

**FINAL  
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE  
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING**

*Monday, March 24, 2025*  
2009 Township Drive  
Commerce Township, Michigan 48390

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chairperson Petsch called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

**ROLL CALL:** **Present:** William Petsch, Chairperson  
Johnny Walker, Vice Chairperson  
Ron Krueger  
Denise Vecellio  
**Absent:** Krystal Schwartz, Secretary (excused)  
Bob Berkheiser (excused)  
Laura Waterworth (excused)  
**Also Present:** Emily England, Director of Senior Services/Parks & Recreation  
Allison Kennedy, Asst. to Parks & Recreation Director  
Mark Schoder, Maintenance Director

**COMMUNICATIONS:**  
None.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**MOTION** by Krueger, seconded by Walker, to approve the February 24, 2025, Parks and Recreation Committee Regular Meeting Minutes.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**Chairperson Petsch opened to Public Comments.**

There were no comments.

**Chairperson Petsch closed to Public Comments.**

**ITEM 1: LEAGUE AND COMMUNITY SERVICE ORGANIZATION REPORT**

**Silo Ranch – Dawn Raye**

Ms. Raye shared the following with the Committee.

- We have our Easter event next weekend.
- After that, we go into our equestrian team and into summer camps.
- Our trail rides will officially open on April 1<sup>st</sup>. They're unofficially open right now, weather permitting.
- We had a sinkhole in the floor. It's all fixed and I think the leaking is done. Hopefully that will stop some of the electric bill. It was still almost \$500 this month, which is down a lot, but now that the pump isn't running nonstop ... We'll see.

### **Friends of Byers – Dean & Karen Schantz**

Mr. Schantz shared the following with the Committee.

- We've been really busy on Sundays with a lot of out-of-towners coming in. They've never seen Byers Farm before and they really liked the location and the quietness.
- We're getting ready for the upcoming events with Easter and the Bicentennial celebration. We have a few things in motion. We have a blacksmith who will attend the function. Everything is falling into place.

### **Motor City Mountain Bike Association – Mike Kearney**

Mr. Kearney shared the following with the Committee.

- With the winds, we did have a couple of trees go down. One is a particularly massive one. We're slowly chipping away at it.
- Otherwise, things are good out there. It was pretty dry this weekend.

*No representatives were present at the meeting for the following leagues:*

- *Lakes Athletics Association*
- *Lakes Area Hawks*
- *CW3 Soccer*
- *Interlakes Girls Softball*
- *Commerce Little League*

### **ITEM 2: TOWNSHIP BOARD REPORT**

No report in Mr. Berkheiser's absence.

### **ITEM 3: PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT REPORT**

Director England discussed the following:

- We have been able to start taking payments for rentals and trips online. That has been working well and cutting down on some time, so we're happy about that.
- Everything else is on the agenda.

Chairperson Petsch – Do we charge a fee for taking payments online?

Director England – We don't, but we pass the fee onto the users. We use G2G through Oakland County; they have a processing fee for credit cards. The fee depends on the amount charged. Or you can do an e-check for a flat \$2.50 fee.

### **ITEM 4: MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT REPORT**

Mr. Schoder discussed the following with the Committee:

- We started fixing the split rail at Mill Race and Byers. We're getting ready for the Bicentennial, and I'm sure Dean will find other stuff for us to do before June.
- At Scarlet's, we're working on the woods and it's getting there. It's looking good. You can almost see straight through to the end.
- At Long Park, we cleaned up the front. We cleaned up all of the brush, vines, dead trees and everything. There was a tree that fell over at the entrance. Did you see that today?

Ms. Vecellio – Yes.

Mr. Schoder –

- A hot water tank is getting installed at Maple Glen.
- Water tests begin this week, so we should be able to open it up when you're ready.
- There are lots of trees down on the trails and in the parks. We're taking care of those.
- Grading of Hickory Glen and Maple Glen will start this week. There are some pretty good size holes and ruts.

#### **ITEM 5: PARK LIAISON REPORTS**

##### **Krueger – Dodge Park**

- Everything looks good at Scarlet's, and yes, you can see very well. I drive that route all the time.
- Things are looking good inside.
- The only thing I would like to have done is the tree in the entrance. It has big metal stakes, but they're really not doing anything. I shook that tree and it's solid; there's no movement in the root system at all. It's right in the island. I think those are hawthorns. One doesn't have guide ropes, and one does. I would like to see those removed.

##### **Walker – Maple Glen**

- I'm glad to hear you're going to grade that because it was quite the offroad course.
- Besides that, everything looked good.

##### **Petsch – Bicentennial Park**

- Nothing new to report.
- It's still looking good over there.

##### **Vecellio – Long Park & Snowy Ridge Park**

- Snowy Ridge looks fine.
- Long Park looks really good.
- Did you see the homemade sign out there about dog waste? Somebody attached it to the split rail fence at the entrance.

Mr. Schoder – No.

Ms. Vecellio – It's funny. I'll show you afterwards. I saw that the dog bags were there. It looks good. Thank you.

##### **Berkheiser – Wise Woods & Victory Park**

- No report in Berkheiser's absence.

##### **Schwartz – Byers and Mill Race**

- No report in Schwartz's absence.

##### **Waterworth – Hickory Glen Park**

- No report in Waterworth's absence.

**ITEM 6: VILLAGE OF WOLVERINE UPDATE**

Mr. Krueger discussed the following with the Committee:

- I happened to go to the last meeting so I can give the update.
- They're having a blood donation on April 14<sup>th</sup>.
- They're having boater safety classes on April 26<sup>th</sup> and May 10<sup>th</sup>.
- Their Easter Bunny Lunch is on Saturday, April 12<sup>th</sup>.
- They're also having a cereal food drive.

**ITEM 7: LONG PARK PHOTOS**

Director England – The egret photo received the most online votes.

Ms. Raye – How many voted?

Director England – Eight.

Mr. Krueger – I thought we were voting today. I would vote for #2.

Director England – You need to, so you are.

Ms. Vecellio – Were we going to open it up again to try to get more photos?

Director England – We did.

Ms. Vecellio – And nothing?

Director England – No.

Mr. Kreuger – Are they going to do it again next year?

Director England – No plans. This is the first time we've ever done it.

Mr. Krueger – Okay, because at this time of year, it's hard to get something that really looks good.

Director England – There are lots of photos of Long Park. They put them in the other photo contest, just not ours.

Ms. Vecellio – Well, I wonder if we could use some of those if they're good.

Director England – We can. We can pull some of those too, but then we need to use some of these as well.

Ms. Vecellio – Great.

Ms. Kennedy – Ron said he liked #8. What was #8?

Mr. Krueger – #8 was with the covered bridge and the water lilies in the front. I thought it looked really sharp. I'm going based on what you sent as part of the packet.

Vice Chairperson Walker – I like #15 where you see the reflection of the bridge in the water. (Page 39 of the packet)

Ms. Vecellio – I think the color ones will look best; the ones that have a lot of color in them.

Director England – Agreed. So, if we use those, and we use the winner, and there's obviously this one with the birds, which we can put information on. I can see what was entered in the Township-wide contest. I'll put together the signs and bring those back for final approval.

Vice Chairperson Walker – That works.

Ms. Vecellio – Yes.

Mr. Krueger – I also liked #11 which was the one that had the trees reflecting in the water and the one evergreen drooping down on one side.

Director England – Okay.

#### **ITEM 8: JOINT MEETING AGENDA ITEMS**

Director England discussed the following with the Committee:

- We have our joint meeting with the Township Board next month on April 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- Most of you have not attended a joint meeting.
- Bill and Bob will need to help lead this.
- It's to make sure that you are all on the same page; their vision and our vision, and to make sure we're all working for the same cause.
- I gave you a printed copy of the current 5-year Parks & Recreation Master Plan. Look through that and see what we set as goals and then we can set specific agenda items that you want to discuss and get clarification on from the Board. I have until April 16<sup>th</sup> to submit agenda items.

Chairperson Petsch – Normally when we do that, we discuss our long-term plans.

Director England – Yes, we can do that. If you want a decision, then we have to list it as an agenda item.

Chairperson Petsch – Is there anything we have that we need a decision on?

Director England – Not offhand that I can think of.

Chairperson Petsch – Everything that we're doing has been approved. The Dog Park and everything else.

Ms. Vecellio – Do we have to talk about the lights, and do we want to talk about the ice skating rink?

Director England – Those can all be part of the discussion, yes. I would think that is something that would need to have action taken on it. Typically, the Township Board doesn't like to take action at their quarterly discussion, but because it is a joint meeting, they will make the exception. The only thing is that it has to be listed as an item, or they cannot take action on it.

Chairperson Petsch – I think on lighting and some of these things we're looking at, that's still under discussion on our end here. We could make them aware that we're looking into something of that nature.

Director England – Get direction from them; yes, I think so. So, we can just put together a list of bullet points.

### **ITEM 9: PARK IMPROVEMENT UPDATES**

Ms. England discussed the following with the Committee:

- The Dog Park fence was scheduled to start today. That's exciting news. That job is almost complete.
- They're scheduled to install the ADA accessible kayak launch tomorrow.
- They're working on the construction documents for the Richardson Center parking lot extension to send it out to bid.
- We're still working with companies for the restroom facility, so we will get an update on that.

Mr. Krueger – Have we made any kind of decision regarding the property across from the kayak launch and how it will be used?

Director England – It's not Parks' land. The Township owns that, but it's not going to be utilized as a park. It can be used as overflow parking, but we're not planning any improvements to it.

Discussion took place regarding the Dog Park fencing, along with the Eagle Scout project in Victory Park.

### **ITEM 10: PARK EVENT UPDATES**

Director England discussed the following with the Committee:

- The M-5K registration is open.
- The Bicentennial information is coming together nicely. What we need from you, and we will share it with you, is to really start pushing to get vendors for that event. We have an online form that they can fill out. Allison communicates with them as soon as that comes through via email so they can pay for sponsorships and anything like that. We will send you all of the information if you can forward it out on social media.

Ms. Kennedy –

- I did forget to include the concerts. We do have the bands:
  - July 11<sup>th</sup> we have Chris Canas, blues
  - July 18<sup>th</sup> is Sunset Boulevard, that's an 80's cover band
  - July 25<sup>th</sup>, Lost West, rock and country
  - August 1<sup>st</sup> is Magic Bus, Woodstock era tribute

**ITEM 11: OTHER MATTERS**

Director England

- I want to give you an update in case you are asked about it. You may have seen my post online.
- We are seeing some depressions in the ground at Victory Park. The area has been fenced off at this time because it does pose a safety concern. Caution signs are up.
- We are doing some investigating to see what's going on.
- It seems to be related to where the old silos were for the Nike missiles.
- If anybody asks, direct them my way.

Mr. Krueger –

- I passed out the booklets on the permanent lighting for the Richardson Center.
- I got three different people to look at it, and two gave actual quotes.
- There's information if you want to look them up online, or feel free to contact me with questions.
- They're all very versatile.
- They come with a variety of different warranties.
- Pricewise, they all seem to be between \$24,000 and \$30,000.

Ms. Vecellio – That's just for Richardson, not Byers?

Mr. Krueger – That's just for the Richardson Center.

- This one from Rose Landscape Lighting; I really like theirs from the standpoint that they would have at least four different zones. The deck area in the back would be a different zone than the rest of the building. Everything would be run by ... Emily's cell phone. When we have the bands going, you could have the lights rock with the music.
- There are all sorts of different things these have the ability to do. It is permanent so it doesn't have to be taken down.
- The way the strips are installed, you would be hard pressed to actually see them. They can color match the siding.
- There are still a fair number of decisions that would have to be made, but at least we have a rough idea cost wise of where we would be at.

Chairperson Petsch – Emily, do you think there's a possibility to have them come in to give a demonstration, a slide show, so we could see exactly ...

Ms. Vecellio – They have the mockup photos. These are cool, for the Richardson Center.

Open discussions continued as the Committee reviewed the information provided by Mr. Krueger.

Chairperson Petsch – If we get to that point, I would like to have each of these groups come in to give us a demonstration.

Mr. Krueger – Would that demonstration have to go to us first? Because the Township Board has to approve the expenditure.

Chairperson Petsch – Yes, we would want it to go to us. We would like to see it before we recommend it to go further.

Vice Chairperson Walker – We can also discuss it at the joint meeting to make sure it's something they're interested in.

Mr. Krueger – It's funny, they don't have a lot of cut sheets, if you're looking for information on what they look like during the day, which was important to me, but they all seem to have videos of what they would look like. I could present those at the April meeting. They would be happy to come in.

Chairperson Petsch – It's always so much better to see their product in action with a display on the screen.

Mr. Krueger – It was hard to find a contractor who actually installs these. All of these companies that provide the materials require you to be certified before they will actually sell you the product. One company is out of Toledo, one is Grand Rapids, and one is Ferndale.

Ms. Vecellio – Remind me again how much we spend every year to put up the regular ones.

Mr. Krueger – It's \$2000, and this is so much different.

Chairperson Petsch – That was my whole thought. You can light it for Christmas, Halloween, or whatever theme you've got, you've got lights for it.

Mr. Krueger – If anybody has questions, feel free to contact me.

Chairperson Petsch – Thanks a lot, Mr. Krueger.

- **The joint meeting between Parks and Recreation and the Township Board is scheduled for Tuesday, April 22, 2025, at 7:00PM at the Township Hall.**
- **The next Parks and Recreation Meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 28, 2025, at 7:00PM at the Township Hall, after park visits at Hickory Glen & Bicentennial.**

## **ITEM 12: ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** by Walker, supported by Krueger, to adjourn the meeting at 6:25pm.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

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Krystal Schwartz, Secretary