

**ADA TOWNSHIP PARKS, RECREATION AND LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 8, 2016 SPECIAL MEETING**

A special meeting of the Ada Township Parks, Recreation and Land Preservation Advisory Board was held on Thursday, November 10, 2016, at the Roselle Park Building, 1010 Grand River Dr. NE, Ada, MI.

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 pm by Chairperson Roe.

ROLL CALL

Members present: Crosby, Haga, LeBlanc, Nowak, Roe, Schmottlach, Steketee, Terwilliger

Members absent: Damstra, Jacobs and VandenBerge

Staff present: Fitzpatrick, Ferro

Public Present: Kate Meyer, Executive Director, Kent County Parks Foundation

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

It was moved by Terwilliger, seconded by LeBlanc, to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion approved unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 10, 2016 MEETING

Motion by Terwilliger and supported by Nowak, to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2016 meeting as presented. Approved unanimously.

REMARKS FROM KATE MEYER, KENT COUNTY PARKS FOUNDATION

Kate Meyer introduced herself to the Advisory Board. She stated her role as director of the non-profit foundation is to work toward filling the funding gap between the costs of achieving parks program goals and the government funds available.

Meyer informed the Board that the Chief Hazy Cloud Park land acquisition grant application submitted by the County to the Michigan DNR was recommended for grant approval by the Natural Resources Trust Fund Board earlier in the week. She noted that the size of the park was originally 1 ½ acres when it was established, and with this acquisition, it will grow to 260 acres. She stated that a long term goal is to link Chief Hazy Cloud Park to Roselle Park with a pedestrian bridge across the Grand River.

Meyer stated there is potential to acquire additional riverfront land for further expansion of the public green space along the river. She noted that Chief Hazy Cloud Park is already the second largest of Kent County's parks.

Meyer pointed out that the current grant requires 30% local matching funds, and they are almost there thanks in part to the Township's support. She stated the County hopes to close on the property acquisition by the end of 2017, and they still need to raise \$622,500 in local matching funds.

Crosby asked where the County will obtain the needed local matching funds. Meyer stated they have already been in touch with past major donors regarding potential gifts. She noted appraisals still need to be completed for review and approval by the State.

Meyer distributed copies of a preliminary master plan showing potential future passive recreational facilities at the park.

11/30/16 REVENUE/EXPENDITURE REPORT, PARK AND RECREATION FUND, PARKS AND LAND PRESERVATION FUND, TRAIL FUND

Ferro reviewed the financial reports contained in the packet, noting that the parks and recreation fund, parks and land preservation fund and trail fund have a combined fund balance of about \$1.15 million.

In discussion, the consensus of Board members was that receiving these reports on a quarterly basis would be sufficient.

Fitzpatrick mentioned that there is a segregated fund held by the Land Conservancy of West Michigan that is allocated to open space preservation in Ada Township. Crosby indicated she would check on the balance of that fund with the conservancy.

LANDSCAPE RESTORATION/ENTRY SIGN AT KNAPP ST./GRAND RIVER DR. PROPERTY

Two alternative design options varying in size were presented for the proposed community entry sign at the Knapp St./Grand River open space site, as part of the overall landscape restoration plan proposal.

After discussion of the merits of the two options for the sign, it was moved by Crosby, seconded by Terwilliger to select the 20-foot long sign design for the site.

Motion approved unanimously.

The Board then discussed funding sources for the sign, and whether it should be funded from Township general funds, open space preservation funds or a combination thereof.

Following discussion, it was moved by Terwilliger, seconded by Crosby, to recommend that \$8,000 in open space preservation funds be allocated toward the cost of the sign, pending bids.

After discussion of the motion, the motion was withdrawn by both Terwilliger and Crosby.

After further discussion, it was moved by Haga, seconded by LeBlanc, to recommend to the Township Board that the proposed project be advertised for bids.

Motion carried unanimously.

PARKS, RECREATION AND LAND PRESERVATION PLAN UPDATE

Board members discussed the schedule and process for completing the new Parks, Recreation and Land Preservation Plan.

A written summary of input from the December 1 open house event was reviewed.

Haga requested that a calendar for the remaining steps in the process be prepared.

LeBlanc suggested we look at the results of the phone survey of Township residents that was conducted last spring prior to the millage renewal election.

Fitzpatrick stated he wants to simplify the format of the project list and schedule contained in the Action Plan section of the Plan document.

Note: LeBlanc left the meeting at 5:15 p.m.

STAFF REPORTS

Fitzpatrick summarized his written report on Parks Department activities.

Ferro summarized a meeting he attended with Dick Cooper, two of his children, their financial advisors and April Scholtz from the Land Conservancy regarding a potential conservation easement on the Cooper property. Ferro stated there have been no conclusions reached yet as to whether the Cooper family would want any compensation for placing a conservation easement on the property.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT

Terwilliger expressed sorrow at the recent passing of former Township Clerk Deb Millhuff, noting that she contributed much time and effort toward development of the Township's park facilities and programs.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jacqueline Smith, Township Clerk