

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
PARK COMMISSION WORK SESSION MINUTES
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2016

PRESENT: Commissioners Deschaine (arrived at 6:15 pm), Jaramillo, McDonald, Stephens

STAFF: Parks and Recreation Director LuAnn Maisner, Parks and Land Management Coordinator Jane Greenway; Administrative Assistant Robin Faust

1. Call Meeting to Order

Acting Chair McDonald called the work session to order at 6:05 pm.

2. Approval of Agenda

Add new item #6, 5 Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan and new item #7 Park Commission November 8th Meeting date and renumber remaining agenda items.

Hearing no objection, Acting Chair McDonald approved the work session agenda as amended.

3. 2016 Deer Management Program

Coordinator Greenway reported sharp shooters have harvested over 1,000 deer from the northern section of the Township. Currently there have been very few complaints from Haslett but numerous complaints from the Okemos residents, particularly south of Grand River. For this year, the DNR has lifted the 450 foot rule from occupied dwellings for archery hunting and staff is asking the Commission to consider adding the following parks to the program: Tacoma Hills Natural Area, Forest Hills Natural Area, Hartrick Park, Wonch Park, Ferguson Park, and Orlando Park Outlot B.

To date, we have heard from one resident who has concerns with hunting in Forest Hills Natural Area because her children play in that area. Staff has received several calls from other Forest Hills residents supporting the hunt. Director Maisner reported that Schools has requested that hunting adjacent to school locations be limited to weekends and during the Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday breaks.

Discussion:

- Commissioner Deschaine reported that during campaigning the primary issues were roads and the deer problem.

- When questioned about including the Sander Farm Natural Area, Director Maisner replied the Township has an open space easement but does not own the site.
- When asked if Hillbrook Park was considered, Coordinator Greenway replied no but the focus for this season was to add location in the southern portion of the community.
- With regards to Forest Hills Natural Area, Coordinator Greenway replied there will be two hunters assigned to the site who are neighbors to the park. The stand will be located in an area furthest from the houses and trail.
- Orlando Park Outlot B is not connected to Orlando Park
- There will be hunting on the MSU property and at Lake Lansing North and is verifying that Indian Hills Golf Course will be participating as they did last year
- The majority of complaints are from Cornell Woods and Forest Hills Natural Area residents

4. International Transmission Company (ITC) Temporary Easement Request

Director Maisner reported a representative from ITC is requesting an easement to reach and replace a monopole tower on College Fields property. Staff has walked the area and due to wetlands at both the east and west ends of the site, it is recommended ITC enter through Hartrick Park. Access will be permitted down the entry drive, through the parking lot to the south side of the ball diamond and west end of the soccer field to the college Fields Golf Course. A copy of the draft easement and site map is included in the packet.

Discussion:

- Would like to request more than \$250 for the easement; suggested \$1,000, plus ITC will pay for any and all damages the equipment may cause
- Suggested having the park naturalist review the west area of the park to ensure the protection of any sensitive vegetation and/or animals, particularly birds, in the area
- The proposed access will not impact the eagle scout pathway

5. Meridian Township Master Plan

Director Maisner reported all of the goals and objectives recommended by the Park Commission were incorporated into the Township' Master Plan and the Township's Master Plan references the 5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan which is a valuable reference tool.

6. 5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Director Maisner reported an RFP had been sent out and four firms submitted bids to assist with designing and conducting the residents' survey, hosting input session and correlating the data to assist with updating the Master Plan. Director Maisner distributed the survey questions used in updating the Master Plan in 2011 and asked the Commissioners to review. She recommended the current

Commissioners with the incoming Commissioners meet in October to begin the updating process. After a review of schedules, it was the consensus of the Commission to hold a special meeting to discuss updating the Master Plan on Wednesday, October 26, at 6 pm, at the Meridian Service Center.

7. Park Commission November 8th Meeting Date

Due to the General Election being held on November 8th, it is recommended to cancel the regular Park Commission Meeting.

8. Comments

None

9. Adjournment

Hearing no objection, Acting Chair McDonald adjourned the work session at 7 pm.