

Minutes
Cascade Charter Township
Parks Committee
Tuesday, October 17, 2023
8:00 A.M.
2870 Jacksmith Ave

ARTICLE 1. Chair Wanty called the meeting to order at 8:00 A.M.
Members Present: Chair Ginny Wanty, Mike Reese, Supervisor Grace Lesperance, Eileen Boekestein, Joe Engel, Matt Douglas, Bill Otten
Members Absent: None
Others Present: Parks Director Melanie Manion and others listed on the sign-in sheet.

ARTICLE 2. Approve the Agenda
Motion was made by Member Engel to approve the current agenda. Supported by Member Otten. Motion carried 6 to 0.

ARTICLE 3. Approval of the September 19, 2023 Meeting Minutes
Motion was made by Member Engel to approve the September 19 meeting minutes as written. Supported by Supervisor Lesperance. Motion carried 6 to 0.

ARTICLE 4. Public Comments
Scot Vansolkema (2570 Orange St) stated that the park bench pricing is too high. He suggested offering various bench styles with some at lower prices.

ARTICLE 5. Director’s Report – Melanie Manion
Member Reese arrived at 8:17 A.M.
Director Manion provided an overview of the recent events and accomplishments in the parks department. Some notable updates included a \$450,000 RAP grant for Friendship Park and the deck located at Tassell Park was refurbished. She also mentioned that ODC is unavailable in 2024 and other options for a natural playground may need to be explored.

Signage for electronic bikes on township pathways was discussed.

ARTICLE 6. Old Business
a) Bench Policy – Joe Engel, Parks Committee Secretary
Member Engel drafted the new bench policy.
Member Reese expressed his support for the drafted policy as written.
Member Boekestein asked if there was a substantial need for benches and Director Manion said there is no apparent need at most parks.
Member Reese made a motion to recommend the bench policy as written to the Township Board. Supported by Member Otten. Motion carried 7 to 0.

b) Deer Management – Melanie Manion, Parks & Recreation Director

Director Manion reiterated the ongoing concern with the deer population. There was hope of organizing a hunt at Burton Park, but the issue extends beyond just Cascade Township. There will be ongoing efforts to develop an effective plan for managing deer populations.

ARTICLE 7. New Business

a) Review of 2023 Master Plan Goals, Mike Reese, Committee Member

Member Reese went over the 2023 Master Plan goals document found in the meeting packet. Some completed projects included the creation of a pathways maintenance plan and resurfacing of some of those pathways. Progress is being made on improving Wycliffe Trailhead Park and updating zoning ordinance requirements for open space, among other projects.

ARTICLE 8. Parks Chair Announcements – Ginny Wanty, Parks Committee Chair

There were no announcements made.

ARTICLE 9. Friendship Park Presentation – Wes Landon, Native Edge

Wes Landon, owner of Native Edge, attended the meeting to give the Parks Committee a presentation regarding Friendship Park. There will be various areas for programs and gatherings, both large and small, and many amenities included within the park.

Director Manion said the management of the project will be handled by herself going forward and thanked Kent District Library's manager, Lulu Brown, for her hard work initiating this project.

Member Douglas left the meeting at 9:36 A.M.

ARTICLE 10. Adjournment

Motion was made by Member Otten to adjourn the meeting. Supported by Member Boekestein. Motion carried 6 to 0. The meeting adjourned at 9:45 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe Engel, Secretary