Superior Charter Township Parks & Recreation Commission

Regular Meeting

October 28, 2024

Approved Minutes

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Chair Nahid Sanii-Yahyai.

1. Roll Call

Park Commissioners present: Curtis Freeman, Riley Schofield, Nahid Sanii-Yahyai, Martha Kern-Boprie

Jack Smiley

Park Commissioners absent: Guy Conti (excused), Greg Vessels

Others present: Trustee Bernice Lindke; Director Juan Bradford, Brenda Baker, Jan Piert, Susan LaCroix

1. Flag Salute

Chair Nahid Sanii-Yahyai led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

1. Agenda Approval

It was moved by Riley Schofield and supported by Curtis Freeman to approve the agenda as drafted. The motion carried.

1. Prior Meeting Minutes Approval
2. September 23, 2024

It was moved by Curtis Freeman and supported by Riley Schofield to approve the minutes of 9/23/2024 with the following corrections:

9. Old Business C. In the third sentence, correct the time of the special meeting called to 6:30 pm, so the sentence reads “Chair Nahid Sanii-Yahyai called a special meeting of the Park Commission on October 7, 2024, at 6:30 pm, in the Township Hall.”

10. New Business C. In the first sentence, insert the letter “n” between “eve” and “t” so the sentence reads “Volunteers for Pumpkin Carving event on October 26, 11:00 am to 2:00 pm Norfolk Park.”

13. Pleas and Petitions. In the first paragraph, third sentence of Dana Green’s comment, insert the letter “s” at the end of “screen” so the sentence reads: “He suggested activities before the movie screens that help children burn off energy.”

The motion to approve the minutes with the corrections noted carried.

1. October 7, 2024

It was moved by Curtis Freeman and supported by Nahid Sanii-Yahyai to approve the minutes of 10/07/24 with the following correction:

Pleas and Petitions

In the second sentence of Jack Smiley’s comment, remove 165 as the number of acres, and replace it

with 162, so that it reads “…grant to acquire 162 acres north of the “Rock Property.” The motion to

approve with the noted correction carried.

1. Citizens Participation

Brenda Baker asked if she could speak under Pleas and Petition. She was informed that she could.

Susan LaCroix introduced herself to the Park Commissioners. She is a resident of Superior Township and very interested in protecting the environment.

1. Reports
2. Chairperson

Chair Nahid Sanii-Yahai attended the Full Moon bonfire on Oct. 19, the trip to Toll Gate Farm in Novi by the Rock Property committee, and the Pumpkin Carving event on Oct. 26. The visit to Toll Gate Farm was very informative, and the Pumpkin Carving event a success. 130 pumpkins were donated by Brookside Farms, and all the pumpkins were given out before 2:00 pm. Nahid thanked all the park staff for their work making this event successful.

Nahid thanked the Park Commissioners leaving at the end of this term, Riley Schofield and Guy Conti, and Trustee Bernice Lindke for their service. She said she would like to organize a “thank you gathering” and asked the out-going officials to let her know when they could participate in a gathering.

1. Director

Juan Bradford submitted a written report. He added that the installation of Christmas lights on the Dixboro Village Green Schoolhouse has inspired other nearby businesses including Moonwinks Café and the country store to also install lights.

1. Board Liaison

Trustee Bernice Lindke did not have a report as she did not attend the October 21 Township Board meeting.

1. Board Attendee Report

Martha Kern-Boprie, Curtis Freeman and Jack Smiley attended the October 21 Township Board meeting. Martha submitted a written report.

1. Park Steward

Juan Bradford spoke with Ellen Kurath. She has been checking on plants she planted in Cherry Hill Nature Preserve (CHNP).

1. Safety

Juan Bradford reported that no staff were injured in the past month.

It was moved by Curtis Freeman and supported by Nahid Sanii-Yahyai to receive the reports. The motion carried.

1. Communications
2. Educational: National Park & Recreation Association Salary Survey
3. Board Resolution #2024-64: Accept Natural Resources Trust Fund Agreement
4. Controller’s Report: October 21, 2024
5. 2025 Township Proposed Budgets

It was moved by Martha Kern-Boprie and supported by Curtis Freeman to receive the communications. The motion carried.

1. Old Business
2. 2025 Parks & Recreation Commission Proposed Budget

At the Township Board Meeting Supervisor Schwartz presented a 2025 budget for the Parks & Recreation fund that contained a transfer from General Fund that was 3.5% or $13,916.00 more than the 2024 amount. The Parks & Recreation Commission presented a 2025 budget containing a transfer from the General Fund that was $114,106.00 more than the 2024 transfer. The difference in the transfer budgets equals $100,190.00.

$114,106.00 Commission budget proposal increase

$13,916.00 Supervisor Schwartz budget proposal increase

1. 2025 Parks & Recreation Proposed Budget Talking Points

The Commission proposal was to fund expanding three permanent part-time maintenance positions to permanent full-time positions with all fringe benefits. The Township Board received proposed budgets on October 21, and will act on them at the November 18 meeting. Park Commissioners discussed the merits and improved efficiency of retaining experienced personnel with maintenance certifications. Martha Kern-Boprie encouraged other park commissioners to emphasize the park commission proposal is to expand the three existing positions from about 75% to 100% when speaking with township board members. It is not adding three new positions to the current park maintenance staff.

1. Fireman’s Park Improvements Update

Juan Bradford reported the improvements to Fireman’s Park are complete. The drainage was corrected. Billings for the work are undergoing review.

1. “Rock Property” Committee Update

The “Rock Property” committee visited Toll Gate Farm in Novi. Toll Gate Farm is owned by Michigan State University (MSU). The next committee meeting will take place in the future. A date has not been set yet. Martha Kern-Boprie asked committee members to suggest a better name for the property than the “Rock Property” as this was the name of a former owner who sought for years to develop it in a manner that was opposed by township officials and contrary to planning and zoning documents.

1. New Business
2. Owl Prowl event on Saturday, November 2 6:30 to 7:30 pm – Volunteers Needed

All park commissioners present had other commitments on November 2, and could not volunteer.

1. Proposed 2025 Farming Lease for “Rock Property”

Steven Peach has farmed 206 acres of the property owned by Superior Township and referred to as the “Rock Property”. He seeks to farm 186 of these acres in 2025. A map of the “Rock Property” with the acres Mr. Peach wishes to farm delineated was provided to park commissioners. Township Board Resolution 2022-31 dated May 20, 2024, containing the lease agreement for 2024 was also provided as background material. It was moved by Jack Smiley and supported by Martha Kern-Boprie to authorize and direct Juan Bradford to enter into a lease agreement for farming purposes with Steven Peach for approximately 186 acres in the “Rock Property” for calendar year 2025 for an amount not to exceed $9,000.00. The motion carried.

1. Parks & Recreation Millage Discussion

Township resident Jan Piert has suggested seeking a millage levy for the Park & Recreation fund, as it could provide more stable funding, and not be subject to political differences with Township Board members.

Jack Smiley stated he opposed seeking such a millage. He believes his property taxes are already high, and he does not wish to increase them. He also stated he finds the Park Commission has a good relationship with the township board, and it is not necessary to seek independent tax funding. He commented that if a tax was for land preservation, he might consider supporting it, but not otherwise.

Martha Kern-Boprie noted that during the 1980s several tax levies were proposed for the park fund, and all failed. One of the consequences of these failed attempts were objections from the public to the Township Board to allocate funding to parks, stating the public had spoken in the election and did not want funding spent on parks and recreation. She was not entirely opposed to seeking a millage, but it should be carefully considered.

1. Bills for Payment

It was moved by Curtis Freeman and supported by Nahid Sanii-Yahyai to approve payment of the bills totaling $48,465.60 at 10/28/2024. The motion carried.

1. Financial Statements
2. September 2024 Revenue & Expenditure Report

It was moved by Martha Kern-Boprie and supported by Curtis Freeman to receive the September 2024 Revenue & Expenditure Report. The motion carried.

1. September 2024 Balance Sheet

It was moved by Riley Schofield and supported by Curtis Freeman to receive the September 2024 Balance Sheet. The motion carried.

1. Pleas and Petitions

Brenda Baker commented on two points.

One, she thought only six people were on the ballot for seven Park Commissioner seats on November 5. Park Commissioners informed her there were six Democratic candidates and one independent candidate.

Two, when she queried the township website for the Park Commission agenda and packet for tonight’s meeting, she could not find it. Juan Bradford responded that he sent the agenda and the meeting packet to the Township Clerk’s office via email on October 23. It may have been missed by the Clerk’s office staff with all the election preparation work they are handling.

1. Adjournment

It was moved by Riley Schofield and supported by Curtis Freeman to adjourn at 7:35 pm. The motion carried.

Submitted by,

Martha Kern-Boprie, Park Commissioner and Secretary