

**Springfield Township
Park & Recreation Commission Regular Meeting
Tuesday, May 8, 2018**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The May 8, 2018 Regular Meeting of the Springfield Township Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson Bower at the Springfield Township Civic Center, 12000 Davisburg Road, Davisburg, Michigan 48350.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present

Roger Bower
Anne Loncar
Dennis Omell
Rich Parke
Angela Spicer
Jean Vallad

Staff Present

Sarah Richmond

Others Present

Commissioners Absent:

Diane Baker

IV. AGENDA REVISIONS AND APPROVAL

Commissioner Vallad moved to accept the agenda as revised, adding Consent Agenda Item H. April Budget Printouts, Change Old Business A. to Old Business B. and add Old Business A. Revision to Rental Agreements per Greg Need. Supported by Commissioner Omell. Vote on the motion: Yes: Bower, Loncar, Omell, Parke, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Baker. The motion carried by a 6-0 vote.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Douglas Russell Olsen introduced himself to the Commission.

Sheila Russell Olsen introduced herself to the Commission.

Diana Reagan introduced herself to the Commission.

Barb Bastian introduced herself to the Commission.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Meeting Minutes-April 10, 2018 with Additional Disbursements of \$3,834.10 for the Parks & Recreation Fund and \$600.00
- B. Approval of Special Meeting Minutes – Joint April 10, 2018
- C. Receipt of Activities Report for April
- D. Receipt of Financial Summaries
- E. Receipt of Progress Report for April
- F. Receipt of Natural Resource Manager April Monthly Report
- G. Receipt of May and June 50 Plus Active Adults Newsletter
- H. April Budget Printouts

Receipt of Communications

Commissioner Parke moved to accept the consent agenda as amended. Supported by Commissioner Spicer. Vote on the motion: Yes: Bower, Loncar, Omell, Parke, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Baker. The motion carried by a 6-0 vote.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Revision to Rental Agreements per Greg Need

Commissioner Vallad stated that there are two emails in front of each Commissioner from Township Attorney Greg Need. She stated that in April there had been a Friends of the Parks vendor event. One of the vendors that was there asked to use the Community Center to have an event just like the one that was held. Ms. Richmond asked Mr. Need's opinion as to whether or not they should allow this because it would be competing with an event that the Department was holding on a different date. Mr. Need is suggesting that they add a "non-compete clause" to the Department's rental agreements. This would cover Hart Community Center and Pavilions.

Director Richmond explained that it would eliminate competing with something that the Department is already doing.

Commissioner Vallad stated that there is currently a clause in the agreements that might cover this issue but it is vague and the new clause would be more specific.

Director Richmond pointed out the specific language that Mr. Need recommends.

Commissioner Vallad moved to add the clause in the memo presented on May 8, 2018 to the Parks and Recreation Pavilions and Hart Community Center rental agreements per Greg Need's email dated Tuesday, May 8, 2018 at 3:47 pm. Supported by Commissioner Parke. Vote on the motion: Yes: Bower, Loncar, Omell, Parke, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Baker. The motion carried by a 6-0 vote.

Commissioner Omell asked about the insurance coverage.

Director Richmond replied that all programs offered by the Department are covered under the Township's liability insurance and that it is determined during an annual assessment of all programs offered.

Commissioner Parke asked when that annual assessment is done.

Director Richmond replied during the fall.

B. Discussion of Farmers Market

Director Richmond stated that she brought the Farmer's Market to the Commission in March of this year and they discussed that they would wait and see what kind of vendors they could get. The Department has had a lot of feedback in the last couple of years due to the declining number of vendors and the types of vendors that they had. The vendor meeting was held on April 25, 2018 and they had five vendors show up to the meeting. The Department currently is not covering costs for the Farmers Market. It would take 18 vendors that have paid for the entire season to provide a positive showing to the public and to cover just the Market Manager's salary. The 18 vendors would not cover the costs of any flyers or any other expenditures.

Commissioner Parke asked if those 18 vendors pay a fee.

Director Richmond replied yes and she provided an explanation of fees.

Commissioner Loncar asked if Director Richmond has done a comparison with other communities regarding rates.

Director Richmond replied yes; they are competitive, if not a little bit lower. They had a rate increase for the 2017 season and they did see a drop in vendors at this time. They cannot attract vendors even though they try different ways to attract them and she highlighted those attempts. They would prefer 18 seasonal vendors to make it worthwhile.

Commissioner Vallad stated that the liability insurance isn't factored in.

Director Richmond replied it also doesn't include maintenance or the paper costs.

Commissioner Parke stated that if they have 18 vendors represented, they are more apt to get more people to attend the market.

Director Richmond stated that two of the vendors want to be under the pavilion and if they have a full group, that is not a problem. But, if they don't put up enough tents, people drive by and don't think they are having a market and then they won't stop. She stated that they have turned down rentals before because of the market.

Commissioner Loncar commented that there are too many farmers markets in the area and they didn't have anything to draw people in last year. If they can't even break even, then they should look to do something else.

Director Richmond stated that they have not broken even in the last two years. It shows that they made money in 2015 because they were utilizing the Double Up Food Bucks grant at that time. They could use the grant funds for administration cost during 2015.

Douglas Russell Olsen stated that his wife and he have been seasonal vendors since the first year. With the three people present, they represent six vendor spots. They are going to pick up a second spot because of the product they want to bring in. They sell baked goods, candies, produce and jams and jellies. They like the Springfield Township Farmers Market best of all. They have had head counts of 300-400 people in one day between 10 am and 2 pm. People come to the market to see specific vendors and they count on it. If the market gets cancelled, residents are going to ask where is their vendor. He asked what happened to the grant money that helped support the market.

Director Richmond replied that this was when they did EBT and the grant organizers changed it so that grant funds were no longer able to be used for administration costs. This was regulated and changed at the State level. Director Richmond stated that the number of visitors have declined the last two years, with the average being less than 200 people per market.

Mr. Olsen stated that he has done other markets on other days than Sunday and some of them do not work out because they are not moving product. They like to do Springfield because people show up wanting to get their product. He stated that Kurtis and Kathy are other vendors with a vendor name of Handmade in Holly which is crafts and antiques.

Commissioner Vallad stated that per the Farmers Market agreement, they cannot have more than 25% crafters. This needs to be factored in. She stated that they are not in the business to lose money because they must answer to the Township tax payers.

Mr. Olsen stated that the three of them present are representing six spaces that came last year.

Diane Regan introduced herself to the Commission as a vendor selling produce. She stated that she does seven markets in the area and she commented on the other markets that she attends.

Commissioner Loncar asked if Ms. Regan does well because she is the only produce vendor.

Ms. Regan answered that she probably wouldn't make as much if there were more produce vendors. She stated that if this market needs more vendors, she can start bringing eggs to sell.

Director Richmond commented on vendors that have been lost.

Commissioner Vallad stated that this was not an easy thing to talk about in March but they must answer to the Township residents and look at the big picture.

Commissioner Parke stated that it appears that the vendors seem to believe that the market is viable and successful.

Chairperson Bower commented that the number of vendors is 50% of what they were a year ago.

Director Richmond confirmed that profits are down as well. She summarized the average amounts made and the number of weeks that are in the season.

Chairperson Bower stated that they have to have a certain number of vendors to pay the bills and they don't have that number.

Ms. Regan commented that this is one of her most expensive markets and she gave examples of how much she pays for different markets.

Director Richmond stated that when they did their price comparisons, they looked at neighboring markets in Holly, Clarkston, Grand Blanc, Fenton and Linden to name a few.

Ms. Regan suggested giving new vendors a free day or a reduced rate.

Commissioner Parke stated that having the Market is a service to the community. The rental rate should be for covering costs not making money. If the number of vendors that they are attracting is diminishing, they only have two choices, raise the rental rates or end the market. They have to be responsible to the tax payers.

Chairperson Bower added or they could run the Market and absorb the costs, but it is not in the budget to do this.

Doug Olsen suggested tapping into the tax dollars and mentioned police and fire because the Farmer's Market is providing a service.

Chairperson Bower stated that you cannot compare a farmer's market to police and fire.

Director Richmond replied that Police and Fire are supported by dedicated millage dollars.

Commissioner Vallad stated that Parks has a dedicated millage also.

Commissioner Loncar stated that at 14,000 people in the Township, at what point is it too small of a niche to continue.

Commissioner Omell stated that Rose Township residents attend the market too.

Commissioner Loncar answered that she was looking at the tax dollars coming in and what percentage of the Township residents are seeing return on that funding amount.

Mr. Olsen stated that they would put signs up or help out with the administrative costs if the market could continue.

Commissioner Vallad asked if there was a reason that the vendors under the pavilion could not be out under canopies.

Director Richmond replied they preferred to be under the pavilion. They make beautiful hand sewn things and they like to be under the pavilion and not worry about the rain or losing a tent.

Commissioner Vallad asked if they should get charged more to be under the pavilion.

Commissioner Parke added that this is a prime spot that the other vendors are not getting.

Mr. Olsen commented that they like to be in the tent because they are easily seen.

Chairperson Bower stated that it is not an easy decision but the Commission has to consider both sides.

Director Richmond stated that she has been an advocate for trying but she has to sit in front of this Board and the Township Board to be able to justify their budget.

Commissioner Omell asked what the Township Board says about the Market.

Director Richmond replied that they say it is up to the Parks Department but the Department has to provide justification for their programs and events.

Commissioner Parke stated it was costing hundreds of dollars each year to run a beach and only having about 200 visitors to the beach. It got to the point where they had to let it go. They had close to 500 participants for the Teen and Children's Easter Egg Hunt and had a combined loss of \$500 on those two events. To him, that is acceptable as a service that they are providing to the community. In this instance, they are talking about \$4000 in costs. If they had half of the spots covered, they are talking about half of that cost for a program that they are hoping to break even on. He has not been to the market so he doesn't know what the value is to the community but he wants the Commission to make the decision with their eyes open considering the amount of money that they are talking about.

Commissioner Omell suggested lowering their costs for the market.

Director Richmond stated that maintenance is taking care of the signage when they do rounds and she did not add the costs into the total. They still have to do the press releases and advertise for both the public and the vendors. She stated that they need to have a manager that will run the market. She also stated that she and her staff have already lowered costs as much as possible.

Mr. Olsen stated that they could have ten vendors.

Commissioners commented that they do not have ten vendors today.

Mr. Olsen replied that if he had more time to work on it, he could get more.

Mr. Olsen, Mrs. Olsen and Ms. Regan commented on their sales at the market.

Chairperson Bower stated that the Commission understands that these vendors want the market to continue but the Commission has to consider the numbers and cost.

Commissioner Omell stated that he would like it to go another year.

Chairperson Bower stated that the Commission wants it to continue but do they have the money to do that.

Commissioner Parke asked how long the season is.

Director Richmond replied 18 weeks, June 2nd to September 30th.

Commissioner Parke stated that the question is can they attract enough vendors at the rates that they have established to cover the majority if not all of the costs. He would like to go forward with it even if they do not see the numbers they need and are projecting a loss for the season.

Director Richmond commented that it is hard to start something and end it in the middle of the season.

Mr. Olsen stated that since his wife and he are retired, they could go to other markets and talk to vendors, see if they are dissatisfied where they are at and they could recruit.

Commissioner Parke asked Director Richmond about the total cost to the Township from last year.

Director Richmond stated that it does not include the loss of pavilion rentals and the loss was over \$2,217.68. This does not include a number of items.

Mr. Olsen stated that he and his wife would be willing to be a Market Manager.

Commissioner Vallad stated that they would still have to pay their market manager salary.

Mr. Olsen stated that they would do it for \$1.00.

Commissioner Vallad stated that there are a lot of items to consider. Commissioner Vallad also stated that she felt it would be a conflict of interest to hire one of them.

Director Richmond replied that she would have to look into it.

Commissioner Loncar stated that there are a lot of good ideas but they are coming to the table late.

Chairperson Bower asked if they could postpone the decision.

Director Richmond replied that the market was supposed to open June third but if the commission wanted to postpone the start for the market then yes.

Commissioners agreed.

Commissioner Loncar stated that what happens if the number of vendors aren't found.

Commissioners discussed having a certain percentage of crafters only.

Director Richmond stated that her Department has been doing everything that they can to bring in more vendors. They have advertised it to start on June 3rd and if they postpone it, they have to make sure they adequately advise the residents. But, if they start it, they have to continue it for the season because it is not fair for the vendors to close early.

Chairperson Bower stated that all members are trying to weigh both sides. The Commission is saying that if it doesn't work, they are out of business. If they try one more time, that will be it.

Director Richmond commented that her staff members and she have gone to markets to recruit vendors.

Commissioners and vendors discussed the options regarding the market.

Commissioner Vallad stated that they need to say yes or no tonight, and they need to not take up any more of Director Richmond's time on this. She does not see them being able to hire a vendor for a \$1.00 to be market manager if they are paying vendors because it is a conflict of interest issue. She stated right now her vote is to close it. If there are only 12 vendors and two are in the pavilion, is that enough to draw people in.

Commissioner Spicer clarified a vendor comment regarding their attendance at the market.

Commissioner Omell moved to keep the Farmer's Market open one more season opening June 3, 2018, the Commission will look at the figures at the end of the season and make a decision. Supported by Commissioner Parke.

Commissioner Vallad asked if they were going to revisit this in July or August.

Commissioner Omell answered no.

Commissioner Parke concurred with Commissioner Omell. He stated that they have other ideas implemented that have been proposed like an unpaid market manager. He understands that it will be a cost to the Township but it is worthwhile to try it.

Commissioner Vallad stated that if it is a go this year, it is a test and they can't do it again.

Vote on the motion: Yes: Omell, Parke, Vallad; No: Bower, Loncar, Spicer; Absent: Baker. The motion tied 3-3 vote.

Chairperson Bower moved to start the Farmer's Market for the 2018 season on June 17, 2018 to give the Commission a chance to reevaluate the vendor situations before it is extended. Supported by Commissioner Parke.

Commissioner Parke commented that this is not viable because you leave the recruiting situation in limbo.

Chairperson Bower withdrew the motion. Commissioner Parke withdrew the support.

Commissioner Parke stated that the Farmer's Market is in the budget but the Commission decided to put it on the agenda to discuss its continuance. The Commission was unable to reach a decision and he asked if it puts them back to the fact that it is an approved program in the budget and therefore it goes forward.

Director Richmond commented that the budget is a plan and the Commission makes the decision.

Commissioner Parke clarified that the market was approved with a minimum and since those minimums were not met, then by default they cannot continue with it.

Director Richmond stated that their goal is to cover their costs so the minimum for the entire season is 18 vendors. This is a large and public program so it needs to be discussed.

Commissioner Loncar stated that they don't have anything to break a tie. She reiterated her comments about discontinuing the market.

Director Richmond stated that going forward, the plan would be for Krystal to be the manager unless something changes.

Commissioners and Director Richmond continued their discussion regarding the viability of the Farmers' Market.

Commissioner Vallad moved to continue the Farmer's Market this year, opening on June 3, 2018 with the following stipulations: must have 14 spots with signed contracts and at least deposits made if not paid in full. The spots must fit into the criteria of the Farmer's Market with no more than 25% of those spots being crafters. Amounts need to be paid to the Parks Director by May 22, 2018 and if the criteria is not met by noon on May 22, 2018, the Farmer's Market will be closed this year. Supported by Commissioner Bower.

Commissioner Vallad stated that this has been compromise that she came in tonight not willing to make. She knows how much office time taken up with this issue over the last couple of days and the staff members have other things to do.

Commissioner Parke clarified that the commitment is for 14 spots, not necessarily 14 vendors. He asked if the vendors using the pavilion should be charged an additional fee for that space and if so should that be included in the motion.

Commissioner Vallad stated that would be a separate motion.

Vote on the motion: Yes: Bower, Omell, Parke, Spicer, Vallad; No: Loncar; Absent: Baker. The motion carried by a 5-1 vote.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion of Hiring Ball Coordinator's Children

Commissioner Vallad moved to allow the Parks Department, specifically Director Richmond, to hire Bob Grady's daughter Sydney and son Vincent to hire for this season. Supported by Commissioner Loncar.

Commissioner Parke commented that he has attended many games in past seasons in which Sydney was an umpire and she is very good as is the rest of the staff.

Commissioner Vallad asked if it was ok that Vincent wasn't quite 15.

Director Richmond replied yes.

Commissioner Omell asked if a Park Commissioner can be an umpire.

Director Richmond replied that for hiring a Park Commissioner, she needs to take it to the Commission.

Vote on the motion: Yes: Bower, Loncar, Omell, Parke, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Baker. The motion carried by a 6-0 vote.

B. Discussion of New Doors for Hart Community Center and Neighbor for Neighbor

Commissioner Vallad asked if they could get a better price if they replace more doors that need replacing.

Director Richmond replied no. If they do both Neighbor for Neighbor doors, they will get a discount toward the labor. These are the worst doors. She is recommending the contractor because they did a thorough job checking and provided a complete quote.

Commissioner Omell asked if these doors were on the drip edge of the roof.

Director Richmond replied that it is both doors and they have to have the drip edge on them. The doors are maintained. The Neighbor for Neighbor declined the door scope on the door.

Commissioner Vallad moved to hire Overhead Door West to replace the doors as indicated in Director Richmond's memo dated May 2, 2018 and replace the doors at a cost not to exceed \$5,000. Supported by Commissioner Spicer. Vote on the motion: Yes: Bower, Loncar, Omell, Parke, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Baker. The motion carried by a 6-0 vote.

C. Discussion of Purchasing New AED Units

Director Richmond stated that the documents included in the packet ask the Commission to approve the spending of \$2300 for two new AED units to be placed at Shiawassee and the Hart

Community Center based upon the recommendation of Fire Chief Feichtner. She summarized the request.

Commissioner Parke moved to authorize the purchase of two new AED Units at a total cost of \$2300 as outlined in Director Richmond's May 3, 2018 memo. Supported by Commissioner Vallad. Vote on the motion: Yes: Bower, Loncar, Omell, Parke, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Baker. The motion carried by a 6-0 vote.

Director Richmond summarized several expenditures that have had to take place based on the MIOSHA review and the Safety Committee recommendations and some unexpected maintenance expenditures that they have had that total \$11,528. The Department did receive funds from the State of Michigan that is represented on the budget sheet which is personal property reimbursement. This amount cannot be budgeted for but for 2018 totaled \$8,093. In 2017, they received \$5,730.27 from this State reimbursement account that was put into the Prior Year Funds that could offset the remainder of the amount needed for these repairs. This would mean that they would not have to touch Contingency as of right now.

Commissioner Vallad stated that she suggested they take the amount out of Prior Year Funds and at the end of the year they will assess the budget.

Commissioners and Director Richmond discussed the budgeting process and Prior Year Funds.

IX. TREASURER'S REPORT

A. Bills List

Chairperson Bower moved to approve the May bills list totaling \$6209.05 and Trust in Agency \$0. Supported by Commissioner Omell. Vote on the motion: Yes: Bower, Loncar, Omell, Parke, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Baker. The motion carried by a 6-0 vote.

X. COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Barb Bastian, Township resident, commented that she attended the Farmer's Market. She is tired of programs being cancelled and she is glad that it is being extended for another year.

Commissioners offered comment on the continuation of the Market.

XII. COMMISSIONER COMMENT

Commissioner Parke stated that it is important for them to be fiscally responsible but the residents did vote for a millage for Parks and Recreation programs and that is what they want to see.

Chairperson Bower thanked the Commissioners for going through the process decisions.

Commissioner Omell stated that it was a good experience for the Commission to go through and he is glad they could work it out.

Commissioner Loncar thanked Director Richmond and the Parks and Recreation staff and if there are programs that are losing money year after year, they do have to be addressed.

Commissioner Spicer concurred with Commissioner Loncar. She asked Director Richmond to let them know via email about the results on May 22, 2018.

Commissioner Vallad asked if a Commissioner could go to the office on May 22, 2018 to support the staff.

Director Richmond stated that the reception that her staff received from Market Vendors on April 25th was not a positive experience. She will be contacting the Attorney and HR if the commission wants but she feels strongly that a staff member should be Market Manager.

Commissioner Vallad stated that they could not hire a current vendor for \$1.00.

Commissioner Parke stated that hopefully they can do things that can minimize the Market Manager's time.

Chairperson Bower stated that the Commission has not kept this a secret and it is up to the vendors to keep apprised of the situation. The Commission went above and beyond.

Commissioners discussed the Farmer's Market.

Director Richmond reminded the Commission about their policy for metal detecting in the parks.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Vallad moved to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Springfield Township Parks and Recreation Commission at 9:11 pm. Supported by Commissioner Loncar. Vote on the motion: Yes: Bower, Loncar, Omell, Parke, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Baker. The motion carried by a 6-0 vote.