

**Springfield Township
Parks & Recreation Commission Regular Meeting
Tuesday, October 14, 2014**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The October 14, 2014 Regular Meeting of the Springfield Township Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order at 6:33 p.m. by Chairperson Vallad at the Springfield Township Civic Center, 12000 Davisburg Road, Davisburg, Michigan 48350.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present

Diane Baker
Roger Bower
Lisa Christensen
Elena Danishevskaya
Dennis Omell
Angela Spicer
Jean Vallad

Staff Present

Sarah Richmond
Jennifer Tucker

Others Present

IV. AGENDA REVISIONS AND APPROVAL

Add "September Monthly Budget Printouts" as item "E" under Consent.

Add "Update to Employee Handbook" as item "C" under Old Business.

Add "Evaluation Committee" as item "D" under New Business.

Chairperson Vallad moved to accept the agenda as revised. Chairperson Vallad was supported by Commissioner Danishevskaya. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Christensen, Danishevskaya, Omell, Spicer and Vallad; No: None; Absent: None. The motion carried by a 7-0 vote.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes –September 9, 2014 with Additional Disbursements of \$8,380.35 for the Parks & Recreation Fund and \$550.00 for Trust and Agency
- B. Receipt of Activities Report for September
- C. Receipt of Monthly Budget Printouts for August

D. Receipt of Financial Summaries

Receipt of Communications

Chairperson Vallad moved to accept the consent agenda as revised. Chairperson Vallad was supported by Commissioner Christensen. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Christensen, Danishevskaya, Omell, Spicer and Vallad; No: None; Absent: None. The motion carried by a 7-0 vote.

Further Discussion:

Commissioner Baker asked why do we charge the same price for Hunter's Safety for both residents and non-residents when the Department does not do that for other programs.

Sarah Richmond, Administrative Assistant, stated that it is a requirement of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources that Hunter's Safety course cannot have resident/non-resident fee associated with it.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Update on 8621 Eaton Road (Large Rental House)

Director Tucker stated that the house at 8621 Eaton Road has been vacated by Ranger Matt Davis and his family.

Director Tucker stated that she has contacted Springfield Township's Fire Chief about the possibility of having the Fire Department burn the house.

Director Tucker stated that an abatement company will be coming out to examine the house on Wednesday, October 15, 2014 at 2:00 pm. There is certain material in the house that has to be removed prior to the house either being demolished or burned by the Fire Department.

Director Tucker stated that she had spoken with an excavating company who had estimated that to remove the debris would be a cost of \$5,000.00 to \$12,000.00 based on how much debris is left. Director Tucker stated that the Commission could do one of two things, either load up everything on site, or bury some on site. Director Tucker stated that she had some reservations about burying anything on site due to the location of the house in the middle of the Preserve.

Director Tucker stated that she had investigated the wood furnace being used in another facility. Unfortunately, due to the codes changing for the wood furnace that we have, it will not be allowed to be used in a commercial setting such as the future maintenance building. Director Tucker stated there was the possibility of selling the furnace. If the Commission would like to sell the furnace then Director Tucker stated she will look into how much that model would be worth.

Commissioner Omell asked if the staff would be removing copper or any other items that could be scraped.

Director Tucker stated any items that can be removed will be removed.

The Commission stated they would like to have the house boarded up as economically as possible and would like Director Tucker to investigate selling the wood furnace and if she is able to get a good price for it she is allowed to proceed with the sale of it.

The Commission would also like to receive an email after the abatement company comes out on Wednesday, October 15, 2014 to let them know the condition of the house.

B. 2015 Parks and Recreation Fund Budget

Chairperson Vallad brought up the \$2,400.00 that is being reimbursed yearly to the Director for her health insurance based upon an inquiry from the Township Treasurer. Chairperson Vallad stated that she knows the Commission is reimbursing Director Tucker's health insurance costs that her spouse incurs by having her on his insurance per the Township policy. However, the Treasurer brought up the concern that it looks like the Township is reimbursing for a health savings plan which is not what the policy states.

Director Tucker stated that through her husband's employment they do take the insurance payments out of his health savings account and the reimbursement is not funding a health savings account. It is for the costs that he incurs by having her on his insurance plan.

Chairperson Vallad asked Director Tucker if it would be possible to get something from her spouse's employer explaining that the funds are not funding a health savings plan but rather funding a health insurance plan.

Expenditures

Director Tucker went over the changes that were listed in the memo that was in the Park Commission packets beginning with the expenditures.

First, the Hospitalization line item in the Administrative Cost Center was increased by \$2,400.00 to cover hospitalization reimbursement for Director Tucker.

Secondly, the Stewardship Cost Center was increased by \$15,000.00 for the 2015 prescribed burns. This expenditure will be off set with grant funds reflected on the revenue side. Director Tucker did state that the Township Board indicated that if grant funding was not available then the Township Board has allocated funds to cover the expense of the prescribed burn.

Third, the Capital Outlay Cost Center contains \$30,000.00 to fund the asphalt pathway at the Shiawassee Basin Preserve ball fields. The Township Board is willing to contribute \$12,500.00 which is reflected as revenue. It was the hope that the project may be covered by Community Development Block Grant funds; however Director Tucker stated that after meeting with the grant advisor that may not be possible. Director Tucker stated that she had added the balance for the project in the App. Prior Year Fund Balance line item.

The Commission stated they would like the Capital Outlay Cost Center to reflect the following:

1. \$25,000.00 in the Shiawassee Basin Preserve line item
2. \$5,000.00 in the Contingency line item

Revenue

First, the App. Prior Year Fund Balance line item was increased by \$17,500.00 to balance the budget for the portion of the pathway project that is not covered by General Fund Contribution. It also includes \$2,400.00 that was added to the Hospitalization line item in the Administration Cost Center.

Second, the \$12,500.00 was added to the Trans From General Fund line item to cover the portion of the pathway that the Township Board indicated that they would be willing to contribute toward that project.

Third, \$15,000.00 was added to the Government Grants to include the potential grant dollars for the prescribed burn project.

Commissioner Bower moved to have the SBP Capital Outlay line item total be \$25,000.00 and Capital Outlay Contingency line item total be \$5,000.00. In addition, per the memo dated October 9, 2014 the new 2015 revenue and expenditure numbers are \$659,500.00. Commissioner Bower was supported by Commissioner Baker. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Christensen, Danishevskaya, Omell, Spicer and Vallad; No: None; Absent: None. The motion carried by a 7-0 vote.

Further Discussion

Commissioner Omell wanted to know if it would be a “cap” that would be placed on the pathway.

Director Tucker stated that the pathway would be pulverized and that would become the base and then there would be a four inch layer of asphalt installed over the new base.

C. Employee Handbook

Director Tucker stated that the Township Board has approved their new employee handbook.

Chairperson Vallad stated that she felt that there should be a committee formed to discuss the changes needed for the Park’s Employee Handbook and then bring those changes back to the Commission.

Director Tucker recommended letting the staff review the new employee handbook in comparison to the Department’s current handbook and then send changes and suggestions to the committee.

The Commission would like to have the employee handbook update done within the next few months.

Commissioners Christensen, Spicer and Omell volunteered for the Employee Handbook Committee.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion of Shiawassee Connecting Trail

Director Tucker gave a power point presentation on the trails in northern Shiawassee Basin Preserve. During the presentation she handed out a new rough draft of a trail map. Highlighted in the presentation were the areas of the trail that needed work and that needed limestone. During the presentation, Director Tucker reminded the Park Commission that the Township Board had \$15,000.00 that was designated toward trails and trail improvements.

Director Tucker stated that the total limestone that is needed per the presentation is about 2/3 mile and there is only 1/3 of a mile in the budget, which means that staff will have to prioritize the areas in need of the limestone.

Director Tucker also showed samples of some signage the staff believed would work for the trail system. Director Tucker stated that she is estimating the cost for just the trail signs, not including "No Hunting" signs for Davis Lake Overlook, would be \$5,000.00

Commissioner Baker asked if, on the signs or the mile markers, there could be a scan bar that people could scan with their phones and get information about the trail or the parks system.

Director Tucker stated that was something to look into.

Director Tucker went over the tentative cost estimates that were included in the packets. The material expenses that are listed with the expenses include the rental of a track machine, a compactor to compact down the limestone, a portable lumber mill to come out and limestone for 1/3 of a mile. The total for these expenses are \$16,060.00 and this amount does not include signage.

Chairperson Vallad stated that in her opinion from past meetings with the Township Board that the Board wanted the project completed before they reimbursed our Department from Township General Fund.

Director Tucker stated that in her opinion you need a commitment from them before spending the funds.

Chairperson Vallad wanted to make sure that it was understood that this project is on-going with many areas to continually work on and it is being completed in increments.

Director Tucker asked the Commission if they wanted her to ask to be on the Township Board meeting agenda, email all Township Board members, or just to talk to the three elected officials.

Chairperson Vallad asked how soon the staff could start this project.

Director Tucker stated that the staff could start the project tomorrow but they did not want to start to order limestone and such without knowing exactly what the Commission would like to see done. She also brought up that if this project was started due to having only two maintenance staff the River Run Preserve trail project would have to wait.

Commissioner Bower moved to commit to the trail project as presented in Director Tucker's October 9, 2014 on the Shiawassee Basin Preserve Connecting Trail. Commissioner Bower was supported by Commissioner Baker. Vote on the motion:

Yes: Baker, Bower, Christensen, Danishevskaya, Omell, Spicer and Vallad; No: None; Absent: None. The motion carried by a 7-0 vote.

Further Discussion

Chairperson Vallad wanted to know where the money is going to come from to fund the trail project.

Chairperson Vallad stated that in her opinion the Commission should do a budget amendment and then bill the Township for the \$15,000.00 reimbursement.

Director Tucker clarified that she can order the limestone and rent the track machine.

The Park Commission stated that due to the time of year the signage should be done in 2015.

Chairperson Vallad moved to add “Budget Amendment” as item “B” under Treasurer’s Report. Chairperson Vallad was supported by Commissioner Baker. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Christensen, Danishevskaya, Omell, Spicer and Vallad; No: None; Absent: None. The motion carried by a 7-0 vote.

B. Change in Timekeeping Procedures-Chairperson Vallad

Chairperson Vallad asked for feedback on the memo that she had placed in the packets. She stated that, as it is right now, the Commission is supposed to be verifying the Director’s time before it goes to the auditors and she feels that right now we do not have a good process in place.

Commissioner Spicer thinks that Chairperson Vallad’s recommendations look good.

Commissioner Bower would like to see the proposed verification process simplified a little bit.

Commissioner Danishevskaya wanted to know if all employees have to ask for time off two weeks prior to needing it off.

Chairperson Vallad stated that is what is currently in the employee handbook but that is one of the items that she believes needs to be addressed in the revisions to the handbook and Director’s timekeeping policy.

Commissioner Danishevskaya stated that she feels that staff should be able to request time off at any time. She feels that, at a Director level, it is not necessary for the position to report to two people. She understands the need to have accountability and that would be possible by the Director scanning and emailing the request to his/her contact and then receiving back confirmation and attaching it to said request. It is her opinion that no employee should be signing off on the Director’s time off requests.

Chairperson Vallad asked if the Commission does not have another employee verify the Director’s time that is being taken then how does the Commission know when/what time is being taken.

Commissioner Danishevskaya stated that by the Director signing off on the request for/absence report form he/she is stating that is the time that they would be taking and if something different is later reported than that is falsification of record and then makes that individual subject to dismissal.

Chairperson Vallad asked Sarah Richmond, Administrative Assistant, if the Absence Information log sheet that is turned into the Clerk's Department is signed by anyone.

Mrs. Richmond stated that currently it is not signed because that has never been a requirement before.

Chairperson Vallad stated that she would like to see Director Tucker start signing that log sheet before it is turned in.

Mrs. Richmond asked for clarification if Chairperson Vallad meant for Director Tucker to just sign her own or every one of them that gets turned in.

Chairperson Vallad stated that all of them should be signed.

Commissioner Danishevskaya addressed the memo's suggestion for the time away from the office report. The memo stated that the Director should contact two Park Commissioners, either by text and/or email, to let them know when the Director would be out of the office or working in the field, etc.

Chairperson Vallad stated that she only suggested two contacts in case there was a problem getting a hold of the primary contact so that the Director gets a response within 24 hours of the their request.

Director Tucker wanted to clarify with the Park Commission as to what the current practices are for her time off. Currently she creates a calendar with the days she knows she will be off or out of the office at meetings and submits that to the Personnel Liaison of the Park Commission, which is Commissioner Baker. At the end of the month she tallies her hours worked and any other time off and then resubmits that to Commissioner Baker. Director Tucker stated that if something comes up and she is unable to come into the office then she text or emails Commissioner Baker to let her know. Director Tucker stated that, in her opinion, the memo that was included in the packets gives the impression as if she is not accounting for her time at all. She also stated that it was frustrating to be addressing the hearsay about her not being in the office.

Chairperson Vallad stated that it was not hearsay when people are stating things such as "Jennifer was not in the office again today". And these statements are being made to more than one Commissioner.

Director Tucker stated that she is not saying that the Commission should not know when she is taking time off or when she is at meetings, and if they all want to be copied on the calendar that she does, than she can do that . In her opinion, it is more troubling that people are not answering these inquiries when she could be at meetings or out in the field.

Chairperson Vallad stated that the other Commissioners do not always know where the Director is or what is going on.

Director Tucker stated that she thought that is why she is reporting her time away from the office to Commissioner Baker.

Commissioner Bower moved to adopt the simple time keeping verification system as discussed that will now have a signature line on it. The Parks and Recreation Director's position must also submit an Absence/Request Form that will be approved by a Park Commissioner and kept in a file. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Christensen, Danishevskaya, Omell, Spicer and Vallad; No: None; Absent: None. The motion carried by a 7-0 vote.

Further Discussion

Commissioner Bower would like to evaluate this procedure in a couple of months.

Commissioner Danishevskaya will be working a form for Director Tucker to use for daily accounting of her time.

The Commission decided that the flextime policy for the Director will be addressed when the employee handbook is updated.

The Director's contact will be Commissioner Baker as her primary and Commissioner Danishevskaya as a secondary.

C. Project Timeline Report/Dashboard

Director Tucker stated that she, Chairperson Vallad and Commissioner Bower, met to discuss the format of the project report.

The Park Commission had an example of the project report in their packets. Chairperson Vallad stated that in her opinion what they had gotten had contained too much detail.

Commissioner Bower passed out an example of what type of format he thought should be used. Just showing basic information such as, the name of the project, date started, completion actions and completion date.

The Park Commission stated that they are not looking to having a lengthy or complicated report but they would like to have something just to keep them up to date and if they need additional information then it would give them a starting point. The Commission stated they know that this type of report is new and may require some adjustments over time to make sure it works for everyone.

D. Evaluation Committee

Chairperson Vallad stated that she had spoken with Commissioner Christensen and Commissioner Baker about this process. In her opinion she would like to see everyone receive evaluations.

Chairperson Vallad stated that maybe there could be a 360 evaluation done using survey monkey so it could be anonymous.

Chairperson Vallad stated that she would like to have the evaluations in place by the November meeting and then the evaluations completed by the December meeting.

Commissioner Danishevskaya stated that in order to evaluate the Commission would need to have some criteria in place in order to evaluate individuals.

Commissioner Christensen stated that in the beginning of the year employees should establish goals so that they can revisit them throughout the year to see how they are doing.

Commissioner Danishevskaya stated that the Park Commission should also set goals at the beginning of the year for the Director. Then at some point a committee should be giving input on how they are doing throughout the year.

Chairperson Vallad stated that she would like to see samples of the evaluations that the Department currently uses.

Chairperson Vallad wanted to ask the Park Commission their opinion on whether they thought the idea of an evaluation process and an evaluation on the Director, Staff and Commission is a good idea.

Commissioner Danishevskaya asked Chairperson Vallad why the Park Commission is being included in having an evaluation performed on them and how would they do that evaluation.

Chairperson Vallad stated that she would like them to do an evaluation on each other because it would be good to know how they all think that they are all doing.

Commissioner Bower stated that he thinks that by doing it that way for the Commission that then becomes personal opinion.

Chairperson Vallad than asked if an Evaluation Committee should be formed.

Commissioner Christensen stated that evaluations are good and it is best practice to have evaluations.

Commissioner Spicer stated that she feels that evaluations should be done and it holds people accountable and helps to evaluate goals.

Commissioner Bower said yes to the evaluations but would like to discuss it in more detail at the November meeting.

Commissioner Danishevskaya stated that evaluation examples should be gathered for the next meeting.

The Commission would like to see evaluations and a format should be discussed in more detail at the next meeting.

Commissioner Christensen asked Director Tucker if she currently does evaluations annually.

Director Tucker stated that evaluations are done on an annual basis and for new employees the evaluations are performed after the probation period.

Commissioner Christensen asked if the evaluation is done one- on-one with the Director and the employee.

Director Tucker stated that yes, it was done one-on-one.

Chairperson Vallad moved to table this agenda item until the next regularly scheduled Park Commission meeting on November 18, 2014. Chairperson Vallad was supported by Commissioner Omell. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Christensen, Danishevskaya, Omell, Spicer and Vallad; No: None; Absent: None. The motion carried by a 7-0 vote.

IX. TREASURER'S REPORT

A. Bills List

Commissioner Christensen moved to approve payment of the bills as follows: Parks and Recreation at \$ 12,739.07, and Trust and Agency \$ 750.00. Commissioner Christensen was supported by Chairperson Vallad. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Christensen, Danishevskaya, Omell, Spicer and Vallad; No: None; Absent: None. The motion carried by a 7-0 vote.

B. Budget Amendment

Chairperson Vallad moved to move \$17,000.00 from the Fund Reserve Cost Center from the Development line item into the SBP Capital Outlay line item for the SBP Connecting Trail. Chairperson Vallad was supported by Commissioner Bower. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Christensen, Danishevskaya, Omell, Spicer and Vallad; No: None; Absent: None. The motion carried by a 7-0 vote.

X. COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

XII. COMMISSIONER COMMENT

Commissioner Baker stated that she is looking forward to the trail project getting under way and being successfully completed.

Commissioner Omell would like to thank Chairperson Vallad for all that she does. In addition, he wanted to let the Commission know that he thought that the Farmers Market was great this year and he misses it now that the season is done. Also he just wanted to express how great he feels

the Shiawassee Basin Preserve is, when you are back on the trails it is like you are miles away from everything.

Chairperson Vallad wanted to know the status of the salary study.

Director Tucker stated it is being worked on with the consultant.

Chairperson Vallad wanted to know if the job descriptions are being updated at the same time.

Director Tucker stated that we could work on it but if you are going to be adding job duties on the job description to include everything that staff is doing then the Commission is going to have think about updating wages to compensate for the updated job description.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Bower moved to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Springfield Township Parks and Recreation Commission at 9:45 pm. Commissioner Bower was supported by Commissioner Danishevskaya. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Christensen, Danishevskaya, Omell, Spicer and Vallad; No: None; Absent: None. The motion carried by a 7-0 vote.

Jennifer Tucker, Director of Parks & Recreation

Jean Vallad, Chairperson of Park Commission