FINAL
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday, July 27, 2026
2009 Township Drive
Commerce Township, Michigan 48390

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Petsch called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

ROLL CALL: **Present**: William Petsch, Chairperson
Krystal Schwartz, Secretary
Bob Berkheiser
Ron Krueger
Denise Vecellio
Mark Giromini

Absent: Johnny Walker, Vice Chairperson (excused)

Also Present: Emily England, Director of Senior Services/Parks & Recreation
Allison Kennedy, Asst. to Parks & Recreation Director
Steve Vercellino, Maintenance Department
Chris Hughes, Maintenance Department

COMMUNICATIONS:
None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
MOTION by Vecellio, seconded by Giromini, to approve the April 27, 2026, 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: EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT
Mark Choma – I'm from Troop 179. I would like to propose an Eagle Scout project for Victory Park. For the project, I would like to build a set of dog agility obstacles for Victory Park. I visited there with my family and our dog recently. I noticed that there was just a big empty place for dogs to run around. So, I thought that could be a good improvement for the park. It would provide dogs with an opportunity to learn new things and it would be a good activity. It would all be fundraised and led by my troop.
These are some of the proposed obstacles I was thinking about. We could do a balance beam for the dogs to walk on, the weave poles for the dogs to run between, hurdles they could jump over, and a pause platform which is just something they can jump on and stand on. The benefits are that these would encourage exercise for dogs. It would also provide training. It would give families another reason to visit the park. It would also make the park better at no cost to the Township.

The plan is to receive approval from the Committee, then I would finish my fundraising, get the materials, get the site ready, and then have a day with the troop to go build the obstacles. Then I would go through to make sure everything is up to standards and it's safe. All costs will be fundraised by me and through my troop, so there would be no cost to the Township. All volunteers will be other scouts gaining service hours. Thank you for listening. Any questions?

Mr. Berkheiser – Always. So, Mark, where is Troop 179?

Mark Choma – It is located in Farmington. I chose to go there because it is a little bit larger and more active troop, and I have more friends there.

Mr. Berkheiser – So, you live in Commerce?

Mark Choma – Yes, I do.

Mr. Berkheiser – So it's not a Boy Scout troop, but are you Explorer?

Mark Choma – It's a Boy Scout troop. I'm 17 right now, so it's a Venture Program. It's still with the troop, it's just for older kids so they can do more activities.

Mr. Berkheiser – You still have to do your Eagle before you turn 18?

Mark Choma – Yes.

Mr. Berkheiser – Okay. So, you showed several pictures, like this one. This one shows wood that is sort of beat up and potentially looks like splinters, whereas some of the other ones you showed looked like they were Trex Decking type material. What is your thought on what you're going to use for that?

Mark Choma – I would like to use materials more like this. A little bit of it depends on the funding, but I would much prefer to do materials like this that are safer and would last longer.

Mr. Berkheiser – We're more interested in the low maintenance piece, because once it's in, unless you plan on coming by every so often to check on it. And, generally speaking, I'll say most of the Eagle's don't do that. So, we're looking for something that's low maintenance.

Chairperson Petsch – That's where I had a question; are these permanent in their location? We do rotate, and we've got two different parks; one for the little dogs, and one for bigger dogs. And then we rotate the larger dogs pens so they don't wear out. So, would these things be able to move between the pens? Emily, how often do we switch and for how long?

Director England – It depends on the turf. This season is probably going to be closed a little longer in between, because it is still trying to rejuvenate from the construction, but it's usually about a month in between.

Chairperson Petsch – Okay. So, are you planning on being able to move these between the two? Are you building a set for the little dogs and the big dogs, or just one set?

Mark Choma – What I was thinking, and what I was talking about with my parents, is that we could build one or two obstacles for the smaller dog area, and then I would build a set of two or three for each of the large ones. They would be more permanent and they would be staying there so they would be more durable and they would last longer.

Director England – So each section would have obstacles in it?

Mark Choma – Yes.

Director England – Okay.

Mr. Berkheiser – Are they going to be mounted permanently, or are they movable for grass cutting purposes? If it's permanent, we would have to weed whack. Do we currently weed whack in there?

Steve Vercellino – Yes.

Mr. Berkheiser – We do, okay.

Mark Choma – Most likely, I was thinking more permanent so they would not be moving while the dogs are doing their thing. It would be safer, if that's possible.

Ms. Vecellio – Do any other dog parks in the area have those?

Mark Choma – I do not really know.

Mr. Krueger – Are there any concerns about whether the dogs could be injured on these?

Mark Choma – I don't think there's a huge risk of injury because they will generally be low to the ground. And obviously, for the smaller dogs, you could build them lower so they would be more accessible to them. I don't think there's that big of an injury concern because I have seen them in multiple other places, and I don't think there's a big worry.

Mr. Berkheiser – Do you have your workbook completed as far as the first part? Or are you just getting an idea of what's going on?

Mark Choma – I was hoping to get approval from you first, and then finish the plan.

Mr. Berkheiser – The first section is the concept of what you want to do.

Mark Choma – Yes, I've filled that out. I talked to my Eagle Scout mentor and he said this would be a viable project for that.

Mr. Berkheiser – What is the purpose of your Eagle Scout project?

Mark Choma – To improve the community.

Mr. Berkheiser – What is the purpose of doing Eagle Scout projects?

Mark Choma – To show my leadership.

Mr. Berkheiser – There you go, good answer.

MOTION by Berkheiser, supported by Petsch, to approve the Eagle Scout project, as presented by Mark Choma, for the dog obstacle course at Victory Park, and for the project plan to be fine-tuned and presented to Director England for final approval.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Mr. Berkheiser – Mark, once you get all that done, types of materials, et cetera., then just get back with Mrs. England and make sure she's good with it.

Mark Choma – All right, thank you.

Chairperson Petsch – Thank you.

ITEM 2: LEAGUE AND COMMUNITY SERVICE ORGANIZATION REPORT

Friends of Byers – Dean & Karen Schantz, Mike Elick

Mr. Schantz shared the following with the Committee.

- We are busy on Sundays. We have a lot of residents and out of towners showing up to see Byers Park. They love it.
- This past weekend, we represented Byers at the Oakland County Historical Society in Pontiac. There is a coalition of all the historical societies of Oakland County. It went really well.
- We are looking forward to our antique event in August. That seems to be going along pretty well too.

Mr. Berkheiser – Dean, is that a vendor display booth event?

Mr. Schantz – Yes.

Motor City Mountain Bike Association – Mike Kearney

Mr. Kearney shared the following with the Committee.

- We've had some volunteers out on their own time. We have not had an organized trail day, but evenings and weekends, clearing a few trees that came down about a week ago, and then doing a lot of trimming.
- The trail is in great shape from what I've seen.
- The only question I had is if Emily had heard back from the lawyers about our MOU.

Silo Ranch – Dawn & Joe Raye

Ms. Raye shared the following with the Committee.

- We had our second Horses & Horsepower, which is a Cars & Coffee event. We had more people show up and I think it's starting to take off a little bit. We had interest from a guy who has a Ferrari club, and he is interested in hosting an event also.
- We are getting ready for Silo Fest.

Lakes Area Hawks – Andy Graham
Mr. Graham shared the following with the Committee.

- We just had our annual camp this weekend.
- We're letting the boys recoup today and we will be back at it on Tuesday full steam until the end of the season.
- We were able to field three teams this year. Unfortunately, we could not get enough of our older kids for a varsity team.

Chairperson Petsch – It will save some wear and tear on the field.

Mr. Graham – Yes.

Chairperson Petsch – Thank you.

CW3 Soccer – Chris Haney
Mr. Haney shared the following with the Committee.

- Nothing to report.
- I will follow up with Steve on the posts.

Chairperson Petsch – Allison, did we have any other reports submitted?

Ms. Kennedy – No.

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

- *Lakes Athletics Association*
- *Commerce Little League*
- *Interlakes Girls Softball*

ITEM 3: TOWNSHIP BOARD REPORT
Mr. Berkheiser provided the following:

- We had a long meeting Tuesday night. I think we were here until midnight.
- More for information, we had a couple building projects. They are condominium projects – not condos like we think of condos, but the whole project is considered a condominium. They ultimately got approved. One is over by Northern High School. The other is at Commerce and Carey, across from Zoner's. That's a big project. We did get a lot of neighbors coming from the surrounding neighborhoods. Some were in favor, and some were opposed. It was a long meeting based on those alone.
- For us here, we also have security cameras that were approved. So, we're moving forward on cameras in different areas covering a lot of the parks. It's unfortunate that we have to spend money doing that, but we do.
- There was an initial presentation regarding buying a lot on Golfview Lane. It's located near the kayak park on the left side as you're heading north. It's an empty lot that has been for sale for a long time. We are in the process of picking it up for tax purposes, and the money for it is being donated back to the Township. It will fall under parks. It will be proposed for open space, and potentially maybe a trail head if some of our trails end up out there. I don't know if there's really much we'd have to do except cut the grass.

Chairperson Petsch – Anything on the proposed purchase of Sally's Barn and the golf course on Wise and Union Lake?

Mr. Berkheiser – None of that has come to the Township Board, but it has gone to the Planning Commission for some initial information. My understanding is that they met with neighbors. You may have seen something on TV. If you haven't seen it, it's on YouTube, look it up. I honestly felt that it was all done fairly and the information seems accurate, as far as the Township Board knows. There is a proposal to develop the eastern part of the property, off Union Lake Road. It's roughly 65 acres. The site is proposed to have a small, specialty grocery store. I think there is a car wash in there.

Chairperson Petsch – Now we're talking at the corner, on the easterly side of the property, across from the DNR boat launch?

Mr. Berkheiser – Correct, but it's all the way across, the whole width of the lot. Then the far western part, where it starts getting really wet with wetlands, is proposed to be donated to the Township, and that is about 50 acres to be donated. There's also a lot of underground work that needs to get done with the flow of the river and all the stuff that has to be done to shore it up, so it doesn't collapse. That's really the big issue. So, that's the initial proposal that went to Planning. That's about it so far.

Chairperson Petsch and Mr. Berkheiser discussed where the former golf course property connects to Victory Park.

Mr. Berkheiser – When and if that moves forward, then Parks will need to consider how we want to utilize that. Do we want to let it grow over? We've had several people come in and talk about disc golfing. To me, that seems like it might be a perfect spot, but we need to have organizations that are willing to take care of it.
The other item is that we have a meeting tomorrow night. It's our quarterly discussion meeting. There are some interesting things. Generally, we don't vote on any of those things, but we do have items that may be of interest, having to do with short-term rentals, and some parks open space.

Director England – Open space versus park space, the definition.

Mr. Berkheiser – Right. So, there are some topics on there if anybody is interested. It's at 7:00pm tomorrow night, right here.

ITEM 4: PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT REPORT

Director England discussed the following:

- Most everything is in my written report.
- Senior activities are going strong. Trips are filling up, becoming one of our hot topic things for the seniors to attend.
- Our first pickleball tournament is scheduled for this weekend. We have low attendance and we need a few more people to sign up for that. If you know anybody who wants to play pickleball this weekend, let them know.
- We did have some staffing changes. My full-time person has moved onto what she told me is her dream job. I think we have somebody to fill the full-time position, but we will be hiring somebody for the part-time position. I will send notice out when that day comes.

ITEM 5: PARK LIAISON REPORTS

Berkheiser – Wise Woods & Victory Park

- Nothing really new over at Victory.

Director England – They are in process of working on the well and waiting on for the drinking fountain to come in. They have drilled and they just have to run everything to the drinking fountain.

Schwartz – Byers and Mill Race

- Nothing to report.
- I know Bob did ask us in the Spring to come up with ideas for our Parks. How do you want those? Should we meet with Emily ahead of time and get it on the agenda?

Chairperson Petsch – I think it's a full blown video presentation.

Director England – PowerPoint.

Mr. Berkheiser – At the budget meeting, I don't know if we decided on a date yet.

Director England – Yes, we did. So, what I would say is if it's an agenda item that you think is ready for a decision, then we want to add it to the agenda and you and I should have a meeting prior to that so we can make sure we have all the proper documentation. If it's just an idea, shoot me an email and we can add it for discussion purposes. No need to meet ahead of time for that. And based upon the discussion, we can move forward.

Ms. Schwartz – Okay. Great, thank you.

Vecellio – Long Park & Snowy Ridge Park

- Nothing for Snowy Ridge.
- For Long Park, I sent Emily an email about this.
- The old signs are still there. I think we're going to bring the new signs away from where they were.

Director England – Right, we're not going back. They're going to be replacement signs, so I will forward that to Steve this week.

Ms. Vecellio – Great.

- And I sent a picture, there is a hole in the pathway north of the bridge. And the stand north of the bridge has a gap between the edge and the platform, and there's a picture of that too.
- I know we're going to talk about the Berry Lake Treatment Plan.
- The dog bags, I know we saw it at Scarlet's, but do all the parks have dog bag containers, and are they all the same?

Director England – Yes, they did at least. Some may be missing.

Ms. Vecellio – Do we replenish them? Because every time I go there, there's none. It seems like it would be very easy to just grab all of them if I were a person that would do that. And, is there a different design we could do?

Director England – So those were done by an Eagle Scout, and they were done with the thought process in mind to address what you just said. The bags we utilize to fill the doggie waste stations at the dog park, they're expensive. So, the idea behind the ones through the other parks was to use a grocery bag. It's low cost and people can donate. I think the idea behind the Eagle Scout project was that people who utilize those stations would then help to refill those stations. So, maybe our marketing person can put something together, an educational thing, reminding them what it is and ask the public to fill it. Maintenance did have bags. I don't know if they still do, but we can check.

Ms. Vecellio – Yes, there's never any at Long Park so I'm guessing people might be just taking them.

Walker – Maple Glen

- No report in Walker's absence.

Petsch – Bicentennial Park

- Nothing new to report.
- People are using the park and it seems to be in good shape.

Director England – I want to tell you I was over there last week. Steve can attest. That park was the busiest I've ever seen it in 20 years.

Chairperson Petsch – I know, I go by it all the time.

Director England – The basketball court was full. The volleyball court was full, pickleball and tennis. I was amazed.

Chairperson Petsch – Yes, people love it. I see people who live in that area and they are happy with what we did there.

Krueger – Dodge Park

- At Dodge Park, I spoke with Steve about some of the things that I was looking at, including possibly replacing the dead boxwood with something else. I'll come up with some ideas on that.
- It's just a punch list of what we talked about before and I'll get it to you.
- Other than that, the park is very well attended. I always see people there.
- It looks great. There are very few weeds.

Mr. Berkheiser – The only thing I will comment on is that we have a lot of vines growing up. I think Bill saw it too. So maybe when we do the RFP, or if we have decided on that person to brush hog some of that, maybe we can do something over there.

Mr. Krueger – That's partly due to the fact … We've been looking at a couple of dead white pines over there.

Mr. Berkheiser – But they're completely covered in vines now.

Mr. Krueger – Yes, they're alive now with vines. There was an area that Chris had mentioned to me that he would love to see cleared out.

Chairperson Petsch – Right, that was where Bob and I walked. Part of my concern with that is I've seen them pull down trees in my yard. We're talking about vines that are this thick at the base, and once they get up and cover the foliage, they are that heavy that they pull the trees down. That's right along the pathway and the edge of the field. It is a potentially dangerous situation. We looked at them and some of those vines were really big. They are killing off the trees.

Mike Kearney – If it's Oriental Bittersweet, which we have a ton of at Hickory Glen, you can cut it, but it will grow right back rapidly. You have to pull it out of the ground or use an herbicide to kill it. It won't die on its own.

Mr. Berkheiser – I don't know which one it is.

Chairperson Petsch – The ones we're talking about are like 5-leaf vines that crawl up a tree and they spread everywhere. When you grab a hold of the root, they will run for … you don't even know where it comes from. They're all over the place under the ground.

Mike Kearney – We have a ton at Hickory Glen. It's a constant battle.

Mr. Berkheiser – I was just saying, if we can ask the contractor.

Director England – He did discuss it on the road frontage with us.

Mr. Berkheiser – Right, but maybe we can do that and clear some so you can see the soccer field.

Chris Hughes – The vines you're talking about are Virgina Creeper.

Giromini – Hickory Glen Park

- I went through the park yesterday.
- I got to see the football camp going on. The kids were looking very enthusiastic, and hot, but that's to be expected.
- The bike paths and everything were looking really good, other than a couple vines as you've said.
- There were a couple trees leaning. They're at the intersection of the path that runs to the party store. I will send photos of those to Emily.
- There are a few of the newer trees that are a little stressed due to the drought, which is kind of to be expected with what we've had going on.

ITEM 6: VILLAGE OF WOLVERINE UPDATE

Mr. Giromini discussed the following with the Committee:

- We have our blood drive coming up August 3rd.
- We've had to come up with some rules for our pickleball courts.
- The Farmer's Market is going strong. Tomorrow will be our 11th, which is halfway through the season. We have 25 vendors for that. We will have a food truck and an ice cream truck.

- Last week, we had our second Tuesdays in the Park. We had police there and the police boat. That was with the local credit union. It went pretty well other than the constant wind that destroyed two tents for the vendors. That's three destroyed this year that we're up to. Then it rained at 7:30.
- The market has done pretty well despite having two of the hottest days this year, and a lot of rain. Tomorrow is looking great.
- Ron and I went out and installed a couple more bricks at the memorial.

ITEM 7: BERRY LAKE TREATMENT PLAN

Director England – So, I know Denise, you're excited to speak about this, but they have not submitted the plan to me yet. The same company that treats our phragmites is putting together a treatment plan for the lake itself. They were hoping they could get the information they needed from aerial photos, but they could not and they need to put somebody on the ground over there. We should have that for next month, and then they can do the treatments together.

ITEM 8: CANOE/KAYAK LAUNCH SIGNAGE

Chairperson Petsch – I think everybody saw what we had in the packet.

Director England – This came about because we had a local restaurant that was advertising to basically call the restaurant, dock at the kayak launch and they would bring food to the boat. So, they were encouraging this use of the kayak launch. We talked to the establishment and they immediately pulled their advertising and apologized. In the meantime, we went to the park and the signs that we had are no longer there. So, we need to put signs up so people know the intended use of this boat launch, which is for nonmotorized crafts. That's what you see in front of you and I would like to order these.

Mr. Berkheiser – We've also had people fishing off the dock. I don't know that I've seen swimming but we've seen divers.

Director England – There are divers. They meet there on Tuesdays.

Mr. Berkheiser – I don't know how they're getting in unless they're walking in, which is fine. You're just using these as examples?

Director England – Yes. I thought they were good.

Mr. Berkheiser – We need to discuss the fishing piece.

Director England – So, I didn't include the fishing piece because we currently don't have a place for people to fish from there. I left that piece off. I have no problem putting it on, I just thought it was due a conversation at least.

Mr. Berkheiser – I'm not opposed to people fishing off the dock.

Director England – If they clean up after themselves.

Mr. Berkheiser – Well, I was going to say, unless it's causing trouble. Have we had issues?

Director England – I haven't heard of any trouble. That doesn't always mean anything, but maybe it's a separate sign.

Mr. Berkheiser – Well, the main reason is for launching canoes and kayaks. Do we still have our canoe storage rack over there?

Director England – Yes.

Mr. Berkheiser – So, I just wrote down whether we want to consider swimming, or what do we want to do about diving and swimming?

Director England – I don't think swimming is bad.

Mr. Berkheiser – Off the dock? I don't really want people …

Director England – I would say no diving.

Chairperson Petsch – I don't know that we want it to be used like a beach area to go swimming.

Director England – I think they're going to.

Chairperson Petsch – Not if it's posted "no swimming". It's not meant to be a beach.

Director England – Correct.

Chairperson Petsch – And what's our liability there? I mean you get in the water to launch your canoe or kayak.

Director England – Yes, but that's different.

Mr. Berkheiser – It could also state that it's not guarded or protected, so I don't know what …

Director England – What our liability is with that. Okay.

Chairperson Petsch – That would be a concern.

Director England – The second sign was "launch area for canoes and kayaks only". I like that. I know at one time we were having trouble with jet skis.

Director England – We were. I think Maintenance put enough boulders there, because that's their answer to all of our problems. I think they can't squeeze through anymore. I haven't seen damage over there from that.

Chairperson Petsch – Are we still considering putting a fishing dock a little further down to the south?

Director England – Yes, we just need to make sure it's going to fit. I think we wanted to look at it to see the depth of the vegetation. I have not pursued that anymore until we do that. And in that case, then you put "no fishing" on this one.

Mr. Berkheiser – Did we look as far as encroachment all the way down?

Director England – I have not looked at that yet. I did speak to Mario about it. I have not followed up with him to know if he has looked at it. He needs to look at that and the entrance off Carroll Lake Road into Victory, because it looks like we have some encroachment there too, according to the aerial.

Mr. Berkheiser – The fenceline on the old parking lot side that goes all the way on the south side, technically that is the property line I think, and it looks like there's a boat dock and everything.

Chairperson Petsch – Yes, and there's a few pontoons there too.

Director England – That one is far enough down.

Mr. Berkheiser – If it's further south, that's okay. That's not our property, but I thought it looked like one of them was sitting on our property.

Ms. Schwartz – I think we need to add it to a field trip in order for all of us to see it. Let's put it on the calendar.

Director England – Yes.

Mr. Berkheiser – Tell the Chief to put the boat in and we'll all take a field trip.

Director England – Do you want me to hold off on ordering these signs? I'm going to add the no swimming and no diving.

Chairperson Petsch – The kayak launch sign I think is something we could do.

Director England – That's the one at the actual old launch.

Chairperson Petsch – Yes.

Ms. Schwartz – Maybe instead of listing the stuff not to do, maybe say more like, "the intended use is".

Director England – I hear you, but that doesn't work. They need bold red letters.

ITEM 9: VICTORY PARK ENTRANCE ON CARROLL LAKE RD

Director England – That was the update that I just kind of gave you. I did pull the aerial. I have not discussed this with Maintenance yet because I think we need to deal with the encroachments first. I will work with Mario on dealing with the encroachments and then see about putting up a gate or fence, something.

Mr. Berkheiser – And brush hog it.

Discussion continued regarding the location of the 60-feet of road frontage on Carroll Lake Road at Victory Park. It is overgrown. Director England would send out another map showing the location.

ITEM 10: BUDGET MEETING

Chairperson Petsch – The budget meeting is scheduled for next Monday.

Director England – August 3rd, next Monday, at 6:00pm. Does that work for you, Denise?

Ms. Vecellio – Yes.

Director England – And Krystal can't be present, but she and I will meet this Thursday to cover any ideas she has for her parks and I will present those to you. We will meet at Richardson.

Mr. Krueger – I can't make it.

Director England – Ron, I can do the same thing for you. If you have time this week, I can sit down with you and go over your ideas and concerns, and then I can present them on Monday.

Mr. Krueger – Sure.

ITEM 11: PARK EVENT UPDATES

Ms. Kennedy –

- This Friday is our last concert for the summer. We have Power Play Detroit coming out. The food truck is the Bavarian Inn Cluck Truck.
- As Emily stated, we do have a pickleball tournament scheduled for this Saturday as well. We're hoping to get some more registrations before that to allow us to proceed. Speaking with Rick, who helps us with our pickleball ladder leagues in the tournaments, he says this is kind of a trend that they're seeing in other communities. The small, one-day tournaments, if you're not -- what do they call it? There's some sort of special ranking. If you're not certified with pickleball, then they're not as well attended. So, other communities have pulled away from just small recreational one-day tournaments. We'll see how things go.
- Silo Fest, so we are working with Dawn and Joe. We'll be providing some different activities for that; a mechanical bull, face painters, we have caricature artists coming, et cetera.
- So new to our calendar, we're doing an event at Victory Park, Stargazing in Victory Park. We've reached out and we're going to work with two different astronomy clubs. They will bring everything, the telescopes, and they will have a little brief discussion about what's in the sky that night, and then the public can come and view through their telescopes. We're looking forward to something new.

Mr. Berkheiser – When is that?

Ms. Kennedy – October 16th at Victory Park.

Mr. Berkheiser – Why not at Richardson?

Director England – Light. It seems to not have so much light pollution at Victory.

Mr. Berkheiser – Oh, so it will be a little darker. Okay.

Ms. Kennedy – It will run from 7 to 10pm that night.

- Next would be the Trail or Treat. We've met with the Library to get everything going on that. Usually in early August, we send out registration. We've already had people from previous years reaching out to us to make sure that they can get registered to attend. Last year we had 1500 to 1700 kids in attendance plus adults. One thing that we are going to do this year is no games are allowed. There were a few of the vendors that were allowing the kids to play games which caused long lines and slowed things down.

Chairperson Petsch – They were lined up to get in from the Scarlet's parking lot all the way to the gate and then on the other side, they wrapped around the building. It was nonstop.

Director England – We are looking for volunteers to man Park's booths as well. I already have you down.

Ms. Kennedy –

- The day after that, we have Howl o Ween at Mickey's Dog Park. You'll start to see banners and advertising for that going up here shortly.
- And then we have our tree lighting event.
- We met with the Library regarding the new pathway that goes down in front of the Library and across the street connecting over toward Byers. There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony at the pathway on August 14th from 11am to 1pm.
    - I know the Chamber will be there.
    - They're going to do a ribbon cutting, and it sounds like Noah Arbit will be there. I don't know if there are other local representatives that are also coming to speak.
    - The library is going to have bike decorating for the kids. They'll do a small little bike parade and there will be treats afterward for the kids.

Director England – We're working with the Oakland County Sheriffs to offer a bike safety class. Noah Arbit is the reason that we had the funding to put that pathway in.

Ms. Kennedy – The Library is asking for registrations, which opens this Friday, just so they know how much to get for bike decorating supplies.

Mr. Berkheiser – What is the status of the bathroom at the Richardson Center?

Director England – It's supposed to be done this week.

Mr. Berkheiser – I heard that last week and last month. Did they pour concrete?

Director England – They did not pour concrete. They're going to be doing that this week.

Mr. Berkheiser – So it won't be ready for Friday night.

Director England – Let me see what Jason said. Partitions should be installed tomorrow, along with soffit covers. Paint will be there over the next few days for any touch-ups. Wednesday PM or Thursday AM; concrete walk after all building inspections are approved, then they will do the seeding. So, if the building officials can get their approvals done by Friday, it will be ready, open and operational.

Mr. Berkheiser – Okay.

Mr. Krueger – One question. At a place where we're doing bike safety, does it make sense at all to try to do any kind of seminar or something to discourage ebikes?

Director England – Not yet, but I think that's coming in our future.

Mr. Berkheiser – Yes, there is a big push in communities about ebikes versus pedal assist. I imagine we will see stuff coming.

ITEM 12: OTHER MATTERS

Pathway Repairs

Director England – I handed out maps. These maps are the existing pathways where Giffels Webster sent their guys out to inspect, and identify all areas of the pathway that need repairs. So, buckling from tree roots, any damage due to age. A lot of these are pushing almost 30 years old now. The areas in red are the areas that were inspected. He gave me an approximate estimate of $350,000 to do all the repairs that these three sections of pathway need. So, $300,000 actual construction and engineering, and $50,000 contingency. He will have a complete packet for me on Friday. My question to you is, do you want me to take this to the Township Board to move forward with this? If so, where would you like me to request the funds to come from?

Mr. Berkheiser – What's in our trail maintenance fund? We moved stuff specifically for that.

Director England – There is $1.8 million.

Mr. Berkheiser – I would recommend that we send it forward. The Board set aside money for maintenance, so that's where it should come from.

Director England – Can I have a motion for that?

MOTION by Krueger, supported by Vecellio, to recommend to the Township Board that we fund and move forward with the pathway repairs.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Director England – Just so you know, that will be going out to bid. They're not going to be fixed in a month. It's a process.

Mill Race Park

Director England – I know Maintenance was at Mill Race Park working today, removing some manmade bridges that people had put down. They had nails sticking out. I met with the tree company today to take down some of the dangerous trees. We're looking at what we can do to address what we've experienced being that it gets pretty wet back there. Unfortunately, the entire park is a wetland, and the majority of it is a particular kind of wetland that is most protected. I do have a note in to the DEQ to find out if we are able to put some kind of limestone through there to at least make a safe crossing, and what their recommendation is. I will get back to you on that. And we have reached out to the arborist for Oakland County to come in. I don't think removing the trees is going to do anything.

Chairperson Petsch – We have to remove some of the canopy.

Director England – I think it's going to have the opposite effect of what you think it's going to have, which is why we're going to have the arborist come in and take a look at it.

Also, signs for Mill Race. Currently, we only have a sign on Commerce Road, the big entrance sign for Mill Race. We don't have anything at the Leo's plaza. I need to verify with Jay that we can put something there. And we don't have anything off Farr Street. There used to be one on Farr Street. We are getting a price. It would be same size as what we put in at the kayak launch.

Ms. Schwartz – That was one of the ideas I had to talk about with you on Thursday. I would also say that the Parks & Rec videos on social media are great.

Director England – Those are by Kay, our new Marketing person. She's doing a good job.

Mr. Berkheiser – We talked about putting a concrete landing pad at the dog park for when it gets wet and muddy.

Director England – I need to touch base with the Maintenance Department on that.

Chairperson Petsch – Bob, just to clarify that we're talking about after you get through the entrance and into the park itself.

Mr. Berkheiser – When you go through the first gate, you're on concrete. You go through the next gate into the park and if it's Spring, it's muddy.

We have been talking for years about the pavilion over at Hickory Glen. Where are we on that?

Director England – That's actually going to be a topic at the budget meeting.

Mr. Berkheiser – We've had that on the last three budget meetings.

Director England – So, the pavilion company that we have been going through, now you can only purchase through one company, which we found out with the construction at the dog park, tripled the cost of that pavilion. So, I talked last week to the contractor who built the restroom facility. He is supposed to be getting me some pricing on pavilions, doing a stick build and we could still do the same type of roof. But we need to identify where we want them built.

Mr. Berkheiser – Is that like a pole barn we could put up? Is it different? You're saying stick built.

Director England – It's just going to be wood.

Mr. Berkheiser – Oh, you mean a wood one. Okay, I just see maintenance down the line.

The next Parks and Recreation Meeting is scheduled for August 24, 2026, at 7:00PM at the Richardson Center, with the park walk through at Richardson at 6:00PM.

ITEM 13: ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Krueger, supported by Schwartz, to adjourn the meeting at 7:54pm.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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Krystal Schwartz, Secretary