

CHIKAMING TOWNSHIP PARK BOARD

Minutes of the March 31, 2008 Meeting

PROPOSED

Chairman Joanne Sims called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. with members Dan Buckenmeyer, George Swanson, Bernie Abendshein and Brad Williamson present. Absent were Ruth Magdzinski and Janice Gibson. Also present were Kirk Schrader and Recording Secretary Marisue Hojnacki.

Sims asked that Matt Barrett be placed at the front of the agenda and the board agreed. Barrett (269/876-9640) represented the Three Oaks Little League Baseball. He said that they are building a Pony League for 5-12 and 13-14 year olds. He had heard rumors that the Park Board might be taking the field down at Harbert Park and if they did, they would love to have the bleachers. They got a grant from the Pokagons, but every little bit helps. Sims asked if they would be done for this season. Barrett said that on Saturday they laid the block for the dugouts. They are 75% done with the grading and need another half day of dry weather to finish the dozing. He said that if in the future they decide to do something, his group would lend the labor support to remove whatever they decide to remove to the benefit of both groups. Sims told him that they do not know at this point. Williamson said that if they were going to dispose of anything they would want to do something positive. Adding, that currently they have no plans to remove the field and that it is currently being used. Sims said that they are working on a five year plan. Williamson said that they are coordinating with new Buffalo and Weesaw so recreational facilities would not be duplicated. He said that if they needed a practice field they could use it. Barrett said they have used it in the past, but it poses a problem with parents that have several children participating in the program and they have to run back and forth. He said that their next plan is to put in a t-ball field. They currently have 15 baseball teams and two fields, which are used Monday thru Saturday for every team to practice twice a week.

Election of Officers: Buckenmeyer moved, supported by Swanson to wait until the April meeting to hold the election. Motion carried.

Approval of Agenda: Swanson moved, supported by Abendshein to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: Williamson moved, supported by Swanson to approve the minutes of the November 26, 2007 meeting as presented. Motion carried.

Correspondence: Sims received a letter from Catherine Butler in New Buffalo wanting to use the baseball field for Pony League, but the Harbert field is not adequate for that purpose. She also received a letter from people concerned about a multiuse development on Union Pier Road in New Buffalo Township that consisted of 40 single family and 6 commercial units. They were concerned about the state of our public

beaches and did not want more crowding on the beaches. Dudeck wrote back that it is in New Buffalo Township and also told them that we spend \$8,500 a year cleaning up the beaches and that we are aware of the crowding on the beaches.

Treasurer's Report: Williamson passed out the February statement that showed they had \$8,873.57 left in their budget. However, it did not reflect the snow removal bill, the \$1,500 that was committed for electrical repairs at Harbert Park and \$2,000 for developing open recreation at the CTP&P. He also handed out a copy of the amended, approved budget. Williamson said that they decided that they needed a more comprehensive plan for the open recreation before they proceeded so perhaps they need to rescind the vote on the \$2,000. Swanson felt that they may not want to release it. Sims felt they could sit on it and still keep it earmarked for the open recreation. They have set aside \$6,500 for planning in the budget. Williamson said that Merritt Engineering drew up a plan for them, but he did not bring it for the meeting. It showed that they could have four full-sized fields or 16 peewee sized fields. It gave them a lot of flexibility. Sims felt they needed to get the cost of putting together the plan.

OLD BUSINESS:

Beach Maintenance Reports:

Townline Beach -Sims said that she received a phone call about debris under the Townline stairs and asked if we could clean it up. Schrader said that it has been there for a long time and people use it as a dump. Pete White had trouble putting in the posts for the deck because of the debris. Swanson asked if they really want to take everything or just as it pops up. Sims said that the person talked about a mattress and pieces of deck and she told him that they would take a look at it.

Park Passes - Sims will call Topp Press about printing them and Judy Harris about laminating them.

Other- Abendshein reported that Schrader had called him because someone had cut the lock off the gate at Berrien Street and opened it. There were no fresh tracks. It is now secured again. The house to the north blew a bunch of leaves over onto Berrien Beach. Sims said that they have talked about some maintenance at the beaches in the near future.

Parks Maintenance Reports:

Harbert Community Park – Sims reported that she received some scenarios from Game Time for additional playground equipment at Harbert Park. They are planning on applying for a Pokagon Fund Grant for equipment. The first plan is for the small child's area and putting woodchips in the whole area for \$19,588.06. The second plan also includes enlarging what exists for \$34,465.47 and the third plan adds to that a climbing wall for the older children for a grand total of \$41,000. It takes five weeks for delivery from the time it is ordered and about two weeks to install. Sims said that wheat is currently under the swings does not meet the safety assessment so they need the woodchips. Swanson asked what the level of demand was and Williamson said that it was the hottest single topic in the survey in the grandchild range. Swanson felt that if they built it they needed to do it right and maintain it, especially the woodchips. Sims

said that they have \$12,500 to put towards it. Swanson moved to go for the \$41,000 plan as long as they received a \$28,000 grant. Buckenmeyer seconded the motion. Motion carried.

River Valley Garden Club – The River Valley Garden Club has reserved Harbert Park for their plant sale on the Saturday of Memorial Day Weekend. It was agreed it fit their criteria as they are a non for profit group.

Harbert Road Preserve – Abendshein reported that there is no need for a burn. Schrader has measured the trails. All the information in the box has faded and they need to find the key. Williamson said he will check to see if he has the key.

Facilities Rental Agreement - It has not been approved by the Township Board yet. Williamson will get a copy of their Special Meeting minutes in December to Dudeck.

CTP&P – Sims said that Williamson, Abendshein, and her met with DLZ Engineers from Lansing and Fire Chief Mike Davidson on the prairie burn. They will get 48 hours notice and will cost \$2,550. The Chikaming Fire Department is using it as a training exercise and then in the future the Fire Department will do it in sections. Davidson and Sims went to Lakewood Estates on Friday and talked with their maintenance people and anyone who showed up. It was suggested that if someone had breathing problems, they should leave the park for an hour. Sims will put together a scenario flyer to be distributed to the residents in the park. Buckenmeyer asked about the clause that if the Fire Department got a call they would shut down the burn and asked that if it was an alarm, if they could start it up again. Williamson said that they are going to have a crew there and will only shut it down if they have to pull that crew. Sims said that it will burn towards the center. Williamson added and up wind. He said that the engineer said that they have never lost control of a fire. Sims will do a press release about the burn. It will be done by May. Swanson moved, supported by Abendshein to accept the proposal from DLZ. Motion carried.

Boundary Signs – Sims said that she had talked with Schrader about boundary signs at the CTP&P, particularly by Mydra Road where the park comes up against private property. Schrader said that they need to find their corners. John Gooch said that at the Kessling Preserve, they did it as a volunteer day. They decided they needed GPS, signs and metal fence posts. Schrader will look at the map and see how many feet and how many signs they will need. Sims will get him the survey map. Buckenmeyer said that he would help.

Garlic Mustard Pull – Sims said that Sue Petterson will put together a volunteer day. Abendshein suggested spraying it, but it has to be done now. Schrader said that they could mark the larger stands of garlic mustard this year so that they could spray them next year.

Signage – Sims said that Schrader has taken down the two big signs at the CTP&P as they need to have the new trail routed into them and they need to be refurbished. Hick Sign Company will do the routing, sanding and refinishing with a heavier varnish for \$622.93. Pete White will put a little shed roof over the signs so they won't fade again for \$637 for both signs. It will be a two foot overhang over both sides to keep the sun and rain off. They also need two new trail signs that are 12" by 18" for \$280. Swanson moved, supported by Abendshein to spend ~~\$1,539.93~~ \$1,259.93 on the old signs, shed roofs and two new signs. Motion carried.

Spur Road Gate or Chain – Sims said that they need to block off the spur road at the CTP&P as someone has thrown tires back there. She received a quote of \$1,725 for a gate. Schrader said that he had chain left over from the swing sets and they could put up posts and run the chain with a sign on it. Williamson had had an emergency and left the meeting briefly. When he came back he wondered about the liability issues with putting a chain across the road. Swanson said a chain with signs across it was as visible as a gate. Sims will check out the liability issue.

Other CTP&P Issues – The water will be turned on. Schrader asked if they were going to spray for cattails. Hollerbach had said that he had something and Sims will find out what it was. Sims felt they may have to improve the overflow tube. They also decided to unlock the gate this week.

Committee Reports:

Beach/Security – Sims will get more than one estimate. Abendshein will contact Nick about checking passes on weekends.

Yearly Contracts – They have a 2-year contract with TDK for mowing. Schrader showed pictures of the trash on the beaches. He suggested putting up signage and information in the local newspapers that people will need to remove their own trash. What you bring down, you take home. It was the general consensus that it was the people who come for just a day that are leaving the messes. Buckenmeyer suggested that as an option they put the trash barrels at the entrances to the beaches, at the top of the stairs.

Swanson agreed and suggested more frequent pickup. Abendshein also agreed, but added that they put signs on the beach stating that the trash barrels are at the top of the stairs. Buckenmeyer felt they may need something with a lid or the refuse could blow around and the neighbors complain. Schrader added that the raccoons would get into it. Swanson suggested putting bullet tops on them. He moved to remove them from the beach and have at least one at the top of the stairs. Schrader said that he puts six at Berrien. He uses about 28-30 barrels during the summer for all the beaches.

Buckenmeyer said that they will need to find a flat surface to put them on. Williamson said that they need a trash management solution in their five year plan and have a short term solution for now. Swanson moved to remove all trash barrels from the beach level and place trash barrels at an accessible point at the top of the beach and that they explore putting lids on those units and increase the frequency of pickup for the 2008 season. Abendshein supported the motion. After discussion Swanson added to his motion to buy bullet tops not to exceed \$3,000 and Abendshein supported the addition. Motion carried. Schrader will bring a proposal for a contract for trash pickup to the April meeting.

Parks Map for Recreational Informational Folder – Sims showed the members a brochure with maps of the Parks and Preserves that would be included in an Informational folder the Public Safety Commission is working on getting a grant for. The members made suggestions on how it should be changed.

5-Year Plan – Williamson will bring a rough draft of the 5-Year Plan to the next meeting and then get members to take some of the areas and work on action items. They would like to have it in place for the August meeting. Swanson suggested that it be completed before the November election of Park Board members.

NEW BUSINESS:

Three Oaks Parcel – Sims said that the parcel on Three Oaks Road was purchased by the Township in 1974 with a clause that it had to be used for special purposes for ten years. She asked them to think about the use or possible sale of the property.

Year End Report – Sims had submitted a Year End Report to the Township.

Wedding on Cherry Beach - Jane Petterson contacted Sims to see about having a wedding on Cherry Beach on July 19 with a dozen people. Sims told her that she would have to bus the people in and share the beach with whoever was there. Williamson said that she will have to fill out a facility use form and follow the rules that will be in place at that time.

Signage – Buckenmeyer said that they should look at how much is on the signage when they revise the signage for the trash. Abendshein said that you do need to post the rules if you plan to give tickets. He felt that people would begin to obey the rules if tickets were given out.

Adjournment: Abendshein moved, supported by Swanson to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 p.m. Motion carried. The next meeting will be on Monday, April 28th, and the May meeting will be on Monday, May 19.

Marisue Hojnacki
Recording Secretary