

**LINCOLN CHARTER TOWNSHIP
PARKS COMMISSION
OPERATIONS WORKSHOP**

Thursday, March 2, 2006

An operations workshop meeting with members of the Township Parks Commission and Board of Trustees was scheduled by Chairman Todd Gardner.

The meeting began at 2:05 p.m. at the Lincoln Township Municipal Building, 2055 W. John Beers Road, Stevensville.

IN ATTENDANCE: Parks Chairman Todd Gardner and Secretary Kim Risk, Township Supervisor Dick Stauffer, Clerk Sharon Geisler, and Treasurer Terrie Smith.

Opening: Stauffer presented parks funding breakdown (Attachment A) comparing Lincoln Township to St. Joseph Township. The comparison shows Lincoln Township Parks receiving a slightly higher revenue percentage, 11.2% vs. 9.2%.

Gardner thanked the township officers and staff for their tremendous help over the past year and expressed his desire to work together. He stated disappointment in the budget workshop sessions. Discussion held about the process of preparing and presenting the budget.

Parks Commission Organization and Charter: When Gardner started his appointment on the Parks Commission in April, he was surprised to learn the other commissioners knew very little about the structure, authority, obligations or by-laws of the organization. Risk, appointed one month earlier than Gardner, stated there was a lack of transitional help or information passed down from the prior parks commission. Gardner has spent hours going through files, doing research and learning parks commission history. He concluded there are still areas he doesn't fully understand and doesn't want future commissioners to have to spend so much time learning the basics.

The LT Parks Commission is set up under Michigan Act 157 Township Parks and Places of Recreation. According to Gardner's research, there are about a dozen other elected parks and recreation authorities in Michigan townships. He has studied their minutes, recreation plans, revenue sources, and other common areas.

Role of the Lincoln Township Board and Staff: Gardner said some responses he has received from the township staff have led to more questions. For example, what is a municipal fund? Group discussed how government financial reports differ from for-profit businesses. Gardner had questions regarding fund equity. Geisler stated Parks Commission has in the past tapped into their fund equity if they spent more than they took in, as they did in March, 2005, at the end of the 2004-05 budget year.

According to Gardner, Parks Commission was unaware of 2004-05 carryover balances in General (est. \$6,000) and Capital (\$26,584) funds until the 2005-06 budgeting process at the end of February, 2006. Also discussed township approving and reserving \$35,000 for Glenlord Beach and misunderstanding about that amount appearing in the Capital Improvement budget presented by Gardner to the township board. Disputed \$35,000 showing in parks monthly balance sheet. Gardner stated \$35,000 was not in township's pre-budget package as a township-funded improvement, nor was it communicated to Parks as approved after the January Township Board meeting.

Township/Municipal Finance Tutorial: Geisler requested clarification on parks invoice from Charles Harmon for web and calendar software. Gardner stated invoices should not be submitted for payment unless funds are appropriated and approved by Parks Commission at the monthly meeting. Further discussed process for paying parks' bills.

Geisler said township handles payment of utilities at the end of the month to avoid late fees. She requested original invoices not be removed from the township building. Discussed issues related to cutting the hours of parks' employee without notifying the township and subsequent confusion over payment of wages. ACTION TABLED until commission can review invoices from employment agency.

Gardner stated concern about how the commission is supposed to operate, compared to how it actually operates. The commission wants to make sure of responsibilities related to expenditures and oversight of spending. There has been a lack of understanding of some allocations and budget line items. Went over maintenance full-time and seasonal employees' and supervisor allocations. Gardner said Parks Commission did not receive a record of time worked and wages allocated.

Expectations: The township office needs to have final budget numbers for 2006-07 and estimated totals for 2005-06 by the end of the day on March 6th.

A "budget workshop" with the township means parks presents their prepared budget. It is a workshop intended for the Township Board of Trustees. The Parks Commission should hold their own workshops to work out issues and call the township with any questions beforehand. Gardner maintained the township general ledgers, going back 3 years, did not contain important information needed to prepare the parks' budget.

Gardner asked for an agreement on basic parameters for any transaction and how it is recorded in the general ledger, so the commission knows about it prior to it showing in the ledger. Geisler stated that Parks will not have any more labor allocations (Parks is no longer using any township employees), but Parks will be allocated for liability insurance and workman's comp if anyone is on Parks' payroll. Township insurance bill is given to Deputy Clerk Accounting Clerk to determine allocations to departments. Gardner insisted this bill be submitted to the commission for review before payment. He said Parks' is obligated to set up accounting controls. Discussed township accounting controls, general ledger entries, and approval of invoices. Smith stated checks are written only on the 15th and 30th of each month. Geisler and Smith requested "head's up" for any parks' actions having to do with money, rather than having to read meeting minutes. Risk suggested Parks may have to meet more than once a month to provide timely oversight of expenditures and approval of invoices. Discussed having a Parks Executive Committee meet regularly.

Commitment to Work Together: Parks should expect to pay certain bills automatically such as insurance, workman's comp, telephone, utilities, contractor services, and credit cards, all general ledger entries. The monthly parks folder provided for meetings should include copies of invoices, monthly summary report and printout of checks paid on the 15th. Discussed township credit cards and local accounts. Went over line item and budget worksheet questions. Geisler encouraged commissioners to call with any further questions.

Operations workshop ended at 3:55 p.m.



 Kimberly Risk
 Parks Commission Secretary