

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GARFIELD
PARKS and RECREATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
September 12, 2022**

Roll Call of Commission Members:

Present: Denise Schmuckal, Fern Spence, Chris DeGood, Chris Remy, Art Bukowski

Absent and Excused: Andy Hoort, Lynn Fricke

Staff Present: Planning Director John Sych, Deputy Planning Director Steve Hannon, Parks Steward Derek Morton, Park Steward Sean Kehoe

Others Present: Tonya Lewandowski, Environmental Consulting & Technology (ECT)

Call to Order: Chair DeGood called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance: Recited by all in attendance.

1. Public Comment (6:01)

None

2. Review and Approval of the Agenda – Conflicts of Interest (6:01)

Schmuckal moved and Spence seconded to approve the amended agenda to add item 9.a. Five-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan – Update for 2023-2027.

Yeas: Schmuckal, Spence, Bukowski, Remy, DeGood

Nays: None

3. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes – August 1, 2022 (6:02)

Spence moved and Schmuckal seconded to approve the meeting minutes of August 1, 2022.

Yeas: Spence, Schmuckal, Bukowski, Remy, DeGood

Nays: None

4. Correspondence (6:03)

None

5. Reports

a. Commissioner Reports (6:03)

Schmuckal indicated that the Township Board has begun discussions on the 2023 Township budget.

b. Staff Report/Updates**i. Parks Steward Report (6:04)**

Morton and Kehoe provided an update on the following:

* *Silver Lake Recreation Area* – Recent activities: irrigation repairs, tennis courts resurfacing, and aeration of the multi-purpose field.

* *Commons Natural Area* – Mostly maintenance, graffiti removal, new trail maps with point numbers will be posted soon.

* *River East Recreation Area* – Bids have been awarded for the Phase 2 projects, and the pavilion roof was recently sealed.

* *Boardman Valley Nature Preserve* – Mostly maintenance; new posters installed in the kiosks with pictures from drone flyover.

* *Miller Creek Nature Reserve* – Removed downed trees, covered graffiti, and replaced several boards along boardwalk.

* *Kids Creek Park* – Potentially acquiring plantings by this fall.

* *Buffalo Ridge Trail* – Installed a picnic table along the trail.

* *Additional* – New kiosk posters for all parks.

6. Old Business**a. PD 2022-89 – Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area Design Plan – Update (6:15)**

Hannon gave an overview of the August 10 open house at Kirkbride Hall. There was a lot of general support for the direction of the project, and the open house was covered by the local media. Lewandowski from ECT presented an overview of the design concept including the proposed trail system, trail types, trailhead designs, hub designs, amenities, projected timelines for completion, and cost estimates.

Commissioners provided comments throughout the presentation on each of the design concept elements. Comments on the proposed trail system included connecting the mountain bike trails into a loop, reducing some of the redundant trails to avoid overcrowding the site, and keeping the Cedar Cathedral trail connection. Commissioners also provided feedback on the proposed trail types. They supported having a portion of the trails on the flatter part of the site designed for high accessibility but also commented on accessibility challenges and steeper grades elsewhere on the site.

At 7:40 pm, Schmuckal asked to pause this item and to discuss item 6.b. This discussion is summarized under item 6.b. below. Schmuckal left the meeting at 7:45 pm.

Commissioners also asked about how parking capacity at each trailhead was determined and recommended reviewing these to ensure that the proposed capacity is appropriate for each trailhead. They also considered whether the proposed total length of trails was appropriate or too intense for this site. Lewandowski indicated there are about 10 miles of existing trails and 10.5 miles of proposed trails. The proposed trails would be constructed more sustainably and following contours.

Lewandowski also provided an overview of initial cost estimates. Staff and Commissioners discussed potential timelines and determined 2023 would most likely involve smaller projects for engineering and design for the Commons, with larger projects starting in 2024.

b. PD 2022-90 – 2023 Priority Parks Projects Discussion – (7:40)

Commissioners discussed the proposed list of 2023 priority parks projects. Staff stated that the Township Engineer provided updated cost estimates for River East Phase #3 projects. Morton and Kehoe also recommended an equipment purchase. The amount for the Commons Design Plan was proposed to be kept at \$100,000 and Staff indicated any implementation of the Design Plan will need to involve funds from multiple sources.

Schmuckal moved and Bukowski seconded TO RECOMMEND to the Township Board the list of priority Parks and Recreation projects for 2023.

Yeas: Schmuckal, Bukowski, Remy, Spence, DeGood

Nays: None

7. New Business (8:24)

None

8. Public Comment (8:24)

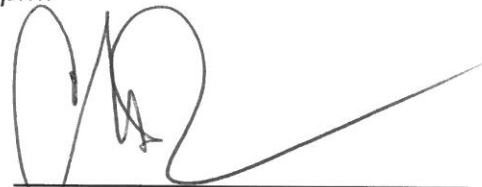
None

9. Items for Next Agenda – October 3, 2022 (8:24)

Hannon discussed the Township's Five-Year Parks and Recreation Plan and stated that the DNR confirmed the Plan expires on December 31, 2022. To be eligible to apply for grants, an updated Plan must be submitted to the state by February 1, 2023. Staff provided comments on the current Plan and what data would need to be updated, as well as a projected timeline for updating the Plan. This item will be discussed in more detail at the next meeting, along with further updates on the Commons Natural Area Design Plan and how it can be included as part of the Five-Year Parks and Recreation Plan update.

10. Adjournment

DeGood adjourned the meeting at 8:30 pm.



Chris Remy, Secretary
Garfield Township Parks & Recreation
Commission
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