

PENINSULA TOWNSHIP  
13235 Center Road, Traverse City MI 49686  
Phone: 231.223.7322 Fax: 231.223.7117  
[www.peninsulatownship.com](http://www.peninsulatownship.com)

**PENINSULA TOWNSHIP PARKS COMMITTEE**

**July 26, 2023**

**Regular Committee Meeting**

**MINUTES**

**7:00 p.m.**

1. **Call to Order** by Skurski at 7:00 p.m.
2. **Pledge**
3. **Roll Call** Murphy, Butler, Dahl, Skurski, Zebell, Milliken, Chown-Township Clerk
4. **Approve Agenda** Skurski requested reports from members regarding maintenance completed or still needed as item G and signage and rules for the pickleball courts as item H.  
**Milliken moved to approve the amended agenda as stated with a second by Dahl.**  
**Approved by Consensus**
5. **Brief Citizens Comments (for agenda items only)**  
**Nicholas Wiker-** introduced himself as the new Planning and Zoning Administrator; he reports to Jenn Cram, the Director of Planning and Zoning.  
**Kent Rabish 13383 Bluff Road-** I am here to answer any questions regarding the progress of the pickleball courts and signage.
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 June 28, 2023
  - B. Correspondence from Murielle Garbarino – July 18, 2023 “Removal of Bittersweet”
  - C. Correspondence from Dave Murphy – July 14, 2003 “PNA Hemlock Wing/ Signage”
  - D. Correspondence from William Stott – July 8, 2023 “OMP Mission Point Park Volunteer Work”
  - E. Correspondence from Grant Parsons – July 15, 2023 “Summary of Meeting in Hemlock Wing of PNA”
  - F. County Health Department Water Sampling Results- July 6, 2023, July 13, 2023, July 20, 2023
  - G. Skurski read correspondence from Sharon Nedlo received July 23, 2023 “Donation” into the record (letter at end of minutes).  
**Murphy moved to approve the amended consent agenda with a second by Chown.**  
**Approved by Consensus**
8. **Business**
  - A. Pavilion Reservation and Special Event Applications for BHP Celebration – Zebell  
The date of the celebration has been scheduled for September 30, 2023. Zebell gave a brief description of the planned activities around the basketball, pickleball, the play structures, and tennis courts. Amendments to the application requests now include October 1, 2023 in case of rain and both Pavilions 1 and 2.
  - B. Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grants/ARPA Money/Parks Projects Survey/

**Bowers Harbor Expansion Beckett & Raeder Plan- Chown**

**Chown-** the township manages the 800 acres of park land with a budget of approximately \$200,000. Christy Summers of Beckett and Raeder is a skilled engineer known for designing boat launches and park amenities. Christy in 2016-2017 created the concept plan for the Bowers Harbor Expansion Plan and the plan was approved by the town board. There was never enough money to begin the expansion. Christy wrote the waterways grant application for Kelly Park. The township has 6 months from the date I received the letter from the DNR and signing it meant we have the 50% matching money. The township does not have half the money. I have written a grant request to Grand Traverse County. Residents here are members of the county and pay 14.35 % of their taxes to the county. Christy is going to write the concept plan for Kelly Park and will update the concept plan for Bowers Harbor Park Expansion. There is a BATA transportation sign at Bowers Harbor Park and we are investigating putting the service back in place if possible. The trust fund looks for improvements of infrastructure and trails and ways for people to enjoy the areas. In the survey conducted by LIAA and residents want new bathrooms and trails at Bowers Harbor Park The trust fund is not looking to fund invasive plant removal. The trust fund works on a system of points. Certain items like trails or bathrooms get you more points. The trust fund requires a 25% match, but requests get more points if the matching funds are higher. One item we have against us is we are considered an affluent area; this gets us less points.

**Fred Woodruff 4824 Forest** I am wondering why we cannot use the existing road at Kelly Park and has the township thought about having a commission, which can raise funds subject to township approval? Township residents have voted for 20 plus years an additional 2 mils to protect the agricultural lands.

**Chown-**Christy had a reason for not using the existing road and she convinced Isiah Wunsch and me. The township cannot drive an increase of this type of funding for parks. This has to be done by a citizen committee. Citizens were the drivers of the PDR concept, educated the public about the idea, wrote the ballot language, got it vetted and collected enough signatures to get it on the ballot. This happened as well in the PDR vote of 2022 extending the program for another 20 years.

**Murphy-**As a private citizen, I can work on creating a ballot measure for a parks millage, but not as a representative of this committee. The decision was made for the 2022 election not to have park millage ask as well as the PDR ballot measure. The other option is to become a charter form of government. An informal information session on the pros and cons of charter versus general law forms will be held on September 7, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. at St. Joseph's Catholic Church.

**Skurski-** is any of the remaining ARPA money available for any of these projects?

**Chown-** we have about \$500,000 left of ARPA money and we can use some of this money to match grants. This money needs to be spent by December, 2024 and we cannot wait another year to do a trust fund grant. This ARPA money can be leveraged to fund more projects when used as a match.

C. PNA Hemlock Next Steps – Murphy

**Chown-** heavy foot traffic through the hemlock portion is putting these trees in jeopardy. A raised boardwalk is needed. I have one grant request out for \$50,000 and another one due September 1, 2023.

**Murphy-** there are 3 reasons for the boardwalk, 1) to save the hemlocks, 2) to keep people from forming alternative trails, and 3) the issue of people trespassing on adjacent properties.

D. Vegetation Removal Policy/Archie Park Match – Murphy/Milliken

**Skurski-** Northwest Michigan Invasive Species Network (INS) is coming out to do invasive bittersweet treatments at Archie Park. INS will also make an invasive species survey at Bowers Harbor Park and Expansion and Kelly Park. If you are approached by someone wanting to work in your park and you are comfortable with their skill level, let them proceed. Just let Becky (Chown) and Mike (Skurski) know.

**Milliken-** the group is asking for an additional \$30.

**Skurski-** this was in the budget and is not a problem.

**Murphy-** John Pelizzari came out with his tractor and pulled the autumn olive out by the roots. This would have taken volunteers about 10 hours of work. John has offered to bring his tractor to other parks if times can be arranged.

E. Park Signage Requirements/Logo for all Parks – Murphy

**Murphy-** the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy will be helping us with signage. I met with Steve Lagerquist and Erin Schug at Pelizzari. The conservancy wants to put a bigger kiosk near the main parking lot and a mini-kiosk at the cul-de-sac area, all new maps and signs, and we could use the same style of sign at all of the parks. Becky (Chown) has been working on a logo and I would hope this could be used throughout the township. The signage should be installed in Pelizzari by October, 2023.

The committee discussed potential logo ideas and the required content for each park. The lighthouse has its own logo as well as the historic buildings, yet these are still under the parks designation.

F. BHP Wrap-Up of Projects/Butler Transition/Pickleball – Zebell Includes Business Item H.

**Zebell-** Ronessa (Butler) is taking over the recreational side of Bowers Harbor Park and I am now handling the expansion. I am continuing to oversee the watering of the trees and the playground for now. I want to publicly thank Michel Bekkers, Russ and Deb Larimer, Katie and Paul Greier, Ronessa Butler, Lynn Stepenson, Allan Jankowski, and Bill Catinella for watering the trees. We have received the information from the pickleball group regarding suggestions for the signage at the new courts. Becky (Chown) and I were invited to Bowers Harbor to learn more about pickleball, which we did. An issue is whether 1 tennis court should have an overlay for additional pickleball courts.

**Milliken-**the tennis courts have been in such bad shape for so long, maybe once they are resurfaced more tennis players may come back to play. The tennis courts would not have double stripping as they do now.

**Chown-**in looking at the list the pickleball people sent us regarding signage, a portion states club play for the Bowers Harbor Pickleball Club on Mondays and Wednesdays from 4-8 p.m. and involve all 6 courts and 4 courts on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Friday. There would not be any courts available on Monday and Wednesdays during those hours.

**Skurski-** my question is do we want to block out times people can play? This seems like one would need to be a member of the club to play on those days and hours.

**Kent Rabish 13383 Bluff Road-** we are not an official club. We are a group of people who have been playing for a while. It is no fun for people who are just learning. This is why we have a beginners group we are training to move up.

**Milliken-** the sign says the courts are closed for club play.

**Zebell-** I see the logic in having people of similar skill level playing together. I hear about people getting hurt playing pickleball and I see how this could make things even more challenging.

**Chown-** I see a problem with the word “closed” and would rather have the sign read open for intermediate and advanced play. I will come up with alternative language. The signage needs to be informative and not restrictive.

**Rabish-** we can definitely help with the celebration. Several courts can be for beginners to learn more about the game; we can provide the paddles and balls. Other courts can have some very advanced players, who are fun to watch.

**Murphy-** this is a public park and we do not want to get calls from people who want to play during those times you have the courts. It sounds like you are going to accommodate players who just show up.

**Rabish-**yes, this is a growing sport and people want to have fun. I appreciate you asking questions. (Rabish leaves)

**Zebell-** the issue of striping one of the tennis courts with pickleball lines has not been settled. We need to make a decision as the lines are going in before our next meeting.

The committee discussed the pros and cons of leaving the 2 new, resurfaced tennis courts without pickleball striping or to have 1 court used for pickleball.

**Milliken made a motion to have the east tennis court lined for 2 pickleball courts with a second by Murphy.**

**Approved by consensus**

**G. Maintenance Updates and Current Needs- Skurski**

**Skurski-** the baseball field needs to be sprayed for weeds. No one has been playing on the fields this summer.

**Milliken-** the hole near the swing set at Archie Park requires filling. The hole has grown quite large and needs additional dirt. The bicycle repair station is being delivered to Archie Park and I have contacted Bob Wilkinson to do the installation.

**Dahl-** the veteran’s monument at the state park is continuing to lose rocks. The flag pole and flag need replacement.

**Chown-** I suggest you contact Rudy Rudolph, who runs the legion hall.

**Zebell-** the vault toilet closest to the new pickleball courts still does not have a latch. The old sand box needs to be removed.

**9. Citizen Comment- None**

**10. Committee Comments**

**Murphy-** Eric Dreier called to tell me he walks in Bowers Harbor Park 5 days a week and he regularly sees Michele (Zebell). Dreier wants to publically acknowledge Michele’s dedication to the park. Susan Piehl, the township office manager, sent out a link to the Wall Street Journal, which listed the light house park and Haserot Beach as places to visit. I am wondering why we are still actively promoting the light house.

The committee discussed the history of how the lighthouse came to be structured and the pros and cons of continuing to run the lighthouse as a revenue center. The lighthouse did some major

renovations with \$100,000 borrowed from the township. Then Covid happened. The way the loan was going to be repaid was to continue having the gift shop, tours, and lighthouse keepers. This topic should go to the town board for discussion.

**Skurski-** do we need someone to attend the next town board meeting on August 8, 2023?

**Chown-** yes, we need to talk about the celebration at Bowers Harbor Park, the work being done by Christy Summers of Beckett and Raeder, which will then be submitted with a grant request to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant for 2024.

**11. Adjournment Dahl moved to adjourn, seconded by Milliken. Approved by consensus**

**Adjournment at 9:59 p.m.**

**From:** Michele Zebell <[mzebellparks@gmail.com](mailto:mzebellparks@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 23, 2023 10:26 PM  
**To:** Marge Achorn <[treasurer@peninsulatownship.com](mailto:treasurer@peninsulatownship.com)>; Margaret A. Achorn <[marge.peninsulatruster@gmail.com](mailto:marge.peninsulatruster@gmail.com)>; Becky Chown <[clerk@peninsulatownship.com](mailto:clerk@peninsulatownship.com)>; Mike Skurski <[Parksmike49686@gmail.com](mailto:Parksmike49686@gmail.com)>  
**Subject:** Donation

Sharon Nedlo sent a wonderful email then followed it with a donation to Bowers Harbor Park.

Good morning, Michelle!

I was walking our dog, Sam, in the park this morning and the thought occurred to me that we should help with the maintenance of the property that we are so lucky to have nearby. My husband and I (and Sam) moved to the peninsula in November 2020. John takes Sam for a walk every morning regardless of what's going on outside...and BH is in their rotation. I've had to sub in the past three mornings and have loved watching Sam enjoy the park and the DD trails. Hence the thought..... we should give back!

If you would, please let me know how to make this happen!

Thanks,

Sharon Nedlo

On Tue, Jul 18, 2023, 9:21AM sharon nedlo <[sharonnedlo@gmail.com](mailto:sharonnedlo@gmail.com)> wrote:

Good morning, Michele! Thanks for your follow up!

I appreciate your offer to meet, but I don't want to take up too much of your time. I'm planning to send \$500 .... so I can mail a check if that works for you! Just let me know.

Thanks.....and have a great day!