

Chikaming Township Park Board Regular Meeting – APPROVED

April 25, 2022

Chikaming Township Large Meeting Room

The April 25, 2022 of the Park Board was called to order at 6:32PM by Chair Arthur Anderson. Also present were board members Jill Underhill, Garth Taylor, Steve Ellis, Sherri Curry, Kathy Sellers, and Shelly Taylor, along with members of the community both in-person and via Zoom.

NATIONAL ANTHEM: Led by Anderson

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Approved as is

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jess Reed (Harbert) – Letter attached

Leah Sherman – passionate about pocket park, reached out to neighbors in support, pledged \$5,500.

Rick Augustiniak – wants to purchase Witt property to build home, feels boxed in because of parking on street and now potential to become a park.

Tom Stillman – Regarding Cherry Beach: periods of insufficient spaces, need to allocate spaces and find solution.

Mirjam Quinn – supports pocket park, buffer from highway, calming effect.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION: None

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

Joe Sipek for Pier St. repairs that began today, and Joe thanks everyone who showed up, great progress today.

Harbor Country Rotary donated 3 trees to Harbert Community Park.

Arthur Anderson for his service on the park board.

Leadership in community garden, as it's grown a lot.

Leah Sherman appreciates the effort put into the pocket park.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Approved as submitted

TREASURER'S REPORT: \$129,881.11 current balance, Leftover balance from last year was approximately \$1,200.

REPORTS: In packet

Alex – both burns at Chikaming Township Park and Preserve completed, Harbor Country Hikers doing a walkthrough, playground improvements are being made, TDK is doing spring clean up, continue routine maintenance and repairs.

Sherrie – Dog Park platform is in shed, Saturday, June 18 is “Doggy Social” from 10-2pm

CORRESPONDENCE: In packet, marked as read.

Laura Adden – opposed doing away with passes

Isobel and Berrien – 10 letters in support of park

Vicki Strobus – opposed design of park

Reed – 2 letters concerning Harbert Community Park

OLD BUSINESS:

Assumption that Underhill was going to draft response to Reeds, which was stated as incorrect, as she only requested any information and interactions be sent to her. Anderson has all information and has had correspondence. Request for Anderson to write response, he has no time and has given all Underhill all information he has.

Motion by Anderson that Vice Chair Underhill draft a response to Jessica Reed's correspondence in March and have Township Attorney review draft and that Jill give the document to the Park Board for their review and approval before May Park Board meeting, Supported by G. Taylor, Opposed by Sellers.

Discussion: It's going to end up in our hands anyways, as it takes a few weeks to draft and get attorney review, board members don't feel qualified to answer many questions in the letter regarding law or zoning.

Motion amended by G. Taylor to leave it to Attorney Hilmer to handle, Anderson agreed to speak with attorney during this process.

Motion withdrawn by Anderson, No objection.

Moved by Sellers to take request for clarify from Reed's letters, March 28 and April 24, and send to Attorney Hilmer to review, Supported by G. Taylor.

Discussion: Jessica's main concern is whether ordinances are being followed, all concerns have been addressed. Attorney budget is \$2,000 and very little has been used already.

All in Favor: 7, Opposed: 0.

Anderson will refer it to Attorney Hilmer.

Berrien-Isobel Park – We need recommendation on if we'll accept donation, then township board chooses if donation is accepted. Bank shot basketball was turned down, grants take several years so funds need to be raised locally for donations, as a suggestion.

Moved by Anderson to make a recommendation to township board that we agree to donation, subject to conditions of MOU by Alan Witt, Supported by G. Taylor.

Discussion: Questioned if park board members' donations are a conflict of interest, comparable to Cherry Beach project. Anderson has been involved since Jan./Feb. Too many strings attached, unpredictability of future, who will maintain it as an art park, family would be involved in design and then their control ends, neighbors don't care if it's a park, just as long as it's not developed. Leah is concerned about her view, there is already lots of congestion with cars, danger to children, concerned about requirements put on the donation. Other concerns include parking, lights, privacy fence, overcrowding. Complaints stemmed from bank shot basketball, quiet place where trees grow, go and conduct art, won't be a destination park. Tremendous asset to community but doesn't fit. Walking area in the summertime. Desire to listen to neighbors, they want park and there's a lot of buy-in, and they have a task force set up. Deal is off if local community group doesn't stay active, pocket parks are wave of the future. Many downed trees, parking signs, nothing serene, it's a mess but there are significant trees there, native plants can build natural space. If park is neglected, trust is dissolved, so it's as long as township wants the park, low maintenance, wooded park, upkeep is much less than Lakeside Park.

Roll Call Vote:

Curry - no

Ellis - yes

Underhill - no

Anderson - yes

S. Taylor - yes

G. Taylor - yes

Sellers - no

4 yes, 3 no, Motion Carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

Moved by G. Taylor to approve Coastline Children's Film Festival, Supported by Anderson.

All in favor: 7, Opposed

Community Garden – Need steward for garden, Karen Thomas wants new chair. Would like compost to be dumped on pavement as opposed to grass. Compost should be put closer to where it's needed but soil is too wet, so will be dumped outside of fence and harm grass. Should be discussed among gardeners. Will look at it again next month.

Garbage Collection – Sellers wants to withdraw conversation.

Zoom Meeting Scheduling – Should be left up to chair, no decision at this time.

Motion by Anderson to have a Zoom Meeting link available for May meeting, Supported by Curry, Opposed by G. Taylor.

All in favor: 5, Opposed: 2, Motion Carried.

QUESTION AND ANSWER:

Beverly Hamil – Zoom meetings are a convenience, as tax paying citizen.

Rick Augustiniak – 10 letters for park, none of us live on border, creating something renters will come to, if Mr. Witt sells to his daughter it would create tax income and would be attractive. His vote for park is a no. Wouldn't have to rezone if it's sold to his daughter.

Marius Stropus – Wondered when township board will vote on park, generally at next week but check agenda. Work wouldn't begin on park until rezoned. Would request privacy fence, this is a question for building and zoning.

Sellers would like neighbors to be heard at township meeting, they can comment or write letters.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Next meeting of the Park Board is May 23, 2022.

Next trustees meeting is May 12, 2022.

Dog Park event on June 18, 20202.

Memorial Day coming up so fun is about to start!

G. Taylor thanks all board members for the positions they hold and the work they've done. Big thanks to Alex.

ADJOURN: The meeting was adjourned at 8:37PM with no objections.

Respectfully Submitted,
Shelly Taylor