

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GARFIELD  
PARKS and RECREATION COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
May 5, 2025**

**Roll Call of Commission Members:**

Present: Jessica Brutzman, Art Bukowski, Andy Hoort, Chris Remy, Denise Schmuckal, William Scott, and Chris DeGood

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

**Call to Order:** Chair DeGood called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

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

**1. Public Comment (6:02)**

None

**2. Review and Approval of the Amended Agenda – Conflicts of Interest (6:03)**

*Schmuckal moved and Brutzman seconded to approve the agenda as presented.*

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

*Nays: None*

**3. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes – April 7, 2025 (6:03)**

*Bukowski moved and Hoort and seconded to approve the minutes of April 7, 2025 as presented.*

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

*Nays: None*

**4. Correspondence (6:03)**

Hannon noted the correspondence from EGLE related to Item 7.b. which is on the Commissioners' desks.

**5. Reports (6:05)**

**a. Commissioner Reports**

Schmuckal stated that the new Township website was now live, and that she will lead discussion on Item 7.c. regarding updated park signage.

**b. Staff Report/Updates**

**i. Parks Steward Report (6:07)**

Kehoe stated the River East Recreation Area playground is under construction. Hannon indicated the new Township website URL is garfieldmi.gov and that the website went live just this afternoon.

**6. Old Business****a. PD 2025-34 – Commons Natural Area Accessible Trail Grant Project – Update (6:08)**

In 2024, the Township received a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) grant for \$300,000 to construct an accessible trail at the Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area. The grant funding was appropriated in October 2024, and the Township and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) fully executed the Project Agreement for the project in November 2024.

Hannon indicated that on April 10, 2025, Staff and the Township Engineer, Gourdie-Fraser (GFA) met virtually with MDNR to discuss potential design options for the trail given the desire to provide the most accessibility while minimizing impacts on the wetlands and surrounding environment. MDNR indicated that the southern part of the trail could be designed to meet ADA accessibility standards, rather than Universal Accessibility (UA) standards, so long as the trail has sufficient flat rest areas / landing spots and that the grade never rises above 8% at any point.

GFA is finalizing design details and cost estimates for the preferred design scenario, including design options for the proposed bridges. A meeting is scheduled with EGLE for a pre-permit meeting next week. Mark Maguire of GFA reviewed the trail plans with commissioners and stated that GFA is also preparing for the meeting with EGLE and hopes to gain insight on the bridges for the creek crossings and boardwalks. He discussed two bridge options – a wooden structure or a metal structure.

Commissioners discussed the two options, including costs, and suggested asking for bids for both options to compare costs and to include the cost of benches. GFA and staff will work to finalize the budget and detailed work schedule for the June meeting. Commissioners discussed the potential of sponsored benches and asked Staff to draft a policy for such donations.

**7. New Business****a. PD 2025-35 – Garfield Township CIP Committee – Update (6:46)**

At their March 25, 2025 meeting, the Township Board voted to establish a Capital Improvements Planning (CIP) Committee. The CIP Committee will review and finalize the Township Capital Improvements Plan which will be used as information in budgeting for Township projects. Staff is formatting the Action Program from the Parks and Recreation Master Plan so that the parks projects can be evaluated using the CIP process. The CIP process also includes reviewing an Asset Inventory to assist with the budgeting for maintenance and replacement. The Parks and Recreation assets include benches, fences, boardwalks, parking lots, lights, and more. Hannon said that the CIP Committee meets next on May 27. Ideas regarding projects for inclusion in the CIP can be brought to Staff and Schmuckal, who is the Parks and Recreation Commission representative on the CIP Committee.

**b. Lake Frontage at Silver Lake Recreation Area – Discussion (6:54)**

Kehoe talked about trimming the brush at the Silver Lake Recreation Area waterfront. He stated that no permits were needed from EGLE so long as the trimming plan was followed, and that the proposed trimming does not impact the ordinary high-water mark. Commissioners agreed to the clean-up and gave Kehoe permission to begin trimming.

**c. Updated Park Signs – Discussion (7:05)**

Schmuckal explained that the Township Board wanted feedback from the Parks and Recreation Commission regarding a design for new signage in the parks, which would feature the new Township logo. Commissioners discussed the proposed signage and indicated they preferred the full seal with the township name on both the large middle directional sign and the smaller wayfinding sign as shown on page 13 of the meeting packet. The CIP Committee may consider a future project to update entrance signs at all parks, and Staff will work on updating the design of the trail directional maps for each park.

**8. Public Comment (7:17)**

None

**9. Items for Next Agenda – June 2, 2025 (7:17)**

Items for the next agenda include finalizing the design of the Commons Natural Area accessible trail and reviewing parks projects for their inclusion in the CIP.

**10. Adjournment**

*DeGood adjourned the meeting at 7:17 pm*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Remy', written over a horizontal line.

Chris Remy, Secretary  
Garfield Township Parks & Recreation  
Commission  
3848 Veterans Drive  
Traverse City, MI 49684