

**AGENDA**  
**Cascade Charter Township Parks Committee**  
**Tuesday, April 18, 2023**  
**8:00 am**  
**5920 Tahoe Dr**

- ARTICLE 1. Call the meeting to order  
Record the attendance**
- ARTICLE 2. Approve the current Agenda**
- ARTICLE 3. Approve the minutes of the March 21, 2023 Regular Meeting.**
- ARTICLE 4. Acknowledge visitors and those wishing to speak to non-agenda items.  
(Comments are limited to three minutes per speaker.)**
- ARTICLE 5. Library Outdoor Gathering Space  
Update from Lulu Brown, Cascade KDL.**
- ARTICLE 6. Update on Millage Campaign  
Update from millage subcommittee and Township staff.**
- ARTICLE 7. Cascade Rec Park Improvements and Moving Forward  
Review and discussion of possible improvement lists and next steps.**
- ARTICLE 8. Property Acquisition Template  
Review and discussion of scores for different park properties.**
- ARTICLE 9. Old Business**
- ARTICLE 10. Any Other Business**
- ARTICLE 11. Adjournment**

**Meeting format**

- 1. Staff Presentation** *Staff report and recommendation*
- 2. Project presentation-** *Applicant presentation and explanation of project*
  - a. PUBLIC HEARINGS**
    - i. Open Public Hearing.** *Comments are limited to five minutes per speaker; exception may be granted by the chair for representative speakers and applicants*
    - ii. Close public hearing**
- 3. Committee discussion –** *May ask for clarification from applicant, staff or public*
- 4. Committee decision - Options**
  - a. Table the decision**
  - b. Deny**
  - c. Approve**
  - d. Approve with conditions**
  - e. Recommendation to Township Board**

**Minutes**  
Cascade Charter Township  
Parks Committee Meeting  
Monday, March 21, 2023  
8:00 A.M.  
2870 Jacksmith Ave SE

**ARTICLE 1.** Chair Wanty called the meeting to order at 8:04 A.M.  
Members Present: Chair Ginny Wanty, Mike Reese, Eileen Boekestein, Windy Korstange, Supervisor Grace Lesperance, Joe Engel, Matt Douglas  
Members Absent: None  
Others Present: Planning Director Brian Hilbrands, Manager Ben Swayze, and others listed on the sign-in sheet.

**ARTICLE 2. Approve the current Agenda**

**Motion was made by Member Engel to approve the current agenda. Supported by Member Korstange. Motion carried 6 to 0.**

Supervisor Lesperance arrived at 8:06 A.M.

**ARTICLE 3. Approve the Minutes of the February 21, 2023 Regular Meeting**

**Motion was made by Member Korstange to approve the February 21, 2023 meeting minutes as written. Supported by Member Reese. Motion carried 7 to 0.**

**ARTICLE 4. Acknowledge any visitors and those wishing to speak to non-agenda items**

There was no one that wished to speak.

**ARTICLE 5. Developing a Natural Resource Plan**

Brian Majka with GEI Consultants gave a presentation on how to create a Natural Resource Plan with the goal of developing a plan for Burton Park someday. Natural Resource Management Plans are goal-oriented and define specific actions that have measurable results. He explained that understanding the land is the first step followed by creating a vision, goal setting, referencing a target ecosystem, evaluating degradation, and engaging community members on plan details. Monitoring the plan and making recalibrations is a necessary component as well.

In terms of making the plan accessible to community members, Majka mentioned creating a website on plan details. This ensures ease of access to information and could promote community support. Mjaka will provide a copy of his presentation.

Member Engel asked if GEI has dealt with developing plans for ecosystems near airports. Majka said they have not personally developed plans for these areas and that it can be difficult to manage wildlife with restrictions in place near airports.

Chair Wanty asked how much creating a plan would cost. Majka indicated it could cost anywhere between \$5,000-\$100,000 depending on how in-depth the plan is.

Supervisor Lesperance asked if these plans could be funded by grants and Majka explained that typically grants fund specific projects and implementation of plans. He mentioned that if funding does go towards development of plans it usually occurs more for aquatic projects.

**ARTICLE 6. Update from Township Engineer**

Township Engineer Thorne previously reached out to Majka and GEI Consultants regarding water bar installation at Peace Park to solve erosion problems across various trails in the park. Majka described water bars as big logs angled along trails to better direct water off the trails to minimize erosion. GEI Consulting uses a leveling laser to assist with waterbar placement.

**Motion was made by Member Engel to recommend retaining GEI Consultants to assist Cascade Township's staff with water bars installation as described in their proposal. Supported by Member Reese. Motion Carried 7 to 0.**

Township Engineer Thorne discussed the drainage issue at Wycliffe Park and recommended installing new inverts to eliminate ponding water. Majka suggested testing the soil in proposed drainage sites to determine the underlying soil.

**Motion was made by Member Reese to discuss with the township engineering consultant to obtain the invert elevations and survey information to come up with a drainage solution. Supported by Member Korstange. Motion carried 7 to 0.**

Township Engineer Thorne provided recommendations on the Burton Park parking lot. He advised repaving with asphalt since this would align best with the budget of \$50,000. Other options will be considered such as gravel, permeable surface, or pavers. Township Engineer Thorne will come back to the Committee with some cost estimates for the different options. This improvement will be put on hold pending further feasibility discussions on the different options, as well as moving the main park access and parking lot based on a suggestion by Burton Park neighbor Jeanine Heibel.

**ARTICLE 7. Update on Parks Director Hiring Process**

Manager Swayze gave an update and stated there were 20 applications. After the initial interviews, Staff was very impressed with one candidate in particular who will proceed to a final interview.

**ARTICLE 8. Old Business**

Manager Swayze gave an update on the Thuele property. The Township has kept in contact with the property owners regarding the 30-acre parcel right next to Peace Park. The price will be set on a per-acre basis. The family wants to keep 10 acres around the house and barn.

Dr. Keys, and his students have finished their deer management study at Burton Park. Dr. Keys will present his findings and recommendations to the Township Board sometime in April.

Chair asked park committee members to use the property acquisition template to score the Theule, Wycliff, FHPS Admin Building, Peace, Burton and Rec Park properties to create a benchmark and a comparison. Committee members are asked to bring their scores to the next Committee meeting or fill out the Excel Spreadsheet which will be sent to them by email.

**ARTICLE 9. Any Other Business**

Next meeting there will be a discussion regarding the park millage, provided the subcommittee has had the opportunity to meet. Committee members should also come with ideas for Cascade Rec Park improvements. Additionally, there will be a presentation by Lulu Brown about the updates to the Outdoor Gathering Space at the Library.

**ARTICLE 10. Adjournment**

**Motion was made by Member Engel to adjourn the meeting. Supported by Member Douglas. Motion carried 7 to 0. The meeting adjourned at 9:38 A.M.**

Respectfully submitted,

Joe Engel, Secretary

Shall Cascade Charter Township levy up to 0.8255 mills (82.55 cents per \$1,000 of taxable value) for a period of twenty (20) years, 2024 through 2043 inclusive, To be used for the acquisition, improvement, maintenance and operation of public parks and open spaces to enable Cascade Township to protect and preserve its natural resources through strategic acquisition, stewardship, education, and management while providing accessible, quality recreational amenities and experiences to equitably enrich the lives of residents and future generations.

This millage would raise an estimated \$1,600,000 in the first year of the levy. To the extent required by law, a small portion of the revenues from this millage will be captured and disbursed to the Township's Downtown Development Authority and/or Brownfield Redevelopment Authority for its use.

DRAFT

## List of Improvement Cascade Rec Park that Ginny has been compiled from various staff and residents as of 3-28-2023

1. Adding trees at Rec Park-Consumer's Energy Grant secured for 15 trees along entrance
2. Cascade Rec Park Maintenance Building- replace before falls down. ( Suggestions to include: large generator that is currently at Fire Station #2, adding a bathroom, Building an office for Park Director?
3. Pavement from entry to big lot, especially at point where they meet at big lot. In disrepair and needs replacement.
4. - Park entry Signage needs replacement, and a bed/landscaping.
5. Gazebo Roof Replacement
6. Add City Water, apparently necessary waterlines are getting close but not yet.
7. Park pathways deteriorating.
8. Upgrade Bathroom cameras as well as add more cameras in park
9. Baseball fields Re-vamp? Remove & re think?
10. Dog Park

Suggestion #1 The large dog area is too small. Suggestion – move the fence separating the large and small dog areas to create more room for the large dogs.

Suggestion #2- Adding a streetlight or two in the large dog park area would be great. As you know, it gets dark very early in Michigan in the winter months. Help with cars that have been broken into in the parking lots, so a light or two would really help people feel safe.

Suggestion #3-Even a few solar-powered spotlights attached to the trees in the large dog side would help a lot. The lights would only need enough power to last an hour or two each night, so solar powered/battery lights would do the trick, so no need for hard wiring the lights.

11. Pickleball courts, port-a-pottie and posted rules sign

## List of Improvements for Cascade Rec Park from Parks Committee Members

- Improvement-remodel maintenance garage to include a bathroom and generator. Adding office and conference room for Park Director
- redo Disc golf course- based on feedback
- add more trees
- update soccer field or baseball fields
- turn existing storm water detention areas into rain gardens by planting with native plants and adding signage to make them into green infrastructure demonstration sites
- as any parking/road changes are made, consider green rather than gray infrastructure for stormwater management
- more shade near the playground
- more parking spots by dog park (we never can get a spot there!)
- more seating in the dog park and more shade there as well
- additional bathrooms on west side of park
- boundary trees (native) along I96
- boundary trees (native) along entrance to park
- double number of pickle ball courts
- revision of disc golf course (I have access to expert willing to volunteer)
- pathway access from Thornapple River Drive (connect new pathway to existing Thornhills sidewalks)
- Expand three parking areas, consider permeable surfaces for all
- perimeter invasive maintenance/control
- strategic consideration of 'highest/best use' for currently designated baseball diamonds/soccer field
- If fields kept, reconstruction of same c/w industry standards and resident needs
- infrastructure improvements per Jim McDonald's priorities
- An all-encompassing pollinator garden ringing the park as well as connecting areas to the interior throughout the frisbee golf area.
- Plant native fruit trees throughout the frisbee area to increase the difficulty of the course (currently it is all grass, and I've seen many frisbee parks that are much more interesting because of the obstacles placed between the holes.
- This park needs not only Ginny's updates, but multiple use interests, especially throughout the frisbee park...we can think of other, low-cost improvement that will improve the visual aspects of this park...even some shallow water features?

**Cascade Township**  
**Parks and Open Spaces Property Acquisition Template**

This tool is designed to help evaluate potential parks and open space sites for acquisition by Cascade Charter Township, using a set of established criteria that can be applied to any potential property. The goal is to provide a consistent and objective scoring of potential sites that can be utilized by the Parks Committee in making an informed recommendation to the Cascade Charter Township Board of Trustees.

Property Name/Nickname	
Property Address	
Owner Name(s)	
Zoning	
Person Completing Form	
Date	

*Form Instructions: For each item list a score of 1 to 5, with one being the lowest rating and five being the highest rating*

	Peace	Burton	FH Admin	Wycliffe	Rec Park	Theule
<b>Natural Features</b>						
Streams/Rivers/Lakes	4.00	0.67	2.33	1.25	0.67	3.33
Wetlands/Riparian	3.25	1.67	3.33	1.50	1.33	2.67
Habitat/Ecosystem Quality	4.50	4.00	4.50	2.75	2.67	4.33
Forest Canopy	5.00	4.67	1.67	3.50	2.00	5.00
Unique Features	4.50	3.67	2.00	2.75	2.67	4.67
<b>Total (Out of 25 Possible)</b>	<b>21.25</b>	<b>14.67</b>	<b>12.00</b>	<b>11.75</b>	<b>9.33</b>	<b>20.00</b>
<b>Location/Connectivity</b>						
Connects to Pathway System	2.00	4.00	4.67	5.00	2.00	1.00
Connects to Water/Waterway	2.00	1.00	2.67	2.00	0.67	1.00
Connects to Park or Other Community Asset	3.00	2.67	4.00	3.75	1.00	5.00
Provides Space/Recreation for Underserved Area	4.00	4.33	3.67	3.25	5.00	3.33
Adds Acreage to Existing Park or Open Space	5.00	5.00	1.00	1.00	4.67	5.00
<b>Total (Out of 25 Possible)</b>	<b>16.00</b>	<b>17.00</b>	<b>16.00</b>	<b>15.00</b>	<b>13.33</b>	<b>15.33</b>
<b>Function</b>						
Preserves Natural Resources	5.00	5.00	2.67	3.75	2.00	5.00
Protects Historical or Cultural Elements	2.75	3.67	1.67	4.00	1.33	2.33
Provides New or Increased Recreational Opportunity	4.75	5.00	4.33	3.50	5.00	4.33
Add Significant Acreage of Open Space	4.75	5.00	1.33	0.75	4.33	4.33
Improves Public Access	3.75	5.00	4.00	4.25	4.00	3.67
<b>Total (Out of 25 Possible)</b>	<b>21.00</b>	<b>23.67</b>	<b>14.00</b>	<b>16.25</b>	<b>16.67</b>	<b>19.67</b>
<b>Feasibility &amp; Practicality</b>						
Appropriately Sized for Its Intended Use	4.75	4.67	3.33	3.75	4.67	4.67
No or Reasonably Remediable Contaminants or Hazards	4.75	4.00	3.33	4.50	4.33	4.33
Cost Practicality/Leveraging Opportunities	4.50	4.67	2.33	2.75	4.33	3.33
Market Urgency/Potential for Development	4.25	5.00	4.00	3.50	4.33	4.00
Management, Maintenance or Adjacent Property Considerations	4.50	4.67	3.67	3.50	3.67	4.67
<b>Total (Out of 25 Possible)</b>	<b>22.75</b>	<b>23.00</b>	<b>16.67</b>	<b>18.00</b>	<b>21.33</b>	<b>21.00</b>
<b>Grand Total (Out of 100 Possible)</b>	<b>81.00</b>	<b>78.33</b>	<b>58.67</b>	<b>61.00</b>	<b>60.67</b>	<b>76.00</b>