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PENINSULA TOWNSHIP PARKS COMMITTEE

March 22, 2023 7:00p.m.

Regular Committee Meeting

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order** at 7:00 p.m. by Skurski
2. **Pledge**
3. **Roll Call** Milliken, Murphy, Zebell, Dahl, Skurski, Chown Township Clerk, Cram Township Planner (Excused Butler).
4. **Approve Agenda** The Bowers Harbor Park (BHP) Pavilion request was moved to next month's meeting. A Bowers Harbor Park update including playground equipment status was added after Business Item E.

Dahl moved to approve the agenda as amended with a second by Chown.

Approved by consensus

5. Brief Citizens Comments (for agenda items only)

Nancy R. Heller 3091 Bluewater Road: in referring Skurski's response to the Droege letter under the Consent Agenda, I would like to know if you have the formal document permitting swimming at Kelly Park and liability insurance from the township.

Chown: we have made the request for the permit, but have not heard anything back. I told Skurski to hold off until we have the concept plan for the boat launch figured out and know for certain whether or not we're going to be able to apply for the Waterways Grant this year. The deadline for the grant is April 3, 2023. Once we have applied for the grant, I will then contact the agency makes the decision regarding swimming this summer.

Heller: I just want there to be clarity for the public. Right now people may think this is a done deal, which clearly it is not. It is important for the public to know this.

6. Conflict of Interest None

7. **Consent Agenda:** any member of the committee, staff, or the public may ask that any item on the consent agenda be removed and placed elsewhere on the agenda for full discussion.
 - A. Minutes from December 14, 2022 and February 23, 2023
 - B. Peninsula Township Parks Bench Policy
 - C. Correspondence from Ronessa Butler "Peninsula Twp Parks in MyNorth Red Hot Best 2023 Top 10"-March 2, 2023
 - D. Correspondence from Timothy Droege "Haserot Boat Launch"- March 6, 2023
 - E. Correspondence from John Nedlo "Parks and Trails" – February 27, 2023

Milliken moved to approve the Consent Agenda with a second by Zebell. Approved by consensus

8. Business

A. Non-motorized Trails-Shipman and Wilson

Susie Shipman 14735 Shipman Road: this is a citizen group formed while working on the master plan. A contractor did a citizen survey for us and one of the major takeaways was the need to install safety features for pedestrians, pavement marking signage, and safe linkage with bike paths and trails. Out of the initial group a smaller group has formed as a working committee. We are not holding public meetings at this time. We are here just to keep you in the loop and share our draft mission and vision. Shipman and Wilson gave a PowerPoint presentation (see at end of minutes).

Shipman: we have made connections with MDOT, who has been helpful in putting up signage at the intersection of Bluff and Gray Road and pedestrian signs at Archie Park road crossing. Other organizations contacted are this parks committee, TART Trails, Cherry Capital Cycling Club, Norte, and TC Track Club. As the peninsula never had a railroad, trails cannot just be created where the old tracks would be. So we are going to have to work with private land owners. This is the vision we are holding for a future with non-motorized trails on the peninsula.

Todd Wilson 782 Neahtawanta Road

Wilson read through the recommendations for rural communities from the northwest Michigan Regional Non-Motorized Transportation Plan. This project of non-motorized trails has been done by many communities and we are following an established plan. "Typically, rural homes exist on two lane county roads with fast traffic and minimal to no shoulders for safe use by pedestrians and cyclists." The transportation plan gives a variety of recommendations that apply to the peninsula. Linking existing locations such as the library, township hall, local businesses, the school, and parks is one way to begin building a system. Cherry Capital Cycling Club has two well established routes (see PowerPoint). Examples of other infrastructure solutions were presented.

~~B. BHP Pavilion Rental~~

C. PNA Update-**Murphy:** the fundraising for the purchase of the Meeker property is going forward thanks to the conservancy and the township putting forward some of the over collected funds from the original Pelizzari millage. We are trying to leverage this effort with keeping some of the other parcel owners in the loop. Wildwood Meadows Association has been favorable. Representatives from Wildwood, township staff, conservancy staff, and me are meeting tomorrow just to keep things moving. The other item is the boardwalk in the hemlock wing. We have had the loose access point used by many people who are just walking in that access point. I had been talking to a longtime owner, but they sold the property. The new owners are open to discussions, but they are younger, with young children, and transitioning careers. It looks like there will be further discussions in September.

D. Maintenance Communication/Capacity-Skurski

Chown: I am acting as the parks maintenance point person for now. I met with Bob Wilkinson, the parks maintenance person. We established the following procedure for maintenance requests. Call or text Bob and relay the request via email to Chown. Copy Achorn, Skurski, and Zebell. An individual has come forward to act as a backup maintenance person if Wilkinson cannot get to the request. We are just waiting on his liability insurance. If this is a health or safety issue, do whatever is necessary to get this resolved. You can always call the fire or police department, and notify the township immediately. **Zebell:** to make the email stand out, I recommend we make the email subject line as MAINTENANCE. This will help get some attention given how many emails we all receive each day. The deputy clerk confirmed park committee members can do alternations within their abilities and are covered by the township liability insurance policy.

E. Agenda and Packet Schedule-Chown: beginning with the May 24, 2023 meeting, the agenda and packet will be created in the clerk's office. The procedure is in the packet. Once the 2023-2024 meeting schedule has been set, the specific dates when items are due will be sent to all of the park members. The agenda and packet will be published to the township website and sent to all committee members.

Added to agenda- Bowers Harbor Park Update-Zebell

Zebell: I have placed in the packet a Bowers Harbor Park Update. The playground equipment is being delivered tomorrow or Friday and the boxes are odd shaped and will probably not fit in the building we had in mind. The playground equipment is tentatively scheduled for installation sometime in May.

The committee discussed the list.

9. Citizen Comments

Nancy R. Heller 3091 Bluewater Road: I am concerned how you are going to secure the playground equipment if it is left outdoors until May. The help yourself is rampant, not just in the township, but all over. Do we have an extra camera? The police officers need to patrol there. You will have some staff there, correct? I recommend you have tarps put down on the ground. You need to check with Bob Wilkinson concerning a circular route; he may have a practical solution. I am not sure why the hoses are definitely out at Bowers Harbor Park. There are optimum times for agricultural spraying. It depends on humidity and the outside temperature. Those optimum times are also good conditions for runners, walkers, and bikers. Please notice how many orchards are planted to the property line. There have been times I have had to stop spraying at my home farm as there are runners or bikers. Good education would really pay off for all concerned. I want to thank everyone on this committee for their hard work. I think the same concerns in the closure of Bluff Road will occur on many of the possible plans for the non-motorized group. Just consider the problems with emergency vehicles and snow removal. Mary Beth, every time I drive by Archie Park, I thank you. I am still concerned about the insurance at Kelly Park regarding swimming. Please make sure the township is insured and the public is informed.

10. Committee Comments

Dahl: there have been multiple incidents in the last few days of deer being killed and left on peninsula roads. The DNR will not pick them. The county road commission used to come and get the deer out of the road right of way. The road commission states they are not doing this anymore. This is a serious health and safety hazard. Citizens may stop to pull a deer off the road and this creates a dangerous situation for an accident. The supervisor and the trustees need to be made aware of this and take whatever action is required to prevent this hazardous situation.

Zebell: a resident got in touch with me to report there are big ruts in the Bower Harbor Expansion section. The citizen believes these ruts were created by heavy equipment driving through the area to Bowers Harbor Vineyard. There used to be a gate that belonged to the park and the gate is no longer there. The vineyard is allowed to use it as agricultural access. The gate needs to be reinstalled with a lock so it is only accessible by the vineyard and township staff. Eric Dreier has offered to go and remove the stakes on Monday.

Cram: this is a condition of the SUP for the Bowers Harbor Vineyard Chateau. The road can be used for agricultural access and park access. My Monday is free and I would like to go with Dreier and take some pictures. I meet with the enforcement officer and supervisor every week, so I will discuss this with them.

Peninsula Township
Parks Committee March 22, 2023 7:00 pm
Lola Jackson Recording Secretary

11. Adjournment Murphy moved to adjourn with a second by Milliken. Approved by consensus.

Adjourned at 8:40 p.m.