

Onekama Township Parks & Recreation Committee

Monthly Meeting Minutes—Final Approved

February 23, 2024 8:30a

In attendance: Michelle Ervin, Gary Madden, Tyler Dula. Attending remotely: Chair Bick Pratt, Al Taylor, Paul Mueller, Ric Alameddine. Absent: Brian Allen, John Wemlinger. Also in attendance: Val Harmon.

Meeting called to order at 8:31a.

Motion to approve the agenda as presented by Madden, seconded by Mueller. All in favor, motion carried.

Public comment: none

Correspondence: none

Chair Pratt announced the Township Board has approved, with stipulations, the \$15,000 donation toward the upgrades to the Village park.

Old business:

Ervin gave an update on the History committee and their building plaques project. She will have a verbiage sample ready to show the Committee at the meeting in March. There are also history recordings being made.

Ervin gave an update on the Education committee and the progress on building the summer events programming. Training and certification events are lined up for the next few weeks.

Chair Pratt to confer with Bob Blackmore to get details worked out for the new maintenance hire for the upcoming season. The person responsible for watering the petunia parade for the 2024 season and other township responsibilities needs to be worked out. The budget presented to the board only included funding for the work to be done within Parks and Recreation.

Chair Pratt reported the Board has approved Allen as the contact person with GTRLC regarding the wetlands project. First step is a physical walk through of the property. There will be an ad hoc wetlands committee consisting of Pratt (chair), Allen, Ervin, Taylor, and Dula.

Dula gave an update regarding his work with the Invasive Species Committee. They will be working on shoreline habitats and encouraging homeowners to work toward natural shorelines. Pratt suggested that discussions regarding natural improvements within the Wetlands shoreline should be included as an agenda item for the next wetlands project ad hoc committee meeting.

There was continuing discussion about the ADA walkway structure at Langland. Chair Pratt to distribute drawings to the group of the proposed plans. If the public receives the project favorably, there is a possibility of expanding it next year.

Chair Pratt to follow up on the April delivery of tables and benches for the township parks.

Dula reported that the removal of invasive species at Carden park has been completed and looks good. Native plants now need to be planted in the open stream bank. Dula to research costs and options. Dula and Chair Pratt to work on the issue of damaged trees in the manicured areas of the park. Dula and Ervin to write a newspaper article about the Carden project for community publicity. Chair Pratt suggested the possibility of installing some sort of base underneath the picnic tables. Perhaps starting at Carden park and expanding to all

seven picnic tables if it is successful. Madden suggested installing a charcoal grill at Carden. This will be considered in the future. This year will include the natural improvements discussed and the ADA table. Ervin said the tables are ADA compliant, so any base put below them should not undermine this compliance. Guest Val Harmon offered her insights regarding materials that are most wheelchair friendly. Dula suggested turning planting native plants along the stream bank could be turned into an educational workshop or volunteer opportunities for high school students. Madden to talk to the school regarding the possibility of working together.

New business:

Ervin reported that she received a new, much lower bid for an educational sign and asked for the Committee's support to pursue this. Val Harmon is an experienced graphic designer and has volunteered to work with Ervin on this project. There was discussion on location to install. At this price, the Committee could pursue more than one sign. She was given the ok to move forward on this project.

Ervin discussed the need to develop a new member packet with pertinent information to bring them up to speed regarding the work the Committee is doing. There was discussion and suggestions on what information might be included.

Chair Pratt reported the budget was favorably reviewed by the board. The final budget will be approved at the March Board meeting.

Chair Pratt stated that Madden's term expires in March. He questioned if the bylaws state there has to be a School Board member as part of Parks & Rec. Madden has been asked by the School Board to stay on as their liaison.

Madden reported to the members about some short- and long-term school infrastructure projects pending. The bus garage may be solarized, and a rain garden has been proposed to deal with parking lot drainage. A long-term project not confirmed yet is to solarize the entire parking lot, which would provide enough power to run the school. Dula discussed grant availability for these projects.

Chair Pratt to change the Committee bylaws to allow for member remote participation, including voting.

The Recreation map is completed and posted in the Township Hall for viewing.

Mueller reminded Pratt that since the repair of the trail and parking lot at North Point was approved the contracts need to be signed with the vendors to do that work.

Meeting adjourned at 9:47a.

_____ Chair

Submitted by Michelle Swanson, Recording Secretary