

**FRUITLAND TOWNSHIP
PARKS AND RECREATION
SCHEDULED MEETING
February 5, 2018**

PRESENT: Chairman Mark Williamson, Commissioner Greg Barrett, Commissioner Thomas Tissue, Commissioner Brian Mathiot and Commissioner Maribeth Picard

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: A number of interested parties.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Mark Williamson called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

WELCOME GUESTS A number of interested parties.

AGENDA: Motion by Mark Williamson, second from Tom Tissue, **ADOPTED**, to amend the February 5, 2018 agenda to include reports on the disc golf course under "New Business."

5 AYES, 0 NAYS

MINUTES: Motion by Mark Williamson, second from Brian Mathiot, **ADOPTED**, to accept the January 2, 2018 regular meeting minutes.

5 AYES, 0 NAYS

PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Carlet Mitenbuler, 4623 Nestrom Road – stated that she is glad that other diseases are being discussed. She added that she was disturbed by the Township Newsletter, stating that it glossed over the issues on the Disc Golf Course. Chris Murray, 5582 Duck Lake Road – mentioned that guidelines are not enforceable, but rules and regulations are. She suggested that the Commission create rules and regulations for the Disc Golf Course, possibly even an ordinance.
2. Lynn Knopf, 4328 Mystic Lane – questioned the statement that it's been reported that a record number of users have been using the park, and wants to know where this information is coming from. She also stated that she was very disturbed by the Township Newsletter.
3. Bob Murray, 5582 Duck Lake Road – stated that he too was disturbed by the newsletter.
4. Chris Murray, 5582 Duck Lake Road – mentioned the survey the Parks and Recreation Commission completed, adding that there was no interest in disc golf.
5. Shawna Meyer – stated she was hired by the DLRA to do an inventory of the park, adding that 7% of the trees are damaged, and 10% of the forest is damaged.
6. Gunner White, 5260 Duck Lake Road – stated that he is new to the area, but agrees that it is detrimental to get rid of the course.

RECEIPTS:

Chairman Williamson reported receipts activity as disc golf donations in the amount of \$6.00 for the month January 2018.

Motion by Mark Williamson, second from Brian Mathiot, **ADOPTED**, to accept receipts for \$6.00 from Disc Golf donations for the month of January 2018.

5 AYES, 0 NAYS

DISBURSEMENTS:

Chairman Williamson reported disbursements activity as \$1,450.00

Motion by Mark Williamson, second from Greg Barrett, **ADOPTED**, to pay total disbursements of \$1,450.00.

5 AYES, 0 NAYS

Roll Call Vote for Receipts and Disbursements: Mathiot-Aye, Tissue-Aye, Barrett-Aye, Picard-Aye, Williamson-Aye

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. NHS Volunteering

Commissioner Picard stated that she spoke to the coordinator at Whitehall High School, and her students will likely begin volunteer work in the spring. She added that she has also reached out to Reeths-Puffer High School and North Muskegon High school coordinators.

2. Tree trimming

Commissioner Barrett reported that he hasn't heard back from Stafford's, but that they will be able to complete the tree trimming before the fiscal year end.

3. Baseball fence capping

Chairman Williamson reported that the capping had to be purchased after February 3rd to be able to postpone delivery. He added that he has requested an April 1st delivery.

4. Park registration

Commissioner Tissue stated that with there being an increase of park use, registration is important to track the number of people visiting and why they're visiting. He added that he is still working on questions for the registrations. Chairman Williamson suggested that the questions need to be very general.

Motion by Mark Williamson, second from Brian Mathiot, **ADOPTED**, to suspend Roberts Rule of Order to discuss ideas for park registrations/surveys with the public.

4 AYES, 1 NAY (Tissue)

Many ideas were given from the public, including survey monkey, someone standing at the gate, a laser at the entrance to track numbers, and incentive-based ideas for the visitors.

Motion by Tom Tisue, second from Mark Williamson, *ADOPTED*, to follow Roberts Rule of Order and go back into meeting discussions.

5 AYES, 0 NAYS

Commissioner Tisue will continue to produce the questions and further discussions will take place at the March 2018 meeting.

5. Park guidelines

Chairman Williamson referenced the list he emailed to the commissioners. Further discussions will take place at the March 2018 meeting.

6. Natural resource survey quote

Motion by Tom Tisue, second from Mark Williamson, *ADOPTED*, to table discussions until the March meeting.

5 AYES, 0 NAYS

7. Future projects

The commissioners agreed that moving forward, they would propose future projects to the Township Board to gauge their interest, then they would move forward with grants.

8. Meeting dates/time

Chairman Williamson stated that he has requested twelve meetings for the 2018-19 budget, as it has been difficult for the commission to achieve progress with things when they are given sixty days in between meeting dates.

The commissioners discussed the time change, compromising and agreeing to move the meeting times to 6:30p.m. moving forward.

Motion by Brian Mathiot, second from Mark Williamson, *ADOPTED*, to change the meeting time of the Parks and Recreation Commission to 6:30p.m. starting March 5, 2018.

5 AYES, 0 NAYS

9. 2018-19 budget

Chairman Williamson stated that the proposed budget has been submitted for review. It was also discussed that the tree guards for the disc golf course need to be purchased before March 31, 2018, which is the end of the fiscal year.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Disc golf course reports

Chairman Williamson mentioned reports regarding oak wilt disease, the spread and causes, and ways to prevent it. The reports were from quite a few professionals in the field.

2. Forester Lucas opinion

Chairman Williamson reported that Mr. Lucas originally reported that the installation of a disc golf course would be low impact as it relates to the forest. Williamson then stated that Mr. Lucas recanted

his opinion after receiving information and doing research on the topic. He did offer some best practices to protect the trees and prevent damage to the trees.

3. Muskegon Conservation District report – Dallas Goldberg

Chairman Williamson reported that Dallas Goldberg said that a fraction of disc induced damage is deep enough to provide an entry point for oak wilt introduction. Goldberg also said that oak wilt could become a problem from naturally occurring wounds created by things such as human tree carvings, wind damage, deer and other animal browse, just to name a few. Goldberg also highlighted some best practices to use to minimize risk and protect trees on the course. Goldberg stated that while the location of the course was not ideal, plans are in place for problematic areas.

Commissioner Tisue stated that the real issue is that the public needs to be made aware of what the risks are, and that it might be a good idea to hold a public hearing. Chairman Williamson said that if a public hearing were to be for educational purposes, he would be all for it, but not if the disc golf course closure were to be debated.

Commissioner Picard questioned whether or not the tree guards are working, and Commissioner Barrett responded that according to Dallas Goldberg, they are. Commissioner Barrett did say, however, that the guards need to be adjusted to cover a little higher and lower than what they are currently covering. Commissioner Picard then stated that it might be a good idea to install a few different tree guards to test them and see which one is the best option. Commissioner Tisue stated that Dr. Roberts doesn't think the tree guards being used are accurate protection and is willing to help figure out what will work best. Commissioner Mathiot stated that it would be a good idea to contact him and take him up on his offer to help.

Commissioner Tisue stated that the Commission should be protecting the natural resources and doing everything they can to do so. He questioned whether they are doing so. Commissioner Tisue also asked what the most responsible way is to proceed, and said that they should be trying to minimize risk, not just live with it. Chairman Williamson stated that the Parks and Recreation Commission is striving for balance to manage the natural resources while creating recreational activities.

Commissioner Picard questioned the "nature preserve" at Nestrom Road Park/Disc Golf Course, and Chairman Williamson responded that the Township office has been going through records to determine the history of the park and the directive for the park as a nature preserve, and as of yet, there has been nothing found designating it as such.

Chairman Williamson reminded the commissioners that the course was approved by both the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Township Board, the money has been spent to put the course in place, and that there are many volunteers who have provided time and money to help with the course. He stated that it is the Commission's responsibility to take care of the course, and any issues that arise with it. Commissioner Mathiot agreed, stating that all information has been on oak wilt, and he said they should be stepping up and offering guidance on how to maintain it. Commissioner Mathiot stated that the group should employ the best practices offered by professionals who know what they should be. Commissioner Tisue stated that Rick Lucas had ideas for operating the course, stating that the commission should put these to use and move forward.

UPDATES:

None.

COMMISSIONERS COMMENTS:

Commissioner Tisue stated that it would be a good idea to make the flyers provided on tree diseases available to residents.

Chairman Williamson stated that for the last two to three weeks, he's been bombarded with emails and he has been responding. He added that when he responds, replies are coming back with more aggression, which is borderline harassment. He asked that everyone have tact when emailing regarding the issues, stated that it needs to be constructive, and that he will respond when he can.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Mark Williamson, second from Maribeth Picard, ***ADOPTED*** to adjourn the February 5, 2018 scheduled meeting of the Fruitland Township Parks and Recreation Commission at 9:05 PM.

5 AYES, 0 NAYS

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Mansfield, Recording Secretary