

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
PARK COMMISSION WORK SESSION MINUTES
TUESDAY, MARCH 8, 2016

PRESENT: Commissioners: Deschaine, McDonald, Wilson
Staff: Parks and Recreation Director LuAnn Maisner; Parks and Land
Management Coordinator Jane Greenway; Parks and Recreation
Administrative Assistant II Robin Faust

ABSENT: Commissioner Jaramillo, Stephens

1. Call Meeting to Order

Chair Wilson called the work session to order at 6:07 pm.

2. Approval of Agenda

Under item #4, number Towner Road Park Development item #a and add Review of Grant Applications as new item #b.

Hearing no objections, Chair Wilson accepted the work session agenda as amended.

3. Pedestrian/Bicycle Pathway Master Plan Recommendations

Director Maisner reported at the next Township Board meeting, Director of Public Works/Assistant Township Manager Perry will review the Pedestrian/Bicycle Pathway Master Plan for additions, deletions and amendments. A copy of the proposed Master Plan was included in the meeting packet. Staff's recommendations as follows:

- Currently, a paved shoulder is indicated on the master plan for the stretch of Towner Road between Marsh Road and Saginaw Highway. Staff is recommending that the designation be changed to an Off-Road Pathway on the south side of Towner Road. This change would better serve to protect pedestrians and cyclists who are trying to access Towner Road Park. Additional commercial development planning has begun in the area to providing safe access to the park is a priority.
- Create a cross-country trail connection from Newton Road Park to Towner Road Park through Sierra Ridge Subdivision. This addition would assist residents in traversing between the two park areas.
- Add a connector trail from Tacoma Hills Natural Area, through the western edge of Sander Farm Preserved Natural Area into MSU's Dobie Reserve.

4. a. Towner Road Park Development

Director Maisner reported that the Commission discussed and approved constructing Towner Road Park together as one project vs a phased approach during their meetings in November, 2015 and February, 2016. The Commission would borrow funds to accomplish this as a single project. The costs are similar by either paying interest on a loan or paying the costs of multiple bid document preparation, bidding, awarding, mobilizing and monitoring. Phasing would also leave the park half-finished and “under construction” for multiple years. It is not uncommon for the Park Commission to borrow money as long as loans are paid while the millage is still active

However, the most recent cost estimates provided by the project consultant, Viridis Design Firm, have approached approximately \$3,000,000. Staff is recommending that the Commission review the scope items in an effort to reduce overall costs to the project. The plan as a whole is in the process of being reviewed by the Development Review Committee and Planning Department. They have identified variances needed and additional requirements from the Fire Department that will also increase costs.

The Site Plan Review meeting is scheduled for March 22, 2016 at 3:00pm. Following the results of that meeting, staff will work with Chair Wilson on a recommended course of action to move this project forward. A total of \$1,500,000 is available for the project in 2016 with another \$300,000 in 2017 and \$300,000 in 2018.

b. Review Proposed Grant Applications

Due to the time, this item was not discussed.

5. Comments

None

6. Adjournment

Hearing no objections, Chair Wilson adjourned the work session at 6:59 pm.