- Improvements:
  - We're working on rebuilding two new mounds for Field #1 and #6, which is the higher level play, with clay bricks and packing clay in those mounds. Those haven't been done professionally in probably 8 to 10 years. They've been just kind of patched up through dads and coaches, so we're working on getting those done professionally.

- New batter's boxes installed on three of the fields.
- Looking at doing some fence upgrades on Field #2 and #5, taking them from a 4-foot fence on the foul lines to a 6-foot fence. The balls are coming off the bats a lot hotter today than they were 20, 30 years ago, and people are staring at the phone when they're watching the kids play. So, trying to keep them safe.
- Safety netting; I updated you guys about that project on Field #1 and #7. That's going to start here in the next month. We're very excited about that.
- In the fall, we completed our portion of the brush hogging around Field #6 and #7, and the batting cages.
- Asks:
  - Going into asks from us as programmer; updates to keep the ball rolling on a couple items.
  - We did our brush hogging. We asked if the Parks Department and Mark and his group could help us with some additional trimming of trees, some dangerous ones. I want to call out Mark and his crew and just say thank you, and to Emily, for helping. It looks amazing. The amount of feedback we've gotten from coaches ... I've got three coaches that are excited to play on Field #7 right now, and that's pretty rare. I have to imagine the Hawks program is going to benefit greatly from that as well. So, thank you.
  - With that, we've done a lot of work on our end, as well as your end. I was wondering if there's an opportunity to potentially do some stump grinding to some of those sapling trees and put in some topsoil to turn these areas between #6 and #7 towards mobile turf. I talked briefly with Mark about it. My fear, and I think Mark would agree, is if we let it go, it's going to turn back into what it was in three or four years. That's one of the comments or thoughts.
  - We talked about adding bleachers to Field #7. I'm wondering if we can get help with that. That's the last field there that doesn't have bleachers currently. We've got this opened up and we have room for bleachers there
  - Also, we're looking for a few more picnic tables. There might be one wood picnic table left in the park, but all the rest of them have rotted out.
  - With opening day coming up, I just wanted to request a porta-potty by April 1st if we could; the one that we had back by Field #1.
- I had two open items I wanted to update you on.
  - The lighting for the flagpole; I still have that on my agenda to procure. We'll have that to you definitely before the next board meeting.
  - And then I'm still working on a parking plan for our spring season, which will go out to all parents before the season starts. We talked about that being a challenge the last few years, parking being a problem. So, we're going to be developing a parking plan that goes into the game agendas for every parent. If they have a game going on Field #3, here's the three ideal spots we want you to park. If you've got a game going here, we want you to park here, which will include parking in the Hawks area. We don't want you parking in the front lawn. So, we're going to encourage people to park in designated areas going forward.

So that's all the items I have. If you have any questions, I'm happy to answer them.

Chairperson Petsch – Are you doing clay in the batter's boxes also?

Mr. Breuer – I'm proposing that we go to an Aeroform batter's box system. Essentially, it will replace the clay bricks and it's honeycomb foam panel with artificial turf so it drains. The challenge with the bricks with a little league organization or a recreational program like ours is that we don't have designated staff onsite to maintain that. The bricks dry out in the heat.

Chairperson Petsch – I know. I coached high school baseball for 18 years. We had to do it ourselves. That's why I was wondering.

Discussion continued regarding maintenance of the batter's boxes and the improvements to be made.

Chairperson Petsch and Mr. Breuer also discussed the interconnection with Commerce Little League, aligning the rules, and the Glengary Cup competitions for the all-star recreational teams.

Mr. Breuer – I don't know where the Glengary Cup is residing.

Director England – Jay reached out to me. I will follow up with him. I don't know who has it currently.

Mr. Breuer – I believe Commerce Little League has it because they won it. We procured it for the greater good of both organizations. It was our goal that it would be on display, somewhere visible in the community.

Discussion continued regarding the relationship between Lakes Athletics and Commerce Little League. Mr. Breuer stated that communication has been great both ways and he would follow up with additional details.

### **Interlakes Girls Softball – Angela Skiver & Jeremiah Fick**

Mr. Fick shared the following with the Committee.

- Registration for our upcoming season will end this month.
- Our next coaches/board meeting will be in March.
- Teams will be assembled in March.
- We will start in early April and be done by mid-June.
- At the next Parks & Rec meeting, I will have a couple things for Mark related to trees and some spring items to take care of.

### **CW3 Soccer – Chris Haney**

Director England – I have an update from CW3.

- Their first event for the spring will be on Friday, April 10<sup>th</sup>.
- Their last game for the spring season will be Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup>.
- He apologized for not being able to be here tonight.

*No representatives were present at the meeting for the following leagues:*

- *Commerce Little League*
- *Motor City Mountain Bike Association*
- *Lakes Area Hawks*

**ITEM 2: TOWNSHIP BOARD REPORT**

No report in Mr. Berkheiser's absence.

**ITEM 3: PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT REPORT**

Director England discussed the following:

- Things are busy at the Senior Center.
- We are in the beginning of our AARP tax season. All of our appointments are currently full with a 65-person wait list.
- If you go through my written report, you'll see that we have trips scheduled throughout the year.
- We've got a bigger presence on social media. Now with our new hire, Ashley, she's really been promoting our activities, which is great. She's also been working with our new marketing person for the Township, Kay, to promote some of the Parks' Committee stuff too, so you guys will be seeing big changes there.
- The dog park latches have been fixed. Hopefully there'll be no more issues with people getting locked in sections of the dog park.
- The restroom facility at the Richardson Center; permits were applied for. We're just waiting on a final schedule, but that should be starting and completed before our concert series starts.
- And then I'm just going to give you a brief update on what we call the library pathway. It was the extension of the bridge at Byers that made it ADA accessible, so that was the beginning of the project. We are getting with the contractor to address the difference in the railings from the existing bridge to the new bridge. Just know that was the beginning. We wanted to get that knocked out. This is a large project, so you're going to be seeing a lot of changes with that pathway getting installed. We'll keep you updated.

Chairperson Petsch – I've been getting a lot of comments from people in the community about the Dog Park. It is just a huge hit. I tell them it will be getting even better. We're working on the water.

Director England – We did get approval to do the well.

Chairperson Petsch – We're getting accolades all over the place. People really enjoy the Dog Park. Some of the concerns are that because it's so nice, we're having a lot of people from out of the area. I told them we are working on a process for residents to have an entrance pass, and outsiders would have to pay some sort of fee.

Director England – If it becomes an issue, correct.

Chairperson Petsch – Well, I'm already getting ...

Director England – Please direct them to call me.

**ITEM 4: MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT REPORT**

Mr. Schoder discussed the following with the Committee:

- We worked at Maple Glen. A few weeks ago, we cleared all the fence lines of all the overhanging trees, and we trimmed up the oak trees.
- The ADA restroom rebuild at Silo Ranch has begun. It's moving along well.

- We worked with them at Hickory Glen on clearing certain areas, and there's several choke cherry trees that have to come down. They're completely dead.
- We're busy with snow removal. We started early and it's going to end late. So busy, busy.
- On the power for the defibrillators at Scarlet's and Maple Glen, they're all set. All Stacey had to do was plug them in and they're ready to go.
- We've taken over plowing at Snowy Ridge and Long Park. WRC used to do that before, so we were asked to take over on that.
- The two hallways here and the main one over there for the Township have been painted.
- The trailer for Silo Ranch was delivered for the old metal roof panels that we can use for things around the shop.
- More construction on Fourteen Mile by Long Park; they've got stuff parked all over the front of the field after they just fixed it all up last year.

Chairperson Petsch – Mark, do we own a stump grinder?

Mr. Schoder – No, we don't. We hire that out.

#### **ITEM 5: PARK LIAISON REPORTS**

##### **Berkheiser – Wise Woods & Victory Park**

- Nothing new to report.

##### **Schwartz – Byers and Mill Race**

- Nothing to report on Mill Race.
- Emily, you answered my question about Byers with the ADA accessible pathway.

##### **Vecellio – Long Park & Snowy Ridge Park**

- Nothing to report on Snowy Ridge.
- Long Park looks good.
- Mark, there's three things I sent to Emily so she will be forwarding those. One is a downed tree.

Mr. Schoder – Okay.

##### **Petsch – Bicentennial Park**

- Nothing new to report.

##### **Walker – Maple Glen**

- Last time I drove through, the park looked good.

##### **Krueger – Dodge Park**

- I haven't visited Dodge Park. I can't imagine with the weather that there's much to see.
- I will visit before the next meeting.

**Waterworth – Hickory Glen Park**

- I'm at the Dog Park most days, but I did actually visit my park.
- I primarily walked on the paved pathway, and everything looked fine.
- I was curious, Mr. Breuer, you mentioned about the bleachers. Emily, did we have a pad for bleachers on our 5-year plan?

Director England – So we put the pads down and the league provided the bleachers.

Ms. Waterworth – Okay so for this request then, do we need another pad?

Director England – This would be a new pad.

Ms. Waterworth – Okay. That's it for Hickory. I love the Dog Park.

**ITEM 6: VILLAGE OF WOLVERINE UPDATE**

Ms. Waterworth discussed the following with the Committee:

- March 14<sup>th</sup> is lunch with the Easter Bunny.
- They have two boater's safety classes scheduled; Saturday, April 11<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup>. You can go to the website.

**ITEM 7: BYERS FLAGPOLE**

Chairperson Petsch – I'm going to defer to Ron on this.

Mr. Krueger – I think there are a lot of decisions that have to be made about the flagpole. One of the things I did was to present multiple concepts from two different suppliers, whether it be a 25-foot pole, 30-foot pole, internal lanyard, external, and so on. I think some decisions have to be made as far as which one would serve us the best, where we would be putting it, are we going to do anything else around it, and who would be maintaining it. These are all things that have to still be determined.

Chairperson Petsch – Okay, I'm going to ask that we table this because I think Bob should be here for that since this does have to go in front of the Township Board of Trustees. I'd like Bob's input before we move forward with this. Let's move this on to the next meeting.

Mr. Krueger – Sounds good to me.

**ITEM 8: PARK SECURITY CAMERA RFP**

Director England – We talked about this in the past. In front of you is the actual RFP that we intend to send out. Those are the locations that we had identified that need the 5G camera system. And so I've included maps in your packet so that we can have a discussion about the areas that we find critical to have surveillance on. If you want to go through these, we can start with the Dog Park off Wise Road.

Chairperson Petsch – These are our cameras, not the license plate readers?

Director England – They're not flock cameras. These are separate.

Ms. Waterworth – And they're not on a network?

Director England – It will be 5G compatible.

Ms. Waterworth – Oh, they will be going on a network.

Director England – Correct. So, I think the entrance of the park itself, the entrance to the Dog Park, and probably the pavilion area.

Chairperson Petsch – And when we're talking entrance, you want it by the road?

Director England – Yes, so we see who comes in and who leaves.

Chairperson Petsch – And in the area of the Dog Park entrance, that would cover all three entrances. And then something at the pavilion.

Vice Chairperson Walker – Are you going to get cars coming or going?

Director England – Both.

Ms. Waterworth – Would we take down the existing camera?

Director England – Yes, those are just portable units. These will be permanent. We can keep the data and be able to access them through the phone. They will be more consistent security cameras.

Ms. Waterworth – Maintained by our IT Department?

Director England – Correct.

Vice Chairperson Walker – Are you looking for a motion for each set of cameras?

Director England – No, we can go through each one and then do one motion.

Ms. Vecellio – Is there any discussion about putting anything at Long Park?

Director England – We can have that discussion. That's why we're doing this. We need to determine if it's a permanent need or if it is something where we can put up a portable. I know Mark has had some issues there. What is the issue that you want addressed?

Ms. Vecellio – With the situation we had at Proud Lake where the guy was killed.

Chairperson Petsch – He wasn't killed there.

Ms. Vecellio – Right, but Long Park is very remote once you get out into it. I just wondered is there ...

Director England – Maybe at this time, we can put some of the portable cameras over there. They're on a data package. They seem to work well over there. If we have an issue with connectivity, then we can add them to the vendor that we select for this bigger project.

Ms. Vecellio – That would be good. I don't think we're having much problem with vandalism lately.

Director England – Yes, I think we will have cameras that we can utilize.

Ms. Schwartz – On that note, I think it is a good idea to keep Mill Race as portable so we can move them.

Director England – That takes us to Scarlet's. The idea is that this is going to replace the current camera systems that are there. Currently it is with Sonitrol, and they need a hub, but that is not a temperature controlled building, so it affects the equipment. We want to get something that's consistent, so I think we want to cover the parking lot, the playground and the entrance.

Chairperson Petsch – Yes. Do we need anything by the Library?

Director England – The Library has their own surveillance up that way. And that takes us to the Richardson Center. The majority of what we have at Richardson is covered by what we have on the building, but the pickleball courts need coverage, and their wireless option does not work. We want to include at least one camera there.

Chairperson Petsch – Yes, since we're putting up permanent bathrooms and storage over there, we need something quality there too.

Mr. Krueger – It's possible to expand if we determine future needs, right?

Director England – Yes. This is basically to get a vendor and then we can reach out again with future needs. Then at Bicentennial, obviously the pickleball courts and the basketball courts. Mark, are you having issues anywhere else in the park? Do you want a camera on the new building?

Chairperson Petsch – Near the pavilion, looking out toward the entrance coming in from the subdivision. Also, the picnic and playground areas. To the south, we have the soccer field which I'm not too concerned about.

Chairperson Petsch discussed security at the Maintenance Building with Mr. Schoder and the new building which is planned for this summer. Cameras are necessary there also. Director England felt those cameras would be included in this packet. Mr. Schoder noted that the pickleball court and the parking lot need coverage also. Discussion continued regarding maintenance equipment.

Mr. Krueger – Are we doing anything at Byers or the Silo Ranch?

Director England – Silo Ranch takes care of their own. If there is an issue at Byers, we have those cameras that we can move.

Vice Chairperson Walker – Is there any opportunity to move the ones from Scarlet's Park to Maintenance?

Director England – No, because they're through Sonitrol, so they're hard wired in and under contract.

Vice Chairperson Walker – Oh, they're leased.

Director England – Correct.

**MOTION** by Walker, supported by Krueger, to proceed with the RFP for the Parks' security cameras as stated. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**ITEM 9: PARK SIGNAGE RFP**

Director England – The next thing is a Request for Proposals for Parks wayfinding signage and park mapping. This is something that we've discussed numerous times and then it kind of got brought to light with the Eagle Scout who wanted to do the park map that we were working on. Unfortunately, that company doesn't respond to me anymore. So, I looked at this as an opportunity to deal with all of our parks. It's something that we've talked about doing for years.

I have put together the RFP. What you have in front of you are just ideas of what I was thinking for park mapping and wayfinding signs for simplicity; putting up a park map at the beginning of the park so people know where items are in the park. We want the company to come in, inventory our parks and make those suggestions. We're not going to have all those answers. We will ask them to stay on brand with what our entrance signs are and make our parks more user-friendly.

Chairperson Petsch – I agree, especially with Maple Glen.

Director England – A lot of those signs are actually from Maple Glen. If you remember, we pulled that from the project because we wanted to incorporate all of the parks.

Vice Chairperson Walker – Are we redoing Scarlet's from what the Scout did?

Director England – No, this would just be like a map.

**MOTION** by Walker, supported by Vecellio, to proceed with the Parks' signage RFP for all Commerce Township Parks as stated. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**ITEM 10: SCARLET'S PLAYGROUND MURAL**

Director England – This is a placeholder.

Chairperson Petsch – Have we contacted anyone yet?

Director England – We've had a lot of discussion in-house of what we're going to do for the 250<sup>th</sup> birthday for America. I'll have something for you next month.

**ITEM 11: PARK EVENT UPDATES**

Ms. Kennedy discussed the following with the Committee:

- Our first event is the Easter event coming up on March 21<sup>st</sup>. Registration is open through RecDesk. As of this morning, our Easter event had about 140 kids registered. The location has changed to the Richardson Center this year, and we hope registration will increase as a result.
- We're slowly rolling out RecDesk registration for our events that require it. We will use it for Easter, pickleball, and for the cornhole tournament as part of the Heart of the Lakes Festival.
- The M-5K will be May 16<sup>th</sup> at On The Dunes again.
- The Heart of the Lakes Festival will be June 13<sup>th</sup>; that is the new name for what was the Bicentennial Celebration. We will be doing most of the same activities, trying to incorporate some more kids activities throughout the event and a kids musician. We're going to have a second band; they'll be performing from 4-6pm before the main band starts at 7:00. That will be coming up in June.
- We have 4 concerts in July at the Richardson Center:
  - July 10<sup>th</sup>
  - July 17<sup>th</sup>
  - July 24<sup>th</sup>
  - July 31<sup>st</sup>
- Silo Fest is September 12<sup>th</sup> at the Silo Ranch
- Trail-or-Treat is October 23<sup>rd</sup>
- Howl-o-ween is October 24<sup>th</sup> at Mickey's Dog Park
- Tree Lighting is December 5<sup>th</sup>
- Pickleball Tournaments at the Richardson Center:
  - June 6<sup>th</sup>
  - August 1<sup>st</sup>
  - October 3<sup>rd</sup>

**ITEM 12: OTHER MATTERS**

Ms. Waterworth – There was an ask if we were ever going to connect some of the trails in Wise and Victory Park, and then there might be a pathway by the cemetery. People have been asking to have trails connected so that there is one path to get to the Dog Park without having to walk on the main road with their dog to get there.

Director England – There's nothing in the plans right now but it's something we can look at. I would need to know what main road they're trying to avoid.

Chairperson Petsch – There's only that one ingress/egress off of Carroll Lake Road.

Ms. Waterworth – That's Commerce, the cemetery?

Director England – We can't cut through the cemetery to get to the park.

Ms. Waterworth – No, but there's property around there.

Director England – Not that we own.

Chairperson Petsch – Yes, we looked at that piece there, but they wanted too much money.

Director England – We’re always looking to try to make connections.

Ms. Waterworth – Yes, that’s why I figured I should let you know. They’re now asking.

**The next Parks and Recreation Meeting is scheduled for March 23, 2026, at 6:00PM at the Township Hall. (No park visits before meetings from November to March)**

**ITEM 13: ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** by Krueger, supported by Walker, to adjourn the meeting at 6:40pm.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

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Krystal Schwartz, Secretary