

Superior Charter Township Park Commission  
Regular Meeting  
September 28, 2020

Approved Minutes

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Paula Jefferson at 6:33 pm.

2. Roll Call

Park Commissioners present: Paula Jefferson, Marion Morris, Terry Lee Lansing, Bernedia Word, Nahid Sanii-Yahyai, Martha Kern-Boprie, Sandi Lopez

Park Commissioners absent: none

Others present: Trustee Alex Williams; Juan Bradford, Park Administrator; David Buterbaugh, Maintenance Supervisor; Patrick Pigott, Recreation Coordinator; Ellen Kurath

3. Flag Salute

Chair Paula Jefferson led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

4. Agenda Approval

It was moved by Martha Kern-Boprie and supported by Nahid Sanii-Yahyai to approve the Agenda with the addition of New Business B. Resolution Supporting the Ballot Proposal to Amend the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. The motion carried.

5. Prior Meeting Minutes Approval

A. August 24, 2020

It was moved by Nahid Sanii-Yahyai and supported by Marion Morris to approve the minutes of 8/24/2020 as drafted. The motion carried.

6. Citizen Participation

Ellen Kurath spoke with park commissioners about the presence and condition of vegetation found in North Prospect Park. Ellen wrote a memo to the Park Commissioners and Staff dated September 9, 2020 that detailed many of her findings. She visited this park on 9/04/20 and found a lot of buckthorn near the north boundary of the park, under electric lines. This large, dense line of buckthorn is approximately 700 feet long. Ellen recommends removing these buckthorn bushes, if possible. A large brush hog machine will be necessary to remove this stand of buckthorn.

Deer and other wildlife have been eating many trees. Ellen will consider applying wildlife repellent to protect young trees.

Ellen reviewed what plants grew well and what did not. During summer 2020 young trees grew more than average. Most of these trees are located in higher elevations within the park.

Ellen will meet with David Buterbaugh in the next two weeks to determine what will be the preferred maintenance work this fall.

7. Reports

A. Chairperson

Chair Paula Jefferson noted that the next Township Board meeting is scheduled on October 19, 2020 and she will be the Park Commissioner Attendee. The October meeting is the budget meeting. Paula reached out to Harold Gonzales about the Little Free Library he installed in Fireman's Park, but Harold's telephone was disconnected.

B. Administrator

Juan Bradford submitted a written report. He added that 250 bookmarks were acquired with the Rapid Response grant, and another 250 were acquired using Park funds. The Dixboro United Methodist Church will host another Halloween trunk or treat event this year, on October 30. Early planning for this event is underway, and he does not know if it will be a simple drive-through to minimize human contact. Superior Township will contribute bookmarks for the goodie bags.

C. Board Liaison

Trustee Alex Williams reported on the township board meeting held 9/21/20. An overview of the active shooter incident that took place in the Lakeview Condominiums was provided. A lawsuit has been filed by residents of a neighborhood in Superior Township located in the Ann Arbor school district and the Ypsilanti 48198 zip code, to have the US Postal Service change the zip code to Ann Arbor 48105. A grant application has been submitted to construct a non-motorized path along the east side of Prospect Road, from Berkshire south to Clark Road. The state of Michigan made a decision on the amount of Revenue Sharing to distribute to local governments during 2021. Superior Township will receive the same amount as in 2020. With this decision in place, township budget preparation has commenced. The Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority (YCUA) bond has been paid off. Preliminary budgets have been drafted for all funds. The utility rate increase recently approved should be sufficient to cover all expense for a year, including the sewer repairs on MacArthur/Stamford this year. The Woodside subdivision should complete Phase One this year. Review of the township personnel manual is underway again. Construction of the Clark Road pump station will begin very soon. Chip seal road maintenance will begin soon. The township board approved hazard pay of \$2,000 for Utility Department field staff that worked on the sewer break. Land has been cleared for the Ypsilanti District Library (YDL) branch in Superior Township. The board approved repair of a fire engine.

D. Board Attendee

No report.

E. Park Steward

No report.

F. Safety

There were no accidents or injuries in the past month. A seasonal employee developed a mild fever and had a COVID-19 test. The test result was negative. The employee had a second COVID-19 test, and this result was also negative. The employee returned to work after completion of quarantine with all required paperwork.

8. Communications

- A. Educational: Equitable Access to Parks & Recreation
- B. Fireman's Park Reservation: Y on the Fly
- C. Oakbrook Park Reservation: Abi S. Photography
- D. Free Activity Packs Flyer

It was moved by Marion Morris and supported by Terry Lee Lansing to receive the Communications. The motion carried.

9. Old Business

A. Fireman's Park Play Structure Completed

Construction of the new play structure in Fireman's Park is complete. Juan is happy with the job. Photographs were provided to park commissioners.

B. Park Use by community organizations

Park commissioners discussed use of township parks by community organizations on a planned basis, as opposed to impromptu gatherings. A consensus of the park commissioners was to require

application to use township parks for planned events, including meetings, rallies and celebrations. Bernedia Word mentioned that Township Treasurer Brenda McKinney was aware of this.

10. New Business

A. Proposed Budget

A draft 2021 Park Fund budget was presented to park commissioners by Juan Bradford. The budget contains a cumulative expense decrease of \$14,117. Most of this will come from Park Improvements. A significant change is a request from Juan Bradford for a stipend for health care of \$6,000 per year. This dollar amount equals about 15.3% of his current salary. Juan and the other regular (year-round) employees receive no health care coverage. Juan pointed out that after working for Superior Township for five years, he is only now starting to earn the amount that the previous administrator was paid. After extensive discussion, the following comments were provided by park commissioners. Nahid Sanii-Yahyai – approves paying the stipend. She said all should have health care.

Bernedia Word – people should be paid.

Sandi Lopez – wants a well-documented proposal.

Terry Lee Lansing – we should discuss all employee’s compensation, not just Juan’s.

Marion Morris – she does not think the Board of Trustees will concur with paying a stipend for health care. We should award this compensation to all regular year-round employees.

Paula Jefferson – noted that Superior Township tends to under-compensate all staff, including salary fringe benefits and paid time off.

Martha Kern-Boprie – noted that the stipend would address an inequity, by providing health coverage. But we should not expect to award annual increments of 15% in future years. She sees merit in providing some form of health care coverage to our regular year-round staff.

A sub-committee of Nahid Sanii-Yahyai, Sandi Lopez and Martha Kern-Boprie agreed to analyze this request in detail, and bring a report back to the Park Commission.

B. Resolution supporting the ballot proposal to amend the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund

It was moved by Martha Kern-Boprie and supported by Marion Morris that

WHEREAS, the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) has funded public land acquisition and recreation projects with royalties from oil, gas and minerals from public lands in all eighty-three counties in the state since its founding in 1976; and

WHEREAS, projects supported by the MNRTF help Michigan communities protect the state’s lakes, streams, lands and wildlife habitats and build recreational facilities like parks, trails and river and beach access for the enjoyment of Michigan residents and visitors, with economic, quality-of-life and public health benefits; and

WHEREAS, every Michigan resident is within a one-hour drive of a state park or recreation area, which are critical contributors to Michigan’s \$25.7 billion tourism industry that supports 237,733 direct jobs; and

WHEREAS, Superior Charter Township has received \$420,000 to create park and recreation opportunities such as Cherry Hill Nature Preserve; and

WHEREAS, the Michigan Legislature unanimously voted to allow the MNRTF to again receive royalties from oil, gas and mining on public land to fund land conservation and recreation, to commit at least 25% of Trust Fund dollars to building and renovating public recreation facilities like trails, parks and rivers and lake access and at least 25% for land conservation, and requiring 20% of State Parks Endowment Fund expenditures be for improvements at state parks, without raising taxes; and

WHEREAS, Michigan voters will now have the opportunity to approve these changes in the 2020 general election, thus amending Article IX, Section 35 and 35a of the Michigan Constitution

Approved by Superior Charter Township Park Commission on October 26, 2020.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Superior Charter Township Parks & Recreation Commission support the ballot question placed before voters in the 2020 general election to update and expand the MNRTF, guaranteeing investment in conservation and outdoor recreation for generations to come, protecting our natural resources and invigorating our local economies.

A roll call vote was taken

	Yes	No	Absent
Paula Jefferson	X		
Marion Morris	X		
Sandi Lopez	X		
Bernedia Word	X		
Terry Lee Lansing	X		
Nahid Sanii-Yahyai	X		
Martha Kern-Boprie	X		

The motion carried and the resolution was adopted.

11. Bills for Payment

It was moved by Marion Morris and supported by Terry Lee Lansing to approve payment of the bills totaling \$23,111.85. The motion carried.

12. Financial Statements

A. August 2020 Revenue & Expenditure Report

It was moved by Marion Morris and supported by Paula Jefferson to receive the August 2020 Revenue & Expenditure Report. The motion carried.

13. Pleas and Petitions

Nahid Sanii-Yahyai asked what the plans are for the Pumpkin Carving event this year. Juan informed commissioners that the event will take place on October 24 in Norfolk Park from 11:00 am – 2:00 pm. The event will be a drive-through, with each child receiving a pumpkin, a carving pattern, a bookmark and a packaged treat. Martha Kern-Boprie volunteered to assist.

14. Adjournment

It was moved by Nahid Sanii-Yahyai and supported by Marion Morris to adjourn at 7:25 pm. The motion carried.

Submitted by,  
Martha Kern-Boprie, Park Commissioner & Secretary