

**PENINSULA TOWNSHIP PARKS COMMITTEE**  
**July 27, 2022**  
**Regular Board Meeting**  
**7:00 pm**  
**MINUTES**

1. **Call to Order** by Skurski at 7:00 p.m.
2. **Pledge**
3. **Roll Call** Zebell, Dahl, Shanafelt, Murphy, Milliken, Skurski, Karczewski. Excused Chown.
4. **Approve Agenda** Milliken moved to approve the agenda with a second by Shanafelt.  
**approved by consensus**
5. **Brief Citizens Comments-for items not on the agenda** None
6. **Conflict of Interest** None
7. **Consent Agenda:** any member of the board, 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 22, 2022
  - B. Correspondence from Muriel Garbarino: NW Michigan Invasive Species Network
  - C. Correspondence from Dave Murphy: Aug 3 Volunteer Day for Invasive Removal from PNA
  - D. Correspondence from Chuck Lombardo: Trail Mowing at Ridgewood & Murray Trails
  - E. Correspondence from Brent Wheat: Beach Monitoring Report for July 7<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>
  - F. Correspondence from Jeff & Kerry Malkiewicz: Use of ARPA funds for BHP Playground**Murphy moved to approve the consent agenda with a second by Karczewski.**  
**approved by consensus**
8. **Business**
  - A. Memorial Park Bench Request – (Andrew & Gwen Moroff) Committee discussed the placement of the bench in Bowers Harbor Park. **Karczewski moved to approve the request with a second by Milliken.**  
**approved by consensus**
  - B. Tennis/Pickleball Court Resurface (Skurski/Zebell)  
**Skurski:** at the last meeting we discussed the resealing of the tennis and pickleball courts for between \$4,000 and \$6,000. That was pulled from the last town board agenda. In talking with Achorn today, the resealing was bundled in with grant money for work on the volley ball court. My personal opinion is maintenance does not score many points when applying for grant money. The volley ball court did not rank very high in the last several public surveys.  
**Karczewski:** I just want to add the township board approved our budget and now we are not able to get this budgeted project done.
  - C. Prioritization of ARPA Funds (Skurski)  
**Skurski:** asked Shanafelt, who is now a trustee to talk about the prioritization of the ARPA funds.  
**Shanafelt:** nothing has happened regarding the ARPA funds. The winery lawsuit court case is August 18, 2022 so that has taken up most of the town board's time right now.  
**Karczewski:** My understanding is all of the grants were applied through Wayne Schmidt's office and all of Michigan State funds have been allocated in the new budget. I did not see any money provided for any of our requested projects.

- D. BHP Playground Quotes from Sinclair Recreation (Zebell) Committee discussed the various options for playground equipment using specific designs and bids from Sinclair Recreation. Option One costs \$285,845 and was favored (all plans and prices are in the packet for the various options).

**Chris Truck** 1117 Quaker Valley Drive

I would like to get copies of these designs and what finally is going to occur. This park is dangerous. If we are taking our grandchildren to the park, my husband goes the night before to spray for the bees now in the tunnels. After seeing a child fall one day on a step, my husband went down and nailed the step. We have now started going to Bryant Park. It proved an embarrassment for our park as 6 of the couples will no longer take their children or grandchildren to Bowers Harbor Park because it is not safe. Where the children play is nothing but holes, mud, weeds, and now the bees.

**Murphy:** I would suggest your husband not take matters into his own hands. We have a grounds person. I worry for your liability in making your own repairs. It would be better to report these concerns as you are doing here tonight so we can take care of these issues.

**Karczewski:** when I see this playground project, I like to see a path to complete the plan. I am not seeing that here. Are we saying this is our priority for ARPA funds?

**Skurski:** The top project from citizen surveys was the bathrooms at the park and then the playground equipment.

**Milliken:** let's postpone the bathrooms by using porta-potties to get safe playground equipment.

**Karczewski:** Carter Oosterhouse had a program called Carter Cares for Kids. I do not know if it is still going. He deals directly with Game Time, who provides the playground equipment. His organization raises the funds locally. Carter for Kids would gain credit for the fundraising and if we use some of the ARPA funds as well, this project might be accomplished.

- E. Review of Committee Structure (Skurski) This group has been together for about 3 years and we are having some members leaving and some new ones coming onto the committee. So I would like each member to give a comment on what went well, lessons learned, what needs to happen in going forward, and what we accomplished.

**Shanafelt:** The LIAA work set a good baseline structure of what was going on in the township. There are new members on the town board and hopefully this work carries forward. The volunteer effort has come together at Archie Park and PNA and I see more volunteer opportunities. The biggest issue for this committee is not having a fixed, spendable budget and it seems the money for this group is arbitrary.

**Dahl:** I have signed up for another 3 years working with this committee. The biggest frustration is not having money to do anything. The maintenance of the bathrooms at locations is poor and there needs to be accountability for this work getting done.

**Karczewski:** The biggest accomplishment was the work with LIAA. The other immense win was for the PNA purchase. I am wondering if we need 7 people as a committee to get big things done. This seems like a group of thoroughbred race horses unable to get out of the gate. The issue is lack of funds and when we do have a small maintenance budget, we cannot seem to get it spent. Sometimes it takes a second or third approval to spend the money allocated to us and there needs to be streamlining of this budget process.

**Zebell:** The work with LIAA was excellent as was the playground equipment at Haserot Beach. The thing missing is a person at the township who makes sure all of the maintenance work is getting done, especially with the bathrooms at all the parks. The little bit of money we did spend went into Archie Park and improved the park considerably. Hopefully, some of the ARPA money will go into our parks.

**Murphy:** Back in 2018, I spearheaded a proposal to eliminate the parks commission. Having two elected bodies manage the parks process over 10 years had not resulted in much being accomplished. The dysfunction within the parks commission and conflicts regarding funding by the town board made progress difficult. My vision was this committee report directly to the town board, had people who

care about parks, and a parks manager within the township monitoring the maintenance. There is a structural problem that remains and this as the biggest frustration. The group is handcuffed with no budget. The LIAA work confirms what we know about the parks. I am really excited about this playground equipment, if this comes to fruition.

**Milliken:** This is a wonderful group of people. There were 4 members of this committee who participated in the volunteer day at Archie Park. There is too much work for the committee members to be the backup on the parks. It is a structural problem which points out how much we need a parks manager. The parks are a huge asset in this community and cannot be run by volunteers alone. I often hear the parks are in bad shape and I tell them we don't have any money. As the peninsula is considered a "wealthy" township, people find it inconceivable there is not money for parks. Without funding, we sit around and talk about stuff and nothing happens.

**Skurski:** I see 3 things. I see maintenance and administration as the same thing. Our issue is one of capacity. We have more work than we have people. The budget process is completely busted. If we get a budget, we should be able to spend the money without needing another approval, which just delays getting anything completed. We need to create another 5 year plan and make sure the financial piece is there for future projects. We don't need expectations higher than capabilities allow.

**Shanafelt:** How many of you are here because of the money we receive? (no one raises their hand). So if that money went to a person making about \$40 per hour, we could probably gain 5 hours a week to have a person help with park priorities. We could vote and make it an actionable item. We are a general township and that is the least large form of government you can have in the state of Michigan. It is designed to not do any government. So a parks committee would probably not exist. That is why there is not enough money. When I joined the town board as a trustee, one item I would like to see is to change the structure of the township.

**Karczewski:** from being the secretary for this committee, I see a whole layer of government. The massive packets, the minutes, the quorums; it does not make sense to have a 7 person board which costs \$22,000. Ideally, this would be on the ballot in 2024 to make this into a charter township.

**Shanafelt:** if this group decides to go from 7 to 5, make sure to lock in the cost of a 7 person board.

- F. Parks Rep for next Town Board Meeting: Skurski to attend the next town board meeting to summarize the review from the committee structure.

## 9. Citizen Comments

**Nancy R. Heller** 3091 Blue Water Road: I have to be careful in how I phrase this. I don't know where this township board is coming from. Call it general appearances. You look at all the weeds in front of the township hall. I don't know how to yank their chain to invest in the parks, which is their own property. Be careful with any ARPA money and know when the money needs to be spent. The town board is pushing for matching grants. Grants don't happen overnight. Being so busy is not an excuse. You heard the women talk about the unsafe playground conditions. We are so concerned about lawsuits and that is a lawsuit just waiting to happen. These are not criticisms, they are concerns. This town board needs to know people who get up and speak are not the enemy; they are voicing concerns. I don't understand all the statues and procedures required. I do know there is a tremendous amount of duplication to get to an end product. Armen, as a new trustee, I would recommend you go over the invoice list every month. You are going to have a heart attack. The priorities need to be looked at. Our economy is in deep do-do and so are the municipalities and townships. We need to have patience. This is coming from me and just me. There is a real lack of communication. I have lived here 53 years. I have experienced a tremendous amount of committees, boards, and commissions. Let's try to get back to a sense of community. Residents are not the enemy. Wineries are not the enemy. I have always believed we need check and balances. We do need rules, but with a level playing field, not what I call

Peninsula Township  
Parks Committee  
July 27, 2022 7:00 p.m.  
Lola Jackson Recording Secretary

the overkill mechanism. I want to thank Beth and Armen for their service to this committee and wish them good luck.

**10. Board Comments Zebell:** is this Adopt a Park Program still in existence?

**Murphy:** the first request was to the Grand Traverse Land Conservancy, which was Pelizzari, a park they helped to make happen. The conservancy did step up, but I am not aware the program continued.

**Zebell:** the invasive species is getting bad at Bowers Harbor and I am looking into using goats or other options for dealing with the poison ivy. I am not sure the amount of money available with the committee turning over their money would be enough to get all the tasks we did to get done.

**Skurski:** the committee will need a new secretary. This committee has a secretary that does the work as a volunteer. Other boards and commissions have employees of the township creating the packets. This structure needs to be discussed. I want to thank Beth for all her hard work.

**Murphy:** I want to get it on the public record that PDR money has never been used for Pelizzari.

**11. Adjournment Karczewski moved to adjourn with a second by Shanafelt. approved unan**  
Meeting adjourned at 8:49 p.m.