

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN

LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August 17, 2011

7:00 p.m. Meeting Room – Nelson Room, Public Safety Building

Members Present: Tom Woiwode Chair; Mary Helmbrecht, Vice-Chair; Members Dave Caszatt, Frank Hatfield, Jim Kielbaso, Mark Stephens, Steve Webster

Members Absent: Margo Smith

Staff: Robin Faust, Parks & Recreation Department Secretary

Public Present: Charles Sower, Bill Sower

1. Call meeting to Order

Vice Chair Helmbrecht called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

2. Public Remarks

A. Sower Woods - Charles Sower stated he was one of four children who grew up on the preserved parcel known as "Sower Woods". Their family saw big changes occur in Okemos and the Township and expressed his appreciation for the Township purchasing their farm and preserving it. Bill Sower spoke about his family, living on the farm and that two of the children had recently attended their 50th class reunions. The Sowers were asked to provide the Township with a family history of the parcel for the Township's records. The members present reviewed the proposed sign and asked the Sowers to provide staff with any changes they may have for the proposed sign.

3. Approve Minutes for July 20, 2011

Page 4, under Other, item #7b1, Red Cedar Glen Preserve – Bike Access, after the word "memo" insert "prepared by".

MOTION was made by Dave Caszatt, seconded by Jim Kielbaso to approve the minutes of July 20, 2011 Land Preservation Advisory Board as amended.
MOTION carried unanimously.

4. Communications

None

5. Receive new property submissions

None

6. Land Management Update

- a. Deer Management – Vice Chair Helmbrecht reported the Township Board has directed Township Manager Richards to develop a deer management plan for Meridian Township. Manager Richards organized a committee of individuals to assist with this project. The committee's current recommendation, which has not been approved yet, is to develop a pilot program this year of organized antler-less hunts on land preservation, parks and other Township parcels, probably during hunting season. The committee is to make one more report to the Township Board. Members discussed: how they will control the hunt (Township is consulting with Sportsman against Hunger program on organizing the hunts); survey of deer population; Ingham County have proposed a hunt in January on Lake Lansing North parcel. Member Stephens reported the Park Commission received complaints from property owners along the Red Cedar Natural Area and did an educational program on deer management last year. He was told a postcard will be sent to residents directing them to take a deer management survey on survey monkey.
- b. Phragmites Treatment – Vice Chair Helmbrecht reported the information was supplied by Leslie Kuhn for the Board's information. Members briefly discussed location and treatment of phragmites.

7. New Business

- a. Buckthorn Treatment – Northwest Preserve – Dave Caszatt distributed a proposal to begin eradication of common and glossy Buckthorn starting with the Northwest Preserve. He will be working with two groups of volunteers from the Towar Neighborhood and Skyline Hills Association with Nick Sanchez from Ingham County Parks who is pesticide certified. Work can begin in October and the anticipated expenditure is approximately \$2,000. Since not all of the chemicals will be used in this application, he would like to store the leftover equipment and chemicals at the Township. Concerns were expressed on liability, Member Caszatt will obtain a copy of the liability form used by Leslie Kuhn for the Township volunteers to sign.

MOTION was made by Jim Kielbaso, seconded by Steve Webster, to accept and support the proposal to eradicate Buckthorn from the Northwest Preserve.

Friendly Amendment offered by Chair Woiwode to add: for an expenditure not to exceed \$2,500. Accepted by Jim Kielbaso and Steve Webster

MOTION carried unanimously.

b. Ordinance Change – Term Limits

Vice Chair Helmbrecht asked the Land Preservation Advisory Board to consider making a motion to the Township Board to open up one paragraph of the Land Preservation Ordinance addressing term limits, who is assigned to take minutes, restriction that if an individual is serving on another Board or Commission cannot serve on the Advisory Board, etc. She will draft new language, have it approved by the Township Attorney and then send the old language and proposed language to members for their review, comments and discussion at the next meeting.

8. Other

a. Financial Statement, July 31, 2011

Vice Chair Helmbrecht distributed the financial report as of July 31, 2011. When asked the amount available for acquisition, Vice Chair Helmbrecht replied \$952,772.32 and in the Land Reserve Fund for stewardship, there is \$3,035,440 and can only spend the interest in any given year. It was suggested that if this is the language in the Ordinance, we may want to consider changing this wording. Vice Chair Helmbrecht reported that additional funds will be received in December.

Hearing no objections, Chair Woiwode accepted and placed the financial statement on file.

b. Ingham County Fire Management Discussion

Chair Woiwode reported Ingham County has asked for permission to perform a controlled burn on the Lake Lansing North parcel that was recently purchased with joint funds. There was discussion that this step should be incorporated into a stewardship plan which Coordinator Greenway is preparing. There was discussion on the merits of performing a controlled burn on the Lake Lansing North parcel as well as on Land Preservation parcels to control woody invasive. Discussions: red maple is a native, not an invasive; not sure fire is part of changing an eco-system; they hope to gain ground flowers from the control burn; it is unnecessary intervention and intrusive; if the land has been acquired to be natural, we are interfering with the natural succession of the land; develop a protocol to eliminate or minimize impact on native and non-invasives while burning invasives; asked about

creating an enclosure spot and monitor the affects before burning the entire area.

Chair Woiwode asked Coordinator Greenway to meet with the Ingham County Parks ecologists to develop a protocol in pattern that insures the control burn does in fact address non-native plants; and after the burn, set up deer enclosure to see what happens to the area after the burn.

10. Public Comment

None

11. Closed Session

MOTION was made by Jim Kielbaso, seconded by Dave Caszatt, to enter into closed session to discuss the possible purchase of real estate.

Roll Call Vote: **YEAS:** Woiwode, Webster, Hatfield, Kielbaso, Caszatt, Stephens, Webster

NAYS: None

8:51 p.m. Return to Open Session: MOTION was made by Marks Stephens, seconded Dave Caszatt, to end the closed session and return to open session.

MOTION was made by Jim Kielbaso, seconded by Vice Chair Helmbrecht to take such action as was discussed during closed session.

MOTION carried unanimously.

12. Adjournment

Hearing no objection, Chair Woiwode adjourned the meeting at 8:56 pm.