

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF COMMERCE
JOINT QUARTERLY MEETING OF THE
TOWNSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES
AND THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE
2009 Township Drive
Commerce Township, MI 48390
Tuesday, April 22, 2025, 7:00 p.m.**

CALL TO ORDER: Supervisor Gray called the Township Board of Trustees Quarterly Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Township Board of Trustees:

Present: Larry Gray, Supervisor
Molly Phillips, Treasurer
Rick Sovel, Trustee
Bob Berkheiser, Trustee
Robert Long, Trustee

Absent: Melissa Creech, Clerk (excused)
George Weber, Trustee (excused)

Parks and Recreation Committee:

Present: William Petsch, Chairperson
Johnny Walker, Vice Chairperson
Krystal Schwartz, Secretary
Laura Waterworth (arrived at 7:19 p.m.)
Ron Krueger
Denise Vecellio

Also Present: Emily England, Senior/Parks and Recreation Director
Allison Kennedy, Asst. to Parks and Rec. Director
Stacy Gross, EMS Chief
Hans Rentrop, Township Attorney

Chairperson Petsch opened the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting at 7:01 p.m.

ITEM 1: Public Comments

Supervisor Gray opened Public Comments.

Seeing none, Supervisor Gray closed Public Comments.

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ITEM 2: AED Policy

Director England explained the need for a policy and that AED devices should be available in the Township's parks. She's worked closely with EMS Chief Stacy Gross to identify which AED unit meets the Township's needs. There are also 2 leagues that do not have AED's in their emergency kits and she would like to provide those.

MOTION by Sovel, supported by Berkheiser, to approve the AED policy.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ITEM 3: AED Units

Director England and the Trustees discussed the costs of the AED's, powering the units, security of the units, and the placement of the units. In addition, the Township Attorney will draft an agreement regarding the use of the AED's by the 2 leagues that currently do not have the units in their emergency kits.

MOTION by Berkheiser, supported by Phillips, to purchase 3 AED's, 3 AED cabinets, and 3 AED power supplies at a cost not to exceed \$10,100.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ITEM 4: Park Use Policy

No discussion and no action taken.

ITEM 5: Discussion with the Parks and Recreation Committee

Dawn Raye, Silo Ranch, gave a slide show of all the improvements made at Silo Ranch so far. The parking lot has been improved, fencing installed, a bathroom upgraded, a community garden added, and they improved the barn roof. She indicated that many additional projects are ongoing.

Chairperson Petsch listed the 6 priorities for the Parks and Recreation Committee and the 2025 Open Space budget:

1. Victory Park- Create an entrance, parking lot, dog park, and pavilion.
2. Union Lake Pocket Park- Finalize the installation of the ADA accessible kayak launch and resurface the existing parking.
3. Richardson- Install a permanent restroom facility and expand the parking lot.
4. Mill Race/Byers- Tree management plan for both parks and replace the foot bridge near the shopping plaza.
5. Long Park- Develop a vegetation management plan, especially as regards phragmites, and treat Berry Lake.
6. Hickory Glen- Install a pavilion, benches, and picnic tables.

Chairperson Petsch continued that if time and budget allow, the Parks and Recreation Committee would also like to do the following:

Maple Glen- Install pavilions, benches, and picnic tables.

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Snowy Ridge- Install lighting and signage on the hill and an ice rink.

Wise Woods- Install way finding signage.

Dodge Park- See to the miscellaneous needs of the park.

Trustee Berkheiser said an eagle scout project installing posts with GPS coordinates at Wise Woods was vandalized.

Director England said there is a lot of vandalism happening in our parks. For example, the pickle ball courts at Bicentennial were damaged and cannot be used until they are repaired.

Trustee Sovel asked when the ground study at Victory Park will take place?

Director England said on April 29th but it will probably take a few weeks to receive the report and the action plan.

Trustee Long said that the plaza parking lot is also the park parking lot for Mill Race Park and signs indicating that should be installed.

MOTION by Krueger, supported by Walker, to adjourn the Parks and Recreation meeting at 8:00 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ITEM 6: Budget Approval for Potential Amendment to Article 41- Zoning Board of Appeals

Trustee Sovel said the Zoning Board of Appeals used to have more flexibility when hearing petitions. He would like to explore returning that flexibility to the ZBA's deliberations and asks for \$1600 for attorney's fees.

MOTION by Sovel, supported by Phillips, to approve up to \$1600 to work with the Township Attorney on Article 41.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ITEM 7: Bond Refunding Opportunity

Treasurer Phillips said that the Township has the opportunity to save approximately \$850,000 by refunding the 2016 capital improvement sewer bonds if they are called back before December 2025.

The Board asked Treasurer Phillips to get more information from the financial advisor regarding the details of the transaction or perhaps not issuing the next series of bonds.

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ITEM 8: Closed Session – Discussion of Attorney-Client Privileged Communications per MCL 15.268(h): Midtown on Haggerty

MOTION by Gray, supported by Berkheiser, to enter into Closed Session.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Ayes: Gray, Berkheiser, Phillips, Long, Sovel

Nays: None

Entered into Closed Session at 8:12 p.m.

Returned from Closed Session at 9:26 p.m.

MOTION by Phillips, supported by Berkheiser to adjourn from Closed Session and approve the Closed Session minutes. **MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

ITEM 9: Other Matters

Treasurer Phillips said State House bills 4027 and 4028 passed, returning local control regarding the placement within a jurisdiction of large scale utilities such as wind farms.

Attorney Rentrop indicated those bills will probably not get passed in the State Senate.

Supervisor Gray said the most recent resolution indemnifying Township employees is from 2001 and it should be updated. He will work with the Township Attorney to do so.

Supervisor Gray said the proposed Oakland County Equalization contract for assessing includes very large cost increases every year. The Township sent out an RFP for assessing services and received back 3 bids, all of which are less expensive than Oakland County's proposed contract. He is currently part of a work group comprised of Treasurer Phillips, Trustee Weber, David Gillam, and Keith Reynolds.

The Board asked Supervisor Gray to bring the proposals to the May meeting where the Board can analyze the 3 proposals, summarize the proposals, and make a recommendation. The Board wants to interview the top recommendation.

Trustee Berkheiser asked if the Board would like to permanently install decorative lights on the Richardson Center and at Byers instead of paying for it annually. Permanent lighting would cost approximately \$35,000 compared to an annual expenditure of \$2,000. The Board decided not to move forward.

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ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Gray, supported by Sovel, to adjourn the meeting at 9:44 p.m.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY



Melissa Creech, Clerk
Charter Township of Commerce