



**PARKS, RECREATION AND LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2020 MEETING, 8:30 AM**

**Location: Ada Township Park, 1180 Buttrick Dr., Ada, MI 49301
Shelter Facility**

AGENDA

- 1) Call meeting to order/roll call
- 2) Approval of agenda
- 3) Approval of minutes from September 10 meeting
- 4) Capital Improvements Plan Review
- 5) Updates on Major Projects
 - a) Potential property Acquisition – 1022 Buttrick
 - b) Leonard Field Master Plan phasing and RJM-Design proposal
 - c) Roselle Park Shelter/ Picnic Area/ Parking lot project – OCBA schedule
- 6) Committee Reports
 - a) Facilities & Programs Committee
 - b) Stewardship Committee
 - c) Trails / Connect Ada Committee
 - d) Rules Committee
- 7) Directors Report
Updates on administrative items, staffing, projects, programs and facilities
- 8) Board Member Comments
- 9) Public Comments
- 10) Adjournment

**ADA TOWNSHIP PARKS, RECREATION AND LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES OF THE THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 10, 2020 REGULAR MEETING
8:30 A.M., VIA ZOOM MEETING**

1. Call meeting to order/roll call

Present: Schmottlach, Levick, Terwilliger, Steketee, Roe, Haga, Crosby and Jacobs

Absent: Damstra, VandenBerge, Nowak

Staff Present: Ferro, Fitzpatrick, Ergang, McCormick

Public Present: None

2. Approval of agenda

Schmottlach moved, Roe supported, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Approval of minutes of the August 13, 2020 meeting.

Schmottlach moved, Steketee supported, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimous roll call vote, with 3 absent.

4. Follow up - Potential Property Acquisition – 1022 Buttrick Ave SE –

Fitzpatrick presented an update on the property noting discussion with the family on setting up an “Option Agreement” with the property owners to hold off for 30 days on the sale of the property so the Township could review options and priorities for funding the potential purchase. Ferro presented a draft of the Capital Improvements Plan showing this purchase would have an impact on fund balances. Mark noted that this is not an agreement to purchase, but an agreement giving the Township the exclusive right to purchase the property for 30 days. Discussion included several points of view including priorities of funding, use of the property, what to do with the house, relation to other projects. George noted the need to be sensitive to the family. A motion was made to pursue the “Option Agreement” while we continue evaluating the project, and request the Township Board to approve the “Option Agreement.

Steketee moved, Crosby supported, to approve submitting an “Option Agreement” to the family and make a recommendation to the Township Board of Trustees to approve the “Option Agreement” and terms within it. Motion passed by roll call vote, with 7 in favor and 1 opposed, 3 absent.

5. Capital Projects planning and review – Ferro gave an overview of a spreadsheet to the group with a breakdown of projected revenues, expenditures and fund balance for Funds 208, 213 and 214. Fitzpatrick noted adjustments to this year’s operation budget including reductions in revenues for programs and rentals reduction due to Covid-19 and some reductions in expenditure. It was noted that there is not much room for \$310,000 for the purchase of the house with the CIP as it currently stands. Steketee asked the question about having some of the funds for the house come out of the Township general fund since this is potentially for office space. Ferro stated that would be a possibility. Haga stated the General fund could help but this should come out of Parks fund. Recommendation was for the Facilities and Programs Committee to review the details of the CIP and funding options associated with the property. The project was referred back to the Committee for further review.

6. Committee Report and updates

- a) **Facilities/Program Committee** – Fitzpatrick stated next meeting is coming up.
- b) **Trails & Connect Ada Committee** – Ferro no update
- c) **Stewardship Committee** – Ferro no update
- d) **Rules Committee** – Fitzpatrick waiting on new Manger to be on this committee.

7. Directors Report – Fitzpatrick requested Board Members to review the Directors Report in the packet since we were out of time. McCormick gave an update on the softball programs noting they will be wrapping up end of September.

8. Board Member Comment – None

9. Public Comment – None

Meeting adjourned at 9:56

Respectfully Submitted,

Jacqueline Smith, Ada Township Clerk

**TABLE 5
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS
PARKS, RECREATION AND LAND PRESERVATION FUND - 214**

PROJECT TITLE	EST. TO 3/31/21	FY 21-22	FY 22-23	FY 23-24	FY 24-25	FY 25-26	FY 26-27	Long Term Goals	FUNDING SOURCES		
									TWP	GRANT	OTHER
Ada Park											
Short term Office & Maintenance Building improvements	\$30,000								\$30,000		
Master Plan Update		\$20,000							\$20,000		
Long Term Office, Maintenance Building & Site								\$200,000			
New entry signs (3)			\$16,000						\$16,000		
Mill and repave trails in arboretum						\$90,000			\$90,000		
Replace Gates -		\$10,000							\$10,000		
Acquire adjoining property - house								\$239,000			
Roselle Park											
Picnic shelter/picnic area/parking lot improvements	\$25,000	\$224,063	\$224,063						\$383,126		\$90,000
New Entry signs		\$16,000							\$16,000		
Mover trail at river bank erosion area					\$80,000				\$80,000		
Improve lagoon area								\$30,000			
Leonard Field Park											
Master Plan -RJM	\$15,000								\$15,000		
Master Plan Implementation with new sign		\$120,000	\$300,000	\$300,000					\$300,000	\$300,000	\$120,000
Legacy Park											
New Entry sign		\$18,000							\$18,000		
Grand River Natural Area Preserve											
Paved trail repair		\$85,000							\$85,000		
New signs				\$10,000					\$10,000		
Carl Creek Crossings Preserve											
New signs (2)				\$14,000					\$14,000		
Carl Creek Wetland Preserve											
New sign				\$10,000					\$10,000		
Public Access & trail Improvements								\$200,000			
Knapp Corner Preserve											
New Entry sign		\$10,000							\$10,000		
Equipment											
Replace light duty pick-up truck				\$22,000					\$22,000		
Repace other equipment - mower					\$20,000				\$20,000		
TOTAL:	\$70,000	\$503,063	\$540,063	\$356,000	\$100,000	\$90,000	\$0		\$1,149,126	\$300,000	\$210,000
POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES											
Parks, Rec. and Land Preservation Fund-214	\$70,000	\$438,063	\$295,063	\$156,000	\$100,000	\$90,000					
Grant Funds			\$150,000	\$150,000							
Other Sources:		\$65,000	\$95,000	\$50,000							
Total:	\$70,000	\$503,063	\$540,063	\$356,000	\$100,000	\$90,000	\$0				

Notes:

Ada Park Long-Term Buildings & Site improvements to be coordinated with master plan update and re-mill of Arboretum trail, and new TWP Admin offices
 Roselle Shelter project could incorporate new signs and gate repairs
 Ada Park Buttrick property funded in part by Fund 213 \$86,000
 Leonard Field Master plan - \$10,000 past payments, up to \$5,000 for phasing
 new signs for the preserves put off until FY 23-24 - these may be moved up if funding allows

TABLE 15
PARKS, RECREATION AND LAND PRESERVATION FUND - 214
PROJECTED REVENUES/EXPENDITURES - 2020-21 THROUGH 2026-27

REVENUES	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Property taxes	\$693,043	\$703,439	\$713,990	\$724,700	\$735,571	\$746,604	\$757,803
Local Govt. Stabilization Fund	\$1,000	\$1,000					
Licenses and permits							
Contributions	\$2,000	\$65,000	\$95,000	\$50,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Grants/revenue sharing		\$0	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Charges for services	\$21,090	\$45,000	\$45,675	\$46,360	\$47,056	\$47,761	\$48,478
Interest and rentals	\$5,800	\$54,025	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000
Other							
Total revenues:	\$722,933	\$868,464	\$1,049,665	\$1,016,060	\$827,626	\$839,365	\$851,281
EXPENDITURES	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Operating expenditures	\$568,763	\$630,000	\$642,600	\$655,452	\$668,561	\$681,932	\$695,571
Capital expenditures	\$97,603	\$503,063	\$540,063	\$356,000	\$100,000	\$90,000	\$0
Debt Service on 2017 Capital Improvements Bonds	\$71,550	\$69,750	\$72,950	\$71,000	\$69,050	\$72,100	\$0
Tax tribunal refunds ordered							
Total expenditures	\$737,916	\$1,202,813	\$1,255,613	\$1,082,452	\$837,611	\$844,032	\$695,571
FUND TRANSFERS (IN, -OUT)	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Total net transfers:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
FUND BALANCE	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Net change in fund balances:	-\$14,983	-\$334,349	-\$205,948	-\$66,392	-\$9,985	-\$4,667	\$155,710
Beginning fund balance:	\$831,946	\$816,963	\$482,614	\$276,666	\$210,274	\$200,289	\$195,622
Ending fund balance:	\$816,963	\$482,614	\$276,666	\$210,274	\$200,289	\$195,622	\$351,332
Fund balance as % of total expenditures plus transfers out	110.7%	40.1%	22.0%	19.4%	23.9%	23.2%	50.5%

October 6, 2020

Julius Suchy
Ada Township Manager
7330 Thornapple River Dr.
Ada, MI 49301

RE: Leonard Field Park – Phase 2 & 3

Dear Julius,

It was very nice to meet with you, Jim Ferro and Mark Fitzpatrick last week to discuss the next steps for Leonard field Park.

Based on the meeting, following is our understanding of how the township would like to proceed with the project, along with our proposed services and professional fees to assist you.

It is our understanding that the first phase of the project will be improvement of the pedestrian crosswalk along Thornapple River Drive on the east side of the park. We understand design services for this work have been completed by others and the actual project will begin this month.

For phase two, we understand you would like to proceed with lighting upgrades for the ballfield and the pedestrian gathering areas along the river. To accomplish this, we propose to assemble a detailed design package for competitive bidding and construction. Our work will include evaluating the existing poles for possible re-use, specifying new poles if needed, specifying lighting fixtures with LED lamps providing safe and adequate lighting for the athletic field and the common gathering areas. Plans will include minor adjustments to fencing if deemed necessary and include a performance specification for an electrical distribution system to support the lighting design. We will also include add alternates as selected by the township for possible upgrades to the base bid.

We understand phase three will be developing a portion of the Master Plan with a construction value of \$600,000, funded partially by a DNR Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant (LWCF). Our scope of work for this phase includes assisting the township with the selection of specific elements of the Master Plan and providing exhibits for the grant application. Our services could be comprehensive where we provide the majority of the application requirements including plans, graphics, narratives, and cost estimates. Or, our services could be supplementary where the township takes the lead on the application and we provide only the plan exhibits and cost estimates.

RJM Design is familiar with all of the State's grant programs and have successfully assisted many municipal clients obtain grant dollars for recreation projects.

For the Phase Two Project (lighting upgrades) and the scope of work described above, we propose to work on an hourly basis with an estimated fee of \$5,800. This represents approximately 54 hours of service.

For the Phase Three Project (LWCF Grant Application), our fees for comprehensive services would be billed on an hourly basis with an estimated fee of \$6,700. This represents approximately 62 hours of service. Our fees for supplementary services would be billed on an hourly basis with an estimated fee of \$3,800. This represents approximately 36 hours of service.

Standard reimbursable expenses such as printing, postage and mileage are not included in our fee estimates and would be billed in addition to our fees.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "R. James Morgan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ada Township Parks, Recreation and Land Preservation
Programs and Facilities Committee

Minutes

Held on September 29, 2020 at 8:00 a.m.

Meeting held via Zoom. Jim Ferro facilitated access and screen views.

In attendance: Judy Levick, Kraig Schmottlach, Jim Ferro, Mark Fitzpatrick, Julius Suchy

Absent: Mike Terwilliger, George Haga

Guest: None

Mark reviewed with the Committee the PRLP Advisory Board's recommendation to have this committee review the status of our fund balances, the Capital Improvements Plan, and the impact purchasing the 1022 Buttrick property would have.

Jim presented updated drafts of the 214 Fund Capital Improvements Projects, Table 5 and reviewed the relations to the projected revenues/expenditures.

Mark discussed the option for funding the purchase the property through the 213 and 214 Fund and how that would impact the fund balances.

Discussion considered both the benefits of acquiring the property and the house and negative consequences. Everyone seemed to agree that obtaining the property would be a positive for the park and that there would be some functions possible for the house. Everyone also seemed to agree that the cost of the purchase is so high that is it would have a negative effect on our fund balances, potentially impact other improvement projects underway, and possibly impact future uses and priorities for the funds.

Other funding options were discussed, including contacting the Land Conservancy or land holdings companies to hold the property until we could apply for a grant, requesting a contribution from the General Fund and conducting a quick fundraising campaign for donations.

Judy recommended that members of the Stewardship Committee review the potential purchase of the property and provide feedback. The rest of the Programs and Facilities Committee concurred with that idea and agreed on the recommendation of having the Stewardship Committee review this project. Jim Ferro agreed to set up that meeting.

Meeting adjourned



MEMORANDUM

Date: 10/6/20

TO: PRLP Advisory Board

FROM: Jim Ferro, Planning Director

RE: Stewardship Committee Meeting, 10/1/20

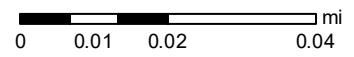
At the Stewardship Committee meeting last week, the Committee discussed the merits of acquiring the 1022 Buttrick Ave property from a land preservation perspective. The Committee reviewed the results of an evaluation of the property that I prepared using the scoring system that was developed many years ago for use by the Open Space Preservation Advisory Board to rate potential property acquisitions.

As shown in the attached graph, the resulting score was at the low end of the range compared against all other sites that we have rated in the past, and is close to the rating of two other sites in the same vicinity that were previously scored, one of which we did acquire (the Osmolenski property, adjacent to the 1022 Buttrick site).

The consensus of the Committee was that, although the Committee does not believe the site is important to acquire due to high quality natural features or other ecological value, the Committee members understand why it might be considered a high priority from a parks and recreation perspective, considering its location in relation to the park boundary and proximity to a ballfield.

Kent County Web Map

October 01, 2020



**Ada Township Open Space Preservation Program
Preliminary Land Screening Form - Non-Agricultural Land**

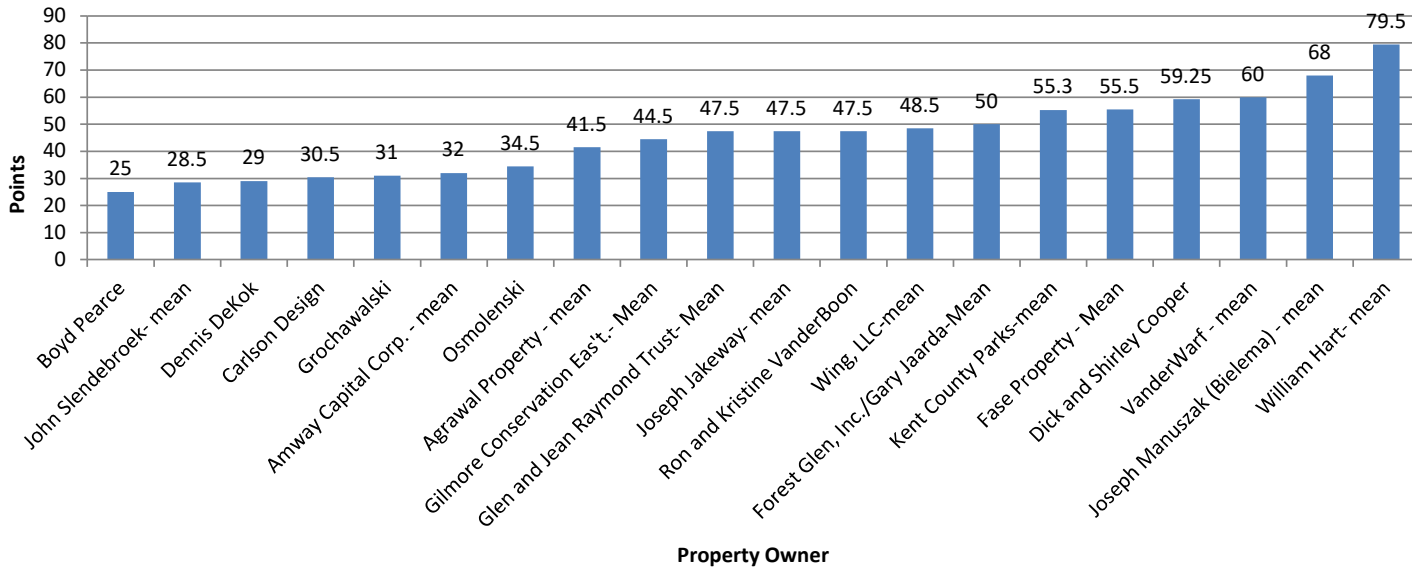
Form Revised: 10/27/06

Date Nominated:	Parcel No: 41-15- <u>34-151-003</u>	File No.:
Property Address: <u>1022 BUTTRICK AVE SE</u>		
Parcel Description: <u>1.7 ACRES WITH SINGLE FAMILY HOME, ADJOINED ON 3 SIDES BY ADA PARK</u>		
Preliminary Review Prepared by: <u>JIM FERRO</u>	Preparation Date: <u>9/30/20</u>	

Evaluation Category	Subcategory	Maximum Points	Score
Ecological Value (Select all that apply) (18 points)	Contains ecosystems or habitats of state, regional or local importance.	7	
	Contains protected wildlife or vegetation and/or overall high species diversity (FQI>30)	5	
	Contains habitat for protected species	4	
	Helps connect prime greenways and wildlife corridors.	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
Comments:			
Natural Function Value (Select all that apply) (16 points)	Significant upland buffer to an area otherwise protected (wetland, shoreline, riparian area)	4	
	Provides flood and storm water control	3	
	Provides ground water recharge and water quality enhancement	3	
	Contains significant woodlot or woodland	2	<u>2</u>
	Contain prime/unique soils or agricultural values	2	
	Provides important natural functions not protected by other means.	2	
Comments:			
Parcel Size (Select one) (14 points)	Parcel size is 40 acres or more, has potential to become a significant natural resource, and is contiguous to permanently preserved property or property that also has strong prospects for preservation.	14	<u> </u>
	Parcel size is 40 acres or more, with potential through succession to become a significant natural resource.	10	<u> </u>
	Parcel size is >5 acres and <40 acres	6	
	Parcel size is 5 acres or less	2	<u>2</u>
Comments:			
Point Subtotal (Enter here and on page 2):			<u>86</u>

Evaluation Category	Subcategory	Maximum Points	Score
Ada Open Space Priorities (Select one) (4 points)	Grand River corridor	4	0
	Chase Lake area	3	
	Agricultural lands (particularly in NE part of township)	2	
	Grand River/Sunny Creek overlook	2	
	Misc. other sites	1	
Comments:			
Aesthetic Value (Select one) (4 points)	Contains or enhances striking landscape features (e.g. river corridor, pronounced landforms, mixed viewsapes).	4	1
	Provides open greenspace to separate incompatible land uses or relieve monotony of same uses.	3	
	Provides unique aesthetic values	2	
	Aesthetic values average for township	1	
Comments:			
Development Potential (Select one) (10 points)	High	10	10
	Medium	5	
	Low	1	
Comments:			
Surrounding Land Uses (Select all that apply) (10 points)	Property contiguous to protected lands (e.g. wetlands, riparian areas, parks or preserves).	4	4
	Property contiguous to agricultural area	3	
	Property contiguous to residential area	2	
	Property contiguous to mixed use area	1	
Comments:			
Environmental Quality (Select one) (10 points)	No environmental contamination	10	10
	Possible environmental contamination	5	
	Known environmental contamination	1	
Comments:			
Page 2 Subtotal:			0 25
Page 1 Subtotal:			0 6
Total Points (Maximum possible: 86)			0 31

Mean Rating of Sites Evaluated, 4/04 to 9/20





Ada Township Parks & Recreation Department
Park Director's Report
For October 8, 2020
Submitted by Parks & Recreation Director Mark Fitzpatrick

Updates on COVID-19

- Recent orders from the Governor adjusted restrictions for indoor events up to 20 people per 1,000 square feet, effective October 9. We plan to change the limit for rental groups in the room at Roselle Park up to 20 people October 13. Limitations for outdoor groups remains at 100 people per event.
- We started our volunteer stewardship work days again this past week with new protocols in place.
- We continue to maintain standard COVID-19 practices for operations, staffing, facilities, visitor safety, programs and events.

Administrative Updates

- The transition process with the new Township Manager, Julius Suchy, began September 14. Mark provided Julius with a tour of the Township parks, preserves and facilities.
- We have been reviewing the Capital Improvements Plan for Funds 208, 213 and 214 to incorporate major projects at Roselle, Ada, and Leonard Field parks. This has gone through the Advisory Board and two committees so far.
- Updates on our recreation program staff include:
 - *The softball program assistants are now done for the season
 - *The umpires are now done for the season.
 - *Rob McCormick plans to leave for the winter November 1st and return in March
 - *We are still holding off on filling the Recreation Program Assistant and Intern positions.
- Review of recreation software is close to completion. We had two more on-line demonstrations recently which completes that part of the process.
- We requested a proposal for services from RJM-Design to assist with phasing and a grant application for improvements to Leonard Field Park.
- Our Community Recreation Plan that we submit to the MI DNR, known as our Parks, Recreation and Land Preservation Plan, expires December 31, 2021. We will be updating the plan through next year.

Updates on Township Parks and Preserves

Ada Township Park

- Shelter and Gazebo rentals will end for the season October 31.
- The irrigation and shelter water lines are scheduled to be winterized November 4.
- The pickleball and tennis courts remain very active.
- Adult softball leagues are done for the season; some softball field rentals may be held in October.
- Soccer field rentals continue through the end of October.
- The lot and house adjacent to the park is still under review for a potential purchase. The property owner received a 30-day "Option Agreement" to hold the property, but has not signed or returned it yet. Financial capability and priorities continue to be reviewed to help process our options.
- A new memorial park bench has been donated by the family from the house in memory of their mother. The bench will be set alongside the new trail near the house.
- A contract has been set to remove three dying or dead trees out of the park that present safety issues.
- Improvements to the park office are under review, including new floor insulation, carpet and doors.

Legacy Park – In Memory of Helen and Rich Devos

- Final work with Progressive A&E includes finish on the amphitheater wood frame, lawn recovery, and an erosion issues along the river bank.
- October 8 is the last scheduled event for the Pavilion area this season.
- We facilitated a number of events at the Amphitheater this year which gave us a fair idea of logistics and needs for the site. These included two concerts, yoga sessions, a story telling session, rental by the Forest Hills Central Middle School for a theater production, rental by the Community Church for an outdoor service and rental by a local business for a fund raiser.
- The guidelines for facility use and rental fees are being reviewed by the committees and expected to go the PRLP Advisory Board in November.
- A dog bag dispenser has been installed in the park.

Roselle Park

- For the improvement project on the non-paved trails in the north section, payment has been made to Bultsma Construction for their services. \$4,552.00 has being retained for 60 days for final completion.
- The OCBA proposal to administrate the shelter/picnic area/parking lot improvement project was approved by the Township Board on August 31. Representatives from OCBA will participate in an October 14 Facilities and Programs Committee meeting to review their recommended time-line of the project as well as budget details. Preparing design and construction documents will follow that meeting.
- The Governor's restrictions for indoor events has moved the limit up to 20 people per 1,000 square feet, effective October 9. We will be adjusting the limits for rental groups in the room at Roselle Park on October 13 up to 20 people as directed by the Governor's Orders.
- The room at Roselle Park will be used for the elections on November 3rd.
- Two new donations have been made to the park, one for a memorial tree and one for a memorial bench.

Leonard Field Park

- Construction on the crosswalks on Thornapple River Drive began October 5 and will continue for two weeks or more. The driveway at Leonard Field Park will be closed during this time. Access to the park will be available via the Covered Bridge trail. The restrooms will remain open.
- A request for a proposal for services has been made to RJM-Design for them to assist with the phasing of the improvements and a grant application. Their proposal is expected later this week.
- The last scheduled softball games for the seasons was completed September 29.

Carl Creek Crossings Preserve

- A volunteer stewardship work day is set up for October 13.
- A dispenser for dog waste bags was put up by the trail head.

Carl Creek Wetlands Preserve

- Park staff have serviced the site to remove fallen trees and keep open a pathway in the preserve.
- The long-range development of the site will be reviewed again as we go though the update of the CIP and Parks, Recreation and Land Preservation Plan.

Grand River Natural Area Preserve

- The trail improvement project planned and budgeted for this year has been postponed until 2021.

Knapp Corners Preserve

- The Sign Committee visited the site and are working on the final details to upgrade the entry sign.

Shady Drive Preserve

- This is a small parcel we own next to the MI DNR boat launch near Knapp.
- It appears that there may have been an intrusion to the property and the DNR property. The DNR has been consulted. We are reviewing the issue.

Updates on the Bike Paths / Non-Motorized Trails

- Three estimates have been received to do repairs at four locations on the trails. The recommendation is to be approved by the Township Board on October 12. The work is to be done this fall.
- Planning for future maintenance and repair needs as well as trail extensions will be incorporated into the CIP process and work by the Trail/Connect Ada Committee this fall.

Updates on Recreation Programs

- With many COVID-19 restrictions still in place, we have not opened up or offered many of the community, family, and youth programs yet. We have also held off on filling the Recreation Program Assistant or Intern positions.
- Large community events remain cancelled. Currently under review are the holiday events of *Tinsels*, *Treats and Trolleys* and *Santa Parade* scheduled for December. The fall Ada-Cascade Clean-Up Day and the River Clean-Up stewardship day were cancelled.
- Adult softball league games are now done for the season. Rob has been working on schedules for leagues and tournaments for 2021. Rob will be submitting a report on this year's program soon.
- Rental use of the soccer and athletic fields by AYSO soccer and Zig-Zag Ultimate Frisbee will end October 31. Note that the games were modified to adhere to new COVID protocols.
- School and pre-school programs such as field trips to the parks, outreach activities to schools and teacher workshops are still on hold.
- Non-organized activities in Ada Park, such as tennis and pickleball, have been very busy with groups several times a day.
- We continue to discuss with local organizations and businesses about providing recreation program in the parks on a contract and/or partnership basis.

Regrading Zoom meetings for Township Board meetings

Copied from Memo from Julius Suchy, Ada Township Manager, to Ada Township Staff on October 6, 2020

Ada Township Staff,

I wanted to provide an update on a number of items and it seems like it has been a whirlwind week in terms of regulations, executive orders, the supreme court decision and where it leaves the Township. Hopefully the information below will help answer some of your questions.

The Michigan Supreme Court, in a split 4-3 decision, ruled on Friday that the governor does not possess the authority under the Emergency Management Act of 1976 to declare states of emergency and disaster as it relates to the coronavirus pandemic after April 30. The Court also ruled that Gov. Whitmer does not possess the authority to exercise emergency powers under the Emergency Powers of Governor Act of 1945 because that act is an unlawful delegation of legislative power to the executive branch. There was some commentary that the ruling does not take effect for at least 21 days, but per our legal counsel and guidance from the Michigan Township Association, we are taking that to mean the executive orders are invalidated immediately.

This has moved all of our public meetings from virtual meetings via zoom to in-person meetings to comply with the Open Meetings Act. There is conversation that the legislature may act on a package of bills that would allow local governments to meet virtually, but that has not happened yet.

I know I received some questions earlier this week asking “are we still required to wear masks around the office” – the answer is yes. The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services issues an emergency public health order replicating the majority of what the Governor had in place in regard to mask wearing as well as limits on gatherings. I have included a link to the article regarding the public health order here - <https://www.mlive.com/public-interest/2020/10/michigan-health-department-issues-order-requiring-masks-limiting-gathering-sizes-statewide.html>

The Township will be reviewing its COVID-19 protocols as staff has raised important questions about some of the items included in the plan that may be outdated or need to be further reviewed and clarified. As per the Township’s COVID protocol, please make sure you are wearing your mask if you have the opportunity to come within six feet of the public or one of your co-workers. The public is often located throughout the building at the Planning or Assessing counter and we want to make sure we are actively wearing our masks in the hallways while moving from our offices to the copy machine, break room or bathroom. A community on the eastside of the State just received a MIOSA violation and a fine of \$6,300 for issues related to individuals not wearing masks in the workplace.

I appreciate everyone’s patience as we work to adjust to our new normal where everything changes depending on the day. I will continue to communicate any changes to the staff so you guys have as much information as possible. If anyone has any questions my door is always open and I am happy to discuss this or anything else. I will be reaching out to staff individually to start setting up 1 on 1 meetings in the upcoming weeks.

Thank you,

Julius Suchy, ICMA-CM
Township Manager