

Chikaming Township Park Board Minutes of the September 24, 2007 Meeting

Chairman Joanne Sims called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with members George Swanson, Ruth Magdzinski, Dan Buckenmeyer and Brad Williamson present. Bernie Abendshein arrived at 7:08 p.m. and Janice Gibson was absent. Recording Secretary Marisue Hojnacki was also present.

Approval of Agenda: Magdzinski moved, supported by Buckenmeyer to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: Swanson moved, supported by Magdzinski to approve the minutes of the August 27, 2007 regular meeting as presented. Motion carried.

Correspondence: Sims said she sent the letter to Chikaming Open Lands and that they have sent the \$5,000 donation to be used at the Chikaming Park and Preserve. They wanted to know how the money would be used so she told them it would be used for educational information on the prairie platform as they had contributed to the prairie, a management plan for the property which would include the pond and burning and other educational programs. She also passed around a letter to Chief Stormont and his officers for all the members to sign that thanked them for their efforts towards security at the beaches this past summer.

Treasurer's Report: Williamson passed around a new summary report of their finances as of the end of August, which showed them where their money was spent. He pointed out that August is typically their busiest month as far as expenses due to the high use of the beaches. He also showed them a budget comparison for the year. He felt that they were in very good shape in terms of how they were spending their money for the year. He noted that he needed to shuffle the budget to cover utility bills and asked about payment to the Police Department. Sims will talk to Stormont. The WHIP Grant cost is currently in Park Preservation. They have spent \$2,000 on spraying and will get \$769 back. They have spent all except \$23,000. Sims said that they need to fix the water problem at the CTP&P. Williamson said that he will run a report right after he gets the figures from Bohac and e-mail everyone.

OLD BUSINESS:

Beach Maintenance Reports:

Overall Beach entrances & Trash- Abendshein said that he took the vines out at Pier Street. He and Schrader will do the swings at Harbert Park in two weeks. Schrader wants to paint them first. Schrader is also going to pull the cattails at the pond.

Pier Street – Magdzinski said that some people have asked if branches could be cut from the trees to have a better view of the lake. She also asked if one of the new members could take on Miller beach and Swanson volunteered.

Parks Maintenance Reports:

Harbert Community Park – Williamson said that they have a problem with the pond washing over the dam there. The overflow pipe clogs because there is no trash rack and it erodes the dam. He felt they need to build a trash rack there that is easy to maintain and control. Abendshein and Williamson will get with Schrader on the project. Williamson thought that they may need a bigger culvert as the current one is only four inches in diameter. He suggested pulling the pipe out, putting in a new one and building the dam up which may cost a couple of thousand dollars. Sims will talk to Larry Merritt. Williamson wondered what was going to be done with the garage and property the township acquired adjacent to the park. Sims will ask Supervisor Dudeck.

Harbert Road Preserve – No one had been there. Buckenmeyer said the last time he was there it was too wet to walk. Sims suggested moving some of the excess wood chips from the CTP&P to there.

CTP&P –

Cattails removal report & pond report – Abendshein reported that Jim Donahoe recommended using the herbicide reward. This will take monthly treatments at \$900 per application and will have to be done annually. The permit fee to do this from the DEQ is \$400 per year. The cattail treatment will cost \$250 per application and is best done in the fall. Swanson wondered what conditions caused the growth of the duckweed and watermeal and perhaps they should look at that for a solution. Sims said that at one time Joe considered a circulator and Swanson felt that there may still be electrical lines that ran from the farm to the cistern. Williamson was not sold on doing something about it. Sims said that she had a report on aerators. Magdzinski said that they had talked about battery operated ones, but that would be too noisy. Buckenmeyer asked if the sonar treatment lasted longer and Abendshein thought that it was a one shot deal. Williamson questioned spending all this money to create a nature preserve and then dumping chemicals in it. He wondered if the problem might be cyclical. Magdzinski commented that it was just this last year that they had the duckweed. Swanson felt they should consult an expert before making a decision. Sims said she will contact the person they had come out before. She also said that Merritt said that they have to get the vegetation out from under the fishing platform. Abendshein said the DNR only gives out a limited number of permits per year so they need to get in their request by January. It was suggested that they talk to someone at Sarrett and Love Creek. Sims will have the information for the next meeting. Williamson felt that maybe the cattails were keeping debris out of the overflow pipe.

Prairie Burn – Buckenmeyer had not gotten a reply from Pheasants Forever. He did more research and there are several who can do it and he

wondered if they should go out to bid. He said that he needed dimensions. Sims said that it is 29 acres, but the original prairie is 24 acres and they are considering burning a third at a time. Buckenmeyer will work on it for the next meeting.

Trail work – Swanson said that the trails are suffering from debris. If you are going to take a walk bring gloves and remove branches from the trail. Sims will call River Valley High School principal Jose Vera and see if she can get the Future Farmers to help again.

Washout and water flow re- routed – Merritt & Hollerbach – Sims had no new information.

Sign on Warren Woods Road – Swanson talked to the Road Commission and was told the placement of signs is based on the speed on the roads. They said that they will look at the sign and see if they can do something. Swanson said that he will follow up and they may have to tell Lakewood Estates that they have tried and can not move it. The problem is their entrance sign is much bigger than the Preserves' so people turn in there. He suggested clearing out the scrub brush for a more spacious Preserve entrance. Williamson said that uniform signage to tie all the parks together is in their five year plan.

Committee Reports:

Five year plan- Williamson said that he took a copy of what they had before and went to Michigan Township.org for supporting information. The guidance for the plan they had before was from 1998 and now he has the 2006 version to work from. The five year plan is not required unless you want to get grant money. He said that most of what they do now is maintenance and repair of parks so in the past they did not have a long term plan. The Park and Preserve was the biggest thing that was done. He said that the DNR now looks at it as “we are people that live amid parks.” They are encouraging them to look beyond their municipality for joint projects and integrating their thinking with neighboring communities.

Swanson pointed out that they have the Galien River in common with New Buffalo and Three Oaks. Magdzinski added New Troy. Williamson said that the other thing they have in common was bicycling. He said that the DNR wants them to think “greenway” – a strip of land that connects recreational facilities. He said that they also need open field recreation. They lost eleven of their soccer fields. They are looking at the 15 acres at the CTP&P for these fields. They will need a road, parking, drainage, rest rooms or port-a-potties and water out there. He hoped they could be the soccer center like Three Oaks is the Little League Center in the area. He saw the biggest project in the next five years as the bicycle paths. He thought that they could build a spur that runs down Warren Woods Road to the Park and Preserve. Magdzinski said that they have come as far as the state line with one. Sims felt that they needed tennis courts and a basketball court. Sims said that second homeowners have asked for dog parks. Williamson said that they also want educational programs. Williamson said that the deadline for grant applications is April 1st and they have to have an approved five year plan before that. It should be to the DNR a month before the deadline so they are looking at March 1. Laurie Lindquist, Sims and Williamson are on the

five year plan committee. Sims will talk to Agnes Conway on who is working on New Buffalo Township's plan. Magdzinski reminded them of the ten acre parcel they own on Three Oaks Road and had been trying to do a swap with the ten acre parcel next to them so that it would connect with the preserve. Williamson said that they also need to address the encroachment situation with Lakewood Estates and fix it before it is forgotten.

Pavilion rental/events policy- Magdzinski presented them with proposed rules and asked them to read it over and send their suggestions. She hopes that they will be able to vote on it and send it on to the Township Board at their next meeting.

Beach access markers- Sims reported that they are being done and will be installed when they are finished.

New Business:

South Bend Tribune Article- Swanson took a reporter on a tour of the CTP&P. The article is going to appear in Sunday's Quest section. There may also be some multimedia on their web site.

Announcements: The port-a-johns and trash pickup will continue until the end of the month. Abendshein suggested keeping it going until after Columbus Day weekend, the first weekend in October. Williamson said that they are hoping to have an ice skating rink in the baseball field at Harbert Park complete with a concession stand and lighting depending on the weather. Long range plans would be equipment to make their own ice.

Adjournment: Magdzinski moved, supported by Abendshein to adjourn at 9:17 p.m. Motion carried.

Next Meeting – October 29, 2007

Marisue Hojnacki
Recording Secretary