



# COMSTOCK TOWNSHIP

## PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT



# ANNUAL REPORT 2020

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## Introduction

The Parks and Recreation Commissioners for the year 2020 were Judy Joling, Linda Law, Marc Rizzolo, John Weir, and Teresa Young. Officers for the year 2020 were Linda Law, Chair; Judy Joling, Vice Chair; Teresa Young, Secretary; John Weir, Treasurer.

# MISSION

The Comstock Township Parks and Recreation Commission works on behalf of the citizens of Comstock Township to build a healthy community and a sustainable environment by promoting active lifestyles and strong individuals and families through parks, programs and partnerships.

# VISION

Comstock Township Parks will be viewed by Township residents as:

- valued components to enhance the quality of life
- considered valuable assets for recreation, relaxation and learning in Comstock Township
- considered as a source of pride for our community
- recognized as safe and healthy environments in which individuals, families and friends choose to spend time.





# PARKS

## Robert Morris Park

This season, due to the onset of COVID-19, we sold all seasonal passes for \$20.00. This was to limit cash handling by the staff.

By the end of May, the beach, natural/open spaces, bathrooms, and disc golf course were open for use. However, play structures, drinking fountains, pavilions, and picnic areas remained closed due to COVID-19 restrictions.

We continue to make improvements to our disc golf course. Regular maintenance of mowing and cutting back brush, along with tee pad replacement, ensures that our course remains one of the best in the greater Kalamazoo area. Larry LaBond began a Thursday night disc golf league that ran from June through September. We saw a large increase in course use and seasonal pass purchases from this league.

New playground equipment was purchased through the GameTime grant discount opportunity. After some changes to the structure layout to best fit our needs, the final total for the structure was \$20,007.98. Below is an image of the structure that was purchased., to be installed in 2021.



# PARKS

## Wenke Softball Complex

Due to COVID-19, we had eight co-ed softball teams on Monday, and 14 men's teams on Wednesday nights. We were not able to start our season until Monday, July 6th. The season was 12 weeks long, and we did not hold a fall ball season.

We did not hold a youth baseball league, book any rentals for BPA tournaments, or have senior softball.

COVID-19 restrictions were heavily in place at fields. We allowed no spectators, dugouts were taped off, the play structure was taped off, and the concession stand sold only prepackaged items.

## Green Meadow Park

We had secured over 30 dates for field rental at Green Meadow Park for 2020. Rentals (\$25.00) did not begin until June due to COVID-19. The majority of the dates were from the Maroons, who have been renting the field from us for three seasons, with other local teams using the field periodically.

## McLinden Trails

Kalamazoo County offered to provide signage for our nature trails informing our park users about safe practices to avoid mosquito related illnesses. We requested eight signs. The text reads, "Wear insect repellent with 40% deet, cover your skin – wear long sleeves, pants & socks, wear light colors as mosquitos are attracted to dark colors".

We hope to continue work on trail signage over the winter months. Signage will be directional as well as provide information on native plant species in the area.

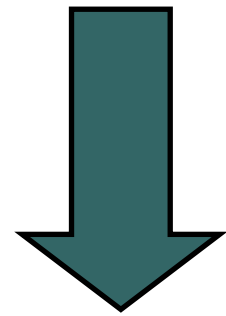


## Merrill Park

Pavilion grills were installed by our parks and township staff in August. The grills were not included in the grant and were purchased and installed separately by the Parks Department. With the flooding issue at Merrill Park, it was important to us to have a solid foundation for the weight of the grills. When the basketball hoops were installed by the contractor, they agreed to use the auger to drill the holes for the grills, instead of our staff digging 2ft holes at each pavilion.

Jolly Allen replaced the parking lot October 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>. We striped additional handicap spaces, hashed out No Parking areas, and added boat trailer parking.

Hoekstra's repaired the Merrill Building roof in 2020. They were the only company that was providing a membrane roof, which we felt was the best option for a flat roof.



# PARKS

## Robert morris Park Summary

### 2020 Summary

	Daily 5	Annual 20	Senior Annual
Total number sold	2376	420	34
value Sold	\$11,880.00	\$8,400.00	\$340.00

### 2019 Summary

	Daily 5	Annual 20	Non-resident annual 35	senior annual
Total Number Sold	1529	152	35	17
Value Sold	\$7,645	\$3,040	\$1,225	\$1,700

2020 Total Pass Sales at RMP (Memorial Day-Labor Day)

\$11,910.00

2020 Total Pass Sales (Including off-season sales)

\$22,176.00

2019 Total Pass Sales at RMP (Memorial Day - Labor Day)

\$22,176

2019 Total Pass Sales (Including off-season sales)

\$16,452

## Parks Goals for 2021

Create signage for McLinden Nature trails

Apply for a grant to complete Robert Morris Park fishing pier.

Educational signage for feeding wildlife, specifically geese/ducks.

Complete Game Time grant for Robert Morris Park equipment.

# PROGRAMMING/EVENTS

## Programming Summary

	2019	2020
Number of programs offered	9	11
Softball Summer co-ed teams	16	8
Softball Summer Men's teams	21	14
No fall softball due to COVID-19 No baseball due to COVID-19		

## Programs cancelled due to COVID-19 Pandemic - 5

Addition of virtual programming page on website.

### Added programs/events as of 2020:

Winter Warm Up      Halloween Parade  
Energy 5k              Movie Buckets  
Disc Golf League      Virtual Scavenger Hunt

## Comstock Energy 5K Run/Walk

We partnered with Beverly Bishop to host a 5K run at Fleetwood Park in 2020. This run was used to raise funds to support a local family whose son is battling mitochondrial disease. We used two seasonal staff members to make sure all COVID-19 precautions were followed. There were approximately 30 runners and walkers.





# NEW PROGRAMS/EVENTS

## The Winter Warm Up

The first annual Winter Warm Up was held at Robert Morris Park in February 2020. We had 17 non-resident vehicles and 16-18 resident vehicles. The event was free to everyone. The event used 16 volunteers and three park seasonal staff. We had s'more making, a hot cocoa bar, sledding, crafts, popcorn, and Disney princesses. The fire department brought a fire truck. We rented three propane heaters from Goggin rental.



## The Halloween Parade

The first annual Halloween Parade was held at Merrill Park in October 2020. We used the new walking path around the park to have families show off their costumes. There were six booths each family could stop at for goodies. We partnered with the Comstock Library and Fire Department for this event. There were 65 participants and the event was free to all. COVID-19 precautions were in place.

## Movie Boxes

We partnered with the library to create movie theater boxes. When patrons rented a movie through the library, they received a movie box with enough goodies for a family of four.



## PROGRAMMING/EVENTS

## Advertising

In 2020, we used the *Comstock Communicator*, the Parks Facebook page, and flyers at the township offices and library to advertise our programs. For 2021, we would like to utilize both the parks website and local media outlets.

## Partnerships

In the beginning of 2020, we looked to partner with the Comstock VFW to work towards bringing back the annual Memorial Day parade. We also looked to do a fishing mentorship. With the onset of COVID-19, we did not pursue either of these events. We hope to continue discussion of partnering in 2021.

We also met with the Comstock Schools Superintendent and the Athletic Director. We were looking to come to an agreement on renting the schools multiple gyms for programs. COVID-19 also put this discussion on hold.

In 2020 we began including the Comstock Library in many of our programs such as the Dino Dig, Halloween Parade, and Movie Boxes. We look to partner with them in 2021 with these programs along with merging our winter programs to better serve our community.



## Goals for 2021:

## 16 Programs Total

Re-organize our softball program to hold a summer playoff tournament series.

Purchase a Hall of Fame / Sponsorship board for Wenke Softball Complex.

Expand our partnership with Library to merge our holiday events.

Expand our partnership with VFW to work on 2022 Memorial Day Parade.

Merrill Park painting in the park, music in the park, movies in the park, food trucks, and/or craft fair (contact Nikos for parking options)

# ADMINISTRATION

The Parks and Recreation Department is made up of three full time staff members, the parks director, program coordinator, and maintenance person.

## **Goals for 2021:**

Update the employee manual for full and part time staff.

Continue meetings and work on all capital improvement projects.

Continue setting COVID-19 best practices and safety guidelines for all staff.