

WHITE LAKE TOWNSHIP
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting
Township Annex - 7527 Highland Road, White Lake, MI 48383
October 13, 2021 @ 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Aseltyne called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Roll was called.

ROLL CALL: Rhonda Grubb, Planning Commission Liaison
Andrea Voorheis, Township Board Liaison
Kathleen Aseltyne

Absent: Merrie Carlock, Chairperson
Deb Deren, Vice Chair

Also Present: Justin Quagliata, Staff Planner
Mike Roman, Treasurer
Sherri Barber, Recording Secretary

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Member Voorheis moved to approve the agenda as presented. Member Grubb supported and the MOTION CARRIED with a voice vote, 3 yes votes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Member Grubb moved to approve the minutes of July 14, 2021 as presented. Member Voorheis supported and the MOTION CARRIED with a voice vote, 3 yes votes.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mary Earley (5925 Pine Ridge Ct.) commented she would like to see Phase 2 of Hidden Pines Park completed.

Tom Patton (846 Schuyler) commented about pathways along Highland Road not being maintained.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. CISMA Stanley Park Survey Report

Staff Planner Quagliata noted the CISMA report was in the packet. CISMA surveyed the park for invasive species over the summer and the report detailed what they found. They identified a few patches of phragmites. There was a small pocket of Japanese Knotweed that should be treated; Japanese Knotweed was very invasive. The Township would work with CISMA next year on a plan. Member Aseltyne noted what may be used for treatment with herbicides/pesticides. She was concerned about the use of Round-Up and would like to see alternative methods used.

B. Field & pavilion rental rate increase

Staff Planner Quagliata reported there was a memo in the packet detailing fee comparisons across communities. An increase of fees was recommended due to the costs of maintenance of the parks. Comparatively, White Lake Township current fees were far below other municipalities for these types of facilities. There would be a \$5 electricity use increase and a \$20 pavilion rental increase for White Lake Township residents. There would be a higher rate for non-residents. Soccer field rates for 2-hour blocks would be \$100 for a large soccer field, small fields for \$90, and quarter practice fields for \$75. The fields were expensive to cut, and were mowed twice per week and double cut when requested. Tom Patton spoke from the public and felt the proposed increase was high. Staff Planner Quagliata stated there were other communities with higher fees. Baseball/softball fields were currently \$40 and the proposed fee was \$95. Hidden Pines ballfield had not been rented in two years. Mary Early noted the Hidden Pines field was used regularly. Staff Planner Quagliata stated the Vetter ballfield was rented regularly. The basketball and volleyball courts would be increased to \$50, which was the fee currently reflected in the policy documents but not the fee ordinance. Basketball and volleyball courts had not been rented in years. The horseshoe rental rate should be removed as the pits were removed.

Staff Planner Quagliata stated the recommended increases would go to the November Township Board meeting. The Committee commented the increases should have been done a long time ago to keep up with the maintenance of the facilities.

Treasurer Roman noted the fields were for use of the community and had to be maintained.

Member Grubb moved to recommend to the Township Board, the approval of the field and pavilion rental rate increase as outlined in the memorandum dated October 13, 2021 for a fee ordinance amendment. Member Voorheis seconded and the MOTION CARRIED with a roll call vote: Grubb – yes; Voorheis – yes; Aseltyne – yes (3 yes votes).

C. Stanley Park grant application update

Staff Planner Quagliata stated the \$500,000 Land and Water Conservation Fund grant application was submitted to the State at the end of March. The grant required a 50:50 match. The Township submitted additional information during the supplemental response period in September. A grant decision should be received by the end of November.

D. Stanley Park sign hardscape/landscape

Staff Planner Quagliata walked Stanley Park with Member Grubb and Member Aseltyne. He asked if the Committee would be in favor of a rock border around the sign, and added the Township may be able to find boulders in the park. Mulch was inexpensive and flowers could be donated and time volunteered for the project. The Committee was in agreement for a rock border with mulch and flowers around the sign.

E. General park rules and regulations update

Staff Planner Quagliata stated one of the rules suggested for removal was the prohibition of alcohol in the parks. There was no one who monitored this. Cindy Toth (953 Beachway Park) spoke from the public to say she did not agree with the suggested change. She thought there would be a problem in the parks if drinking was allowed. Staff Planner Quagliata noted alcohol was allowed in the State parks within the Township. Mary Earley asked staff if all the parks closed at dark. Staff Planner Quagliata stated parks were open dawn to dusk. Cindy Toth asked staff what the benefit would be. Staff Planner Quagliata stated the Township would be developing the Civic Center area and holding more events, and allowing alcohol would be positive. He added there would be more to come on this, tonight was just opening discussion. There was a possibility to allow beer and wine but not liquor. Kim Turner (971 Schuyler) wondered if anyone had thought about sound limits for events. Treasurer Roman asked staff if the police went through the parks regularly. Staff Planner Quagliata reported they randomly check the facilities.

F. Bloomer Park oak wilt prevention project

Staff Planner Quagliata stated the Township was alerted to an oak wilt issue on a property adjacent to Bloomer Park. A resident of the Township generously offered the services of an arborist. There currently was not an oak wilt problem at Bloomer Park but a possibility it could spread to Bloomer Park from the affected property. The plan was to dig a five-foot trench, 400 feet long around the contamination zone on the park property; oak wilt could travel through the root system. They would preemptively fell eight trees. This should take place at the end of November or December.

G. Recommendation of utility vehicle purchase

Staff Planner Quagliata stated there were three quotes for a utility vehicle in the packet. The Township was considering purchasing a John Deere Gator. It could be used across the park system, and would have an enclosed cab for use during the colder months. Member Voorheis asked if there would be a contribution from the General Fund for the purchase, as it would also be used by the Township in general, not just for Parks. Staff Planner Quagliata stated staff did a lot of research and the John Deere Gator appeared to be the best to serve the Township needs. The Committee liked the idea.

H. 2022 budget; millage status; and fund balance

Staff Planner Quagliata discussed the 2022 budget and proposed expenditures. He noted one item in the budget anticipated the 50:50 match for the development of Stanley Park; if the grant was not received this number would be impacted. There was a six-year millage and we were halfway through it. The Township would like to carry a \$100,000 to \$200,000 fund balance. Mary Earley asked what would happen when the millage runs out. Staff Planner Quagliata stated it was the Township Board's decision if they would like to seek a renewal for the millage.

OTHER BUSINESS:

2022 Meeting Schedule

Staff Planner Quagliata discussed the proposed 2022 Meeting Schedule.

Member Voorheis moved to accept the 2022 meeting schedule. Member Grubb seconded and the MOTION CARRIED with a voice vote. 3 yes votes.

COMMUNICATIONS:

a. Member Comments

Staff report: Staff Planner Quagliata reported Senator Runestad's office contacted him about pursuing funds for trails in the Township. They inquired about the Township interest, but the Township did not have the funds to match or contribute at this time. There was a possibility the Township could receive money with no match required. The shipping container in Hawley Park had been removed. The geocache placed in Vetter Park was a success. Bloomer Park storm related cleanup was still an ongoing maintenance project. On October 19, there would be a CISMA work day at Stanley Park. The Historical Society Halloween event at Fisk Farm was cancelled. He noted the CERT team did training in September and was able to utilize Stanley Park.

Member Grubb noted the Planning Commission approved a redevelopment at the old Sonic site. One tenant would be a mattress store and the other would be a drive-through. Trailside Meadow amended their final site plan to convert the active adult community to single family site condominiums. She also added Steve Anderson donated two soccer nets for Parks and Rec.

Member Voorheis reported the Huron Valley Optimist Club was having an Octoberfest with a cornhole tournament. She said the Township Board had met many times lately.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:49 p.m.

The next meeting is Wednesday, December 8, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.