

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

*Monday, January 23, 2023*

2009 Township Drive  
Commerce Township, Michigan 48390

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

**ROLL CALL: Present:** Johnny Walker, Chairperson  
William Petsch, Vice Chairperson  
Barbara Garbutt, Secretary  
Bob Berkheiser  
Krystal Schwartz  
Laura Waterworth  
Ron Krueger

**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 Petsch, seconded by Krueger, to approve the November 28, 2022, Parks and Recreation Committee Regular Meeting Minutes, with the following corrections presented by the Recording Secretary, as proposed by Ms. Carrie Hancock to her commentary:

1. On Page 6 of 20, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph, 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence, correct to read as “*We have a **marketing** strategy that ran through the entire year.*”
2. On Page 10 of 20, bottom of the page, correct to read as “... **40** years of *accumulation*”.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Chairperson Walker opened to Public Comments. He explained that those with comments should approach the microphone, state their name and address, and each person will be allowed two minutes to speak.

Ray Golota, 1595 Vanstone Dr., Commerce Township – This is probably my second meeting. The first meeting I was at was not here; it was at Maple Glen a couple years ago when I walked the diamonds with you folks. I want to say first, I’ve lived in Commerce Township for 31 years, and you guys are doing a fantastic job. Everything looks great, perfect. However, I have just a few little points. My wife is tired of listening to me, so I figured I might as well bring it here so I can cross it off my list too. I’ll try to go quick. I haven’t read the minutes of previous meetings, so I apologize because maybe some of the answers are in there.

1. If you’re heading west on Wise, off Union Lake, there's the park on the north side. I understand that there are supposed to be some signs alerting vehicles

that there's a park entrance there on the north side. Maybe I missed them, but I haven't seen them.

2. We share the Lakes Community Trail with Wolverine Lake. Thank God, we haven't had any snow yet, but last year I noticed that Wolverine Lake plows that trail from Benstein to Glengary, and we don't.
3. I noticed there are a lot of signs at Maple Glen that ask dog owners to pick up dog waste. I do have a yellow lab. I walk him twice a day there, and I carry extra bags, and I pick up dog waste all over the place. I know you can't do anything, but sometimes I think to myself, where the signs are, come up with a slot where I can put bags in there.

Chairperson Walker – Thank you very much for your comments.

Ray Golota – I'm done?

Chairperson Walker – Yes, sir. Your best bet when you want to make a long comment would be to send an email to the Parks & Rec Board. We will be more than happy to take a look at it and address whatever we can address.

Ray Golota – Can I drop the rest of these off?

Vice Chairperson Petsch – Yes, you can drop them off to Emily right over there. Didn't we put up bag dispensers at the parks?

Ms. Waterworth – They're at Hickory Glen, but there's no bags in them.

Discussions continued regarding the dispensers that were put up by the Boy Scouts, restocking them with bags for dog waste, the fact that some of the dispensers were torn down and are missing, the style of the dispensers, working with leagues and organizations to have them restock at each of their designated parks during the season, and also that Maintenance does check them.

Carrie Hancock, 2552 Wixom Road, Commerce Township – I appreciate the correction on the minutes. They're important documents as to what we go through as it relates to my contract.

Unfortunately, we're at a situation where we're in litigation now. The Township has filed a complaint and I would prefer to resolve this without litigation, but here we are. So, stay tuned. I'll be on standby. Thank you.

Denelle Yeager, 1990 Birch Court, Waterford – I just wanted to be here in support of Windmill Farm also. I know that based on the Parks & Rec survey they did that 30% of people are in favor of equestrian activities. I feel that the equestrian activities and the greenspace itself are essentially to the fabric of this community, the character of this community. One of the opportunities that I feel has really been missed is to expand the therapeutic programs. I know that you and the Township Board are really concerned with it being more inclusive programs, serving more than just a subset of the community. If we were to be able to stick with the contract and have that stability, we'd be able to apply for more grants, serving more of the community; the children, the veterans, all the therapeutic opportunities. Plus, that is an opportunity for alternate

funding, for money to be coming in to support, expand and improve the facility. I just wanted to express, I'm in support of Windmill Farm. Thank you.

Jennifer Yeager-Saylor, 2068 Alsup Ave, Commerce Township - Some of you might recognize me. I'm also a Windmill Farm supporter. I don't plan on going anywhere soon because I'm really passionate about this project. I've been very engrossed in trying to figure out how I can help and how I can make things work. I do have ideas and I would love if we could just have a meeting of some sort. My three children are 5<sup>th</sup> graders at Keith Elementary, in the Walled Lake School District. They take lessons every week at Windmill and it's getting very stressful in my house because my kids are really worried about what's going to happen next. We have been starting plans and putting together our middle school equestrian team. I've been speaking with the athletic director. We're really trying to move things forward because that's what our direction or intent is. Also, you may be aware that I have started a petition that is getting some really wonderful traction in our community, and it is focused towards our community. As of today, we are almost at 4,000 signatures. I have several comments from people who really want to see this survive. I think it's a beautiful opportunity and something that we should embrace. Thank you. I appreciate your time.

Steve Michell, 4363 Bluebird Drive, Commerce Township – With the winter season upon us, I'm asking why we don't plow the bike trails or the walking trails. I mainly run in Dodge V. The previous commenter said that Wolverine Lake does some plowing. They're clearing trails on the Airline Trail, on the Walled Lake portion of it. I'd like to see us do some of that and make it accessible during the winter season. It's very icy out there right now. We just walked through the park the other day and it's a slip and fall hazard.

I'm also wondering about the bike speed limit. You talked about that a few meetings ago. I apologize, I missed the last couple meetings going back into the Fall. Looking at the upcoming bike season and I've talked to a couple of people who have had near misses or actual accidents on the bike trails, partly related to speed. I'm just wondering where we're at with that and if you've made any decisions to do a speed limit, or limit the types of e-bikes that are out there that people tend to go pretty fast on.

The last point I want to make is that something we don't have in the Township, but other townships and cities have; disc golf, splash pads, golf courses, and that sort of thing. Windmill Farms I think is a really unique facility and I think the Township and the concessionaire should continue working together to make that a viable entity going forward. It's a valuable and unique asset that most places don't have. I think we need to work our best effort to keep that going.

Mr. Berkheiser – So Emily, we made recommendations on bike speed limits. Is that going to the Township Board?

Director England – Correct, and I'm working with the attorneys on it. We've talked about several changes that will go into a park policy, but we'll also amend ordinances. We're trying to do one amendment at one time. That will be coming to the Board, hopefully by March.

Mr. Berkheiser – Okay.

Vice Chairperson Petsch – We don't have equipment to plow the pathways, do we?

Mr. Schoder – No. Wolverine is a very small community, and Commerce Township is huge.

Vice Chairperson Petsch – I know, it's a lot. I was just curious. I didn't think we had that equipment.

Ms. Waterworth – I bought Yaktrax from REI and I walk my dog with them on. I never slide on them. They're like \$20.

Steve Michell – I have those too, but they're not optimal.

Ms. Waterworth – You can only wear them when there is snow and ice.

Chairperson Walker closed to Public Comments.

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

### **Lakes Area Hawks – Pete Lesner**

- All our bills are paid.
- The park is being updated regularly. Whatever breaks down, we take care of it.
- The most specific thing I wanted to touch upon was the health factors and AED machines for safety policies.
  - We put a lot into that. We have multiple fire people in our league, as well as medical nurses and one doctor that I know of.
  - We regularly did our certifications in the previous years; however we have fallen back on that. I'm glad that you reminded us that we should all be doing it.
  - We do have our own AED machine. I'm certified for the past 18 years continuously. I'll be recertified before May.
  - I have called the Commerce Township Fire Department so we can set up a meeting to get our entire staff, or at least the head coaches certified in CPR and first aid.
  - I think it's very important. I just want to make sure you know that we take it very seriously, because you never know what's going to happen.

Mr. Berkheiser – Basically, the Township Board had asked all organizations that are dealing with the kids what their policies are to make sure that we have folks that are trained, whether it's practice or game time.

Pete Lesner – I'm not sure what the policy is. It's a good starting conversation to assure you that I've been certified for many years and we are actively setting up certifications for all of our coaches.

Vice Chairperson Petsch – Pete, I coached high school for 18+ years. We all had to be certified, as we're asking our coaches to do, which is a great thing. All of our certification and lessons were online. You sat in an online classroom and were able to then take the test after you went through all of that. If you passed, they forwarded your certificate onto the high school AED department. They are available online. It was interesting and it was

a regular classroom. Each lesson was over an hour long that you had to sit through, and then take a test to certify yourself.

Pete Lesner – Right and I visited those websites. I want it in-person. That's just me personally, but I want it with the machine and the body that you have to practice CPR on. It's what we're doing.

Vice Chairperson Petsch – Right, and if you're certified, you can teach your head coaches.

Pete Lesner – I'm not an instructor. You have to have an instructor.

Vice Chairperson Petsch – These online tests give you certification for concussion protocol, all the different rehab protocols, and what the kids need to do if you do suspect an injury.

Pete Lesner – We do have a medical person at every single game and practice.

Vice Chairperson Petsch – Great.

### **Commerce Little League – Paul Kammer**

- Back to the conversation about the dog bags, there are three or four stations at Maple Glen that I know of on our side of the fields. But yes, they have not been filled. This is the first I'm hearing the request for the league to fill them. Essentially they're for grocery bags. I get rid of a lot of bags at my house so I'll put them in here. The PVC tubes are still there.
- As of now, we opened registration on December 1<sup>st</sup>. We've got approximately 400 registered players at this point and we hope to get to about 600. That gets us back to the number that we were at in 2019, which is good. We're still growing and recovering from COVID. Everything seems to be trending younger. We're losing a lot of older age kids. Everybody over 12 is harder to get, but we're bringing in a lot of T-ballers and 4-6 year olds.
- At the end of 2022, the last time I was here we were talking about some field improvements. We spent a good handful of money for Suburban Landscape to come out and just regrade all of our fields, cut out grass and safety hazards for the grass infields, get rid of a lot of dirt and dust in there. We did that in October.
- Improvements for this year; we've had some damage to our dugout roofs. When they were installed in 2015, they were redone. They weren't done properly – they essentially slapped metal roofing on plywood and the plywood is rotted. We also had some storm damage in July which we've cleaned up, but as of right now, there are dugouts without roofing on them. We're in the process of getting quotes. I worked with Emily, and Mark had offered for the Township to come and rebuild a couple of roofs, but we want to do them all. Sooner or later, they're all going to be bad. It's looking to be \$35,000 to \$40,000. It's a big chunk of change that we're trying to possibly fundraise for.
- The other improvement we're looking to do at Henderson field, the first field coming off the main entrance on the left, was the last of the fields to get upgraded with additional high fences, higher backstops to alleviate foul balls, so

that's another improvement we're looking at, another \$20,000 that we're trying to get some grant money for.

- Other than that, everything is looking good. We've got good people on the board. We have over 26 people on our volunteer board right now, which is great because there's going to be a lot of turnover.
- We will be starting with practices around the beginning of April, as soon as the weather breaks, and games will start the second to the last week of April and run through mid-June.

Mr. Berkheiser – So are all of your coaches required to be CPR trained?

Paul Kammer – We don't require a CPR training or certification, but Little League International requires us every year to submit a safety plan which they approve. It's on our website. I sent it to Emily. Each Spring, we have our coaches meeting where we bring in the Commerce Township Fire Department and they run through the AED training, along with an elected official who is the safety officer. She is a medical professional who oversees and checks on the AED every season. She makes sure the pads are good and that the batteries are up to date. That happens every Spring in February or March. The AED is always available inside of our shed that's open during game days, and it's a code entry that all coaches and parents have in case of a medical emergency.

Mr. Berkheiser – So you have the potential then that during a practice, there isn't someone there who is CPR trained with the kids? You're not requiring a coach on each team to be CPR trained?

Paul Kammer – We never have required that.

Mr. Berkheiser – Emily, can you follow-up with the Fire Chief to see what he feels, whether we should or shouldn't have requirements at that level?

Paul Kammer – Volunteers for coaches, we probably have 120+ coaches. We do require concussion certification for all coaches, but we typically just abide by the rules of Little League International, however, we would be willing to follow the Township guidelines.

Director England – Do you guys always have board members present?

Paul Kammer – Yes.

Director England – So maybe a board member needs to be CPR certified.

Mr. Berkheiser – I think game time is probably not much of an issue. I think the concern is when you're practicing and you're out in a field that's behind the Lutheran Church. There's nothing there except a couple coaches and if a kid takes a baseball to the chest ... I mean it's highly unlikely, but most incidents are with children. Just see what the Chief says.

Director England – I'll talk to the Chief.

Paul Kammer – We are also implementing for each coach, in each coaching bag, speaking of the Damar Hamlin issue, they're called heart-guards. They're essentially smaller catcher's pads that you put under your shirt, for pitchers specifically. This is for the balls that are getting hit back at the pitcher and it has a smaller pad that covers this portion of their chest to protect them from the cardiac issue.

Mr. Berkheiser – So will all the pitchers have to wear one under their shirt?

Paul Kammer – We don't know if it will be required. We will talk with our safety officer, because there could be some push back from parents in general for making it a requirement, but we will have it available. Nothing has come out from Little League International at this point requiring that. We're just moving toward that and we will see how they react to it.

Ms. Schwartz – Is it cumbersome? Would that be the pushback?

Paul Kammer – Yes. Football players wear them under their pads as well. They're spandex. Little League International has done a lot to make the kids safer, but we only allow for what they call USA bats. Essentially, they're made to hit like wood bats. When you get into travel tournaments and leagues, they'll use these bats that are USSSA certified, and they essentially have more pop to make a ball carry 50 feet further on the exact same swing, or the equivalent of 20mph. That is implemented by Little League International. The heart-guards have not been something that has been required by them at this point.

The only other issue that we would have by making it a requirement of all pitchers is that I think you would have to then supply one for every player, otherwise you'd have kids taking them on and off. You couldn't pitch with a catcher's vest on. We'll keep up with the requirements of Little League International and report back to Emily. The safety plan is on our website, and all coaches get a copy of that.

Director England – Thank you.

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

Dean Schantz shared the following with the Committee.

- We had our Christmas event a month ago and it turned out great. We filled up all of our time slots and had a lot of compliments on the farmhouse. It really added a lot to that event.
- We had a lot of people interested in utilizing the farmhouse. We're going to form a strategy as far as tours for groups, local elementary schools and some of the residents as well.
- There's 200lbs of duck feed every week.
- Then we're going to have a strategy as far as fixing the south side of the barn. We have the signage all constructed and ready to go. We will do a materials list.
- We will set up dates and times for events this year.
- Regarding AED, relative to our function, it might be something for big events. We do have the Fire Department a mile down the road. I've been trained, but we don't have an AED onsite.

Mr. Berkheiser – The concern had to do with sporting organizations. It didn't have to do with Byers.

Director England – The Sheriff's Department and Fire Department are always made aware of Byers' events also.

**Interlakes Girls Softball – Casey Maybrier**

- I'm still new here.
- I asked Angela and Tim what we do for our plan. They told me we call 9-1-1, and the Fire Department is right there. I've never actually seen if we have one of these in our equipment room, but I'm pretty sure we do.
- Our registration is open. It closes on January 28<sup>th</sup>. Our meeting was a couple weeks ago, so I don't have an updated number, but hopefully things look good.

Mr. Berkheiser – I would just ask you to go back and ask what your policy or rules are as far as coaches being CPR trained. Just check on that.

Casey Maybrier – I am a coach as well. We don't have to be CPR certified, but at the meeting we did a lecture on safety precautions. No one has to get a certificate or anything. Honestly, we can't even get enough volunteers for coaches, and then to require classes, I don't know that they will do that. We do have face masks as optional. We don't require anyone to wear the chest protection. My personal opinion on it, as a player and a coach, I feel like it should be optional. I would have never worn a face mask as a kid and I feel parents and children should have the choice for that.

Mr. Berkheiser – Just double check, and we will find out what our folks feel on the subject.

Director England – Do you have to do any concussion training?

Casey Maybrier – Yes, at our coaches' meetings, there's a PowerPoint and it goes over everything, including safety precautions. We have umpires at every game. Bill, I'm sure he's certified, and I'm sure several other people are. I'm just new.

Director England – Okay, I can double check with Angie too and have her send me the PowerPoint.

Mr. Berkheiser – Even if you call 9-1-1, no offense, it goes to dispatch, then it comes back to the Township. You're still looking at 4 or 5 minutes before they know you're down the block.

Casey Maybrier – A lot of people use the fields to practice without being with their coach.

Mr. Berkheiser – I understand, but that has nothing to do with an organized function. When you're having an organized function, we're just checking on that. Everybody uses the fields. People walk their dogs on the fields.

Casey Maybrier – We would have to give a key to every coach for our equipment room, where all of our medical stuff is.



Mr. Berkheiser – If the coaches are having a formalized practice, that might be something they should have. These are the questions we're trying to get you to ask so that you know what's going on, and we'll check with our staff for recommendations.

### **CW3 Soccer – Chris Haney**

- Our CW3 Peewees and Junior's Development Program will be at Dodge again this Spring on Fridays and Saturday mornings, as with the last 10 years or so.
- Both league and development program registrations are open.
- I have two questions for all of you.
- I'm assuming that we are also dealing with Item #7 right now.

Director England – Sounds like it.

Mr. Berkheiser – Sorry, I just thought it was easier.

Chris Haney – The AED issue, I gave our response. We do not have an AED for CW3 soccer. It sounds like we're going to need to buy one. It would be a good idea. We probably have a higher probability of using it on a parent, grandparent or coach than a player.

All of our professional staff are trained in basic medical. They are not certified for CPR, but it's a component of Michigan State Youth Soccer Association, US Youth Soccer and the US Soccer Federation, through their licensing program. All of our volunteer coaches have to go through a Michigan State Youth Soccer protocol training, which includes some basic medical, first aid, but to my knowledge it's not CPR certification. I could be wrong and they may be more certified than our professional staff. I'll follow-up on that and get the absolute answer.

I think, in my opinion and in my experience with the soccer program, your point, Bob, was spot on. It's less likely to be an issue at a game, especially a scenario at Dodge Park where we might have 4 or 5 games going on simultaneously. Within our ranks, there are dozens of doctors and nurses. On the two teams I'm personally responsible for, there's three doctors between the two teams who are parents and are likely to be there. However, for CW3 coaches who practice ... Bob, you called out the guy coaching behind the Lutheran Church.

Mr. Berkheiser – It happens to be my church, and I know there's a field back there.

Chris Haney – The person coaching by themselves – that could be a really bad situation. We will definitely follow-up on that.

The question we had regarding Dodge Park for an AED is that we would have to get one that is in a secured box. We would need permission to mount it maybe on the bathroom facility, and then watch the cameras for theft. I don't want all of our staff to have access to our storage unit there.

Maybe a suggestion for your key issue (to Casey Maybrier), a combination lock would allow you to give the combination out. Look for ones that you can program and set the combination.

Casey Maybrier – Okay.

Director England – Chris, is there consistency, like board members or you are always present when there are games going on?

Chris Haney – Me personally? No, I'm not at all games. If I have an away-game, I could be in another state. Again, I'll follow-up again on the CW3 volunteer coaches, because it might actually be a legitimate CPR certification. It would not be that difficult to have at least, as Bill mentioned, some kind of online certification. Today's CPR is a whole lot easier than it was years ago when I first learned it.

Temporary signage, like the banners that we've put up at the entrance of Dodge Park, to basically announce registration and then tryouts; is that something that we're okay with?

Vice Chairperson Petsch – Yes.

Director England – Can you make a motion?

**MOTION** by Walker, supported by Schwartz, to approve the placement of CW3 temporary signage at the Dodge Park entrance to announce Registration and Tryouts accordingly. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Lakes Athletics Association – Jerry Stoddard, President**

*A report dated January 18, 2023, was submitted in the packet:*

- *League Update – Spring 2023 registration is open and ongoing, over 120+ as of today with a goal nearing 300. LAA preference is to fill and close registration by early March.*
- *Upcoming Dates & Information*
  - *Season Dates – April 2023: Spring Clean-Up and Opening Day*
  - *Monthly Meeting – Next scheduled Board meet is January 18 2023*
  - *2023 Capital Improvements – Sprinkler work is completed; LAA will work with P&R to schedule meetings for review and support of repair work invoices. Thank you! LAKES has approved funding for replacement of the remaining 2 original backstops at HG Park. The tear-down process has already begun. Flagpoles have been installed at HG!*
- *Needs From Township*
  - *Flagpoles – Installed; will submit receipts for township approved reimbursement funding. Please let us know meeting availability or process to complete reimbursement.*
  - *Parking Lot Construction – Some modifications are in discussion; no news at this time.*
  - *SPRINKLERS – Repaired and renovated after many years of service. Map of the completed system is now in existence for future construction reference. LAA can schedule meeting with P&R to review and discuss next steps, and reimbursement for approved portion share. Please advise meeting availability or process to complete reimbursement.*
  - *New Backstops – Just advised about Novi Fence installers ongoing work to install 2 new backstops this winter.*

**Windmill Farms (Horse Farm) – Carrie Hancock**

- *See public comment above, and Township Board report below.*

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

- *Motor City Mountain Bike Association*

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

Mr. Berkheiser provided the following:

- I guess I can go back two months.
- In January at our meeting, there wasn't a whole lot on the agenda.
  - We approved an ordinance for small winemaker licenses.
  - There was a thought to charge people for SAD petitions, which for example could allow the Township to arrange for snow plowing for your neighborhood. So you could do that through a petition, and the Board felt that we shouldn't charge people for those activities. There is some work involved by the Township, and sometimes a resident does not follow back up on it. They put a lot of effort into getting the petition going and staff wanted to know how the Board felt about fees for that. It went by the wayside, so no charge to do SAD's.
- I did want to say, as Carrie mentioned, the Township received notice in mid to late December that Ms. Hancock retained an attorney to help her work her way through the contract issues. At that point, the Township decided it was probably not in our interest to just make public comments on things. If you hear folks talk about it, being a Parks Committee member, I suggest that you just direct everybody to the Supervisor. He will be the speaker for the Township, and/or the Attorneys. A complaint was filed and I think it's going to court. I don't know for sure, but everything now is going through the legal system, so no comments.

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

Director England discussed the following:

- Things are going great at the Senior Center.
- Our activities continue to increase in participation.
- We continue to add more classes, arts & craft classes, and lunches. We continue to receive more sponsorship for those activities.
- I do want to touch base quickly on the transportation program.
  - The last update I received was that Oakland County was willing to talk to us about reimbursement for the expenses that we pay out to People's Express, which is who we currently use for Senior Transportation, until there is a plan set in place.
  - All of the communities that currently use People's Express have gotten together and compiled all of our information on rides and costs for the last 3 years. We have submitted that to Oakland County and we do have a meeting set up with them next Monday. Hopefully I will have more information for you on that.
  - As of right now, the senior transportation program will run as it has since we began using People's Express in 2019.

Mr. Berkheiser – A quick comment on that. The Township pays and budgets our own money; a ballpark of about \$175,000 per year for the current services.

Director England – Correct, and we get back \$37,000 in SMART credits which we will no longer be receiving.

Mr. Berkheiser – Right, and we're being taxed now with the new tax that was approved. It was not approved by Commerce Township, but approved in Oakland County. But still, we will be paying \$2.1 million or so into the County for transportation. Even if they reimburse us our \$175,000, we're still paying \$2.1 million.

Director England – Correct, so I'll have an update next month, but we are continuing to work with the other communities to fight the fight.

- We do have some good news. We applied for a grant through the Oakland County Senior Matching Grant Program that they announced in early December, and we were awarded a \$250,000 grant for reimbursement on our pickleball courts.
- Getting into the Parks; we can touch more on this under Park Events, but our Christmas Tree Lighting event was a huge success. It was better than any of us could have dreamt it to be. We have a lot of things to discuss and possibly do different next year. We will continue to make it bigger and better.
- We did get notification from the DNR that we did not receive our Land & Water grant. They issued a large grant for a dam project, which was above the normal requested amount. I intend to apply for that grant again this year, but in the meantime, we did submit 3 Spark grants with the DNR.
  - One is for pathways at Bicentennial Park, along with redoing the tennis parks, repaving the parking lot and the basketball court.
  - We submitted the same project for Victory Park with the parking lot and the dog park; this was submitted for the Land & Water grant.
  - Lastly was to install new inclusive playground equipment at the Richardson Center.
  - I'll keep you updated on that.

Mr. Berkheiser – When are they expected to announce that one?

Director England – They said the end of January, but they received over 600 applications. There will be 3 rounds of Spark grants. If we don't receive it in the first round, we can automatically resubmit for the next 2. They will give us feedback if there are things we need to change to possibly score better, we have that opportunity.

Mr. Berkheiser – Are we moving forward with some of those?

Director England – We're moving forward. I'm working with Jason on getting construction plans for the parking lot into Victory Park.

Vice Chairperson Petsch – Emily, we had planned to put that as a gravel parking lot.

Director England – The Parks Committee approved it with gravel. When it went to the Township Board, they upped it to asphalt due to maintenance issues and the fact that it is secluded.

#### **ITEM 4: PARK LIAISON REPORTS**

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

- In the parking lot, the ropes that are on the poles with red reflectors look really nice. They make the poles not look so odd.

- When you pull in straight, there's a little parking spot and they put a bunch of parking blocks there. The blocks look great, but in that spot, the blocks go to the end. When people pull in there, at the new entrance, they might not be able to pull out of there on a game day. The two parking blocks next to the wooden fence might need to be pulled back up so you can drive that way.

Director England – Okay, I'll check it out.

Ms. Waterworth –

- It looks a lot nicer.
- The park was busy. I've been there morning, daytime and evening, and there's always people walking, riding bikes and walking their dogs. It's extremely active, even in the winter.
- I noticed Diamond #1, there's no fence there behind the baseball diamond.

Director England – All the way to the back, they're replacing it.

Ms. Waterworth – Okay, behind that in the woods, there are two blue crowns spray painted on the tree. I know Wolverine doesn't patrol. I did see one Oakland County Sheriff and I let them know.

Director England – Back by the dump.

Ms. Waterworth – Yes. I can give you better directions. It's by Mile Marker #2. In all the years that I've walked the park, I've never seen graffiti on the trees. Otherwise, the park looks good.

### **Krueger – Dodge Park**

- I didn't do a lot of walking into my park, but I have driven through a few times.
- The playground, even in the wintertime, especially since January has been so nice, they've still been using the park.
- I do plan on doing a walk through at the end of February or early March and I'll do a punch list of anything that I see that needs to be done. I will promise to keep the bags in the dog bag dispensers at Dodge Park.

### **Petsch – Bicentennial Park**

- I have nothing to report.
- We're still the same waiting on grant money.

Director England – The old Township Hall building is scheduled to come down in the Spring, and the new playground equipment will be installed this week.

Vice Chairperson Petsch – Are they tearing down the addition that was put on that building?

Director England – Yes.

Vice Chairperson Petsch – The whole thing is coming down, okay.

**Walker – Maple Glen**

- I haven't been to Maple Glen in a couple weeks.
- I was just talking to Mark and he said there is a small issue with kids doing donuts and tearing up the front circle.
- Prior to that, I was there and everything was looking good.

**Garbutt – Long Park & Snowy Ridge Park**

- Long Park is not used quite as much in bad weather. It's mostly used for photographs.
- As always, we get some trash there but that's about it.

Director England – To add on to Barb's report, Jason is finalizing the construction documents for the pathway along 14 Mile Road. That should be going out for bids by the end of the month.

**Schwartz – Byers and Mill Race**

- Nothing to report on Byers.
- I was at Mill Race a couple weeks ago. I walked in at the entrance by Leo's and 7-Eleven. There was some garbage back there. On one of the apps, someone said the community was cleaning it up. That's going to be a springtime project after everything thaws. It's probably due to garbage blowing back there from the businesses.

**Berkheiser – Wise Woods & Victory Park**

- We're obviously waiting on the grants, so we will see how we move forward with that.
- I have seen some use on the new parking lot. There were 5 or 6 cars there, but I didn't see any people so I'm assuming they were on the trails.
- We have had some instances over there with encroachment on park property, which hopefully we will talk about at our Board discussion meeting. We're looking at park property and residents that are encroaching with firepits, garages, et cetera, on our property.
- Other than that, there haven't been major issues.

Director England – The new sign has been installed. The sign that was at Wise Woods was vandalized, so they have now replaced that.

Chairperson Walker – Did the Township vote on the sign add-on for Scarlet's Smile at Dodge Park?

Director England – It was approved. I have been talking with them and they are working with the sign company to get it ordered.

Ms. Waterworth – Was there anything about putting the address number on there?

Director England – We are going to do that to all of the signs.

Ms. Schwartz – On that note, Emily, you had mentioned to me that you looked back at the original agreement and it was in Scarlet’s agreement that they could come to us and ask for a sign. So, that was part of the original plan.

Director England – Correct.

#### **ITEM 5: VILLAGE OF WOLVERINE UPDATE**

Ms. Waterworth discussed the following with the Committee:

- They are planning their Bunny Luncheon at the Richardson Center on Saturday, March 25<sup>th</sup>.
- They’re planning events for the rest of the year.
- I did have one more question about Hickory Glen. There’s a sign that says we have a survey to let us know what you think about riding on the bike paths. Is that ours or someone else’s?

Director England – It’s ours, but it needs to come down. Mark, can you make a note of that?

Ms. Waterworth – Mark, just come to the park with me when I walk my dog and I’ll just point out everything.

#### **ITEM 6: MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT REPORT**

Mr. Schoder discussed the following with the Committee:

- I’ll make sure we get those dog bags taken care of tomorrow. That’s usually done when we do park inspections.
- The trash, brush removal and logs from the wooded area at Scarlet’s; we’re still going through that. We cut up a bunch and we’re clearing it out with the dump trucks. Once it’s cleared, we’ll cut some more.
- Damage by vehicles – At Maple and at the Sledding Hill. We need to do something to stop that. Maybe put fencing up or rocks. They’re tearing it up. The fencing on the west end of the sledding hill, that’s falling down. We need to figure out what we want to do.

Mr. Schoder also discussed issues with trash at Long Park and at Dodge Park. He would like to review costs for surveillance cameras, and he will ask the Sheriff to patrol whenever they can. Director England discussed working with Sonitrol on automatic lock systems and cameras.

Discussions continued regarding clearing brush and trees, services performed by the County, quotes for tree work, and the budget available.

Ms. Garbutt – Back in October at Scarlet’s, when schools had a half day, there was a small gang of boys there who were doing things they shouldn’t be doing. I called Larry Gray and he will ask the Sheriffs to patrol the park on school half days.

#### **ITEM 7: AED – LEAGUE SAFETY PLANS**

Director England – This item was covered, but I will check with the Fire Chief for recommendations and then I’ll get back with the leagues.

**ITEM 8: PARK EVENT UPDATES**

Ms. Kennedy discussed the following with the Committee:

- As Emily said, the Christmas Tree Lighting event was a huge success.
  - We estimate somewhere between 350-400 people were at the event.
  - It started at 4:00pm. The tree lighting and most of the activities weren't scheduled to start until 5:00pm. We thought it would be a slow first hour, but we probably had 50 people there in the first 15 minutes just to get cocoa and do kids crafts.
  - We had Oakland County come in with indoor glow putt-putt. Per Oakland County, it's one of the best events that they've had. They estimated over 200 kids going through there just to play putt-putt.
  - I couldn't even tell you how many people got face painting, and they said they don't keep track.
  - It went pretty well. We will look at continuing it again next year.

Director England – The Fire Department went above and beyond with decorating the fire truck and bringing Santa to the event in the fire truck.

Ms. Garbutt – It was very nice.

Ms. Schwartz – It was a wonderful event. There were a lot of people there. I think those numbers are pretty low. It was done really well. I think you are going to need more help, especially if this grows. People are talking about it, so I would expect more people next year. We may need to get a volunteer program in place for big events. I know you could have used a lot more hands.

Ms. Kennedy – We talked about it and Emily thought that in the past, the Attorneys had frowned upon having volunteer groups. We will have to check into that and see what we can do.

Director England – Things are changing.

Ms. Schwartz – Safety is important. There is a need to have extra hands there.

Ms. Kennedy – Yes, we know we will have to reorganize it, just based on the way things were set up and having more people than we had anticipated.

Director England – Definitely a good problem, but it was a hectic day.

Ms. Kennedy –

- The M-5K, we did make the decision to switch that to May. That will be Saturday, May 20, 2023.
- I've already talked to the medal companies and we have new medals on order to change them up a little bit.
- We will look at getting that set up. I've already gotten approval from MDOT and the Airline Trail. I should have the website up and running this week for people to start registering.

Mr. Berkheiser – Does that interfere with any other local runs?



Ms. Kennedy – I don't think so. I know Wixom has one, but theirs is the first Saturday in May, because it goes along with the Kentucky Derby. I have not seen any other ones locally advertised yet.

Discussion continued regarding advertising and RunSignup.

Ms. Kennedy –

- Our concerts are all set.
  - I haven't heard from JAG so I don't know if we had the last date selected, the 7<sup>th</sup>, but I know all of the other dates are set with the bands, food trucks, and face painters.
  - I think we're ready to roll. Those concerts will be July 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> and August 4<sup>th</sup>.
- We will have the Christmas Tree Lighting event December 2<sup>nd</sup>, which is the first Saturday of the December.
- I have not heard from Oakland County yet about the POP or RAPP grants. So, we have not yet submitted for bounce houses or anything like that. I'll see if that comes out here shortly, otherwise we will look at trying to get bounce houses or the climbing wall, something at one or two of the concerts.

Director England – And we will do kids' activities too, like we did last year.

**ITEM 9: OTHER MATTERS**

Director England – I have no other matters.

**The next Parks and Recreation Meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 27, 2023, at 6:00PM.**

**ITEM 10: ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION** by Petsch, supported by Schwartz, to adjourn the meeting at 7:09pm.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

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Barbara Garbutt, Secretary