

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN
PARK COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, JUNE 9, 2015

PRESENT: Commissioners: Deschaine, Jaramillo, McDonald, Wilson
Staff: Parks and Recreation Director LuAnn Maisner; Parks and
Recreation Administrative Assistant II Robin Faust

ABSENT: Commissioner Stephens

1. Call Meeting to Order

Chair Wilson called the regular meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

2. Approval of Agenda

Under item #9 New Business, add item #a Foreclosed Parcels and under item #12 Discussion Items, add #b Social Media Promotions.

COMMISSIONER JARAMILLO MOVED, COMMISSIONER DESCHAIINE
SECONDED TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING AGENDA AS
AMENDED. Voice vote. Motion passed.

3. Presentations

a. Chronic Wasting Disease

Chad Stuart, Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Tim Wilson from the United States Department of Agriculture reported on the Chronic Wasting Disease found in a deer in Meridian Township and the action that has been taken.

- A six-year old doe was found in Meridian Township with the chronic wasting disease
- This disease affects the central nervous system.
- This disease is a mutated protein that cannot be killed or destroyed and a deer may carry the disease for three years with no symptoms.
- This disease is passed from deer to deer in their environment through urine, saliva, and blood.
- An MSU study preliminarily indicates the density of deer in Meridian Township is 60 deer per square mile; it should be approximately 20 per square mile
- Dogs cannot contract the disease. To date they have only found this disease in deer, elk, mule deer and moose.
- They are first collecting samples within the two mile radius of where the diseased deer was found. Samples are being taken from Township and several private properties in the evening hours.

- If residents have questions, please contact Lt. Plaga, Meridian Township Police Department. Additional information is available on the front page of the Township website. The Township is cooperating fully with the DNR and USDA.

4. **Public Comment**

None

5. **Commissioner Reports and Comments**

Commissioner Deschaine invited everyone to attend the Celebrate Downtown Okemos event on Saturday, June 13 and announced the “Love a Park Day” park clean up on Saturday, June 20. He is expecting over 50 volunteers from the Haslett Kiwanis Club, Meridian Republicans, Haslett Beautification Association, the Meridian Democratic Club and Haslett-Okemos Rotary Club at the five parks and thanked them for volunteering for the event. If anyone is interested in volunteering, contact the Parks and Recreation office.

Commissioner Jaramillo shared that last weekend was “National Trails Day” and that the Township could also hold events promoting our trail system during next years’ event.

6. **Approval of Minutes**

- a. April 28, 2015 Work Session Minutes
- b. April 28, 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes
- c. May 19, 2015 Special Meeting Minutes

COMMISSIONER MCDONALD MOVED, COMMISSIONER JARAMILLO SECONDED, TO APPROVE THE APRIL 28, 2015 AND MAY 19, 2015 MEETING MINUTES AS SUBMITTED. Voice vote. Motion passed.

7. **Communications**

A. Items to/from the Public

1. From: Eckhart Dersch; RE: Township Master Plan and Friend of the Park Program/Central Park Report
2. From: Therese Poland PhD, Research Entomologist, Forest Service; RE: Emerald Ash Borer Studies approval in Township Parks

B. Commission Information

1. May and June Calendar of Events for Parks & Recreation
2. Towne Courier: **April 5:** Meridian organizes communitywide park clean-up; Meridian accepting adult softball team registrations; **April 12:** Meridian Parks Commission appoints replacement member; Meridian organizes communitywide park clean-up; Meridian accepting adult softball team registrations; **April 19:** Campfire program on animal babies; Meridian Township now registering adult softball teams; **April 26:** Nature camps offered at Harris Nature Center; Meridian Farmers Market will open May 2;

Meridian Township now registering adult softball teams; **May 24:** Nature camps offered at Harris Nature Center

3. Lansing State Journal: **April 11:** Paddlers Race 160 Miles from MSU (Wonch Park) to Lake Michigan
4. Meridian Summer Monitor 2015

C. Staff Inquiries/Response

None

CHAIR WILSON MOVED, COMMISSIONER DESCHAIINE SECONDED, TO ACCEPT AND PLACE THE ITEMS OF COMMUNICATION ON FILE. Voice vote. Motion passed.

8. Director's Report

- Conducted a site visit with DNR Grant Coordinator to Hillbrook Park, Harris Nature Center and North Meridian Road Park
- Meridian Monitor Summer edition was mailed and featured free activities for families to enjoy in Meridian Township. Special thanks to the Communication Department for its creation. It is a great promotional tool for our community
- Sand Volleyball Courts at North Meridian Road Park are nearly completed utilizing Lake Michigan beach sand.
- Summer Farmers' Market begins July 1 on Wednesdays and Saturdays.
- The Pedestrian Bridge Ribbon Cutting Ceremony is scheduled for Wednesday, June 17 at 11am. It is located adjacent to Wonch Park and will provide improved accessibility to Wonch Park and downtown Okemos from schools and neighborhoods.
- Wonch Park Paved Loop Trail Ribbon Cutting Ceremony will be held in July after parking lot paving is completed
- "Love A Park Day" is scheduled for Saturday, June 20; Commissioner Deschaine spearheaded the organization of this event engaging community groups and organizations to adopt a park
- Ferguson Park parking lot will be crack filled and sealed together with the Harris Nature Center lot soon.
- Central Park Master Plan Focus Group Meeting has been scheduled for July 15; this is an opportunity to receive valuable input on how the community would like the center of the Township to look like.
- Celebrate Downtown Okemos is scheduled for Saturday, June 13, from 10 am -11 pm with entertainment, 5K and Fun Runs, children's activity area, arts and crafts market and beer and wine tent.
- MSUFCU donated and planted 10 trees in Nancy Moore Park with a \$1,000 grant received through the Arbor Day Foundation
- Congrats to Meridian Garden Club for winning a state garden club award for their development and maintenance of the Claire Twohy Garden
- Parks and Recreation Specialist Greg Grothous has taken a new position with the City of St. Joseph. His last day is next Wednesday June 17. Greg has

- been with the Township ten years and his wife will also be taking a position with a hospital there. We wish him and his family all the best
- A total of 40 applications have been received to date for vacant Parks and Recreation Specialist position. The interview process will begin very soon.

9. New Business

PUBLIC COMMENT

a. Foreclosed Parcels

Director Maisner reported during the work session the Commissioners received for reviewed two parcels on the Foreclosure List from Ingham County. The Commission and staff reviewed the facilities and their locations.

CHAIR WILSON MOVED, COMMISSIONER MCDONALD SECONDED, BASED ON STAFF'S RECOMMENDATION, THE COMMISSION WILL NOT PURSUE PARCEL #33-02-02-03-401-001 OR PARCEL # 33-02-02-10-302-010 AT THIS TIME FROM THE INGHAM COUNTY FORECLOSURE LIST. Voice vote. Motion passed.

10. Unfinished Business

PUBLIC COMMENT

a. 2016-2021 Capital Improvement Plan

Director Maisner reported that the Capital Improvement Program identifies projects for a period of six years and serves as a planning and budgeting tool. Due to lack of funding, some of the projects have been on the list for over fifteen years. Many of these projects have been the result of community surveys and discussed during public hearings and meetings with the community. The Park Commission held a special meeting in May to review and discuss projects for the coming years. It is anticipated that the park millage will collect \$1,500,000 for projects and department operations in 2016. Based on current operational needs, approximately \$900,000 can be dedicated toward development projects in 2016. Following a complete review of the proposed projects, the Park Commission agreed to dedicate \$900,000 toward the construction of Phase I of Towner Road Park. Other Projects for 2017 include grant projects of Hillbrook Tennis Court Renovation and Accessibility and pavilions at Harris Nature Center and North Meridian Road Park and Phase II of Towner Road Park.

The 2016-2021 CIP for Parks was forwarded to the Department of Community Planning and Development.

11. Other Business (cherry)

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

12. Discussion Items (lilac)

PUBLIC COMMENT

a. Central Park Master Plan

Director Maisner reported a consulting firm has been hired to take the Commission through the master plan process. The consultants have already spent over four hours touring the site, was given an great deal of data and maps for analysis and they are very excited about the project and proceeding forward with the focus group meetings. The first focus group meeting will be held July 15 and Open Studio times later in the month. This process will be very interactive.

b. Social Media Promotions

Commissioner Jaramillo stated she likes Meridian Township Facebook pages but only 500 of the residents know about it. It needs to be more useful and we need to increase promotion of our Facebook and Twitter accounts. She will be contacting the Communication Department on its promotional procedures and content to see what more we can do to better promote the parks and will report back at the next meeting.

Discussion:

- Work with staff to post more park and recreation items vs nature photos with sayings.
- Suggesting holding a cell phone “selfies” contest or “what park am I in?” contest

13. Final Comments

None

14. Announcements

- Next Regular Meeting Date: Tuesday, July 14, 2015, Town Hall Room
- Farmers’ Market:
 - Spring Market – Saturdays, May – June, 8 am- 2 pm, Central Park Pavilion
 - Summer Market – Wednesdays and Saturdays, July 1-October, 8 am – 2 pm, Central Park Pavilion
- Celebrate Downtown Okemos, Saturday, June 13, 10 am – 11 pm
- Meridian Fishing Derby, Sunday, June 14, 9 am – 12 noon, Central Park Pond
- Music in the Village Concert Series starts Wednesday, June 17 at 7 pm, Meridian Historical Village
- Love a Park Day, Saturday, June 20, 9 am – 12 noon; Ferguson Park, Harris Nature Center, Hillbrook Park, Meridian Historical Village, Marshall Park, Newton Road Park, Orlando Park, Sander Farm Natural Area,
- Lake Lansing Band Shell Concert Series starts Friday, June 6, at 7 pm, Lake Lansing South

- h. Meridian Arts and Crafts Marketplace, Sunday, June 28, 11 am – 4 pm,
Central Park Pavilion

15. Public Remarks

None

16. Closed Session

None

17. Adjournment

COMMISSIONER DESCHAIINE MOVED, COMMISSIONER JARAMILLO
SECONDED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

The meeting adjourned at 7:58 pm.