

PARKS COMMISSION MEETING

Lincoln Charter Township
2055 West John Beers Road
Stevensville, Michigan 49127

Tuesday, June 7, 2005

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Tucker at 7:10 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Bill Tucker, Todd Gardner, Mike Lucker, Rich Knapp, Rick Knight, John Hoskins. **ABSENT:** Kim Risk.

ALSO PRESENT: Carol Petros, Nichole Thiele, Deb Bly, Karen Reinhardt, and Lincoln Township Treasurer Terrie Smith.

Audience Comments: Former parks board member Carol Petros reminded everyone the Master Parks Plan took many months and cost many consulting fees to prepare. The current board should strive to pursue grants and make projects contained in the plan come to fruition. As an elected body, the parks board does not need to get project approval from the township. The board stated their commitment to determining matching funds to pursue grants for any new projects and acknowledged appreciation for having a parks "blueprint" to help guide them.

Secretary's Report: Tucker, seconded by Lucker, made a MOTION to approve minutes from May 16th meeting with one amendment: under "Report of Special Committees/Projects – Fencing for Baseball Fields" it should state "Fencing will be done by the end of June." MOTION CARRIED. Corrected May 16th minutes will be given to the Township.

Treasurer's Report: Knight, seconded by Hoskins, made a MOTION to approve payment of bills, with the exception of \$1372.50 billed by Dagostino for beach cleanup. MOTION CARRIED. Water bills and surcharges were examined.

Report of Officers: Current Chairman Tucker made a MOTION to nominate Todd Gardner to the chair position. MOTION seconded by Lucker. MOTION CARRIED. Current Vice Chairman Knapp made a MOTION to nominate Bill Tucker to the vice chair position. MOTION seconded by Lucker. MOTION CARRIED. (Gardner acted as chair from this point on.)

Budget Committee – No report.

Insurance Issues – The township pays \$103,968 in liability insurance and parks is billed \$5,982 of that amount. The insurance is part of the Michigan Township Association group plan with coverage provided by Western Insurance. The vacant Parks House on Cleveland is insured at \$192,000, although the appraised value is \$104,000. Gardner gathered information on other parks property structures which also seem over-valued. The parks are all tax-exempt, but must pay certain assessments. Gardner met with assessor and discussed combining all of the township parks into one legal address to reduce assessment fees. Further research is needed. ACTION TABLED.

Report of Special Committees/Projects:

Soccer Fields Concession Stand/Bathrooms Plan – The soccer leagues provide recreation at the Rocky Weed complex for around 800 area children. Over the weekend the complex was host for Soccer Fest, comprised of 97 traveling teams with 10-16 youth players per team along with coaches, referees, and families in attendance.

Representatives from the non-profit organizations LYSL (Lakeshore Youth Soccer League) and SWM (Southwest Michigan Select Soccer) presented ideas for a larger concession stand and permanent bathroom facilities. The groups support new facilities to better accommodate large numbers of people, improve sanitation, add storage, and offer shelter from inclement weather. Running water and security lighting are the most immediate concerns.

Discussion was held concerning the decrease of funds available in the Parks Capital Improvement Budget. A sum of \$15,000 that had been originally set aside for soccer complex improvements was moved to the Parks Operating Budget by the township board. The Parks Board has been examining expenses and working to find a way to move the money back into the Parks Capital Improvement Budget.

It was pointed out that in prior years the soccer leagues have made annual donations of \$1,000. The groups were advised that any future donations should be specifically earmarked for soccer complex capital improvements. Past projects, such as the tree plantings and parking lot expansion, were paid for 50-50 by the parks and the soccer organizations. Further research is needed to uncover prior usage and monetary agreements between the soccer organizations and the township.

The parks board and soccer representatives were in agreement that more progress is needed at the soccer fields. The biggest obstacle is getting water and sewer lines extended at a projected cost of \$75,000-100,000. The soccer group was asked to come up with placement alternatives for the concession and bathroom facility, bring a conceptual drawing and attend the July 5th parks meeting.

Chairman Gardner also proposed putting together a community planning sub-committee composed of parks board members and representatives of soccer, baseball, and rocket football programs.

Old Business:

Parks Reservations & Usage Rules – The following information was taken from www.berriencounty.org/parks about rental facilities at Madeline Bertrand Park. The Bertrand Lodge, completely enclosed with a kitchen, rents for \$80/day on weekends and \$40/day on weekdays. The Topenebee and River Shelters, including grills, electricity, and tables, rent for \$60/day on weekends and \$30/day on weekdays. An entry fee of \$3 per vehicle is also charged.

Other area shelters and rental fees:

Briarwood at Riverview – \$100

Woodbine at Riverview – \$150

Tiscornia – \$50

Lions Park Shelter – \$75

The fee structure is divided into different rates for township residents, non-residents, unions, and corporations. Government groups are generally free of charge. The board decided to set rental fees for the Township Community Shelter and North Lake Park Shelter at the next meeting.

Parks Permits/Collection Machines – The following information was taken from www.sicity.com/community/parks: St. Joseph residents can receive park passes at no charge by showing proof of residency at the City Clerk's Office. They receive a sticker for their car that

exempts them from entrance fees at city parks. Non-residents may purchase a park pass for \$20. Residents or non-residents without a pass must pay a \$3 entrance fee at Tiscornia and \$5 at the City Boat Launch.

Signs are clearly posted and payment boxes are installed at these St. Joseph parks. Tickets, purchased on the honor system, or passes must be displayed on the dashboard. According to Gardner, when violators pay their \$50 fine at the City Clerk's Office they are then given a parks pass. Gardner shared vendor information.

Discussion was held on utilizing this type of system at Lincoln Township Beach and North Lake Park as a revenue source for parks. Charging parking fees for baseball and soccer tournaments or team entry fees was also discussed. ACTION TABLED.

Handicapped Parking Signs/Access – Tucker has made arrangements for Berrien County Parks Director Randy Rood to come inspect our parks this fall.

New Business:

Trash Removal Concerns – No report.

Parks Maintenance:

North Lake Park – No report.

Glenlord Beach Repair Bids – Lucker has contacted CPM construction to give an initial estimate for repair or replacement of the decking structure. Careful consideration should be given to using long-lasting composite materials instead of wood. The board discussed replacing the multi-tiered deck with a simpler structure to maximize the view.

Lincoln Township Beach – No report.

Community Center – No report.

Rudnick Park – No report.

Baseball/Softball Fields – No report.

Soccer Fields – Hoskins working on making an appointment with AEP to check into security lighting and monthly expense.

Announcements: Carol Petros stated her willingness to assist the board and help get answers to questions about the prior board's decisions.

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned by Chairman at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Risk

Kimberly Risk, Secretary
Parks Commission