PENINSULA TOWNSHIP PARKS COMMITTEE

Special Meeting
September 22, 2021
6:00 p.m.
Township Hall
MINUTES

1. **Call to Order** by Skurski at 6:00 p.m.
2. **Pledge**
3. **Roll Call** Shanafelt, Dahl, Skurski, Murphy, Zebell, Milliken; Excused Karczewski; also present Chown, town board clerk and Achorn, township trustee.
4. **Approve Agenda** Milliken moved to approve the agenda, second by Murphy **Passed Unan**
5. **Brief Citizens Comments for items 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 August 25, 2021
   B. Correspondence
      a. Lola Jackson – dog loop
      b. Dave Murphy – signage at Bowers Harbor Park
      c. Dave Murphy - tree decision at Pelizzari Natural Area
      d. John Hyslop and Bill Hyslop - signage at Haserot Beach
      e. Dave Murphy, Armen Shanafelt, and Steve Lagerquist - new fencing at Pelizzari Natural Area

Four corrections made to the August 25, 2021 minutes.
Zebell moved to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Dahl. **Passed Unan**

8. **Business**
   A. Rescheduled park planning work session with LIAA (Matt Cowall and Barry Hicks)
   Cowall presented the document Parks Operating Budget Recommendations- Draft (see at end of minutes) followed by a discussion.
   B. Update from township board meeting (Skurski)
   Requested $4,000 for new fence materials at Pelizzari, which was approved. Requested $4,000 and engineering support to repair the pickleball court surfaces, which was approved. Reported on the future MDOT removal of the damaged tree on the border of Pelizzari and Center Road, the need for work on the baseball field if there is to be little league in the spring, and the high interest in a dog park.
   C. Maintenance update (Wilkinson) not in attendance
   D. PNA tree removal and fence update (Murphy)
   MDOT is paying to remove the damaged tree and invasive species on the border of Pelizzari along Center Road. The Pelizzari parking lot had new split rail fence installed by volunteers.
   E. Dog parks – Terry McDermott-not in attendance and Skurski will reach out to reschedule her.
9. **Citizen Comments** None
10. **Board Comments**

Zebell: Pickle ball nets can be repaired. Eric Dreier contacted her regarding setting up a fund where people can donate money for tree plantings at Bowers Harbor Park. This park was selected as it has irrigation.
Murphy: Will invite a volunteer coordinator from Friends of Sleeping Dunes to come speak with the parks committee regarding their program.
Skurski: Murphy and Zebell will attend the town board meeting on October 12, 2021.
11. Adjournment Zebell moved to adjourn with a second by Murphy. **Passed Unan**

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Peninsula Township – Parks Committee 09/22/21

Parks Operating Budget Recommendation - Draft

Peninsula Township reached out to the Land Information Access Association (LIAA) to request assistance with developing a Parks and Recreation Budget that would allow for the effective and efficient operation of the Township park system. LIAA worked with the Peninsula Township Parks Committee (the Committee) to better understand the history of the parks, what Committee members feel is working well, and what they feel needs improvement or could be done differently. Several thoughts for consideration were shared and are summarized as follows:

- Current staff are doing everything they can, but they need additional help to keep up with parks maintenance and management, especially as park usage continues to grow and Kelley Park is improved with a boat launch.
- There needs to be a person on the township's staff who is primarily responsible for the coordination of maintenance, volunteers, capital programs, and the continued operation of the parks system.
- Additional funding is needed to bring and keep current facilities up to date on repairs. Opportunities for additional parks funding may include:
    - Reprioritizing parks needs and allocating existing township revenues to maintenance and operations.
    - Consideration of a dedicated parks operating millage.
    - Exploring opportunities to fund capital projects through alternative sources such as grants and donations; professional assistance may also be needed to submit and manage grant requests and donations.

Funding – Current

LIAA reviewed and analyzed the past two fiscal year (FY) budgets provided by the Township Deputy Treasurer. The two years reviewed covered:

- 04/01/19 – 03/31/20
- 04/01/20 – 03/31/21

In addition to these budgets, LIAA was also provided documentation on the breakdown of costs for maintenance for each park or facility that is included in the parks budget for each fiscal year. The township tracks expenditures under two different "Fund" codes (the first three digits) and three different "Department" codes (the last three digits) within its budgeting software:

- 208-751: Parks (BHP/Haserot/Archie)
- 208-212: Pelizzari
- 508-000: Lighthouse

While all three codes have expenditures, only Parks (208-751) and Lighthouse (508-000) have revenues. LIAA worked within the existing Township budget framework when making recommendations.

Funding – Past Fiscal Year Analysis Methodology and Development of Recommendations

One-time revenues or expenses may occur during any given FY. This could be the awarding of a grant, the installation of new playground equipment, or a major repair due to deferred maintenance or natural causes. LIAA adjusted for these occurrences in both the revenues and expenditures provided to develop an average annual dollar amount that the Township currently counts as spending on its parks. This includes all Township owned/operated parks. Additionally, some adjustments were made to account for the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused a disruption in the normal revenue stream, particularly for Bowers Harbor Park and Mission Point Lighthouse Park. The assumption was made that revenues would eventually return to pre-pandemic levels.

Another outlier is the $145,000 received for a tower lease. The assumption was made to remove this from the parks budget as it is currently not being used in whole to fund park activities.

- Total Estimated Average Annual Revenues for all Parks: $136,832
  - B/H/A/P $18,467
  - Lighthouse $103,365

- Total Estimated Average Annual Operating Expenditures for all Parks: $150,868
  - B/H/A $83,604
  - Pelizzari $4,015
  - Lighthouse $63,249

Based on pre-pandemic funding levels, Lighthouse Park generally produces enough revenue to maintain its own operations with a surplus each year. It is LIAA's understanding that all revenues and expenditures for Lighthouse Park must stay with that park facility budget and cannot be reallocated to other facilities due to certain requirements associated with the park and funding resources. This leaves the remaining parks with average annual operating revenues of approximately $18,467 and expenditures of $87,619.

Funding – Recommendations

As has been demonstrated to us by the Committee and others during the course of this study, if the Township wants to be able to proactively manage and maintain its more than 823 acres of parkland and park facilities, more resources will need to be secured in terms of both labor and funding.

Parks are generally not revenue-generating resources, so the fact that the Township has found a way to balance the unique needs and costs of the historic lighthouse with revenues generated by the facility is commendable. The Township could decide to reallocate some revenues from the Lighthouse over to broader parkland operations, though doing so could risk the sustainability of the Lighthouse operation if unexpected costs or losses arise (such as occurred during the pandemic) after Lighthouse funds had been depleted (in essence leaving the Township to pay Paul by robbing Peter).

Personnel & Maintenance – Overview

Across all of the parks, we would recommend an increase in annual contractual services and/or additional funding for Township personnel. Tasks and skill sets that would be beneficial include:

- Part-time employee or contractor who is the go-to staff person for the coordination of maintenance, volunteers (including the Parks Committee), capital programs, and the continued operation of the parks system.
- Additional maintenance help.
- Professional grant writing assistance, especially for capital projects.

Personnel & Maintenance – Current

The township presently spends $61,166 on Contractual Services in all of the parks along with $12,946 in Repairs and Maintenance. This is predominantly for one dedicated contractual employee who is responsible for all routine and special maintenance in the parks as well as several other properties the Township owns and maintains.

Personnel & Maintenance – Recommended

LIAA is recommending that the Township budget an additional $60,000/year for parks personnel (shown below under Contractual Services) and an additional $13,000/year for Repairs and Maintenance (predominantly for materials and equipment) to speed up needed activities at all parks.

For the purposes of the personnel estimate, we based the additional budget on the cost of one full-time employee as follows:

- $20 per hour for 2080 hours per year = $41,600
- 1.4x multiplier (standard used by US SBA) for full-time employee per year = $16,640
- Total budget for full-time equivalent employee(s) or contractor(s) = $58,240

This gives the Township the option to consider one full-time employee to handle all of the functions listed above (parks administration, additional maintenance capacity and grant writing). In the alternative, those functions could be divvied up among a mix of different people or parties, beginning most importantly with a part-time dedicated administrator who can manage the remaining budget to contract for additional services, e.g.:

- Part-Time Parks Administrator, employee or contractor – $20 per hour for 1040 hours per year = budget of $20,800
- Additional maintenance, grant writing and other contractors as needed – budget of $39,200

Cost Across All Parks	Current	Recommended	Difference
Contractual Services	$61,166	$121,166	$60,000
Repairs & Maintenance	$12,946	$25,946	$13,000
TOTAL	**$74,112**	**$147,112**	**$73,000**