

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GARFIELD  
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING**

Monday, April 1, 2024 at 6:00 pm  
Garfield Township  
3848 Veterans Drive  
Traverse City, MI 49684  
Ph: (231) 941-1620

**AGENDA**

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

**Call Meeting to Order  
Pledge of Allegiance  
Roll Call of Board Members  
Election of Officers**

**1. Public Comment**

**Public Comment Guidelines:**

Any person shall be permitted to address a meeting of The Parks and Recreation Commission, which is required to be open to the public under the provision of the Michigan Open Meetings Act, as amended. (MCLA 15.261, et.seq.) Public Comment shall be carried out in accordance with the following Board Rules and Procedures: a.) any person wishing to address the Board is requested to state his or her name and address. b.) No person shall be allowed to speak more than once on the same matter, excluding time needed to answer Commissioner's questions. Where constrained by available time the Chairperson may limit the amount of time each person will be allowed to speak to (3) minutes. 1.) The Chairperson may at his or her own discretion, extend the amount of time any person is allowed to speak. 2.) Whenever a Group wishes to address a Committee, the Chairperson may require that the Group designate a spokesperson; the Chairperson shall control the amount of time the spokesperson shall be allowed to speak when constrained by available time.

**2. Review and Approval of the Agenda – Conflicts of Interest**

**3. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes – February 5, 2024**

**4. Correspondence**

**5. Reports**

- a. Commissioner Reports
- b. Staff Report / Updates
  - i. Parks Steward Report

**6. Old Business**

- a. PD 2024-22 – Commons Natural Area Accessible Trail Grant Project – Update

**7. New Business**

**8. Public Comment**

**9. Items for Next Agenda – June 3, 2024**

**10. Adjournment**

Garfield Township will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting to individuals with disabilities upon the provision of reasonable advance notice to Garfield Township. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact Garfield Township by writing or calling Lanie McManus, Clerk, Ph: (231) 941-1620.

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GARFIELD  
PARKS and RECREATION COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
February 5, 2024**

**Roll Call of Commission Members:**

Present: Art Bukowski, Andy Hoort, Chris Remy, Denise Schmuckal, William Scott, Fern Spence, and Chris DeGood

Staff Present: Deputy Planning Director Steve Hannon, Parks Steward Sean Kehoe

**Call to Order:** DeGood called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Recited by all in attendance.

**Election of Officers:**

*Schmuckal moved and Bukowski seconded to retain the current slate of officers: DeGood as Chair, Spence as Vice Chair and Remy as Secretary.*

*Yeas: Schmuckal, Bukowski, Hoort, Remy, Scott, Spence, DeGood*

*Nays: None*

**1. Public Comment (6:04)**

None

**2. Review and Approval of the Agenda – Conflicts of Interest (6:05)**

Spence asked to add discussion on the Traverse City Light and Power property to the agenda under New Business item 7.c.

*Schmuckal moved and Spence seconded to approve the agenda as amended.*

*Yeas: Schmuckal, Spence, Bukowski, Hoort, Remy, Scott, DeGood*

*Nays: None*

**3. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes – December 4, 2023 (6:05)**

*Schmuckal moved and Hoort seconded to approve the meeting minutes of December 4, 2023 as presented.*

*Yeas: Schmuckal, Hoort, Bukowski, Remy, Scott, Spence, DeGood*

*Nays: None*

**4. Correspondence (6:06)**

Hannon noted one item of correspondence from the Grand Traverse County Director of Parks and Recreation regarding adoption of the 2024-2028 Grand Traverse County Parks and Recreation Plan, including a link to the plan.

**5. Reports (6:07)****a. Commissioner Reports**

Hannon said that the Planning Commission is working on the Master Plan update and anticipates the Township adopting it in June. Commissioners discussed the status of a property on North Long Lake Road next to the Commons Natural Area at which extensive gravel mining had taken place near the park and wanted to explore strategies to prevent similar activity from happening again in the future.

**b. Staff Report/Updates****i. Parks Steward Report (6:18)**

Kehoe submitted his report in writing and indicated that the vandal who broke into vehicles at Silver Lake Recreation Area has been arrested in Chicago. Updated kiosk posters have been ordered for Silver Lake Recreation Area. A meeting is scheduled with Copper Ridge personnel to discuss potential trail head options. A split rail fence is being replaced at Kids Creek Park and a new winter kiosk poster was created with information about animal tracks. Hannon indicated that the Township's grant application with the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund for an accessible trail at Commons Natural Area was recommended for funding by MDNR.

**6. Old Business**

None

**7. New Business****a. PD 2024-10 – 2023 Parks and Recreation Commission Annual Report (6:22)**

The Garfield Township Parks and Recreation Commission shall submit an annual written report to the Township Board concerning its operations and the status of parks and recreation activities. Hannon gave an overview of the 2023 Annual Report with Commissioners.

*Scott moved and Bukowski seconded THAT the Parks and Recreation Commission 2023 Annual Report as presented in Planning Department Report 2024-10 BE RECEIVED and FILED and FORWARDED to the Township Board.*

*Yeas: Scott, Bukowski, Hoort, Remy, Schmuckal, Spence, DeGood  
Nays: None*

**b. Future Investments at Boardman Valley Nature Preserve (6:42)**

Commissioners discussed the TAPA request for resurfacing the pickleball courts at Boardman Valley Nature Preserve and discussed how often the resurfacing is necessary and how to pay for it. Commissioners wanted to know the current condition of the courts and if resurfacing is truly needed at this time before evaluating the request from TAPA. Staff talked about creating a long-term maintenance schedule for all park amenities.

**c. Traverse City Light & Power Property – Discussion**

Commissioners held a discussion on a property owned by Traverse City Light and Power (TCLP) which is currently for sale and if the property is worth pursuing to add to the Township Parks system. TCLP is currently taking proposals from public entities and may want as much as \$600,000 for the property. Commissioners had concerns about the contamination from previous dumping of coal ash on the site as well as the asking price. The Commission had previously discussed this and other properties for evaluation as potential additions to the Garfield Township Parks system. Commissioners supported taking a wait and see approach.

**8. Public Comment (7:15)**

None

**9. Items for Next Agenda – April 1, 2024 (7:15)**

Commissioners noted the following items for the next agenda:

- A schedule and next tasks for the MNRTF grant for the Commons Natural Area now that the Township has been recommended for funding
- A potential next MNRTF grant application for 2025
- An update on the progress of projects at River East Recreation Area
- An update on potential pickleball court resurfacing at Boardman Valley Nature Preserve

**10. Adjournment**

*DeGood adjourned the meeting at 7:18 pm.*



## Charter Township of Garfield

### Parks Report

#### **Silver Lake Recreation Area**

New Kiosk maps have been put up at the park.

The entire park (walking loop, playground, and dog park) has continued to be very busy with our mild temperatures.

Pavilion reservations are already coming in.

#### **Commons**

We met with interested parties from Copper Ridge and there seems to be some concerns (additional traffic/after hours activity) regarding putting in a trail head behind the surgery center. We have reached out to Gordie-Fraiser to re-evaluate the original location as to whether or not it is possible to have a small trail head at the NW corner of the back lot of the surgery center where we have about six spots designated for parking there already.

## **River East**

Derek has met with Lautner's a few times on site regarding well capacity, water treatment and phase two irrigation which would cover the open field to the south as well as areas around the bathrooms.

Four bids (AJ's, Molon, Waltons and Elmers) came in for the upcoming work at RE. AJ's was the lowest bidder. Jennifer can speak to this but she has been working with AJs on other projects and is confident that they will do a good job.

Discussion of pre-purchasing bathrooms to lock in delivery date and saving 15-18% of costs by purchasing it ourselves.

## **Boardman Valley**

When the weather breaks, we will be starting to replace some rotting guard rail along the trail.

## **Miller Creek**

Staff have removed a few downed trees over the last couple weeks.

## **Kid's Creek**

We are looking at replacing the split rail fence at the east end of the pond when the weather breaks as the current one is rotting and falling apart.

A member of the Brook Trout Coalition (who is also a Conservation Resource Alliance biologist) reached out to us to

see what volunteer jobs they might be able to help with around the trout pond.

### **Buffalo Ridge Trail**

We have heard from the Conservation Resource Alliance, and we will be receiving some tribal funds to replant some of the trees that didn't make it through the drought early last summer.

Staff have counted/marked trees that need to be replaced due to last years drought. Chances are it will be a fall planting due to better availability of new trees as well as some thoughts that fall plantings are proving to be more successful in northern Michigan according to the CRA.

We are looking at ordering a brush bar to assist with the removal of the autumn olive bushes along the trail.

### **Additional Information**

Pickleball Board would like to update their reservation information to clean up the playing times and what courts are being reserved. Once we receive the drafted update and finalize it, staff will add the updated information to the agreement.

Submitted March 6, 2024

Derek Morton

Sean Kehoe

		<b>Charter Township of Garfield</b>	
		<b>Planning Department Report No. 2024-22</b>	
Prepared:	March 27, 2024	Pages:	2
Meeting:	April 1, 2024 – Parks and Recreation Commission	Attachments:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Subject:	Commons Natural Area Accessible Trail Grant Project – Update		

**BACKGROUND:**

In December 2023, Garfield Township was informed that its grant application for \$300,000 for an accessible trail at the Commons Natural Area was recommended for funding by the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) Board of Trustees. A formal grant offer will be made sometime in 2024 in the form of a project agreement after the funds are appropriated by the State Legislature; this process could take 4-6 months.

Meanwhile, the following steps can be taken before the project agreement is completed. Staff have been in contact with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) and have begun working on several of these steps; an update is provided as follows:

**Prepare a legal description and boundary map of the project area**

- Staff are preparing a boundary map including the project area and the entirety of the Commons Natural Area.
- The Township Assessor has prepared a legal description and sketch of the Commons Natural Area.

**Finalize any lease, easement, or use agreements**

- The Township owns the entirety of the Commons Natural Area, though there are some existing conservation easements and a historic easement. Staff will show all easements on the boundary map.

**Make sure local matching funds are in place**

- The Township Board passed a resolution on March 14, 2023 supporting the grant application and committed to using up to \$368,100 in Township matching funds as a 55% local financial match to the project. The funds would be allocated from the Township budget to the Park Fund.

**Retain the services of a Prime Professional**

- The Township's Engineer of Record, Gourdie-Fraser (GFA), can be the Prime Professional for this project. GFA provided a proposal for engineering services on the project to the Township Board which was approved at their March 26, 2024 meeting.
- GFA completed a boundary survey of the property in 2023 which will be used for this project.

**Prepare plans, specifications, and bid documents**

- GFA's proposal includes preparation of the engineering plans, specifications, and bid documents.

**Begin securing required permits**

- Environmental Consulting & Technology, Inc. (ECT) completed a wetland delineation of the project area in 2023 which will be used when applying for wetland permits from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE).
- Based on the wetland delineation, there are some potential adjustments which could be made to the proposed trail route to minimize impact on the wetlands. Staff and GFA will investigate adjusting the proposed route in the preparation of the engineering plans before applying to EGLE for permits.
- Staff also spoke with EGLE department staff and determined that an on-site pre-application meeting would not be needed since it is already known that a permit will be required.

**Prepare a resolution to be adopted by the Township Board**

- The MDNR has provided a sample resolution which can be adapted and prepared for the Township Board in anticipation of the project agreement.

**NEXT STEPS:**

Staff will continue to work on completing the above items in anticipation of a project agreement sometime later this year. A sample full potential timeline of the project is provided below:

**Sample Project Timeline**

December 2023	Project recommended for funding
January 1, 2024	Eligible to begin incurring Prime Professional costs
June-September 2024	Step 1: Project Agreement (tentative timeline based on legislative approval)
Fall 2024	Step 2: Plans, specifications, and bid documents
Winter 2025	Step 3: Contractor / vendor selection
Spring-Fall 2025	Project construction
Fall 2025	Step 4: Request grant reimbursement (partial reimbursement may be requested once at least 25% of construction expenses have been paid)
June-September 2026	Project agreement expires

**FUTURE PROJECTS:**

The Parks and Recreation Commission also asked about preparing an MNRTF grant application in 2025 for the next project at the Commons Natural Area. One of the priority parks projects anticipated for later in 2024 is engineering and design of the Red Drive trailhead located near Greenspire School, Northwest Education Services, and at the start and end of the proposed accessible trail loop. Improvements to the Red Drive trailhead could be part of a future grant application.

**ACTION REQUESTED:**

This item is for information only. No action is required.