

**PARK BOARD MINUTES
Letts Community Center
December 14, 2011**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Rick Kibbey, Paul Carrier, Pat Murray, Ron Lott, Adam Hussain

MEMBERS ABSENT: Excused Dusty Fancher, Luke Canfora, Patricia Spitzley

OTHERS PRESENT: Brett Kaschinske, Parks and Recreation Director; Harold Leeman, Gier Advisory Board Chair, Kellie Brown, Board Secretary

CALLED TO ORDER: 7:10 p.m. by Rick Kibbey

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

Rick Kibbey added update on Walsh Park under Old Business

STATEMENT OF CITIZENS

None

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Pat Murray moved to approve the November 9, 2011 minutes as submitted; seconded by Paul Carrier. 5 yeas; 0 nays

Motion Carried

NEW BUSINESS

Waverly/Michigan Parks

Brett Kaschinske stated the proposal to put the sale of Waverly and Michigan Parks on the ballot was defeated Monday evening at Council by a vote of 4 to 3. The major factor was they did not want to see any votes for the sale of park land on the February ballot because it is the Republican primary ballot and they wanted a broader representation. We will try this again, however we do need to engage in further discussion on how to do this. The ideas we have at this time are only possibilities and we have not received any written proposals.

Patrick Murray clarified that none of the property is in the City. Brett Kaschinske stated that is correct and Lansing Township maintains the zoning rights. Whoever would be interested in the property would also have to be in touch with the township regarding what the zoning is and could zoning changes occur.

Brett Kaschinske stated the other issue was NeoGen and their request to purchase the Vector Building, about 10 feet of property north of the building and two parking lots on both the east and west sides of the Vector Building. Really no amount of park land; meaning grass, water, trees, etc is included. It is a lot of asphalt and buildings and it was previously the parks maintenance building. NeoGen purchased the property that was not on park land, however this is the portion on park land and this action failed as well.

Patrick Murray inquired if we had to put Waverly/Michigan Parks on the ballot to sell it or to do anything with it. Brett Kaschinske stated we would have to put it on the ballot to sell it. Patrick Murray inquired if we could transfer to the Township. Brett Kaschinske stated that is something we have talked about. We have engaged in a meeting with Lansing Township and they have some interest in the property, especially with regard to storm water and retention mitigation. The Township needs to replace some wetlands that were taken out of a different part of the Township by Eastwood. The Township "owes" the DEQ wetlands and they are interested in the area of Waverly Park along Waverly north of Michigan where the water goes over the road.

Patrick Murray clarified we would not have to put it on the ballot if we were transferring the property. Brett Kaschinske stated that is correct. It is only when we actually sell the property that it needs to go on the ballot.

Rick Kibbey stated we have not heard from Lansing Township about consideration, we have only heard they are interested in the use of the property. Consideration would be a land swap, but we have not heard anything to this nature.

Adam Hussain stated he heard the Township is not interested in buying. Brett Kaschinske stated that is correct, but they do have money to use for wetlands.

Patrick Murray inquired how much we spend to maintain the property. Brett Kaschinske stated he was asked earlier about that, but we do not actually budget per park. We currently mow on the outside and inside of the fence, we maintain a sidewalk by the starter house which is a CATA bus stop and we pick up trash.

Patrick Murray asked what we could mow in other areas if we did not mow Waverly.

BUDGET FY13

Brett Kaschinske stated we have approximately a seven million dollar budget, we do not have specific numbers yet but we are looking at about a twenty percent cut. Everything is on the table, we are looking at parks, and we are looking at recreation.

Rick Kibbey inquired how this relates to cuts in other departments. Brett Kaschinske stated outside of police and fire it is equal. With the millage passing it changed issues for police and fire and helped out their budget.

Ron Lott stated he was mislead prior to the election, because at his neighborhood meeting it was stated the millage was not to return laid off workers, but it was to avoid further layoffs.

Rick Kibbey inquired when we will see a proposed budget. Brett Kaschinske stated March or April.

Ron Lott stated the budget is normally provided in February.

Rick Kibbey asked for a CIP list too.

Rick Kibbey asked for a finance report from Public Service on how they used park staff and park money this past year. Also, can there be a report from Ingham County. He would like to see how the contractors compare.

Brett Kaschinske stated he could provide a report on how much is for forestry work, athletic fields, pools, general maintenance and River Trail.

OLD BUSINESS

Walsh Park

Rick Kibbey stated at the last meeting the Board had a request for a community garden at Walsh Park. The issue is usually water and it was suggested they talk to the neighborhood.

Brett Kaschinske inquired if any Board members had issues with this request other than making sure the neighborhood is contacted, the community is on board with this and Dr. Davis has been contacted. They did not ask for any action from the Board, but he wants to make sure the Board is ok with this request.

Adam Hussain inquired what policies are in place to ensure the gardens are kept up and maintained.

Brett Kaschinske stated we have an agreement with the Garden Project and they monitor these projects and if the gardens are not kept up then the agreements do not get renewed.

Paul Carrier inquired if Dr. Davis has been contacted.

Brett Kaschinske stated he is a person of interest on this project and his name was provided to the group.

Rick Kibbey asked Brett Kaschinske to contact Dr. Davis to verify the group has spoken with him. Kibbey asked the Board if everyone was okay with this request; no one spoke up against it.

UPDATES

Golf RFP

Brett Kaschinske stated the City is close to and looking at finalizing an agreement with LEPFA (Lansing Entertainment and Public Facilities Authority), they run the Lansing Center, Common Ground, City Market, and Cooley Stadium. They would take over all concessions and marketing, we would still take care of merchandise sales and run the golf course. We are looking at this instead of the RFP's we received. We would terminate our current concession agreement with Art's Bar.

Paul Carrier inquired if we are still maintaining the park and that is the most expensive, how is this saving us money?

Brett Kaschinske stated one area of growth we had was in concessions. We transferred one employee out of the golf fund to Public Service and we moved another employee out of golf for the winter. We have cut back on staffing levels to reduce costs.

Rick Kibbey inquired what percentage of the concession stand revenue we receive. Brett Kaschinske does not have the exact figures, but we are looking at doubling our concession revenue.

Paul Carrier asked about the expansion of the club house and would they make an attempt to readdress this issue. Brett Kaschinske stated there has been discussion about that on a long term plan, but on a shorter plan there has been talk about putting a deck on the club house to accommodate outings and for individuals to have an opportunity to stay around, have drinks and a meal. We are planning on changing furniture and bringing in televisions which will be provided by LEPFA. They are looking at bringing in clients and promote the golf course for conferences looking at using the Lansing Center.

Rick Kibbey stated he heard from a neighborhood individual that the drain commissioner has not started the project at the golf course. Brett Kaschinske stated that is correct. He will find out and report back next month.

Cemetery RFP

Brett Kaschinske stated the City only received one bid. We heard from the Friends of the Cemetery they had a group interested and because of the specifications in the RFP there were other interested individuals who did not bid. The City advised the Friends to submit a bid; however they did not submit a proposal. We are back to just the one bid and we will now engage in negotiations to see if we will have a contract. That does mean we are going in that direction, but we are at the next step.

Rick Kibbey asked if all the cemeteries are in the RFP or is it just Mt. Hope Cemetery. Brett Kaschinske stated all cemeteries are included. Rick Kibbey stated Evergreen appears to have land to sell. Brett Kaschinske stated that is correct, we are only selling lots in Evergreen. Section G has two religious groups interested in plots.

Rick Kibbey asked if we have plotted out the other areas and if not, what it is going to take. Brett Kaschinske stated it would take about \$10,000 and that will be part of the discussion.

Park Study

Rick Kibbey provided a draft of an annual report to board members to receive comments and input. He would like text and actual numbers at the next meeting.

Ron Lott stated he will look at Mr. Kibbey's report and put together something by the end of the month.

Rick Kibbey provided a form to board members and stated he and Dusty Fancher visited 40 parks. On the next group he wants to include how homes look at a park, either out the front door or out the back door. If the Board needs to make recommendations on parks to close, he wants to have an up to date understanding of what we currently have. Of the 40 parks they have already reviewed there was a park that is an area used by an apartment building, there was a park they could not find and a park that served as a parking lot.

UPDATES

Winter guides – Guides have been delivered and classes will begin in January.

REMARKS

Adam Hussain inquired what has been happening at the Naturalization Ad-Hoc meetings.

Rick Kibbey reviewed the guidelines discussed at the meetings.

Adam Hussain inquired why the Ad-Hoc Committee exists when each Ward is represented by the Park Board.

Rick Kibbey stated the Ad-Hoc is a joint committee with Park Board members.

Harold Leeman stated as the Chair of Gier Advisory Board there were a lot of families over the last two weeks at the floor hockey tournaments at Gier and the improvements to the gym have been a great asset to the families. One challenge he has to the Board and the Director is with the turn over of staff and the new hires the staff need to take control of the building and buy-in they are working in a building for the City and take control of the building and be more out going with citizens in the building.

Harold Leeman inquired what happened to the Washington Dome. Brett Kaschinske stated we contracted with a company to remove the dome. It did cost us to remove the dome, but the costs were less than keeping it inflated.

Harold Leeman inquired about the Crego Park grant. Brett Kaschinske stated we need to finalize some issues with the environmental study, but it right now we are waiting on the State of Michigan.

Harold Leeman inquired about Moores Park School and does the Board have any insight on what is new with the building. Is Gillespie buying the building?

Patrick Murray stated Gillespie shared a pamphlet with the neighborhood association that implicated the property was his. The assumption of the neighborhood association is that he owns the building.

Patrick Murray suggested the Parks Director, the Moores Park Neighborhood Association and Mr. Gillespie meet regarding the property.

Harold Leeman inquired if Park Board members have met with the Public Service Board to voice concerns and address issues. Rick Kibbey stated he talked to an individual on the Public Service Board and they have never heard anything about the issues.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted: Kellie Brown, Park Board Secretary
Approved January 11, 2012