

Packet
December 17, 2024,
Parks Committee Special Meeting

Consent

Minutes

PENINSULA TOWNSHIP

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**Peninsula Township Parks Committee
Regular Meeting
November 20, 2024
MINUTES
7:00 p.m.**

1. **Call to Order** Zebell called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.
2. **Pledge**
3. **Roll Call** Caviston, Dahl, Zebell, Murphy, Milliken, Chown-township clerk.
4. **Approve Agenda** Dahl moved to approve the agenda with a second by Milliken. Approved by Consensus
5. **Brief Citizens 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 October 23, 2024, Regular Meeting
 - B. Extension of 2% Allocation Grant from the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa IndiansTwo items were corrected in the minutes. **Chown moved to approve the consent agenda as amended with a second by Milliken.** Approved by Consensus
8. **Business**
 - A. Introduction and Welcome to New Parks Committee Member Torey Caviston (Zebell)
Caviston has joined the parks committee and looks forward to being an active participant.
 - B. Kelley Park Boat Launch Update (Cram and Chown)
Consumers Power installed electric cabling throughout Kelley Park in anticipation of a housing development. The project never occurred. The DNR purchased the property after the electrical equipment was already installed. A portion of the installed electric infrastructure is used to power occupied residential homes to the north of the Kelley Park property. Our engineers are working to make minor changes to help mitigate the costs to move some of the electrical lines. A discussion with the engineers will occur after the Thanksgiving holiday.
 - C. Discussion of Need for Formal Request to Township Board to Change the Name Bowers Harbor Park Expansion Area to Bowers Harbor Natural Area (Chown)
Members of the parks committee agreed with the name change from Bowers Harbor Expansion Park to Bowers Harbor Natural Area. The committee wanted to differentiate between the active recreational area of Bowers Harbor Park and the passive use of the expansion area. However, this name change needs to be approved by the town board. There has been a change to the meeting agenda structure of the town board. There is now a category for governmental updates, and this is where a parks committee update can occur. Murphy volunteered to represent the parks committee at the next town board meeting on December 10, 2024. Murphy will recommend the name change and a definition of what

constitutes a natural area. Steve Lagerquist of the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy will be contacted for a definition of a natural area. Pelizzari Natural Area has no lighting, no paved parking, no ball fields, and no organized activity. Only the walking trails are mowed. For the Bowers Harbor Expansion land, the issues of a dog park could arise as well as the current annual staging of the Bayshore Marathon in the parking area. Large areas are mowed for the marathon. In 2008, Christy Summers of Beckett & Raeder created a plan for the expansion property. This included a bathroom along the Devil's Dive Road perimeter, buffering vegetation, and a picnic shelter with a grill. The committee decided to wait before making the recommendation of the expansion to a natural area until the 2008 plan was reviewed. Dahl brought up the trash compactor facility further down Devil's Dive Road, where the road going through the compactor property needs repair. This property is owned by the township. Wilkinson will be contacted to access the situation.

D. Discussion of Draft "Nearby Recreation" Sign/Map and Icons to Potentially Be Used in New Township Park Signage (Murphy, Zebell, and Chown)

The committee went over the Nearby Recreation Sign/Map, which showed owned and managed township parks, Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy properties, and the state parks (the icons and map are on pages 12-14 in the packet). The first park to have signage will be Pelizzari Natural Area. The sign will be a large square with about 15 placards. These pieces will contain the history of the park, the hemlock wing and its importance, keeping dogs leashed, maps, and both activities available and those discouraged. These are modeled after the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy signage. The Murray and Ridgewood trailheads should be included on the map. Archie Roadside Park, Mission Point Lighthouse Park, and Old Mission State Park are the correct names for each of these parks.

E. Discussion of Parks Committee Structure, Role, and Next Steps (Zebell and Murphy)

Maner Costerisan completed its Organizational Analysis and Recommendations for Township Structure on September 9, 2024. The Land Information Access Solution (LIAA) conducted a Parks Funding Feasibility Study in 2022. Both studies found the work being done by volunteers has become unsustainable to manage the 823 acres of parks and recommended hiring a parks director.

The parks committee discussed what it should be focused on, such as preserving and enhancing natural resources and promoting recreational activities. If a parks director was hired, the committee considered meeting quarterly and still having committee members responsible for their individual parks. Issues found at the parks would be communicated to the parks director. The parks director would make written or verbal reports to the town board monthly. Murphy explained the history of the elected parks commission, which operated independently of the town board and had its own budget. In 2018, the commission was eliminated through a citizen's referendum and seven members were appointed to the committee by the town board. The lighthouse was separated from the parks commission and has its own manager. The discussion turned to what the parks director would manage. There is the lighthouse, historical structures, the non-motorized committee, and overseeing maintenance of the parks. The township has three cemeteries, which are considered memorial parks and handled by the clerk's office. This would not change and may be something to consider in the future. A clearly stated job description of a parks director needs to be created.

The Maner Costerisan study has been put on the website and should be discussed at the town board meeting on December 10, 2024. Shanafelt suggested there be a committee of five to seven individuals to study the report and make recommendations to the township board. Individuals from the community can come forward to request their appointment. There will be several trustees and there should be one

member from the parks committee. The recommendations may be whether to become a charter township, do a Headlee rollback, do a parks millage, or some combination of these.

The township has had significant issues to deal with. Covid, the winery lawsuit, turnover on the township board, and three supervisors in the past couple of years. The committee discussed how a parks millage was put on hold so the PDR millage could be passed in 2022. There will be an election in 2026, and a parks millage should be on the ballot. The township cannot lead any millage elections, and they must be citizen driven. It would cost around \$20,000 to have a survey and ballot campaign.

The work on a new township survey needs to begin the first of the year. The last survey took about six months to design. With the new year comes a new annual budget. The parks will have limited funds and probably most of the money will go for parks maintenance. It is a statutory duty of the supervisor to create the budget. Maura Sanders, the newly elected supervisor, will take over this task from the treasurer's office. The committee discussed reviewing the parks budgets from 2024 and 2023. A list of completed projects and those items still needing attention will be created. A small project should be included for the budgetary ask for this upcoming year. The list needs to be as detailed as possible.

9. Citizen Comments:

Nancy R. Heller, 3091 Bluewater Road: I urge the committee to be extremely prepared and organized and stop spinning your wheels. Your committee responsibility for the budget needs to be your top priority as the clock is ticking.

10. Committee Comments

Zebell: perhaps the fire department would be able to assist in a controlled burn of the autumn olive.

Caviston: I have a background in environmental work. Currently, I work at the Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation as their Youth and Community Impact Coordinator. I spend half my time administering grants and scholarships. The other half I work with the youth and advisory councils, which is comprised of high school students. We teach them about philanthropy, and they manage an endowment where they get to decide where to award funding. For most of my career, I worked in environmental education, and my formal education is in environment stewardship.

11. Adjournment:

Murphy moved to adjourn the meeting with a second by Milliken.

Approved by Consensus

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Parks Budgets

UNAUDITED DRAFT: 4/1/24 - 9/30/24 CASH RECEIPTS & DISBURSEMENTS

GL NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	2023-24 ORIGINAL BUDGET	2023-24 ACTIVITY
Dept 000			
Revenue			
208-000-607.EVT	Parks Lg. Event Fee	9,000	8,350
208-000-664.000	Interest Income	600	1,553
208-000-667.000	Rental Income	1,000	1,050
208-000-675.000	Donations		700
208-000-675.CAP	Donations/Grants Capital Fund-Kel		22,500
208-000-675.DNR	GRANT-DNR KELLEY BOAT LAUNCH		539
208-000-675.EVT	LARGE EVENT-PARKS DONATIONS		1,798
208-000-675.GNT	Park Grants Received		22,854
208-000-675.PLK	Donations-Pickleball Court		282,476
208-000-676.000	Miscellaneous		6,465
TOTAL REVENUE		10,600	348,285
NET OF REVENUES/APPROPRIATIONS - 000 -		10,600	348,285
Dept 751 - PARKS			
Expenditure			
208-751-703.000	Per Diem	6,750	1,400
208-751-710.LIB	Liability Insurance	2,000	2,303
208-751-710.WRK	Workers Comp	100	124
208-751-715.000	Employer Social Security	700	203
208-751-726.000	Supplies	7,000	1,060
208-751-726.PRK	Park Signs	500	
208-751-783.000	Seeding and Planting Services	2,000	
208-751-801.000	Legal Fees	100	666
208-751-807.000	Audit Fees	500	415
208-751-818.000	Contractual Services-R Wilkinson	60,000	55,615
208-751-818.010	Recording Secretary	2,250	1,260
208-751-818.200	Contract Services	7,200	17,883
208-751-818.PLO	Plowing	2,500	2,510
208-751-855.DEQ	Noncom. Public Wat. Sup. Fee	1,500	1,703
208-751-881.000	Community Activities	500	
208-751-900.000	Legal Notices	300	164
208-751-900.PNP	Printing	500	
208-751-921.000	Electricity	2,600	2,331
208-751-926.000	Street Lighting	1,500	1,455
208-751-930.000	Repairs and Maintenance	20,000	15,946
208-751-958.000	Memberships and Dues	600	647
208-751-966.KEL	Grant Cost - Kelley Park	9,900	12,015
208-751-967.BHP	Grant Costs-BHP EXPANSION		270
208-751-967.DTE	Grant Costs-DTE		2,506
208-751-970.000	Capital Outlay/MiscExpenditures	77,600	107,271
208-751-970.PKL	Capital Outlay-Pickleball Court		279,414
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		206,600	507,161
NET OF REVENUES/APPROPRIATIONS - 751 - PARKS		(206,600)	(507,161)
Dept 753 - PARKS-PELIZZARI NATURAL AREA			
Expenditure			
208-753-710.LIB	Liability - Insurance	300	291
208-753-807.000	Audit Fees	150	104
208-753-818.PLO	Plowing		440
208-753-921.000	Electricity	400	406
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		850	1,241
NET OF REVENUES/APPROPRIATIONS - 753 - PARKS-PELIZZA		(850)	(1,241)
Dept 930 - APPROPRIATIONS-TRANSFERS IN			
Transfers-In			
208-930-699.000	Appropriated Transfers In	201,300	232,042
TOTAL TRANSFERS-IN		201,300	232,042
NET OF REVENUES/APPROPRIATIONS - 930 - APPROPRIATION		201,300	232,042
ESTIMATED REVENUES - FUND 208		211,900	580,327
APPROPRIATIONS - FUND 208		207,450	508,402
NET OF REVENUES/APPROPRIATIONS - FUND 208		4,450	71,925
BEGINNING FUND BALANCE		17,118	17,118
ENDING FUND BALANCE		21,568	89,043

UNAUDITED DRAFT: 4/1/24 - 9/30/24 CASH RECEIPTS & DISBURSEMENTS

GL NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	2024-25 ORIGINAL BUDGET	2024-25 ACTIVITY THRU 11/30/24
Dept 000			
Revenue			
208-000-580.000	County Funding		25,000
208-000-607.EVT	Parks Lg. Event Fee	2,000	30,650
208-000-664.000	Interest Income	900	1,655
208-000-667.000	Rental Income	500	700
208-000-675.ARP	ARPA APPROPRIATIONS	50,000	
208-000-675.CAP	Donations/Grants Capital Fund-Kel	15,000	12,500
208-000-675.DNR	GRANT-DNR KELLEY BOAT LAUNCH	67,250	31,444
208-000-675.NMT	GRANT: NON-MOTORIZED TRAIL		66,000
208-000-676.000	Miscellaneous	25,000	
TOTAL REVENUE		160,650	167,949
NET OF REVENUES/APPROPRIATIONS - 000 -			
		160,650	167,949
Dept 751 - PARKS			
Expenditure			
208-751-703.000	Per Diem	7,490	520
208-751-710.LIB	Liability Insurance	2,250	3,001
208-751-710.WRK	Workers Comp	750	85
208-751-715.000	Employer Social Security	775	130
208-751-726.000	Supplies	7,000	253
208-751-726.PRK	Park Signs	2,500	453
208-751-783.000	Seeding and Planting Services	2,000	
208-751-801.000	Legal Fees	1,000	243
208-751-807.000	Audit Fees	500	417
208-751-818.000	Contractual Services-R Wilkinson	65,000	45,680
208-751-818.010	Recording Secretary	2,625	1,180
208-751-818.200	Contract Services	20,000	13,678
208-751-818.PLC	Flowing	3,000	2,510
208-751-855.DEQ	Noncom. Public Wat. Sup. Fee	1,500	975
208-751-881.000	Community Activities	1,000	
208-751-900.000	Legal Notices	500	
208-751-900.PNP	Printing	500	
208-751-921.000	Electricity	2,600	2,191
208-751-926.000	Street Lighting	1,500	1,000
208-751-930.000	Repairs and Maintenance	12,500	5,685
208-751-958.000	Memberships and Dues	700	647
208-751-966.KEL	Grant Cost - Kelley Park		61,888
208-751-967.DTE	Grant Costs-DTE	2,000	
208-751-970.000	Capital Outlay/MiscExpenditures	152,500	1,736
208-751-970.PKL	Capital Outlay-Pickleball Court	2,200	3,291
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		292,390	145,563
NET OF REVENUES/APPROPRIATIONS - 751 - PARKS			
		(292,390)	(145,563)
Dept 753 - PARKS-PELIZZARI NATURAL AREA			
Expenditure			
208-753-710.LIB	Liability - Insurance	300	373
208-753-807.000	Audit Fees	150	104
208-753-818.PLO	Flowing	500	
208-753-921.000	Electricity	400	218
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		1,350	695
NET OF REVENUES/APPROPRIATIONS - 753 - PARKS-PELIZZA			
		(1,350)	(695)
Dept 930 - APPROPRIATIONS-TRANSFERS IN			
Transfers-In			
208-930-699.000	Appropriated Transfers In	150,000	
TOTAL TRANSFERS-IN		150,000	
NET OF REVENUES/APPROPRIATIONS - 930 - APPROPRIATION			
		150,000	
ESTIMATED REVENUES - FUND 208			
		310,650	167,949
APPROPRIATIONS - FUND 208			
		293,740	146,258
NET OF REVENUES/APPROPRIATIONS - FUND 208			
		16,910	21,691
BEGINNING FUND BALANCE			
		89,041	89,041
ENDING FUND BALANCE			
		105,951	110,732

Business

Proposed Name Change for Bowers Harbor Park Expansion Area

Bower Harbor Park Addition/Expansion

Considerations:

Park Uses to date:

- Mown paths for hiking
- Parking and bathroom location for the Bayshore Marathon in May
- Discussion in the past as a possible location for a dog park

Beckett & Raeder plan:

Earmarks a location for a pavilion, grills, and vault toilets

Dave Murphy: As to my conversation with Steve today, these thoughts:

- The conservancy introduced “natural area” to the nomenclature of their assist projects intended to remain natural, as opposed to holdings they have exclusive rights to. So there’s Pelizzari Natural Area, Maplehurst Natural Area, etc. That’s a nuanced distinction based on ownership/management. The conservancy continues to assist with natural areas they help bring into existence, but title is held with other entities. On that basis, changing it to Bowers Harbor Natural Area (BHNA) makes sense. Your reaction, Susie? Do we need public input on this to be sure no toes are stepped upon?
- Another caveat Steve noted is that a natural area remain or be returned to a natural state as much as possible.
- Helpful to such a designation is a management plan specifically indicating it should be a natural area. We have the Beckett & Raeder plan, but I don’t believe that’s a formal management plan on the addition. Or is it? Tori asked for a copy of the B&R plan & it’s [here](#). Other than a picnic pavilion as the last recommendation in the B&R report for the “south park,” I don’t see the proposed design would work against a natural area designation as described by Steve. And the B&R plan has already been changed per the work done in 2023 on the pickleball courts & more, so could we avoid a pavilion in that location, especially since there are two pavilion locations at the traditional BHP?
- Digging a bit more for any sort of mgt plan on the BH properties, the best I see is the 2023 parks management plan [here](#), & it notes appendices with both the PNA mgt plan created in approximately 2010, & some pages taken from the B&R plan with an accompanying narrative as a management plan for the two parks. Via contract, LIAA created this document & it did so for grant application purposes, but there is nothing in the BHP Expansion area specifically noting it’s a natural area. I wonder if we look to make an amendment to that plan?
- Steve expressed concern about the large parking lot off of Devil’s Dive and advantages to expanding the natural area by keeping parking & a trailhead limited to the old park. I’m not sure that has to be decided while trying to get the name worked out, but I do want to flag it as a concern of Steve’s with the natural area’s design. Steve is an outstanding trail designer, & if he sees advantages to limiting the parking & trailhead, we’d be well advised to hear more from him. The B&R parking lot plan is a significant amount of land when considering the overflow area & entry road. We’ll likely continue to see local users want an informal access from Devil’s Dive as we see at PNA from the cul de sac, but Steve’s point about how much might be gained by returning it all to a natural state should be considered.
- I’ll add this consideration: We’ve had discussions that the current parking plan at the old BHP needs some work given pickleball parking. We didn’t return to that discussion at the last meeting, but we did note in the previous meeting that we’d benefit from a better long-term plan for parking. If we’re going to expand or really work on a nice parking plan in the traditional park including not far from the access to the expansion’s trail, does this add to Steve’s point about consolidating parking?
- Just for everyone’s info – and because I was curious – the original BHP has 22 acres & the addition has 59. I wanted the info to have a feel for how big the “natural area” will be & how to best manage trail design for maximum public good.

Becky's thoughts:

...that as long as the use is predominantly that of a natural area, it isn't a problem, nor does it translate into allowing undesirable activities at other natural areas. That was my feeling as well, for what it's worth. Perhaps a recommendation and resolution, if the parks committee agrees, would clarify the concern that undesirable uses could creep into other natural areas? I would definitely want to be sure we put appropriate guardrails around any use that seems like a violation of the definition of a natural area or that seems like it could creep into something that would violate the intent of a natural area.

Miriam-Webster definition of "conservation"

1. a careful preservation and protection of something

- *especially*: planned management of a natural resource to prevent exploitation, destruction, or neglect
- *water conservation*
- *wildlife conservation*

Name suggestions:

- Bowers Harbor Natural Area, BHPNA
- Bowers Harbor Natural Area, BHNA

Mary Beth:

- BHP Nature Trails
- BHP Nature Walkway
- BHP Grasslands Trails

Torey:

- The Trails at Bowers Harbor Park

Michele:

- BHP Conservation Area
- BHP Environmental Conservation Area

Parks Committee Structure, Role, and Next Steps

Peninsula Parks Management

Recommendation:

Create a Parks Manager position

- Supported by findings in the LIAA Parks Funding Feasibility Study in 2022
- Supported by the Maner Costerisan Organizational Analysis and Recommendations for Township Government Structure, released November of 2024, study conducted _____
- As experienced by parks committee: scope and amount of work beyond the capacity of volunteers

Oversight of:

Peninsula parks
Historic sites
Lighthouse
Cemetery grounds
Non-motorized

In conjunction with:

Peninsula Parks Committee
OM Historical Society
Lighthouse Manager
Clerk's office
Non-motorized committee

Role of coordinating entity:

Advisory/park stewards
Advisory & management
Management
Management
Advisory

Proposed Park Manager responsibilities:

- Budget development and management
- Arrange and supervise contracts (such as mowing, snow removal, trail maintenance)
- Regular meetings with coordinating groups
- Capital project management
- Seek and prepare grant applications
- Address safety and enforcement/issuing tickets
- regular site checks with the assigned park steward
- Oversite of capital projects
- Manage assets, land, invasive species remediation
- Communicate with community: newsletter, website, Next Door posts
- Develop a volunteer program/network and coordinate volunteers in conjunction with park stewards

Reasons to maintain a parks committee:

- Provides a level of input and oversight for each park
- Provides a roster of interested parties who can expand the volunteer efforts through friends and acquaintances of each committee member
- Can encourage financial support from the township board
- Can advocate for particular parks with the park manager and/or within the committee of stewards
- With the acreage of peninsula parks, a manager's responsiveness would benefit in both the short and long term from the monitoring, observation, and input of each park's steward

Reasons to eliminate parks committee:

There is little financial input or effect from the committee

The committee is really an advisory group and a source of volunteers