

PENINSULA TOWNSHIP
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**Peninsula Township
Parks Committee Regular Meeting
November 17, 2025
MINUTES
7:00 p.m.**

1. **Call to Order** by D. Murphy at 7:00 p.m.
2. **Pledge**
3. **Roll Call** Bruning, Gartland, Zebell, D. Murphy, Caviston, Chown, Excused-C. Murphy
4. **Approve Agenda** the minutes for the October, 2025 were not in the consent agenda and will be available for the December, 2025 meeting. ~~Chown moved to approve the agenda as amended with a second by Bruning.~~
Chown moved to approve the agenda with a second by Gartland
Approved by Consensus
5. **Brief Citizen Comments (for agenda items only)** None
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 the October 20, 2025 Parks Committee Meeting-not there
 - B. Email Correspondence from Bowers Harbor Pickleball Group
 - C. Budget, as of October 31, 2025**Chown moved to approve the consent agenda as amended with a second by Gartland.**
Approved by Consensus
8. **Business**
 - A. Friends of the Peninsula Parks Conversation
 1. Tracy Barrilleaux of the Friends of the Sleeping Bear Dunes gave a presentation on the Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes. One important item for this group is having a mission statement. New activities need to be in line with stated mission. The organization provides tools and guidance for volunteer recruitment and retention, including training manuals, emergency procedures, and clear communication channels. Friends receive a monthly newsletter and a mid-month contact, all via email. The friends' website is where volunteers log their hours and activities.
 2. Representatives from Friends of the Peninsula Library- Madelyn Ryan-vice president, Bill Ryan, Robbin Stott, membership chairman of the friends of the library, and William Stott.
Madelyn Ryan 2364 Twin Eagle Drive- the library is membership driven rather than by a volunteer group. The friends do fund raising events, the largest being the book sale, which raises about \$10,000 and the gala, which raises about \$2,000. Memberships range from \$15 a year to a lifetime membership if you are over 65 for \$100.
William Stott 3193 Ogidaki Trail- the idea of a friends' organization is outstanding and needed. The idea of adopting a trail to walk is a great idea. I have spent most of my time cutting down autumn olive and spraying poison ivy at the Bowers Harbor Natural Area. I do work at other parks as well. After a one-day seminar, a person can be certified to carry a hand saw. I

contact Wilkinson when there are downed trees. I take plenty of pictures to send to members of this committee. Having a yellow vest on is a visible reminder of someone who is connected to authority in the parks. All dogs suddenly appear on leashes.

Maura Sanders Peninsula Township Supervisor- the township survey came out extremely favorable for parks, but not as favorably for a potential parks millage, but it was still greater than 50%. It was around 68% online and 46% from phone respondents. This leads back to the creation of the friends group discussion. Parks millage is great, but there needs to be some more public education on what exactly that money will be going towards. Is the timing right now to try for something like a millage? I don't think so. I'm being honest and transparent. Having the friends group established and up and running, that really shows strong footing for the parks. We have township owned assets with the Peter Dougherty Society, Old Mission Lighthouse Keepers, and the Old Mission Historical Society. All three of these groups are running their own fundraising arm and work to supplement all the projects they want to do there on behalf of township property. Parks are grand and big. We wouldn't just be looking for charitable donations from folks within the township. The township has already created a separate charitable contribution for parks. Parks have a donation line item in the budget. These three societies that are attached to the township assets have their own 501(c)(3). They have their own independent bank accounts and they have is the agreement between themselves and the township. Thank you.

Next Steps- continue to explore forming a "Friends of Peninsula Parks" group to support volunteer coordination, fundraising, and park stewardship. Ideas to get people involved can be adopt a trail, adopt a park, and investigate methods to have a communication network for providing volunteer opportunities at the parks. Consider the structure, separation from the committee, and legal aspects of forming a 501(c)(3). More discussion at future meetings.

B. Parks Donations Discussion

1. Donation Boxes-the committee is investigating installation of donation boxes in high-traffic parks (e.g., Pelizarri, Bowers Harbor Natural Area, Haserot) and assessing costs, security, and maintenance responsibilities. The committee considered feasibility, cost, and security concerns before implementation of QR codes or online donation options. It is important to include donation information on park signage and newsletters to encourage contributions.

2. Donation Reports from OMPHS, Dougherty House, and Mission Point Lighthouse-in meeting packet.

3. Parks Wishlist - develop and distribute a parks wish list in the next newsletter to highlight specific needs and encourage targeted donations.

Next Steps-review and possibly replicate successful fundraising programs from other organizations such as commemorative bricks, annual appeals, galas, and adopt a trail.

C. Old Mission State Park Management Plan Update- C. Murphy continued to work on the management plan and Bruning is taking on the signage for the park.

D. Bowers Harbor Natural Area 2% Update-Zebell has provided a draft of the materials going to the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians in the packet and the final report is expected around the end of November, 2025.

E. Signage Updates

1. Archie Park Design Draft- in the packet, with some corrections needed.

2. Bowers Harbor Natural Area-Zebell will reach out to the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy to make a connection there and has information from Beckett & Raeder to share.

3. Old Mission State Park-Bruning is continuing to work with C. Murphy regarding signage at the DNR owned state park, which is leased and managed by the township.

4. Common Sign Language- a sub-committee of Zebell, Bruning, and Gartland will meet before the December, 2025 meeting to make sure there is consistency, clarity, and inclusion of relevant contact information and rules (see the common sign language chart in the packet).

F. Budget Requests

The pickleball group requested a \$268.74 reservation system reimbursement. This was not in the budget and the committee will coordinate with subcommittees for future budget needs.

Caviston moved to approve a \$268.74 reimbursement for the pickleball reservation online system with a second by Bruning.

Roll call: aye-Chown, Caviston, D. Murphy, Zebell, Gartland, Bruning. Approved Unam

The pickleball group has done an excellent job in maintaining and managing the courts.

Next Steps- clarify and plan for unbudgeted expenses for the upcoming year.

9. Citizen Comments

Maura Sanders Peninsula Township Supervisor- this isn't the friendliest of comments, but it's something that I want you guys to listen to and I'm sharing it with you first and then it'll be going out to the other committees and commissions. Personal safety and safety in the township are the top priorities for everybody, all our residents and our visitors. We just saw what went down in Traverse City over the weekend. That young man was a resident of our township and his grieving mother is a resident as well. It's a reminder for everybody. If you see something, say something, pick up the phone, call 911. If it doesn't strike you as an emergency, but you just kind of have a gut feeling, you can always call the non-emergency member. You are all in appointed positions under the township umbrella, and obviously the township has a lot of emotion right now regarding the winery lawsuit. I'm seeing things posted online and reading things that I don't think I ever would have thought some people would have those thoughts, let alone put out there for the public to see. You guys are the parks committee, but you just never know. I will relay in the last couple months there was an actual verbal assault on an appointed member within the township, one of the committee members and that verbal assault was committed by an actual winery owner, which is 100% inappropriate and inexcusable. We did end up calling our deputy sheriffs to come in and talk to the person who was on the receiving end of this verbal assault. And there was also a witness, and that witness did write a statement and gave it to the sheriffs' department. So, there is a record of it and I just want to remind all of you, you know, be vigilant, but don't ever think that something weird or oddball like that should just go unnoticed. Report it. And if you feel uncomfortable having a spotlight shining on it, you can always call me and I'll be more than happy to come and sit and talk to you. We'll sort this out together because my job is to make sure that everybody feels safe here in our township. If you have questions or ever want to talk about any of this stuff offline, you know where to find me. I'm always going to be able to answer, so, keep your heads on, keep doing what you're doing. You guys are doing a good job and safety is first for you, for our residents, and our guests in the township.

10. Committee Comments

People who want to use chain saws in the park must be trained. All volunteers need to have a waiver on file with the township. Consider having a simple method to report issues in the park, such as a downed tree. More is discussion needed.

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November 17, 2025 7:00 P.M.
Lola Jackson Transcribing Secretary

11. Adjournment Chown moved to adjourn the meeting with a second by Caviston.

Approved by Consensus

Meeting adjourned at 9:24 p.m.