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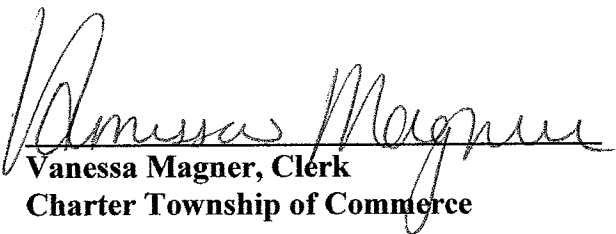
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CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING

- MEETING DATES:** Thursday, September 5, 2013
- TIME OF MEETINGS:** 6:30 P.M.
- PLACE OF MEETINGS:** Richardson Community Center
1485 Oakley Park Rd.
Commerce Township, Michigan 48390
- PURPOSE OF MEETINGS:** 1. Master Plan Goals and Objectives

SIGNATURE OF TOWNSHIP CLERK 
 Vanessa Magner, Clerk
 Charter Township of Commerce

DATE AND TIME OF POSTING: Tuesday, September 3, 2013 at 11:30 am

This notice is posted in compliance with PA 267 of 1976 as amended (open meetings act), MCLA 41.72a(2)(3) and the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA).

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

Thursday, September 5, 2013

2009 Township Drive

Commerce Township, Michigan 48390

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Schultz called the meeting to order at 5:30pm at the Ralph C. Richardson Center.

ROLL CALL: Present: Dave Schultz – Chairperson
Peter Pace – Vice Chairperson
William Petsch
Michelle Holmes
Tim Wichert
Bob Berkheiser

Also Present: Emily England, Director of Senior Services/Parks and Recreation
Leah Groya, Planning Consultant, Living Lab

ITEM 1: MASTER PLAN GOALS

Ms. Groya reviewed the goals presented to the Committee. She explained that she had used some of the language from the last plan when formulating the current goals to pull through the objectives. She developed this draft by also incorporating the results of the survey, the focus group meetings, and feedback from the group.

These goals and guidelines are important from a DNR perspective for grant applications and they will look at these, along with the table of capital improvements. They will check to see that there is a match between the goals and guidelines. The language here is intentionally broad and may include things that we do not even anticipate at this time. We will review each goal and if you have comments, we can discuss them accordingly.

Ms. Holmes asked if there will be tasks to go with each guideline. Ms. Groya confirmed. Mr. Berkheiser asked how the goals were developed. Ms. Groya stated that they are basically the same as before, but additional goals could be added. Ms. Holmes felt that these were good for grants. Ms. Groya explained that the Committee should feel they are important. Mr. Berkheiser added that they should show progression and mesh with the old plan, unless anyone thinks the old plan should be discarded. Ms. Holmes noted that they are very similar to the previous.

Mr. Schultz inquired about the number of grants received since the last time Master Plan Goals were reviewed five years ago. Ms. Groya stated that the Rails to Trails grant was received. Open discussions ensued regarding grant applications, trust fund monies, MDOT funding and consistency of the goals with planning documents. The availability of grants was further discussed at length. Ms. Groya explained that if you currently have a grant, you would not apply for another with that grantor unless it was

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for a continuation. Ms. England and Ms. Groya assured the Committee that available grants are frequently and carefully reviewed by the Township.

Ms. Groya explained that by following this process outlined by the DNR, it makes the Department eligible for grant funding, but that is only one use of this tool. It also organizes the Committee and the priorities to enable these items to move forward. Ms. Holmes agreed that there is a need to learn how to use the tools to keep improving the parks and making them more functional.

Mr. Schultz asked if this review was to understand the goals better, or to prioritize them. Ms. Groya replied that this exercise is not to try to prioritize. If someone feels a goal should be deleted, it can be removed, or if a word or task should be added, it can be discussed.

Ms. Groya began the review on Page 1, with the first item, Organization, Operation and Maintenance Goal, and proceeded to Guideline 1. Ms. Holmes suggested an addition to the tasks for researching and obtaining funding options and to implement the steps, which would include reviewing the structure of budgets for other nearby recreational departments.

Mr. Wichert stated that after task 1.1, he thinks there is a need to develop a special events coordinator. Ms. Holmes added that Ms. England's title is way too broad to have a decent running program, and this area does need support to take on that responsibility as it should not be the role of the Committee. She explained that Mr. Pace has got a great program rolling, but someone is needed to oversee it now on a day-to-day basis. Mr. Petsch agreed that someone could follow up on the guidelines and solicitations.

Ms. Holmes also felt that this individual could also oversee fundraising projects and recruiting more volunteers. They could also assist with documenting volunteer time. Mr. Wichert asked if it would be a contract position. Ms. Groya stated that discussion is necessary to determine how the department will be operated in the long run with regard to feasibility and stability. Contractual employment was further discussed, along with funding for such a position.

Ms. Groya proceeded to Guideline 2 on Page 1. Mr. Schultz stated that he had a task to add. He would like to see a business plan template developed that lists certain parameters and this would be used before implementing a new program or building a new facility so that the Committee would understand the long-term costs. The concert may not be the best example, but it is a smaller scale project and as it grows, as some point, this information needs to be plugged in somewhere. If there is a special events coordinator helping for part of the year, they could also be running that system. Ms. England agreed that this may be seasonal help. She added that when she and Pat attended a conference, a maintenance manual was discussed. This would tie in with that suggested task. The manual could provide tracking of the various jobs that are performed throughout the year, such as when and where pesticides are applied, and

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this could also incorporate the trail ways map, the forestry plan, et cetera. Ms. Holmes also agreed that there is a need to develop better record-keeping, especially for the league records, and that may tie into the manual or project pages too.

Mr. Schultz discussed organization and league budgets at length. Ms. Holmes discussed tracking volunteer hours and matching funds. Ms. Groya and Mr. Wichert discussed what volunteers may do, and what would need to be done by staff. Ms. Groya noted that Guideline 6, Task 6.2 could be improved tracking of volunteer time.

Mr. Berkheiser inquired about 4.2 for installation of cement pads. Ms. Groya stated that it was a comment from the focus group and she asked if the Committee agreed. She believed it was suggested by maintenance staff as it is challenging to cut the weeds around the bleachers, benches and porta johns. Ms. Holmes added that she also had protective structures here. They do however prefer the cement pads because they can bolt the porta johns down. Open discussions continued regarding whether or not there was a need for cement pads, a potential increase in liability, and vandalism issues. Mr. Berkheiser was not sure that this should be a task. Mr. Schultz stated that the porta johns are only one of the three things listed.

Ms. Groya continued to Guideline 5. Mr. Schultz discussed potential interest in having gates for all park entrances. Mr. Petsch stated that the idea was reviewed but would require having staff open them every morning, and close them every night. Open discussions ensued regarding the gate at Dodge Park, and using gates as a tool to deter vandals. Ms. Groya would add a bullet to investigate gating of the parks.

Mr. Berkheiser noted that references made to Eagle Scouts here, and throughout the document, should be changed to say only "Scouts" as items may apply to several of the different scouting organizations. Ms. Groya would change that, and would also add surrounding businesses to the list, such as Home Depot. This would also be an area to add a statement about improved tracking of volunteer hours.

Ms. Groya proceeded to Guideline 7. Ms. Holmes asked if there was a need to develop the Q&A because it goes specifically with the management plans, tracks what needs to be done each year, and it is being started in four of the parks. Mr. Wichert stated that he would like to see this expanded to all of the parks, and with an emphasis on Mill Race. Ms. Groya would add this as a task.

Mr. Berkheiser initiated conversation regarding Task 8.7 and asked if a lot of paper is used for the brochures. The brochures were suggested by Sue Gross and could be made available at the Township Hall. Mr. Berkheiser suggested that it be in PDF form and available online. That way, someone can print a copy if they want. It can also be updated regularly and sent electronically. Open discussions continued regarding the Senior Newsletter, brochures, and trail maps which related back to Task 8.2. Trail way signs/maps posted within the parks were also addressed and various way-finding interpretations were discussed including scanner codes.

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Mr. Schultz discussed Task 8.5 with regard to signage about projects and acquisitions with millage funds. The stipulations regarding promoting the millage were reiterated.

Ms. Groya proceeded to Page 2, and reviewed the language for the Partnerships and Collaboration Goal. Open discussion continued regarding the different organizations, liability insurances, income, grant funding, the historical significance of Byers, volunteer work, et cetera. Ms. Groya would massage the language in this area, include reference to historical sites and create more detailed tasks.

Ms. Holmes referred back to Guideline 1 and suggested tasks there referencing partnership agreements to be reviewed and maintained, and developing a manual for programming to include policies and procedures. Ms. Groya stated that 1.1 could be review and update partnership agreements. Ms. Holmes agreed and added that 1.2 could be related to programming, and 1.3 could be to develop and maintain a quality assurance process for tracking volunteers and projects.

Ms. Groya stated that Task 2.2 includes partners' involvement in development of the property. Ms. England cautioned that the tasks should not be too specific. Ms. Holmes agreed that the tasks should not be tied down to a specific relationship.

Mr. Schultz stated that he recalled when each Committee member was assigned not only to a park, but also to each league or group. He wondered if it would make sense to do that again to have continuum with dialogue between the Committee and the organizations. Ms. Groya added that she was thinking along the same lines with having each Committee member be a keeper of each goal. Mr. Schultz added that someone also needs to be a liaison for pathways and providing updates and possible suggestions for what section should be connected next, et cetera. Mr. Pace discussed the park steward arrangement that currently exists. Ms. Holmes stated that Barbara and Kristen would be willing to come to a meeting in January to discuss pathways.

Ms. England stated that Tom would like the Committee to prioritize the pathways and that he had included the map insert for the Master Plan. Discussions continued regarding pathway connections and setting aside time for the Committee to carefully review and prioritize these goals. Ms. Holmes discussed SEMCOG, and added that Barb and Kristen know the history and future of the trail way plans. Mr. Schultz requested that the trail map be enlarged for the upcoming Committee review.

Ms. Groya reiterated Guidelines 1 through 5 on Page 2. Ms. Holmes suggested an addition to 4; develop and maintain an interactive communication process and hold a minimum of one joint partnership meeting per year to discuss projects, goals and strategies. Open discussion continued on Guidelines 4 and 5 regarding sharing of information and resources with the Planning Commission, Library, Historical Study Committee, et cetera. Ms. Groya discussed changes to Guideline 6.3 and adding Mill Race as a historic site. Ms. Holmes agreed because Mill Race is included in the grant spreadsheet.

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Ms. Groya proceeded to Page 3 and reviewed the language of the Facility Development, Improvement and Expansion Goal. Ms. Holmes addressed the word renovating in the goal description and suggested adding “or improvements” here because of the language used for the millage. Upon review of Task 1.1, Mr. Berkheiser agreed with the need to develop a master plan and concept plan for Wise Park, but he questioned the source for the list of activities in the second sentence. He explained that there is also a need to develop a concept plan for each activity as it relates to each park. Ms. Groya replied that she was trying to capture a multitude of activities here that she had received through feedback. Mr. Schultz was unsure about listing some activities here and not others. The park should be considered for everything. Ms. Groya would strike the second sentence. Ms. Holmes agreed that this would provide consistency.

Mr. Wichert asked if there would be anything for Long Park. Ms. England stated that it was supposedly done a long time ago. Ms. Holmes agreed. Mr. Petsch added that boat and canoe rentals had been talked about. Ms. Holmes stated that there was a grant for the park. Mr. Wichert suggested that a task be added to update the master plan for Long Park.

Ms. Groya reviewed Guideline 2 and explained that this language was pulled from input of the Committee and was consistent with the survey commentary. Open discussion took place regarding concept plans, Byers and acceptance of the preservation report. Ms. Groya stated that the Oakland County preservation report is mentioned in the document a couple times. Mr. Wichert stated that a concept plan will eventually be needed for Byers. Ms. England stated that it needs to be revisited. Ms. Holmes suggested that Mill Race and Byers concept plans could be reviewed as a unit which has not been done before.

On Task 3.1, Mr. Schultz reviewed the language and suggested changing it to include improved entrances, then 3.5 could be eliminated. Ms. Holmes discussed Task 3.3 addressing lighting issues and wondered if it was appropriate here or elsewhere, as it would have to be an ordinance amendment. Mr. Wichert stated that it is being considered. Ms. England stated that security lighting in the parks would be under the purview of the Committee.

On Guideline 4, Mr. Wichert asked if restroom facilities would be maintained by the maintenance crew. Ms. England replied yes, and it would be built by the Parks and Recreation Department. Mr. Wichert added that although these would be great to have, more people would need to be hired to take care of them.

Ms. Groya proceeded through Guideline 5 and 6. Mr. Berkheiser commented that he does not see the Committee looking at anything yet for lacrosse until an organization is established and a contract can be executed.

Open discussion ensued regarding the precedent set with organization agreements. Mr. Schultz suggested a task for conducting detailed reviews of the current

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organizations and their practices. Contracts, schedules and field usage were discussed at length, along with development of future agreements and availability of fields for additional activities. Mr. Petsch discussed combining fields such as using the adult softball outfields for soccer. CW3 soccer fields were discussed along with their need for 10 fields for tournaments and future expansions of their league. Discussions continued regarding usage and development of Dodge Park and Wise Park, concepts, potential activity designations for each park, and related funding. There is a need to create best-in-class facilities by completing parks, one at a time, to make sure that each one is safe, secure and outstanding.

Other lengthy topics of discussion included the various parks, expansion of fields, tracking field usage, management and enforcement, and other alternatives for partnerships such as lacrosse, or a dog organization with the potential dog park. Mr. Schultz discussed how the times have changed since agreements were established 25 or 30 years ago, and how new agreements should be vastly different from those executed originally.

Ms. Groya proceeded to Guideline 7. She explained that the text was cutoff on Task 7.1 and clarified the language here to include staying engaged with the Township Board to continue to incorporate green space, trails and public gathering space. She then proceeded to Guidelines 8 and 9. Mr. Wichert noted the comment about continuing to look for property and discussed possible acquisitions in the northwest section of the Township. Ms. Groya reviewed the language which includes land adjacent to existing parks and for currently underserved areas.

Ms. Groya proceeded to Page 4 and reviewed language for the Programs Goal. On Task 1.2. Discussion of community gardens took place and Ms. Groya clarified that residents rent the plot to use as a vegetable garden, and then keep it maintained. Potential locations were reviewed.

On Guideline 2, Mr. Wichert discussed the addition of a farmer's market. Ms. England added that a senior member had also suggested holding an Arts, Beats and Eats festival. Open discussions continued regarding these two topics, vendors, scheduling and implementation.

On Guideline 3, Mr. Berkheiser inquired about campout nights. Ms. Holmes discussed Civil War reenactments. Mr. Pace discussed encampments and the scouting organizations. Ms. Groya stated that campouts could also include family nights and be in conjunction with an event like Movie in the Park. Camping was discussed at length and this would be a special event that would require Board approval. On Task 3.1, Ms. Holmes requested that the language be changed to state community groups.

Mr. Wichert discussed applying for a historical sign for Byers. Mr. Berkheiser inquired about issues with the application. Mr. Pace felt this should be pursued again. Ms. England explained the issues that had been encountered. Ms. Groya would incorporate text regarding pursuing historical signs for historical sites. Ms. Holmes discussed the

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local history project, which is a cooperative web program involving the Library and the Historical Society for developing and educating society on the history of the community.

Ms. Holmes discussed Guideline 4 and past and future featured art displays at Township facilities. She added that the hospital displays a lot of framed art created by kids.

Ms. Groya reviewed Guidelines 5 and 6. Ms. Holmes stated that she had a comment under Guideline 6 tasks to incorporate seeking out articles and photos from leagues for future newsletters and for the Facebook page, and encouraging groups to submit information for the electronic sign.

Mr. Schultz discussed Task 2.3 and inquired about the possibility of having an amphitheater to address the increased interest in concerts. Ms. England stated that this is scheduled for Dodge Park. Mr. Schultz felt this was a priority considering the significant attention the events have received.

Ms. Groya proceeded to Page 5 and reviewed language for the Accessibility and Connectivity Goal. Mr. Berkheiser asked if this is looking to make improvements, or simply stating what the Committee wants to do. Ms. Groya discussed Task 1.1 as an example and explained that the map would be used to delineate the priorities. After the last meeting, there was discussion about whether or not this should include what you want as a Township which goes beyond just Parks and Recreation, such as with the development of non-motorized facilities. This can involve improving crosswalks with pushbutton signals, and incorporates the trails and sidewalks to different types of facilities, schools and commons. Mr. Schultz asked if this would involve the Planning and Engineering Departments. Ms. Groya replied yes. Ms. Holmes added that Kathleen Jackson would be involved, and that she would ask Barbara to join the Committee in these efforts. Extensive open discussion continued regarding pathway projects, strategies, connectivity, related costs and available funding.

This led to the addition of Task 2.2 to assess and develop trail connections from the northwest section of the Township. Ms. Holmes stated that she does not think this was included on the map as proposed. Mr. Schultz asked if this was at Proud Lake. Ms. Holmes replied yes.

On Guidelines 3, Ms. Holmes discussed benches, and expanding emergency markers as there is only one. Ms. England stated that the Eagle Scout did that and GPS'd everything. Ms. Groya stated that she could add to 3.4 or change the wording accordingly. Mr. Berkheiser asked if the Multi-Lakes Trail goes through the conservatory. Ms. Groya replied no, it goes through Maple Glen and Hickory Glen. Ms. Holmes noted that this sentence could say to all Township trails.

Ms. Groya asked if Guidelines 4 and 5 were okay, and the Committee agreed. She proceeded to the final page, Page 6, and reviewed language for the Funding Goal.

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Mr. Berkheiser inquired about where the language came from in 2.4. Ms. Groya stated that it was in the last plan and she recalls people discussing remnant parcels. Discussions took place regarding Township owned properties versus property purchased by the Parks and Recreation Department, the Sleeth Road property, Fox Links, a tiny piece of land by the dam, and a site in Golf Manor. Wetland and dam issues were discussed. Ms. Groya would change the text at the end of 2.4 to include, for those purchased with Parks' money.

Mr. Wichert discussed developing a wish list for the parks. Ms. Groya stated that this would be under capital improvements. Mr. Wichert added that people could donate money to the projects if they would like. Ms. Holmes felt that this would go along with Guideline 3 to fund development strategy plans. The wish list could be part of the strategies and diversification of funding streams is necessary.

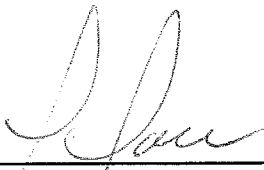
Mr. Schultz initiated discussion of funding for trails specifically. Open discussion continued and the Committee agreed that there is a need to have a study/investigation of the budget in comparison to that of surrounding communities. Ms. Holmes reiterated the need for development of guidelines for functional policies and procedures for the Parks.

The next Parks and Recreation Meeting will be Monday, September 23, 2013 at 7:00pm.

ITEM 2: ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Wichert, supported by Petsch, to adjourn the meeting at 7:24pm.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY



Peter Pace, Vice Chairperson, on behalf of
Dick Zemmin, Secretary