

Superior Charter Township Park Commission
Regular Meeting
January 25, 2021
Conducted via Zoom platform technology

Approved Minutes

1. Call to Order
The meeting was called to order by Chair Marion Morris at 6:33 pm.
Chair Morris read the rules regulating government meetings conducted via Zoom platform technology.
2. Roll Call
Park Commissioners present: Marion Morris, Nahid Sanii-Yahyai, Greg Vessels, Terry Lee Lansing, Riley Schofield, Martha Kern-Boprie

Park Commissioners absent: Guy Conti

Others present: Trustee Bernice Lindke; Juan Bradford, Park Administrator; Patrick Pigott, Recreation Coordinator
3. Flag Salute
Vice-Chair Nahid Sanii-Yahyai led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
4. Agenda Approval
It was moved by Nahid Sanii-Yahyai and supported by Greg Vessels to approve the agenda as drafted. The motion carried.
5. Prior Meeting Minutes Approval
 - A. December 21, 2020
It was moved by Nahid Sanii-Yahyai and supported by Greg Vessels to approve the minutes of 12/21/20 as drafted. The motion carried.
6. Citizen Participation
There was none.
7. Reports
 - A. Chairperson
Chair Marion Morris reported that Juan Bradford submitted the Schock Park memo and proposed minutes of the December 21, 2020 Park Commission meeting to the township board. In addition to regular meetings with Juan to sign payables, she discussed some concerns about Park Commissioner compensation with Martha.
 - B. Administrator
Juan Bradford submitted a written report. In addition to that report, he informed park commissioners he continues to meet with the Dixboro Village Green board about plans for the 2021 Farmers Markets. The first market is planned for May 14, 2021.
 - C. Board Liaison
Trustee Bernice Lindke will be the Township Board Liaison to the Park Commission this term. Trustee Lindke seeks feedback from Park Commissioners on what we look for from the liaison. Chair Marion Morris encouraged Trustee Lindke to meet with Juan Bradford about this. Martha Kern-Boprie commented that the liaison can inform the Park Commission of concerns and opportunities that

come to the attention of the township board, and likewise can bring ideas and issues back to the board from the park commission.

D. Board Meeting Attendee

Martha Kern-Boprie attended the January 19, 2021 Township Board meeting, and submitted a written report on the meeting.

E. Park Steward

Ellen Kurath submitted detailed written reports on the presence of invasive vegetation in Cherry Hill Nature Preserve (CHNP) and in Schroeter Park. These reports included drawings of plant locations, and suggestions for diminishing the presence of these plants. Her suggestions included plant removal by volunteers as well as park staff. Martha Kern-Boprie suggested organizing volunteer efforts on a few weekends through the growing season. If publicized, we could have 15 to 20 volunteers for a morning or afternoon several months of the season and make a significant impact on these invasive plants. Other park commissioners were supportive of this idea, and asked Patrick Pigott to help coordinate these efforts.

F. Safety

G. Patrick Pigott reported there have been no accidents or injuries in the past month. He did inform the park commission of icy conditions near the entrance and near the boardwalk in Cherry Hill Nature Preserve.

8. Communications

A. Educational: 2020 NRPA Agency Performance Review

B. 2021 Township Board of Trustees Meeting Attendees

C. Ellen Kurath: Schroeter Park & Cherry Hill Nature Preserve Reports

It was moved by Martha Kern-Boprie and supported by Nahid Sanii-Yahyai to receive the communications. The motion carried.

9. Old Business

10. New Business

A. 2021 Parks & Recreation Commission Pay Rates

Chair Marion Morris outlined some of the history of compensation issues for the park & recreation commission. She also reviewed the financial cost of some proposed stipend increases, ranging from an increase of \$10.00 per meeting, per commissioner up to \$31.00 per meeting, per commissioner. Martha Kern-Boprie related additional background, including that the Superior Township Park Commission stipends are significantly higher than those paid to members of other boards and commissions in Washtenaw County. Beginning in 1984 through at least 2006 County stipends were \$25.00 per meeting attended. Martha checked with the Michigan Townships Association, and learned that only the Township Board has the authority to set compensation for township elected officials. She also noted that stipends are for meetings attended. They do not reflect time volunteered at recreation events or attending other meetings. Nahid Sanii-Yahyai said she is not concerned about her compensation but thinks a raise could be justified. Riley Schofield had no comment. Trustee Bernice Lindke commented it is important to do the homework for all issues on the agenda. Terry Lee Lansing said she does not have a strong opinion for or against the concept of a raise. She does think the Chair and Secretary deserve a raise. Marion Morris stated that parks are often the "face of the township". Parks were used a lot during the pandemic. Significant improvement has been made to Superior Township Parks in the past twenty years. Greg Vessels stated he feels he is adequately compensated now. Martha Kern-Boprie noted that the Park Commission is seeking additional funds of at least \$5,115 from the Township Board for maintaining non-park properties. That request may not be favorable reviewed if the Township Board finds we are using the money to pay ourselves higher stipends.

Park Commissioners came to a consensus not to pursue a change in stipend amount at this time.

B. 2021 Special Events

Juan Bradford presented a schedule of special events that were planned for 2020. Most events had to be canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Easter Egg Hunt is traditionally the first event, in early April. If we have this event in 2021, Juan said it should be a non-contact event like the pumpkin event last fall. As people drive up, they are handed a treat bag with candy and a simple craft project.

Additional suggestions were made.

Greg Vessels suggested an outdoor scavenger hunt in a nature conservancy where family groups look for tokens of plant and animal presence.

Martha Kern-Boprie suggested adding an improv theater activity as an additional offering at one of the special events. Greg Vessels said his wife has a lot of experience with this, and he volunteered her to help.

Nahid Sani-Yahyai commented that we should do something now. Many people are suffering from depression due to confinement brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. She suggested a zoom event that includes exercise, music and perhaps poetry or humor.

Martha Kern-Boprie suggested a winter event, with alternate plans depending on weather. If we get a snowy day, there could be sledding and snow sculptures. If no snow, children could learn about winter habits of animals. This would probably be an event for a year from now.

Juan will meet with Marion to propose detailed plans.

11. Bills for Payment

It was moved by Greg Vessels and supported by Terry Lee Lansing to approve paying the bills totaling \$30,703.21 at 1/25/2021. The motion carried.

12. Financial Statements

It was moved by Terry Lee Lansing and supported by Nahid Sani-Yahyai to receive the December 2020 financial statements. The motion carried.

13. Pleas and Petitions

Nahid Sani-Yahyai attended the December 21, 2020 Township Board meeting, and provided a report on board action. Trustee Bernice Lindke asked if she could use township email. Email access was offered to all board members as a result. A grant was awarded from Washtenaw County Parks in amount \$125,000 for the Prospect Road non-motorized path. Grants awarded to Superior Township total \$600,000 for the year. Work on the Utility Department pump station located on Clark Road has begun. DTE Energy has begun trimming trees that obstruct power lines. New policies that impact employee time off are in development. The township's insurance premium increased \$600 per year. Five acres owned by the township on Harris Road, near the Ypsilanti District Library site were cleared. Board members discussed pay raises for the Supervisor, Clerk and Treasurer. Stipends for Trustees were increased by \$25 per meeting, from \$175 to \$200.

Marion Morris commented that at the December 21, 2020 Parks Commission meeting, a commissioner stated a park commissioner should be able to speak during Citizens Participation as a member of the public, the same as a private citizen.

Marion proposed the following clarifying policy:

If the park commissioner wishes to speak to something concerning township parks and recreation, it should be added to the meeting agenda.

If the park commission wishes to speak to something that does not concern township parks and recreation, it should be raised in the "Pleas and Petitions" portion of the meeting.

Park commissioners concurred with Marion's clarifying policy.

14. Adjournment

It was moved by Martha Kern-Boprie and supported by Greg Vessels to adjourn the meeting at 7:42 pm.
The motion carried.

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