

Onekama Township Parks & Recreation Committee

Monthly Meeting Minutes—Final Approved

March 29, 2024 8:30a

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

Meeting called to order at 8:33a.

Motion to approve the February meeting minutes by Mueller, seconded by Wemlinger. All in favor, motion carried.

The order of the agenda items was amended to accommodate guest Dave Wallace.

Trails system update—Alameddine

Alameddine is working with Dave Wallace of the Onekama Township Planning Commission on the trails system project. They recommended going with the proposal from Gourdie Fraser in Traverse City. It comes in under budget for the project. He also reported that Networks Northwest recommended the committee get a complete street resolution signed by the Board, which serves as confirmation the Township is interested in building a trail which will make it easier to qualify for possible grants. The Village will also need to sign a similar resolution. Alameddine has found several grant opportunities, including the Michigan Health Endowment Fund. Subject to deadlines and other considerations, he may submit an application for this grant.

Motion to go to the Board for funding for a feasibility study by Alameddine, seconded by Wemlinger. All in favor, motion carried.

Motion to hire a grant writer to support this grant request and future work by Alameddine, seconded by Wemlinger. All in favor, motion carried.

Enhancing community communication—Chair Pratt

Pratt reports that he and others will be meeting with Board member Ed Bradford to learn about editing the website. Pratt recommends establishing a new Communications Team ad hoc committee with intention to transition to a subcommittee for purposes of enhancing Parks & Recreation communications with the community.

Motion to nominate at the April meeting four members to establish a Communications ad hoc committee to focus on strategic communications by Ervin, seconded by Alameddine. All in favor, motion carried. The committee will be on an ad hoc basis for now.

Correspondence:

Chair Pratt received an email inquiring about overnight parking at Langland Park. It is not allowed. Ervin was asked what visitors are supposed to do with fish guts. Doug Berry of the Invasive Species Committee said they may dispose of them in personal trash, or the fish cleaning stations in Manistee will accept them and they will be recycled into cat food.

Budget—Chair Pratt

Pratt reported that the Board has decided against hiring a maintenance worker for this year. They decided to fund Jean Capper for the summer programs, as well as hiring a grant writer for the township. Most of the proposed budget items the Parks & Recreation Committee asked for were approved.

Committee Reports

Village and Township Joint Efforts—they are working on scheduling the next meeting. Wemlinger reported that a rate schedule for rentals of the event stage has been completed. Chair Pratt expressed his happiness at how the Township Board and the Village Council have been able to work together lately to great success. Dave Wallace stated it should be recognized that the Township and the Village have done something together for the first time in 15 years, and that it is an important development.

History Committee--Ervin reported the History Committee will remain as a Parks & Recreation subcommittee until January 2025 at which point a decision will be made whether to create a new committee and present that request to the board. Ervin gave the members a verbiage sample for the history signs.

Education events are still in progress. Ervin presented a flyer regarding a new event called the 30 Day Challenge promoting physical activity, as well as a volleyball and bonfire on the beach event to be held three times over the summer.

Motion to move forward with the 30 Day Challenge and volleyball & beach events by Alameddine, seconded by Allen. All in favor, motion carried. Ervin to determine costs associated with new events for presentation to the board by Pratt

Wetlands—Allen

Following this meeting, there will be a visit with members of the GTRLC to the wetlands area to review the wetlands project.

Old Business:

Chair Pratt to get fire rings in April. Installation of ADA walkway on the south end scheduled next week subject to weather. The seating at the three parks will also be delivered next week subject to weather. Allen volunteered to help Pratt with the installations. Pratt is waiting on two more bids for the Carden Park enhancements.

Bylaws changes—

Chair Pratt presented proposed bylaws changes to the members. Motion to approve the proposed changes for submission to the Board for their approval by Wemlinger, seconded by Alameddine. All in favor, motion carried.

Election of officers—

The members discussed the purpose of “Secretary” as a part of the Committee officers slate, since the Committee employs a Recording Secretary. Alameddine suggested replacing it with a new position “Program Director”.

Motion to rescind the previous approval of the bylaws changes as submitted by Wemlinger, seconded by Alameddine. All in favor, motion carried.

Motion to replace “Secretary” as an officer with “Program Director”. All in favor, motion carried.

Ervin agreed to develop a job description for this new position to be presented for discussion at the April meeting.

Email protocol—

There was discussion regarding email usage best practices between Committee members. Pratt asked who wanted to get a new township email address.

The members discussed identifying student volunteering opportunities. Ervin explained the historical purpose of having a school representative on the P&R Committee, and suggested the members consider getting a student back on the Committee.

Chair Pratt is working on getting bids for ongoing sand maintenance at Langland Park.

Dula to move forward sourcing plants for the Carden Park planting project.

Pratt initiated discussion whether mobi-mats should not be installed at the north end of Langland because of water run off and sand removal issues. There should be no water runoff problems with the installation of the rigid walkway at the south end. It was suggested that mobi-mats not be installed at the north end until water runoff issues are resolved and that a sign be installed indicating ADA access is at the south entrance.

New member packet topic tabled for now.

Meeting adjourned at 10:17a.

Bick Pratt Chair

Submitted by Michelle Swanson, Recording Secretary