

**Charter Township of Comstock
Parks & Recreation Commission**
Meeting Minutes of July 13, 2020
7:00 P.M.

Commissioners Present: Judy Joling, Linda Law, Marc Rizzolo, John Weir, Teresa Young
Staff Present: Vanessa Street, Parks Director and Rachel Roon, Parks Coordinator
No citizens in attendance.

Call to Order by Chairperson, Linda Law

1. Review of the Minutes from June 8, 2020:

Motion by Joling/support from Rizzolo to accept the Minutes as presented with an added name to the 'thank you' recognition list in Item 7d.

Motion to approve Minutes: 5 Yes/0 No

2. Bills Payable:

Motion by Weir/support from Young to approve Bills Payable as presented.

Motion to approve Bills Payable: 5 Yes/0 No

3. Correspondence: Parks Director Street reported a phone call from Cary Max regarding the status of the Commission's consideration of memorial plaques and benches. Parks Director Street replied that work on a policy is in progress.

4. Citizen's Comments: None

5. Request for Agenda Adjustments: None

6. Reports:

a. Parks Director: Report provided to Commissioners in Board packets. Parks Director Street noted two unexpected items at Merrill Park: 1) the contractor had to reinstall a black plastic fence to prevent soil erosion until the ground is more stable, and 2) due to an apparent inadvertent release from Morrow Park Dam by a private company, muck was deposited downstream along the Kalamazoo River shore, especially at Merrill Park, and extending further downstream. The extensive deposit, resembling a sandbar, presents a safety hazard and is preventing shoreline fishing. Commissioner Law will follow up with township and county officials as to the appropriate response considerations.

There is a problem with trash dumping at N. Wenke Park and McLinden Trails parking lot/area, as well as vandalism. Commissioners discussed ways to alert citizens to the problem and encourage them to report incidents when witnessed.

b. Treasurer: Report provided to Commissioners in Board packets. Commissioners Weir and Joling expressed concern over the difficulty in tracking cost item details in the township budget summaries. (Note: CoVid-19-prevention related expenses (masks, gloves, sanitizer units, signage, temp.signage, And rescheduling costs, so far total \$2000-\$2500). Commissioner Law will check on insurance charges.

c. Commission Chair: Refer to Item 7.

7. Business:

a. Merrill Park Update

Parks Director Street reported that edging work was done along River and Comstock street sidewalks, and that 18 new trees were planted. The park is being heavily used by residents, especially the walking path, restrooms, and shaded areas. Items remaining to be completed are installing playground benches, bike racks, basketball hoops (although some delay with hoops installation may apply due to CoVid-19 prevention policies), and grills. Grass seeding will be completed in the fall as the work is not guaranteed if seeded in the summer heat. Some loitering has been reported.

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b. Policy Manual Revisions – Table of Contents

Commissioner Young summarized ongoing efforts to revise the Comstock Township Parks and Recreation Policy and Procedures Manual, and provided the proposed table of contents to Commissioners for comment. Parks Commissioner Street is also currently reviewing the first draft of the revised policy and providing comments. The draft will be provided for review and discussion at upcoming P&Rec Commission meetings.

c. Wenke Complex – 2020 Tournament Discussion

Parks Director Street described the rescheduling efforts for softball tournament starts. A major concern with ongoing ballgames is noncompliance with safety measures (related to CovVid-19 prevention), even though these measures were carefully planned and agreed upon with the BPA prior to the start of the season. Courtesy of players toward P&Rec staff reiterating safety measures has been also lacking. Concerns are increasing among staff and commissioners about tournament scheduling/lengthy game-gatherings and noncompliance. The BPA has requested 3 tournaments.

Consistent with Kalamazoo County's recommendations and considering safety and noncompliance concerns, a motion was made by Weir/support from Rizzolo to cancel Wenke Softball Complex tournaments in 2020.

Motion to approve cancellation of tournaments for 2020 as presented: 5 Yes/0 No

d. Other

- 1.) At the request of Commissioner Weir, Parks Director Street provided the security system cost breakdown so far: \$8000 for equipment installation and \$4000/year for monitoring. Commissioner Rizzolo suggested that negotiations to lower costs should take place at the next contract renewal.
- 2.) It has been reported that swimming at Peer Park has occurred and items are left in the water.
- 3.) The Community Gardens have been closed and associated activities cancelled due to CoVid-19 concerns.

8. Announcements: None

The meeting, held at Robert Morris Park, was adjourned at 8:30 P.M.

The next meeting will take place on August 10, 2020 at 7:00 P.M. (Park Visits will be on the agenda).

Respectfully submitted, Teresa Young, Secretary