

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GARFIELD
PARKS and RECREATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
March 6, 2023**

Roll Call of Commission Members:

Present: Denise Schmuckal, Art Bukowski, Andy Hoort, William Scott, and Chris DeGood (6:08)

Absent and Excused: Fern Spence and Chris Remy

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

Call to Order: Trustee Schmuckal called the meeting to order at 6:06 pm.

Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all in attendance.

1. Public Comment (6:07)

None

2. Review and Approval of the Agenda – Conflicts of Interest (6:07)

Commissioners noted the date listed on the agenda was Tuesday March 6, 2023 and that the agenda should be amended so the date is Monday March 6, 2023.

Hoort moved and Bukowski seconded to approve the agenda as amended.

Yeas: Hoort, Bukowski, Scott, Schmuckal

Nays: None

3. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes – February 6, 2023 (6:07)

Scott moved and Hoort seconded to approve the minutes of February 6, 2023.

Yeas: Scott, Hoort, Bukowski, Schmuckal

Nays: None

4. Correspondence (6:07)

None

5. Reports (6:08)

a. Commissioner Reports

Schmuckal stated that the recent Planning Commission/Township Board Joint meeting was very informative.

b. Staff Report/Updates

i. Parks Steward Report

Kehoe submitted the Parks Steward Report in writing and added that a new countertop was ordered for the Silver Lake Recreation

Area bathrooms. Clearing was done for the dog park at River East Recreation Area and a septic tank may already exist underneath the park. Engineers are working to locate the possible tank. Kids Creek Park tree planting materials have been delivered.

Hannon stated that the 2023-2027 Parks and Recreation Master Plan has been accepted by the Michigan DNR.

6. Old Business

a. PD 2023-26 – Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area Design Plan – Grants Update (6:13)

The MNRTF grant application is for part of the “Conservation Recreation” Trail in the northern portion of the Commons Natural Area property. This trail will be designed as a universally accessible (UA) trail and will form an approximately 1.4-mile loop. GIS data has been received for this portion of the trail.

Part of the grant application process is an Accessibility Review including input from people with disabilities, disability advocacy groups, and other organizations which serve people with disabilities. Staff met with two representatives from Cordia at Grand Traverse Commons, a senior living organization, and had a discussion with a representative from Disability Network Northern Michigan.

Staff drafted an outreach letter and draft letter of support as outreach to area stakeholders. Drawings and details of the proposed trail are being reviewed by the Township Engineer. Commissioners discussed public input and other entities to reach out to for possible input. Staff will send out the draft grant application to Commissioners.

7. New Business

a. PD 2023-27 - Mountain Bike Subcommittee Update (6:33)

The mountain bike subcommittee held their first meeting on Wednesday February 22, 2023 at Township Hall, including representatives from the Copper Ridge Riders Association (CRRRA), Northern Michigan Mountain Bike Association (NMMBA), and others. The subcommittee discussed conducting an inventory of the existing mountain biking trails. Staff and subcommittee members will walk the trails in the spring to gather more information on the condition of the existing trails and to determine if any trails need to be closed off.

Commissioners discussed fundraising for future trail projects and for the Commons Natural Area in general. Commissioners indicated that any fundraising efforts should include all community members and potential trail users, not just the mountain bikers. Commissioners discussed the idea of stakeholders forming a 501.c.3 nonprofit for fundraising activities, or two such nonprofits to allow for one to focus on mountain biking trails and one to focus on hiking and walking trails.

8. Public Comment (7:09)
None

9. Items for Next Agenda – April 3, 2023 (7:09)

Items may include a synopsis of the grant applications and an update from the mountain bike subcommittee. Commissioners asked if the next meeting should be canceled if the only agenda items are updates. Staff will coordinate with the Chair to determine if the meeting will be canceled.

10. Adjournment

DeGood adjourned the meeting at 7:15 pm.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'CR', is written over a horizontal line.

Chris Remy, Secretary
Garfield Township Parks & Recreation
Commission
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