

LELAND TOWNSHIP PARKS AND REC COMMITTEE
Tuesday, November 29, 2022; 5:30 p.m.
Leland Township Library – Munnecke Room
203 E. Cedar Street, Leland, MI 49654

Minutes

PRESENT: Nick Bierschbach, Karen Kirt, Juliana Lisuk, Molly Steck

GUESTS: Susan Och

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Ms. Steck called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

ACTION: Ms. Lisuk moved to approve the agenda; supported by Ms. Kirt. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: (October 11, 2022):

ACTION: Ms. Steck moved to approve the minutes from the October 11, 2022 meeting as presented; supported by Mr. Bierschbach. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

UPDATES / DISCUSSION:

Park Stewards Report:

Grove Park – The porta johns are still out.

Hancock Field – Looks good and has been cleaned up. The water has been turned off and the bathrooms are now closed.

Narrows Park – Ms. Steck commented that there is a large branch that is falling down when walking towards the beach; she asked who should take a look at this. Ms. Och asked Ken to check on this. It was noted that this is a narrow tree so Ken will most likely be able to handle this matter on his own.

Nedows Bay Beach – Looks good and has been cleaned up; the porta johns have been removed.

Provemont Pond – Ms. Lisuk mentioned that there is a tree here which may need to be taken down. Ms. Steck inquired if the Fire Department is looking to do any training with chainsaws in this area. Mr. Bierschbach stated that the west side of the pond was taken care of; he will inquire further when he goes to the Fire Department.

Schneider Beach – The porta johns are still out.

Suelzer Park – Ms. Och stated that the park looks good and the docks are out of the water. She stated that Williams & Bay has experienced truck problems but the porta johns have now been removed.

Van's Beach – The porta johns are still out.

Ms. Lisuk inquired about the ice rink. Ms. Och stated that the Township Board approved this at their last meeting with the condition that we will get together with the school at the end of the winter to ensure that everything is put back together correctly. She added that a fundraising event will be held with the goal of raising \$1,500 to cover the cost of lights and rink materials. Ken inquired if the water/pump issue had been resolved. Ms. Och replied that Jeff and Tim will be working on this matter.

Ms. Steck asked about the field water supply. Ms. Och stated that a more formal process needs to be followed. The park must be opened in the springtime, the water system flushed with bleach and tested two times. A volunteer or a contractor would need to handle this. Ms. Steck asked who has handled this in the past and Ms. Och replied that she is not certain but noted that SOS Analytical has come out in the past.

Ms. Steck inquired if a motion is needed to get this expense into the budget for next year. Ms. Och replied that a motion is not necessary and stated that the cost is approximately \$200. Action on this item is not needed until spring or when the baseball season begins. Mr. Bierschbach added that the township should get on a company's schedule now so that we will be ready in the spring. Ms. Och stated that the company that comes to blow the lines out in the fall may be willing to come back in the spring to do the necessary work. She added that the township may be able to split the cost of this with St. Mary's School.

Ms. Och shared that she recently had a discussion with Ms. Alex McBride who is the Grant Coordinator for the Western Region of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The minimum amount of funding available under the SPARK grant is \$100,000 and the maximum amount is \$1 million; a match is not required. There are three rounds of grants. Applications for the first round are due by December 19th and grant recipients are announced at the end of January 2023. By February of 2023, recipients are expected to begin their projects. Another grant cycle will begin in 2023. Ms. Och acknowledged that there would be some "heavy lifting" required to meet the December 19th application deadline.

At the last Township Board Meeting, Ms. Och proposed that the board consider the grandstand at Hancock Field and the library seawall for the SPARK grant; she believes that these are two of the township's greatest recreational assets. Ms. Och stated that she received pushback from the board and added that one member believed that the township is too wealthy and does not qualify for this grant based on the criteria. Ms. Och shared that the purpose of the grant is to equalize rural and urban areas. The Township Board would like to receive a list of priority projects from the Parks and Recreation Committee.

Ms. Och was able to obtain quite a bit of information about the SPARK grant from Ms. McBride during their conversation. One of the most important questions was the lease agreement at Hancock Field; the grant criteria state that funding is not available for improvements on property that is leased. Ms. McBride explained that if the lease renders the park inaccessible to the public for greater than 25% of the time, grant money cannot be used. Ms. Kirt noted that even when sporting events are held, the rest of the field is still open. Ms. Och forwarded a copy of the lease to Ms. McBride for review and is waiting for her reply. It may be necessary to have a discussion with the Leland Public School or somehow have them sign off on the township's grant application. If we can get around the matter of the lease, Ms. Och believes that Hancock Field is a good prospect for the SPARK grant.

When awarding the grant, they will consider the ALICE score (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed); this represents the minimum income level necessary for survival for a household. In 2021, 43% of Leelanau County was below the threshold; on a statewide level, 38% of households are under the threshold. Ms. Och noted that there are more people struggling in Leelanau County than on a statewide level.

Ms. Kirt asked how soon we would receive a decision regarding the lease and also inquired why the Township Board was unsure about submitting an application for Hancock Field improvements under the terms of the grant. Ms. Och replied that the board members were most likely concerned about the word "lease". She commented that Ms. McBride did not seem too concerned about the lease but this needs to be clarified further so that Ms. Och will have the correct information in order to get this matter in front of the board.

Ms. Och stated that the seawall is used by boaters. The grant money could certainly not be used by the library and lockers could not be built with the money as that would represent a school project. It is understood that these improvements are very different than what the township would use the grant money for; Ms. Och stated that it is not a "slam dunk" that we will receive any grant money but this represents a good opportunity to obtain funding for these projects. Ms. Kirt noted that Suttons Bay Township recently approved an action to submit a grant application for Herman Park.

Ms. Och asked for ideas as to what could be done at Hancock Field if we pursue this option for the grant. Ms. Kirt suggesting trimming back the trees in order to further open the fields. It was noted that there is a lot of unused space here and trees have grown

quite a bit in recent years. Ms. Och asked Ms. Kirt to walk the site with Bill Watson to determine the cost to hire Youth Work to assist with the project at this location; Ms. Kirt agreed to take on this assignment. Ms. Och noted that there are some platted streets in the area but stated that some cross-country trails could be added.

Ms. Och asked for any further suggestions. Ms. Kirt noted that Suelzer Park could use some play structures. Ken added that some picnic tables are in poor condition. Ms. Och stated that picnic tables would not be costly but play structures are a high budget item.

Ms. Lisuk and Ms. Steck discussed the idea of having a gazebo that could provide shade to walkers and bikers. Ms. Och asked Ms. Lisuk to look into obtaining the cost for a pavilion and she agreed to do so. In terms of size and cost, it was suggested that the new pavilions in Herman Park and Silver Lake Park could be looked at for comparison purposes.

Ms. Kirt stated that she likes the idea of trail signs. She asked if we could get more done at Provemont Pond if we write the grant for this location. Ms. Och was unsure that we could get to the \$100,000 minimum for the grant at Provemont Pond but Ms. Steck stated that we could most likely get to this amount if we identified several projects.

Ms. Kirt asked how the Parks and Recreation Committee could be more persuasive and inquired if it would help to attend a Township Board Meeting. Ms. Och replied that it would be helpful to make telephone calls and send email messages to township board members as well as to ask members of the public to do the same.

Ms. Och is currently talking to EGLE regarding the seawall. If the wall fails, this will pose many problems. She believes that if the board hears from the public on this matter, they will realize that taking advantage of these grant opportunities would provide the funding that is needed for these improvement projects. Ms. Kirt stated that she likes the idea of Hancock Field, Provemont Pond and Seltzer Park for the grant. Ms. Steck thanked Ms. Och for looking into this matter on behalf of the Parks and Recreation Committee. Ms. Och stated that there was an article in the Leelanau Enterprise recently which addressed the fact that many townships are receiving grant funding; she would like the Township Board to consider this fact.

Ms. Steck stated that the budget was on the agenda for this evening; however, she does not have numbers at this time. Discussion ensued regarding a partnership with YouthWork so that they could assist with various projects in the next year. Ms. Och explained how the budget process has functioned in the past as well as the timeline. Ms. Och stated that it would be ideal to have a large spreadsheet with various projects identified that would allow the township to show which projects could be paid for.

There was discussion regarding the need for lifeguards. Mr. Zorran VanDandt who is a firefighter/EMT with Leland Fire and Rescue has indicated that he is willing to train lifeguards; he is certified to do so. Chief Besson has stated that he would like to keep this activity under the umbrella of the Fire Department. Ms. Och indicated that it would

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take a couple of weeks for a person to be trained and the compensation that has been built into the budget is \$20 per hour.

Ms. Och added that we should look at the Master Plan to see what goals identified in the document might translate to possible opportunities for the SPARK grant.

Ms. Steck announced that she will be stepping down as the Chair of the Leland Township Parks and Recreation Committee so new leadership is needed. She will be very busy with work and courses that she plans to take beginning in January. The duties of the chair include: preparing the monthly meeting agenda, sending the agenda to Ms. Lisa Brookfield at least 18 hours before the meeting, arranging for the meeting room, arranging for a recording secretary, chairing the meeting and preparing a monthly report for the Township Board. Ms. Lisuk stated that she will serve as the Chair for January and February only but is unable to do so between March and October. Leadership needs will continue to be discussed at the January meeting.

Ms. Och announced that Ms. Kirch will no longer be the Township Board Rep on the Parks and Recreation Committee. The board must appoint someone to serve in this role so Ms. Och will speak to the board and report back.

The meeting schedule for the Leland Township Parks and Recreation Committee for 2023 is as follows:

Wednesday, January 11, 2023; **6:00 p.m.***

Wednesday, February 8, 2023; **6:00 p.m.***

Wednesday, March 8, 2023; 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 12, 2023; 5:30 p.m.

May – no meeting

Wednesday, June 14, 2023; 5:30 p.m.

July – no meeting

Wednesday, August 9, 2023; 5:30 p.m.

September – no meeting

Wednesday, October 11, 2023; 5:30 p.m.

November – no meeting

Wednesday, December 13, 2023; 5:30 p.m.

- Please note the 6:00 p.m. start time for the meetings to be held in January and February; all other meetings will begin at 5:30 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ADJOURNMENT:

Ms. Lisuk moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:39 p.m.; supported by Ms. Kirt. Motion carried.

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The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 11, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in the Munnecke Room at the Leland Township Library.

Respectfully submitted,

Allison Hubley-Patterson
Recording Secretary