



CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Township Service Center
2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court | Haslett, MI
Wednesday, July 13, 2022, 6 PM

PRESENT: Board Members: Jamie Hiller, Steve Thomas, Kris Parnell, Yu Man Lee, Kendra Grassesschi, Mark Stephens
ABSENT: Township Trustee, Courtney Wisinski
STAFF: Emma Campbell, Stewardship Coordinator
TOWNSHIP: None.

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

CHAIR HILLER MOVED TO CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 6:05 PM.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

A. A member of the public, Evelyn Cradell, is interested in applying to become a board member for the Land Preservation Advisory Board. Ms. Cradell introduces herself and her interest in Township conservation and land preservation.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

A. July 13, 2022

BOARD MEMBER STEPHENS MOVED TO APPROVE THE JULY 13, 2022 AGENDA. Board member Parnell seconded.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. May 11, 2022

Board Member Grassesschi moved to make a correction on Item 7A to reflect the discussion of including vernal pools into the Township Climate Sustainability Plan.

BOARD MEMBER GRASSESSCHI MOVED TO PLACE THE MINUTES ON FILE AS AMENDED. Board member Lee seconded.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

5. COMMUNICATIONS

A. None.

6. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Horses on preserve property & the Land Preservation Ordinance
1. Section 22-102 of Land Preserve Ordinance

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- i. Staff member Campbell gives a summary of Section 22-102 which states that, “Unless posted otherwise, no horse or other draft animal may be brought on land preservation property.”
- ii. Due to reports and observations of horses on preserve and park property, staff member Campbell felt it necessary to discuss the current ordinance.

7. OLD BUSINESS

A. Wetland Restoration & Education Program Update

1. Wetland Buffer Project at Central Park South Update

- i. Plants installed in the buffer are blooming and doing well; there is good foot traffic through the area for education as a demonstration area; Ethan Olds will return in late summer to aid in the completion and installation of signage at the wetland buffer. Smaller signage denoting wetland buffers will be created for demonstration areas as well as for residents to use at their wetland buffers. Educational signage will detail what plants have been used, and the benefits of wetlands and functioning wetland buffers.
2. Buffer restorations will continue to enhance Township areas as a priority and continue to spread into residential properties.
 3. Board Member Grassesschi discusses the collaboration and connectivity of the Wetland Education Program across departments, parks and preserves. This program will utilize areas of high visibility to educate the public about the wetland ordinance; residential notices are going out to the public to educate the community about potential wetlands on their property, and how they can conserve them; native plant guides are being published to help guide homeowners and include designs for a deer resistant wetland buffer garden using all native plants. An important aspect of this program is to measure the success and efficacy of plans installed, using before and after pictures, as well as taking inventory to understand what plants are suitable in certain areas.

B. Planting a Native Meridian; Programs Review

1. Staff member Campbell reviews the native plant program
2. Over 400 native plants, grown from seed collected by Meridian Conservation Corps volunteers, have been installed at the following preserves and parks: Central Park South, Davis Foster Preserve, Lake Lansing North Preserve, as well as additional plants allocated from the floating island project to the Marketplace on the Green drainage ditch. A native plant guide is being drafted and will be published in time for the fall native plant sale taking place at Harris Nature Center. Education and outreach has so far been successful and many residents are looking forward to taking part in the program. Signage is the final key and will be finalized in late 2022, early 2023.

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(CLOSED SESSION BEGINS)

C. Land Acquisition Site Visits & Scoring Review

(CLOSED SESSION ENDS)

8. REPORTS

A. STAFF REPORT: Stewardship Coordinator, Emma Campbell

1. Staff member Campbell briefly discusses the budget for next year, and will bring the numbers to the next meeting after they are approved. Major areas of expansion for spending will be the contractual budget for invasive species management, and hiring a seasonal field worker for preserve maintenance.

B. ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION REPORT: Board Member, Kendra Grassesschi

1. Board member Grassesschi further discusses the Wetland Education and Restoration program. Some items of discussion are working with Township HOA's to mitigate mowing of wetland buffers in communities where landscaping is contracted out. Development of signage denoting wetland buffers may aid in this mitigation. The Climate Sustainability Plan is currently under review by the Environmental Commission and Board Member Grassesschi is charged with reviewing the Water Quality section of this plan and is looking for any members of the community with expertise in this area for input into this long-term plan.

C. PARK COMMISSION REPORT: Board Member, Mark Stephens

1. Board member Stephens summarizes the success of the floating island project at Central Park South, showing the board a picture of a turtle already utilizing the area for sun bathing. Stephens also brings an idea forth an idea to contact Michigan State University to inquire about recycling old greenhouses for the native plant program.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT

A. NONE

10. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS

- A. Chair Hiller opens up a discussion about the potential to start sub-committees within the Land Preservation Advisory Board to handle special projects and interests. Chair Hiller urges board members to bring their ideas to any future meetings.

11. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Next Land Preservation Advisory Board Meeting: Wednesday, August 10, 2022 at Towar Woods Preserve, 2948 Margate Lane, Haslett, Michigan.

12. ADJOURNMENT

BOARD MEMBER PARNELL MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. Vice Chair Thomas seconded.

VOICE VOTE: Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting is adjourned at 7:31 pm.

Providing a safe and welcoming, sustainable, prime community.

