

**Springfield Township  
Park & Recreation Commission Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, March 9, 2021  
VIA PHONE/VIDEO CONFERENCE**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The March 9, 2021 Regular Meeting of the Springfield Township Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order at 6.33 p.m. by Chairperson Bower via Phone/Video Conference.

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**III. ROLL CALL**

**Commissioners Present:**

Diane Baker (present, Springfield Township, MI)  
Roger Bower (present, Springfield Township, MI)  
Anne Loncar (present, Springfield Township, MI)  
Dennis Omell (present, Springfield Township, MI)  
Rich Parke (present, Springfield Township, MI)  
Angela Spicer (present, Springfield Township, MI)  
Jean Vallad (present, Siesta Key, FL)

**Staff Present:**

Sarah Richmond

**Others Present:**

Chris Benedict, IT Administrator

**IV. AGENDA REVISIONS AND APPROVAL**

**Commissioner Vallad moved to accept with the agenda as presented.  
Supported by Commissioner Omell. Roll Call Vote on the motion: Yes:  
Baker, Bower, Loncar, Omell, Parke, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent:  
None. The motion carried by a 7-0 vote.**

**V. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**VI. CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Approval of Meeting Minutes – February 9, 2021 with Additional Disbursements of \$1,612.66 for the Parks & Recreation Fund
- B. Receipt of Activities Report for February
- C. Receipt of Financial Summaries
- D. Receipt of Progress Report for February
- E. Receipt of Natural Resource Manager February Monthly Report
- F. Receipt of Memo re: Returning Contractors
- G. Receipt of February Budget Reports

### Receipt of Communications

1. Memo from Mike Losey re: 2021 Prescribe Burning Plan

Chairperson Bower asked about the pond weed removal and if it was necessary this year.

Director Richmond replied yes because they have to maintain what they have been doing until the dam is removed.

Commissioner Baker asked about the Progress Report. She asked where the ceiling tiles and rail system was being installed.

Director Richmond replied the Hart Community Center.

Commissioner Baker and Commissioner Spicer asked about the Esports.

Director Richmond answered that they would discuss it during Commissioner comment.

**Commissioner Vallad moved to accept the consent agenda as presented. Supported by Commissioner Spicer. Roll Call Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Loncar, Omell, Parke, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent: None. The motion carried by a 7-0 vote.**

## **VII. OLD BUSINESS**

A. Discussion of Generator Information for HCC

Director Richmond stated that the Commission spoke about the generator in November which would be the generator coming from Fire Station 2 since they were getting a new one. Several Commissioners raised concern about the age of the unit and concern about it not accommodating their needs. The Commission tabled the topic until they could receive additional information. She wanted to get information about the old generator versus a new generator and this is the information provided to the Commission. A new generator, not including the natural gas piping and concrete pad, would be \$51,752. The cost in electricity to connect the old unit would be \$31,037.00. This is good information to have as they are planning future expenditures for the Hart Community Center. She suggested that if they wanted to install a generator they try get a grant to help finance a portion of the purchase and work with Neighbor for Neighbor. It would be her hope that if they purchased a new generator that it would power both sides of the Hart Community Center. The pricing of electrical components is changing quickly so if they decide to do this at a later time, this pricing could be different.

Chairperson Bower confirmed that the new generator was going to cost in the area of \$81,000.

Director Richmond replied yes, it potentially could. This was one estimate that she got and if they were planning on making this expenditure, they would need to get at least three bids which would include the natural gas piping and the concrete pad. She did not get a price for natural gas piping and concrete pad.

Chairperson Bower commented on the charges of the new generator.

Director Richmond stated that it was already decided that they were not getting the old one from the Fire Department. The Commission expressed many concerns at the November meeting regarding the old generator and she tried to address those with the new generator information. The old generator would be \$31,073.00 to hook it up but did not include the cost to move it, the concrete pad or natural gas piping. She did not know if that included the transfer switch. The

\$51,752 would be the cost of just the new generator including the work to put it in and the warranty. This would not include the natural gas piping, nor the concrete pad.

Commissioner Omell expressed concern about the pipes freezing.

Director Richmond commented that if the power goes out, they use heat tapes and do the best that they can.

Commissioner Omell stated that a portable generator would be useful to prevent the pipes from freezing.

Director Richmond stated that she does not know if this is possible, but she can check. She indicated that there are two electrical boxes.

Commissioner Omell suggested that they put in a generator plug. He did this and although it was not approved, it helped.

Director Richmond indicated that they have two generators.

Commissioner Parke stated that the only reason they are talking about this is that there was one available that might be low cost and would be nice to have. He stated that if they are looking to spend \$50,000 to \$80,000, it would be way down on his priority list. There are so many other things they could do with that amount of money.

Commissioner Loncar concurred.

Chairperson Bower suggested that they do look into the idea of installing generator plugs since they already have the generator.

Director Richmond indicated that she would look into it.

Commissioner Parke stated that they need it for the furnace in an emergency.

Commissioner Vallad stated that the more you put on the transfer switch, the more expensive it gets. She agreed putting in a plug is a good idea.

## B. Discussion of Park Commissioners Pay

Director Richmond stated that at the February meeting, Commissioner Loncar proposed that the Commission reduce their pay per meeting by 50% and revisit it again in 6 months. The Commission tabled the item until this month and after the meeting, Director Richmond felt she should discuss this item with the Township attorney. Attorney Need informed her that based on the State Statute that once the compensation of the Commission has been approved, it is not able to be decreased during the Commission's four-year term. Mr. Need also stated that the Commission's compensation which is approved by the Township Board during the budgeting process can be increased during the term but not decreased. There is nothing prohibiting donating all or part of their compensation back to the department after they receive their check.

They could also write a check to the department once their check has been issued. She did not speak to her staff about a suggestion as was discussed at last month's meeting based upon the information from the attorney.

Commissioner Vallad commented that it was her opinion that the Commission showed how much they valued their employees in 2020 when they made sure that all year round full time and part time staff received their normal pay when the Township offices were closed from mid-March to Mid-May.

Commissioner Baker stated that she recalled a time when they did reduce their pay.

Commissioner Vallad stated that the statute could have changed since that was done.

Commissioner Baker stated that there still is a question in her mind as to what they could do to make the staff feel appreciated. Moving forward, it would be good to know what gestures would be appreciated.

Chairperson Bower asked if she sees a way to move forward.

Commissioner Baker replied that she was waiting for feedback from the staff.

Commissioner Vallad stated that at the December meeting, she made the motion to reassess wages and salaries at the June meeting and she encouraged Director Richmond to talk about her idea for appreciation at that time.

Director Richmond stated that she had some concern about discussing possibilities with staff after hearing back from the attorney. She suggested that some municipalities give additional days off for staff members as a good will gesture. She could go and ask the staff about that idea if the Commission wants her too.

Commissioner Baker stated that she would like to know from the staff how they feel appreciated.

Chairperson Bower replied that he likes Director Richmond's idea. If they open it up to the staff, they might get varying ideas and it may get complicated.

Commissioner Loncar agreed with Chairperson Bower.

Commissioner Omell agreed with Director Richmond's suggestion.

Commissioner Parke stated that he agrees with looking at this when they look at salaries in June.

Commissioner Spicer agreed with Director Richmond's suggestion.

Commissioner Vallad stated that she does not want to do anything about additional time off yet because when they reassess salaries in June, they might be able to give them raises instead.

Commissioner Baker added that she is in support of Director Richmond's suggestion.

Chairperson Bower commented that the consensus of the Commission is that they will revisit it in June.

Commissioners agreed.

**Commissioner Vallad moved that no further action is going to be taken in Commissioners Reduction in Pay and per the motion that was made at the December 2020 meeting, the Commission will be reassessing wages and salaries at the June 2021 regularly scheduled meeting. Supported by Chairperson Bower. Roll Call Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Loncar, Omell, Parke, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent: None. The motion carried by a 7-0 vote.**

## **VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Approval of Hiring Garrett VanGilder for Baseball Site Supervisor**

Director Richmond stated that she is seeking permission from the Park Commission to hire Garrett VanGilder for the position of Baseball Site Supervisor. Garrett has worked for the Department for the last four years as an umpire and has previously filled in as a Site Supervisor in 2019 when they needed someone at the last minute. Garrett would be answering directly to the Baseball Coordinator and would have interactions with Kathy VanGilder, Recreation Coordinator of Sports and Seniors. If there were any issues, Director Richmond would deal with him directly. This position works 20 hours or less per week. Garrett is a highly rated umpire and is highly responsible which is why she is recommending him for this position.

**Commissioner Parke moved to waive the hiring of relatives and other conflict of interest provision of our Handbook. The Commission has had public discussion relative to hiring this individual and it would be in the public interest of the community to hire Garrett VanGilder as the Baseball Site Supervisor for 2021 summer. Support by Commissioner Vallad.**

Commissioner Omell asked if they were going to have baseball season this year.

Director Richmond replied yes; they are accepting registrations. There will be different protocols to follow but they are working hard to make the season happen.

**Roll Call Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Loncar, Omell, Parke, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent: None. The motion carried by a 7-0 vote.**

### **B. Approval of Updated Covid-19 Recovery Plan**

Director Richmond reviewed the Updated Covid-19 Recovery Plan in the Commission packet. It was updated based on input from EctoHR and the Township Board has approved their plan which is similar to this plan. She explained the revisions that were made.

Commissioner Parke stated that things change rapidly and asked if there was something the Commission could provide that would allow the Director to modify the plan in accordance with changes that are ongoing.

Director Richmond explained that there is language in the plan that give the Director authority to update as needs change and she explained why.

**Commissioner Vallad moved to adopt the updated Covid-19 Recovery Plan as referenced and outlined in Director Richmond’s memo dated March 5, 2021. Supported by Commissioner Omell. Roll Call Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Loncar, Omell, Parke, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent: None. The motion carried by a 7-0 vote.**

## **IX. TREASURER’S REPORT**

### A. Bills List

**Commissioner Omell moved to approve the March bills list totaling \$2,601.78. Supported by Commissioner Baker. Roll Call Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Loncar, Omell, Parke, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent: None. The motion carried by a 7-0 vote.**

## **X. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

None

## **XI. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

## **XII. COMMISSIONER COMMENT**

Commissioner Baker thanked Director Richmond for her good work.

Chairperson Bower thanked the Commissioners.

Commissioner Omell thanked Director Richmond and the staff.

Commissioner Spicer thanked the Commissioners for the sympathy card sent to her.

Commissioner Vallad thanked Director Richmond for her hard work. She stated that they will be meeting in person in April.

Director Richmond indicated that they would meet in person unless there is a medical reason to be staying home and there is not a doctor’s note required. Director Richmond updated the Commission on Easter events, Esports program and the spaghetti dinner distribution.

## **XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**Commissioner Vallad moved to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Springfield Township Parks and Recreation Commission at 7:39 pm. Supported by Commissioner Omell.**