



**Springfield Township
Park & Recreation Commission Regular Meeting
Tuesday, May 11, 2021**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The May 11, 2021, Regular Meeting of the Springfield Township Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order at 6.33 p.m. by Chairperson Bower at the Springfield Township Civic Center, 12000 Davisburg Road, Davisburg, Michigan 48350 with members of the public and the Commission onsite in the Conference Room and remotely via phone/video conference per Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Order.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present:

Diane Baker
Roger Bower
Anne Loncar (attending remotely, Springfield Township, MI)
Dennis Omell
Rich Parke
Angela Spicer (attending remotely, Springfield Township, MI)
Jean Vallad

Staff Present:

Sarah Richmond

Others Present:

Chris Benedict, IT Administrator

IV. AGENDA REVISIONS AND APPROVAL

Commissioner Vallad moved to proceed 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 – April 13, 2021, with Additional Disbursements of \$7,067 for the Parks & Recreation Fund
- B. Receipt of Activities Report for April
- C. Receipt of Financial Summary
- D. Receipt of Progress Report for April
- E. Receipt of Natural Resource Manager April Monthly Report
- F. Receipt April Budget Reports
- G. Approval of Issuance of Camping Permit to Poweshiek Conservation Partnership Staff

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Receipt of Communications

Commissioner Vallad moved to accept the consent agenda as presented. Supported by Chairman 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.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

None

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion of Green Lake Park Project

Director Richmond explained that she is coming to the Commission asking for permission to spend \$5,500 to contract with All-In-One Lawncare to perform work at Green Lake Park. She feels that to contract with this company would be the best use of their resources. This project is not budgeted for but feels that it is time to do this work in a timely manner. It is a good investment to the habitat portion and to address the safety concerns that they have had at the park.

Commissioner Vallad moved to approve All-In-One Lawncare to do work in Green Lake Park as outlined in Director Richmond's memorandum dated May 5, 2021. Supported by Commissioner Omell.

Commissioner Loncar stated that she went and walked the property and called Director Richmond with some questions. She asked how many maintenance hours were spent on this property.

Director Richmond commented on questions that Commissioner Loncar asked her. One of the questions was when the Township had acquired the property. She stated that they found a deed that was signed in October 1980. They acquired the property from DNR for \$1.00.

Commissioner Loncar asked if there was anything in the deed that says it cannot be sold.

Director Richmond replied no, not that it cannot be sold. She read a clause in the deed.

Commissioner Vallad stated that if they sell park land, it needs to be replaced by other park land.

Director Richmond replied that this is just for land that is acquired through a grant. She stated that they bought this property for \$1.00.

Commissioner Loncar reiterated her question about the maintenance and hours and asked how many houses were in the surrounding neighborhood and if they get anyone besides neighbors using that park.

Director Richmond answered that last year, there was \$1,380 to mow the property. It takes about ½ hour to do rounds and possibly 15 minutes on a good day. On average, it takes ½ hour to do rounds at that park. So, for the highest paid employee, it costs \$79.65 weekly and \$4,141.80 annually to just do rounds and she explained what rounds entails. If there are other items that are needed, it may take longer. She stated that she had the Clerk's Department

provide the number of residential parcels near the park and it came to 250 parcels. If they estimate that each parcel has 3 people living in the home, that is 750 residents. Commissioner Loncar asked if Director Richmond would estimate that other residents use that park and she answered no. It is defined in the Master Plan as a neighborhood park, and it is set up that way.

Commissioner Loncar replied that this is her assumption, that it is used by the neighbors.

Commissioner Vallad stated that she visited the park and she commented that it looks very nice after all the work done there. She suggested that the Commissioners visit the property.

Commissioner Loncar concurred.

Commissioner Vallad stated that there is \$3750 in the bid for seeding; she asked if this was the best idea for this area.

Director Richmond answered that she did not ask for money for seeding. The seeding that they will do will be done in the future but not now. She stated that she feels that if they take care of it, clean it out and mow it, the grass will come up. She stated that she found plans that were done in the 1990's for this mowing work that was never done. She spoke to the Natural Resources Manager, and he had no problem with the work proposed. The mowing will help with the invasives and the safety issues that they have had there. She stated that the work that they are doing will hopefully reignite neighborhood interest in the park.

Commissioner Vallad asked when the concrete pad was poured.

Director Richmond stated that the neighborhood got together to install playground equipment in 2003. She summarized the problems with the volleyball net in the past. She reiterated that they would like to do the work described, put up the new basketball poles and hopefully the vandalism will end.

Commissioner Parke stated that hopefully with the new work, the patrons will take better care of the park. He suggested that one or two years from now, they look at how many residents are utilizing the park and if it justifies the ownership. He does not know how the estimate of 75% of the sale of the park would go to Clarkston Schools was arrived at. The assumption must have been that the last 40 years, the property would have generated more in property taxes than in revenue generated by its sale. This does not take into consideration any improvements done.

Director Richmond agreed.

Commissioner Parke stated that the remainder of it would go to the Township and the benefit to the Parks Department would be no ongoing maintenance charges if it is not being used by the residents. Now it is a good plan to clean up the park and make it neighborhood friendly.

Director Richmond stated that the Library wants to do one of their summer activities at that park so they can capture more children that go to Andersonville Elementary. She would like to have the Library use the park in July.

Commissioner Baker asked if they could do more to publicize it to draw attention to it.

Director Richmond stated that they considered having it be a scavenger hunt stop.

Commissioner Loncar commented that the problem there is parking.

Director Richmond stated that parking along the road is not safe. Cars travel at a high rate of speed on the road and people are hesitant to walk along the road to get to the park.

Commissioner Baker asked if the vandalism and patrolling could be added to the ranger's activity list.

Director Richmond stated that he could drive by, but he has no authority to write tickets, and she would not want to put her staff in an unsafe position. The best situation is for the neighbors to contact the police.

Commissioner Baker stated that after it is cleaned up, she asked if surveillance equipment were something that they would consider.

Director Richmond stated that the tricky thing is you need a clean picture of the face, and you must be able to figure out who the people are. She commented on continued communication with DTE and how that is progressing. The light is now working. She has got some response from the new contact at DTE. She prepared a letter for the neighbors encouraging them to speak up if they see suspicious activity at the park.

Commissioner Omell asked how much land was there.

Director Richmond replied the deed says 1.6 acres but when the Assessing Department looked it up, she was told it was 3.171 acres.

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. Discussion of Electrical Work at Hart Community Center

Director Richmond stated that at the March meeting, the Commissioners received information about a proposed generator for the Hart Community Center. Commissioner Omell suggested that they install receptacles for portable generators. In the packets, she included two bids for installation of receptacles that would support a generator to run the furnaces and fridge and freezer. She also added information on the battery used to operate the horn strobe alarm in the kitchen. The battery currently costs \$100, and she replaces it every year, which is why she would like to have it hard wired into the building.

Chairperson Bower moved to accept the bids from Troy Electric for electrical work at the Hart Community Center in the amount of \$2,000.00. Supported by Commissioner Baker.

Commissioner Parke questioned the need for this work to be done. The \$2,000 is an unnecessary expenditure giving very little payback for the money spent.

Commissioner Omell stated that his concern is during the winter and keeping people warm.

Commissioners discussed how to connect a generator to support the furnace and whether it is needed.

Commissioner Loncar asked if the receptacles could be used still if they went to a generator that runs off the gas line.

Director Richmond replied she does not know.

Commissioner Vallad replied that the plugs would not be usable with a stand-alone generator.

Commissioner Parke stated that he is unconvinced. If the power goes out and it is freezing cold for 3 or 4 days, you still must send someone over to tend to the generator. He suggested using Torpedo heaters to keep the building warm.

Commissioners and Director Richmond discussed the generator use and the proposed work.

Director Richmond stated that even if the receptacles do not get installed, she wants to get the circuit done so they do not have to keep purchasing batteries.

Commissioner Parke suggested that they run a generator with extension cords.

Commissioner Vallad stated that she is for spending the money on this item.

Commissioner Baker stated that the receptacles seem like they are for ease of use and not having to run cords.

Director Richmond replied yes; it is a lot easier than running cords in the cold and dark.

Roll Call Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Omell, Spicer, Vallad; No: Loncar, Parke; Absent: None. The motion carried by a 5-2 vote.

C. Discussion of Hartman Property-Proposal for Trail Access & Stream Crossing

Director Richmond provided a conceptual plan for trail access and stream crossing for the Commissioners to view. She stated that she is asking the Commission to agree with the concept so that they can send the plan to the railroad company and move ahead with pedestrian access. She explained the conceptual plan presented, both option 1 and option 2 including proposed signage.

Director Richmond stated that if they must put in lights and gates, it would be very costly. The next step is sending to the Township Board and then to the railroad company.

Commissioner Vallad stated that she likes option 2 better.

Director Richmond stated that determining which option will be up to the railroad company; they need to let them know that both options are acceptable, and they will decide.

Commissioner Parke asked where the pedestrian traffic was going to be coming from.

Director Richmond stated that the reason they moved the access, so everyone is funneled through the main access point. The vehicle gate at Marquoit will stay where it is and will only be unlocked when the access drive must be utilized by staff.

Commissioner Parke stated that one thing that is left out is the substantial grade.

Director Richmond stated that they would add additional material and she would advocate for additional signage in this area.

Commissioner Parke stated that either option is fine by him. If a train is coming, it will be obvious.

Director Richmond explained access by referring to the map in the packets.

Commissioners agreed with supporting the conceptual plans.

Commissioner Parke asked if the railroad company would let them add fines to even out the trail.

Director Richmond stated that they discussed this, and she summarized the discussion. They need to add material to the drive, and she suggested 21AA. She stated that the railroad company will have to let them know.

IX. TREASURER'S REPORT

A. Bills List

Commissioner Vallad moved to approve the May bills list totaling \$9139.02 and \$50.00 for Trust in Agency. 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 stated that is good to see everyone in person and thanked the Department for good work.

Commissioner Parke concurred.

Commissioner Omell stated that he was impressed with the crossing plan.

Director Richmond updated the Commission on the upcoming Fishing Derby.

Chairperson Bower stated that he is impressed with the signage on the trails.

Director Richmond commented on the trail signage.

Commissioner Loncar stated that the Green Lake property looks great and commented on how great the Taco Event was.

Commissioner Spicer stated that she is happy they are working on the Green Lake Park.

Commissioner Vallad commented on a recent trip out in the park area.

Director Richmond commented on some additional information that she would like to add to the trails including QR codes and reflective signage.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Omell moved to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Springfield Township Parks and Recreation Commission at 7:37 pm. Supported by Commissioner Vallad.