

PENINSULA TOWNSHIP
13235 Center Road, Traverse City MI
49686 Phone: 231.223.7322 Fax:
231.223.7117
www.peninsulatownship.com

PENINSULA TOWNSHIP PARKS COMMITTEE
Regular Committee Meeting July 14, 2024
MINUTES
7:00 p.m.

1. **Call to Order** by Skurski at 7:00 p.m.
2. **Pledge**
3. **Roll Call** Milliken, Murphy, Zebell, Skurski, Dahl, Chown- Township Clerk, Cram- Director of Planning and Zoning, Westmoreland- Planning and Zoning Administrator
4. **Approve Agenda** Skurski added one item to the agenda. which was the introduction of Tori Westmoreland, the new Planning and Zoning Administrator.
Westmoreland: I am excited to be here and look forward to working with you all. I have worked in the public sector since graduation from Arizona State University with a degree in urban and environmental planning and a minor in sustainability.
Cram: once Tori gets settled in, she will be the staff liaison between the township and the parks committee.
Murphy moved to approve the agenda with a second by Milliken. Approved by Consensus
5. **Brief Citizens Comments (for agenda items only)** None
5. **Conflict of Interest** No one
6. **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 June 26, 2024 Meeting
 - B. Correspondence from Brent Wheat "Weekly Grand Traverse County Beach Report"
 - C. Correspondence from Sarah U'Ren "Microbial Source Tracking Program This Summer"
 - D. Correspondence from Luke Kreykes and the Northwest Michigan Invasive Species Network
 - E. Correspondence from Erik Carpenter and the GTC Health Department regarding Sanitary Survey for Archie Park

Milliken moved to approve the consent agenda with a second by Chown.

Approved by Consensus

Business

- A. Kelley Park Boat Launch Update-Chown

Chown: every month we have an update call with Beckett & Raeder regarding progress with the Kelley Park Boat Launch. Cram and Westmoreland were on the call we had today. I was gratified to receive a verification that Angie Bouma, who is a respected botanist with the Grand Traverse

Regional Land Conservancy, agreed to come out to Kelley Park and do a plant inventory for us. I am meeting her at Kelley on August 1, 2024 from 1-3 p.m. to walk the property. You are all invited to come. The plan for the land was to build massive condominium complexes and a road was put in and earth was moved. The water levels were very high, and a wetland formed. The development never happened. EGLE doesn't care about the history or the fact it is a very compromised wetland with a road currently bisecting it. Angie Bouma can be helpful in so many ways and to make a comparison from 2017, the last time a plant inventory was done, until now will provide valuable information.

Cram: we are on this project because of the wetland. As proposed, the parking layout will bisect some of the wetlands so it will not meet the required 25-foot setback, and an approved variance will be needed. Working with the ZBA to demonstrate the unique circumstances with this public amenity will also help the process we will eventually go through with EGLE. The ZBA should hear this case in August or September to keep the project on track. The ZBA will want to know why Beckett & Raeder choose this design. There are various significant reasons why and every decision that's made has a domino effect. One of the big goals is to do as little moving of sand as possible. The chosen path is where there is already tremendous wetland, disturbance with the bisecting road, but it is also a shorter distance that might require less dredging than if they move it elsewhere.

Chown: EGLE is becoming more difficult to appease when disturbing a wetland. You used to have to mitigate or pay for credits for a certain amount and now the cost has doubled. EGLE now has 3 categories of what a wetland is and what makes it a true wetland. They do soil and vegetation tests, but EGLE is now viewing this as a wetland. there are issues to deal with in terms of storm water runoff and how to protect the wetland. There are many considerations with how to do this in a thoughtful, sensitive way that is not unattractive and affordable. Christy Summers is our engineer at Beckett & Raeder. She has yet to have a project she designed turned down, so she's certainly in it to be successful and she's got a good team. I think Summer plans to attend the ZBA meeting via zoom and answer questions.

B. Bowers Harbor Parking and Restricted Use -Skurski/Zebell

Skurski: the topic of standing water was received from several tennis and pickleball players. After a rain, the tennis and pickleball courts had some low surface spots with standing water. A couple of sweep brooms or squeegees should work and the cost would be about \$100. We don't want people slipping and falling.

Chown: the tennis court striping has been done. I want to thank Brian Peace from Elmers. The special orange paint had to be ordered, the gentleman who actually puts the paint down was busy, and the scheduling was difficult due to rain.

Skurski: the issue of parking and restricted use will come up under Business Item C.

C. Pavilion Usage by Tom Groups, New Permit Type or Policy- Zebell/Skurski

Skurski: there was a request from a bus tour group with 42 people to stop at Bowers Harbor Park. They wanted to know if there were any restrictions in using the facilities and did they need a permit. I reread all of our ordinances and there is a fee involved regarding pavilion use.

Cram: the parks ordinance says under Section 4 that any group of 50 or more people must secure a permit and go before the town board. A group under 50 wanting to reserve a facility must apply and pay a fee. If a group wants to take a chance on a pavilion not being used, they can. The township takes reservations June through September.

Skurski: I would like a motion to open the reservation system year round with the current fee system. If there are over 50 people, they need a permit and there is a \$200 fee. Residents get a 50% discount. With an event having fewer than 50 people, a reservation is \$100. Refunds are given if the event is

cancelled 30 days before the set date and no refunds are given if cancelled after 30 days.

Murphy made a motion to have the current policy of reservations and fees to be extended to year round with a refund if the reservation is cancelled 30 days prior to the event with a second by Chown. Approved by Consensus

Skurski: I will relay the change of policy to Piehl, who is in charge of taking park reservations.

D. Bowers Harbor Park Signage Discussion-Skurski

The committee discussed the signage at Bowers Harbor Parle Some parks have signage reading parking is for park use only. The signage needs to be more specific. Cars have parked on the grass near pavilion one or blocked the entrance to the walking path. People need to know where they can park, and this is not clearly delineated. Without clear signage, enforcement is not possible. One sign has already been ordered reading "To Maintain Access for Emergency Vehicles No Parking Within the Cul-de-Sac." Wilkinson to install the sign. Dogs off leash and playing in the sports fields can leave fecal material and some owners may not pick this up. This remains an ongoing concern. Signage at the beginning of the 2 entrances to the walking path reading 'please-pedestrian traffic only' was agreed upon. The signs are going to be green and white.

Milliken made a motion for the need to create a budget for 9 signs; 1 for the soccer field, 1 for the remaining enclosed fields, signs on the 2 entrances of the baseball, tennis and pickleball courts on each entrance saying these are designated for sports only with a second by Murphy. Voice Vote Aye- Dahl, Skurski, Zebell, Murphy, Milliken

Nay-Chown

Approved

E. Dog Park Re-visit-Zebell

The committee revisited the topic of having a dog park. The parks committee theoretically is open to the possibility of a dog park. However, this effort must be citizen led.

Chown: if there's a group-of citizens interested, just like the pickleball court group, the committee supports this exploration. We may have a location, but there is no money to do it. Almost every community in this country is putting in dog parks and we can learn so much from their experience and process.

The committee agreed to continue discussion on this subject going forward.

7. Citizen Comments None

8. Committee Comments

Skurski: the idea of parks being managed by volunteers and not having a budget is not a workable situation. The increased fees collect from events such as the Meijer Festival of Races and the Bay Shore Marathon should go right to the parks and not go through the budgeting process. The committee is in need for another member and I suggest getting someone from the historical society. We have been working with them lately on signage and technically the buildings fall under parks. The society does most of the work in the management of these historic properties. Now is a time when we should look at how the parks committee is structured. There are parks, recreation, and historic. The lighthouse was part of the parks when this body was a commission. The tours of the lighthouse generate \$80,000-\$100,000 a year and could fund the parks. There is an outdated rule saying all money needs to go back to the historic lighthouse. I suggest this be reconsidered. I have gone through two 5 year plans for the parks, which is 10 years. In reflecting upon this, I am resigning from the committee effectively tonight.

Members of the committee thanked Skurski for his years of service and stated he will be missed.

Peninsula Township
Parks Committee Regular Meeting
July 24, 2024 p.m. 7:00 p.m.
Lola Jackson Recording Secretary

9. Adjournment Milliken moved to adjourn with a second by Chown.

Approved by Consensus

Adjourned at 9:10 p.m.