

**Springfield Township  
Park & Recreation Commission Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, April 10, 2018**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The April 10, 2018 Regular Meeting of the Springfield Township Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chairperson Bower 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  
Anne Loncar  
Dennis Omell  
Rich Parke  
Jean Vallad

**Staff Present**

Sarah Richmond

**Others Present**

**Commissioners Absent:**

Angela Spicer

**IV. AGENDA REVISIONS AND APPROVAL**

**Commissioner Vallad moved to accept the agenda as presented. Supported by Commissioner Loncar. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Loncar, Omell, Parke, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Spicer. The motion carried by a 6-0 vote.**

**V. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**VI. CONSENT AGENDA**

- A. Approval of Meeting Minutes-March 13, 2018 with Additional Disbursements of \$12,830.10 for the Parks & Recreation Fund and \$150.00
- B. Receipt of Activities Report for March
- C. Receipt of Progress Report for March
- D. Receipt of Natural Resource Manager March Monthly Report
- E. Receipt of March before Audit Budget Reports

Receipt of Communications

**Commissioner Parke moved to accept the consent agenda as presented. Supported by Commissioner Baker. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Loncar, Omell, Parke, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Spicer. The motion carried by a 6-0 vote.**

## **VII. OLD BUSINESS**

### **A. Discussion of Mill Pond Park Beach**

Director Richmond summarized her memo to the Commission. She summarized the history of the beach and the cost of the maintenance. In the survey done in 2005 by Professional Lake Management, there was no starry stonewort in the pond but now it is prevalent throughout the entire pond. In 2017, the Department spent \$6,800 in staff time to maintain the beach area. She summarized the costs required to improve the beach area. It is her recommendation that the Department close this beach. She suggested that they still chemically treat the pond so it can be used for fishing and kayaking, although that area is limited because of the vegetation. She stated that they get a lot of comments regarding the beach and they have tried to address them but the return on the investment of time and money is not beneficial. The beach is used more as a sandbox than anything else.

Commissioner Vallad asked if there were any Commissioners that were opposed to closing the beach area.

Commissioner Parke stated that based on Director Richmond's memo, they are spending approximately \$115 per resident who swims in the beach if they use the figure of 200 swimmers per year. This is not cost effective for the Township. It is irresponsible to spend this kind of money maintaining the beach.

Chairperson Bower stated that the time and money spent is being taken away from other projects and could be used more beneficially in other places.

Commissioner Loncar agreed and stated that the Metro Parks are starting to shut down beaches because they are not used anymore.

Director Richmond confirmed that the beach does get the water tested through the Oakland County Health Department and there have been times that it has been closed due to high ecoli counts.

Chairperson Bower stated that closing the beach would have a positive effect on the birds.

Director Richmond stated that one of the swans is very aggressive so it will limit some of their liability. She confirmed that Risk Management's recommendation is that they post a lot of "No Swimming" signs at the water's edge, and leave the beach fencing up for this year plus they need to establish a barrier from the sand (beach) to the water's edge so it would show people that this is no longer a beach. There is \$1,600 budgeted in 2018 to contribute to sand and some signage. She stated that they can increase signage and suggested plantings native plants along the shoreline. The Oakland County Natural Resource Manager has been working with her regarding treatments and she will be providing guidance regarding the plant list that they have used. The biggest thing is to establish the area as a "No Swimming" area. She stated that Oakland County Parks is closing a beach at Addison Oaks and they are putting topsoil on top of

the sand along with planting plants along the shoreline. This would make this area easier to mow. This is an option for the Township. She stated that they could also take the sand and move it to the volleyball court to use.

Chairperson Bower stated the disadvantage to the grass planting is that it would encourage the geese and the swans.

Commissioner Baker asked if they should bring rocks in to line the beach edge.

Director Richmond replied that rocks are a possibility, but topsoil is cheaper. She is not recommending it this year. She stated that during the Mill Pond Park Improvement Committee meeting there have been discussions regarding having a boardwalk from Mill Pond Park to the lumberyard property. A potential spot where that boardwalk could come in is where the old beach was. She suggested that they let the beach go, do a planting at the water's edge and see how it develops naturally.

Commissioner Loncar asked what else is needed to deter swimmers.

Commissioner Parke commented that it sounds like they want something visible that denotes this is no longer an area for swimming.

Director Richmond replied that this is why they would leave the fence up and put signs up too. She commented that the next question becomes how do you let the public know. She stated that in the description in the Spring and Summer brochure, she took the part about the beach out because they didn't know what was going to happen.

Commissioner Parke asked if she had consulted with the Natural Resources Manager about what to do in this area.

Director Richmond replied yes. She will work with him after they get the plant list from Oakland County. She stated that it also might be a process and it all may not get done this year. She suggested language for the signs. She stated that she talked to Risk Management about making it an access point for kayaks and canoes and he suggested that if she is going to close it, it needs to be fully closed. There are other areas around the pond that can be accessed with a kayak.

Chairperson Bower stated that they are in limbo now because of the consideration of the Mill Pond Park Improvement Committee.

Chairperson Bower stated that the area will not support anything more than a small kayak. He suggested that they close the beach, put up signs and let nature take its course until they found out what is going to happen with the Mill Pond dam.

Director Richmond replied that they still need to put up signage and put something on the website.

Commissioners discussed the signage required and how to handle public input received.

Commissioners confirmed that they are interested in looking at plantings for the beach area.

Commissioners agreed that they do want to see plantings by the water, they do not want to see anything designated as a canoe or a kayak launch site, whatever they plant by the water will have input from the Natural Resources Manager and will be successful if the dam comes down and signage will be installed with wording like, "Restoration Work in Process".

Director Richmond concurred.

Commissioners discussed the repercussions of removing the dam and the funding of the work that will be done.

**Commissioner Vallad moved to naturalize the Mill Pond Beach area, close the pond to swimming and follow the steps as outlined by the Risk Management agent. Supported by Commissioner Baker. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Loncar, Omell, Parke, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Spicer. The motion carried by a 6-0 vote.**

## **VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

### A. Discussion of Background Check Policy

Director Richmond reviewed the draft policy that she provided to the Commissioners. Employees are currently all background checked at time of employment. This policy is primarily for the coaches but it should probably be geared toward all employees and independent contractors too. She stated that currently the Township does the background checks for no charge.

Commissioner Loncar stated that there should be something added to the policy stating that it is mandatory for any current employee to report any violations of the background check policy to the Director.

Director Richmond stated that for current employees, the Township does a driving record evaluation which allows the Township to get updates on those driving records. She stated that she also added that employees can be background checked every three years.

Commissioner Baker asked why the difference between the words terminated and immediately removed use in the document.

Director Richmond explained that it doesn't necessarily mean that they are removed from coaching forever but they would remove them until they can investigate the situation. She explained that the Department has an agreement document that is provided by our HR Consultant which give the Township the right to do the background check.

**Commissioner Vallad moved to adopt the Background Check Policy in Director Richmond's memo dated April 5, 2018 with the additions as discussed. Supported by Chairperson Bower.**

Commissioner Parke asked if the Township and/or the Library have similar policies.

Director Richmond stated that the Township background checks their employees but she does not know if they do background checks on their volunteers. She doesn't know about the Library. She stated that there is the potential to background check the Commissioners.

Commissioner Parke suggested that Director Richmond forward the policy to the Township and the Library.

**Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Loncar, Omell, Parke, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Spicer. The motion carried by a 6-0 vote.**

#### B. Discussion of Athletic Field Policy

Director Richmond summarized the draft copy of the Athletic Field Policy that she provided to the Commissioners. The biggest change is the increase in pavilion fees. And on page 4, this part covers the damage to the field done by patrons. This covers the Department against damage. Another change makes it against the policy to drive out to the athletic fields. They have currently chained the sidewalk and added a sign to prohibit people from driving out to the fields. She is in the process of pricing out bollards to install along the pathway prior to the ball season beginning. She will check to see if it should be a "sidewalk" or "pathway."

Commissioner Baker suggested that she adds, "and/or replacement cost" to this policy.

Director Richmond concurred. She has a meeting with the Oakland County Sheriff Sergeant to find out about patrols and availability to write tickets.

Commissioner Vallad suggested that she adds "asphalt" in front of sidewalk to make it clear.

Director Richmond stated that in the Field Rental Application, there is a sentence that they have to initial that makes them acknowledge that they received the policy.

Commissioner Parke commented that when you rent a car, there are specific things that they call to your attention when you fill out the paperwork and he suggested that they point out those important items and initial those areas if it was not too cumbersome within the agreement.

**Commissioner Vallad moved to approve the updated and amended Athletic Field Use Policy and Field Rental Application Form as outlined in Director Richmond's memo dated March 29, 2018 with additional verbiage discussed this evening. Supported by Commissioner Omell. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Loncar, Omell, Parke, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Spicer. The motion carried by a 6-0 vote.**

#### C. Discussion of Township's Sexual Abuse & Molestation Policy

Director Richmond reviewed the Township's Policy to Prevent Physical or Mental Abuse, Sexual Molestation and Sexual Conduct, Township Supervisor's memo dated March 11, 2018 and an email from Supervisor Walls dated March 16, 2018 regarding the policy. This policy was approved at the Township Board's meeting on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018 which was required in order to get an insurance quote. This policy does not cover the volunteer coaches. She provided

feedback to the Supervisor regarding the policy but that feedback was not completely included before it went to the Township Board. The email suggests that the Township does have coverage and Selective Insurance has some changes that they would like to make to the policy and at that time Director Richmond's concerns will be addressed. One of her concerns is that nowhere in the policy do they talk about doing background checks on employees to make sure that they do not have a prior history of abuse or molestation. She continued to review the documents and outlined her points of concern. This is not something that the Commission has to make a motion on, it is for their review and information. She is waiting to see the revisions that Selective is recommending.

Commissioner Vallad asked how do they make sure that Director Richmond's comments and concerns are implemented.

Director Richmond commented that Supervisor Walls knows that she wants to be involved with the review of the policy. It was strongly expressed that she and the Library Director should have input before it went to the Township Board but there was a push to get it done in a timely manner. She explained the training that they provide to their volunteer coaches. This provides some insurance coverage for the coaches through the company that provides the training.

Chairperson Bower asked who is the best person that someone should report to.

Director Richmond replied the reporting process for a non-criminal claim per the policy. The Township Attorney has been involved with this policy and so has the Oakland County Sheriff's Sergeant.

Commissioners and Director Richmond discussed different examples of reporting that has been done in the past and ideas for reporting in the future.

Commissioners and Director Richmond discussed parent interactions and how to communicate with parents.

#### D. Discussion of Neighbor for Neighbor Tent Request

Director Richmond summarized the request for a tent from Neighbor for Neighbor. They would like to purchase a sail tent, put eye hooks on the back of the building and secure with posts in the ground to put up over the back asphalt pad by their back door. She stated that they use a picnic table on the back pad to put out additional items, including produce, that their patrons may be able to choose from. She has concerns about this tent and she explained those concerns.

**Commissioner Vallad moved to deny Neighbor for Neighbor's request for a large square sail sunshade to be attached to the Hart Community Center Building.**

Commissioners discussed alternatives to the tent request presented.

**Supported by Commissioner Parke.**

Commissioners discussed the fact that nothing should be located outside of the building. As proposed, it is a safety hazard to have something that is not secured on all sides. The building rental is for the inside of the building.

**Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Loncar, Omell, Parke, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Spicer. The motion carried by a 6-0 vote.**

## **IX. TREASURER'S REPORT**

### A. Bills List

**Commissioner Vallad moved to approve the April bills list totaling \$7,497.75 and Trust in Agency \$300. Supported by Commissioner Loncar. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Loncar, Omell, Parke, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Spicer. The motion carried by a 6-0 vote.**

Director Richmond explained the new revenue cost center, "Department Three- State Grants" which is a reimbursement from the State and is not something that the Department should budget for each year.

## **X. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

None

## **XI. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

## **XII. COMMISSIONER COMMENT**

Commissioner Baker stated that the Joint Meeting went well.

Commissioner Parke thanked Director Richmond for all the hard work from her and her staff to provide such good service to residents.

Chairperson Bower thanked Director Richmond, Mike Losey and Laura Moreau for all the commentary tonight at the joint meeting. He commented that the Mill Pond Park Improvement Committee meetings and Joint meeting are positive. River Run development is going well.

Commissioner Omell stated that he had a good time working the Teen Easter egg hunt.

Commissioner Vallad commented that she worked the Teen Hunt too for the first time and thought it went well and it seem like it was fun for the kids.

Commissioner Loncar commented great job on the Easter Egg Hunt.

Commissioner Vallad commented on the Friends of the Parks upcoming Vendor Event and she passed out a flyer about the event which is to be held on April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018.

Director Richmond commented that Lauren Vance has spent a lot of her own time helping the Friends of the Parks on this event.

Chairperson Bower stated that the Mill Pond Park Improvement Committee has worked very hard and he commented on their progress and work.

Director Richmond agreed and said it has strengthened their relationship with Oakland County Parks. She commented that the Pathways Committee also worked well together.

### **XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**Commissioner Baker moved to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Springfield Township Parks and Recreation Commission at 9:06 pm. Supported by Chairperson Bower. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Loncar, Omell, Parke, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Spicer. The motion carried by a 6-0 vote.**