

**Springfield Township
Park & Recreation Commission Regular Meeting
Tuesday, January 12, 2016**

I. CALL TO ORDER

The January 12, 2016 Regular Meeting of the Springfield Township Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Chairman Bower at the Springfield Township Civic Center, 12000 Davisburg Road, Davisburg, Michigan 48350.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present

Diane Baker
Roger Bower
Dennis Omell
Angela Spicer
Jean Vallad

Staff Present

Sarah Richmond

Others Present

Commissioners Absent:

Lisa Christensen with notification
Elena Danishevskaya with notification

IV. AGENDA REVISIONS AND APPROVAL

Commissioner Vallad moved to accept the agenda as revised, adding "December Budget Printouts" as I. under Consent Agenda. Supported by Commissioner Omell. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Omell, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Christensen, Danishevskaya. The motion carried by a 5-0 vote.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Meeting Minutes –December 8, 2015 with Additional Disbursements of \$2,142.67 for the Parks & Recreation Fund and \$150.00 for the Trust & Agency Fund
- B. Receipt of Activities Report for December
- C. Receipt Progress Report for December
- D. Receipt of Financial Summaries
- E. Receipt of Springfield Township Park Commission Rules of Procedures and Operation
- F. Approval of 2016 Programs and Events Schedule
- G. Receipt of Memo re: 2016 MRPA Annual Conference
- H. Receipt of January and February 2016 Fifty Plus Active Adults Newsletter
- I. December Budget Printouts

Receipt of Communications

Commissioner Vallad moved to accept the consent agenda as revised. Supported by Commissioner Spicer. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Omell, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Christensen, Danishevskaya. The motion carried by a 5-0 vote.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Discussion of 8621 Eaton Road

Director Richmond stated that she spoke to Carla Spradlin at Oakland County to discuss if the Springfield Township Parks and Recreation could use Community Development Block Grant funding for the demolition of the house. She provided a memo that was addressed to both the Park Commission and the Township Board summarizing the discussion that she had with Ms. Spradlin. CDBG funds might be able to be used for the demolition of 8621 Eaton Road but there is a whole series of steps that Parks and Recreation must undergo. She stated that the Township Board is holding a Public Hearing on Thursday, January 14th to look at the possible reprogramming of Program Year 2014 funds. Supervisor Walls is asking that \$6,000 is earmarked for code enforcement which would leave \$4,950 to be put towards demolition. At any point in the CDBG approval process before the house is actually demolished, there is the possibility that the Parks and Recreation Department can be told by the County that they cannot demolish the house or that they cannot use the funds for this purpose. Director Richmond has had several discussions with Supervisor Walls and Erin Mattice regarding this issue. The Commission had decided in 2015 that they did not want to pursue this because of the additional criteria that were put in place by using the CDBG funding. This was brought up again by a Township Board member and this is why Director Richmond put the project on hold until they found out the answers. If the Parks Department do consider using the CDBG funding, she has been told that the soonest that the Fire Department could use the house for training would be summertime 2016. All of the work has to be done and all documents submitted by September 2, 2016 if the CDBG funds are used. She stated that the Building Official has to be willing to sign off on the house as blighted by the State of Michigan standards.

Commissioner Vallad asked if the house qualifies as blighted.

Director Richmond replied that after discussions with Supervisor Walls, they believe that it qualifies. The house now has broken windows, the roof is leaking, etc. Director Richmond stated that they need to get a letter confirming the blighted stated by the Building Official, the Township Board has to reprogram the money for this purpose and then they have to do an environmental review. After this, they will then get the approval to apply to the SHPO to provide application to the State on whether or not this house would be considered historic. She was told this review by the State agency takes 30 days. If it is considered historical, they cannot use CDBG funds to demolish it. She stated that they would also have to rebid out the asbestos removal specifications. During all of this the house is still becoming more and more of a liability. She stated that the Parks Commission could decide tonight that they want to move forward on the demolition and not utilize CDBG funds. If that is the case, she will let the Township Board know that the Park Commission wants to move forward on getting the house demolished as soon as possible without CDBG funds. She can then move forward with the asbestos abatement.

Commissioner Vallad stated that the memo was great and described the agenda item well. Her opinion is that the \$4,950 is not worth the CDBG funding criteria for demolition while the house just keeps becoming more of a liability.

Chairperson Bower added that there were no guarantees that the Department would get the funding.

Director Richmond concurred.

Commissioner Vallad asked if there was something else that the Township Board wanted to use the money for besides Code Enforcement.

Director Richmond stated that she doesn't know for sure; she thinks that there are other options.

Chairperson Bower asked if the timing could be put off until after September if CDBG funds were used.

Director Richmond clarified that the funds would have to be expended by September 2, 2016 or they are lost.

Commissioner Vallad stated that she is not in favor of pursuing the CDBG funds because it is too unknown and it is not worth it.

Commissioner Omell stated that he does not think it is worth the extra work.

Director Richmond stated that a certain percentage of the funds would have to be used for demolition.

Chairperson Bower asked how much extra staff time would be involved in using the CDBG funds.

Director Richmond stated that she and Erin Mattice estimated that they would have approximately \$1500 in staff time.

Chairperson Bower stated that they would also have to put off the project due to the steps involved.

Commissioner Baker asked what this process gives them other than \$4,900.

Director Richmond confirmed that possibly that is all it gets them and she confirmed that, by waiting, the house becomes an attractive nuisance. She confirmed that the Fire Department would like to start their training in February but first they need to do the asbestos abatement, turn off the utilities and get the fixtures out that they want to keep. Once the Fire Department starts training, they will do their training during February and March after the Parks Department receives the contingency plan and the insurance coverage is confirmed.

Chairperson Bower stated they may be turning down the funds, but they are gaining by not using staff time in the office.

Commissioner Vallad moved that the Park Commission respectfully ask the Township Board to pursue a different use for the Community Development Block Grant funds other than the demolition of 8621 Eaton Road. Supported by Commissioner Omell. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Omell, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Christensen, Danishevskaya. The motion carried by a 5-0 vote.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Potential Additional Events for 2016

Director Richmond stated that Rebecca DeSimpelare, Recreation Superintendent, had some ideas about bringing some programs back to the Park Department. The Park Commission had decided that any normal events could be approved by the Commission under Consent but anything that they wanted to add back in would need to be discussed by the Commission. She stated that the Park Department wants to add new programs and/or events including a Princess Party, Superhero Party, Fishing Derby and the Halloween event. She stated that they have a potential partnership with a local church for the Halloween event if the Commission is interested in pursuing this. She stated that they can incorporate some of the ideas of Ms. DeSimpelare that she presented during her interview and add trick or treating at the Hart Center. They could also utilize the trail at Shiawassee for hayrides, etc. She stated that these are discussions that they would like to have with the potential partner, but if it is something that the Commission doesn't want, then they will not pursue it.

Commissioner Vallad asked how time consuming this would be because that is why some programs were eliminated in the past.

Director Richmond replied that it depends on how they do it including volunteer involvement.

Chairperson Bower asked if they should go through the proposed events one at a time for the Commission to consider.

Director Richmond summarized and outlined the memo that was provided in the packets. She stated that the fishing derby is not labor intensive at all and they have had a lot of people asking them about this event. She stated that she already has a volunteer to do some fly fishing demonstrations. They also have a sponsor that said they might be interested if the event is held again. The most expensive part of it is stocking the ponds and she suggested that this is what they use the sponsorship money for. If they cannot get a sponsor to stock the pond, then they may not be able to do the event. She suggested that the cost for restocking would be approximately \$500-\$600.

Ms. DeSimpelare stated that the Princess Party is something that Waterford does. She suggested that they host a lunch from 11 am to 2 pm which she would like to plan on April 23rd. She stated that they already have volunteers that would commit to dressing up as princesses and Independence Township has agreed to let them borrow princess dresses. It would be a mommy and me type event with pictures and a craft activity which they already have. The princesses would be available to dance with the girls and there will be a sing-a-long and story time. She suggested using volunteer NHS students for nail painting and story time.

There will be a light lunch planned. She stated that the age group would be 10 years and under.

Commissioner Vallad suggested that they should not promote this to just girls. She knows that they will probably only have princesses there dressed up, but there may be boys that want to attend.

Director Richmond stated that they had this discussion with her staff and decided that they would allow moms and sons too.

Commissioner Vallad suggested that they use the language that this will create and opportunity for kids 10 and under, instead of girls 10 and under.

Director Richmond stated that they could change the language.

Commissioner Baker agreed with Commissioner Vallad. She suggested having something supplemental for girls concentrated on science and math. There is a shortage of women in these fields and this kind of thinking is cultivated early.

Director Richmond stated that they do offer science camps.

Commissioner Baker suggested that they should have more about young woman empowerment. She stated that this program is fine but she is thinking of something additional.

Chairperson Bower stated that this was a good idea for an event down the road.

Director Richmond stated that they can look at the fall time to add an event like this. They are now under a time constraint for the Spring/Summer 2016 brochure.

Chairperson Bower and Commissioner Vallad offered that they should use the word participants instead of girls to encourage all kids to participate if they want to.

Director Richmond agreed that they could make adjustments in the program to accommodate boys.

Ms. DeSimpelare stated that the next event that she would like the Commission to consider is a Superhero Ice Cream Social. She suggested that they are looking to do it on a weeknight in July. They will have an ice cream cart and have pictures taken with superheroes. They will borrow the costumes and are planning a short two hour event.

Chairperson Bower asked if they were going to suggest that the kids can dress up as superheroes.

Ms. DeSimpelare responded yes. She summarized an idea for picture taking that makes it seem as if the child is flying.

Commissioner Vallad asked if they had looked at doing this event in conjunction with the Farmer's Market.

Director Richmond stated that they feel like they would have good participation in the middle of the week for a short time.

Ms. DeSimpelare stated that there was no age limit; it is geared for families.

Commissioners discussed the corn hole game that is proposed for this event.

Commissioners discussed the proposed events.

Commissioner Omell moved to accept all of the proposed events. Supported by Commissioner Baker. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Omell, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Christensen, Danishevskaya. The motion carried by a 5-0 vote.

Commissioner Omell thanked the staff for coming up with new ideas.

Commissioner Baker commented that it was a great partnership for Parks and Recreation to be able to work with Springview Community Church.

B. Approval of Appraisal Bids for Lake Shiawassee Property

Director Richmond handed out a memo from Supervisor Walls that is being given to the Township Board. She stated that she discussed the appraisals received with Supervisor Walls. She would first like to get the appraisal bid approved. She stated that according to the Springfield Site Action Committee agreement, any expenditure need to be approved by the SSAC Board, Township Board and the Park Commission. She stated that Supervisor Walls is recommending in his memo that the Board approved a cost not to exceed \$8,000.00 for costs related to this project. Supervisor Walls is more familiar with what acquisitions would cost.

Ms. Strole stated that Supervisor Walls' request did not include a not to exceed amount. She explained to Director Richmond and advised Clerk Moreau that this is a concern of hers and she will strongly suggest to the SSAC Board that the motion include a not to exceed amount using the figure of \$8,000. She heard back from Clerk Moreau that Supervisor Walls agrees and the Township Board on January 14th will include the not to exceed amount in their action. She stated that the neither the Township Board nor the SACC Board is going to get into awarding bids; this is for the Park Commission to handle. She stated that the SSAC Board needs to approve an authorization with a cap for expenditures for certain services.

Director Richmond stated that she will still bring all of the information to the Park Commission and she will be in contact with Ms. Strole to keep her informed. But with this motion, they will know that they can expend up to \$8,000 out of the endowment fund toward the things that they need to do. SSAC Board is meeting Thursday, January 14th, 2016 before the Township Board to discuss this matter.

Chairperson Bower stated that this would eliminate and expedite any situation that may come up.

Commissioner Vallad asked Ms. Strole if it was her recommendation that the Park Commission make a motion to affirm the request in the memo.

Ms. Strole answered that this is up to the Commission. This is separate from any action awarding bids. She is going to recommend that the SSAC Board approve an amount not to exceed \$8,000.

Chairperson Bower stated that the SSAC Board and the Township Board is giving authorization so that the Parks Commission can approve the bid tonight.

Director Richmond clarified that it is an agreement between the three Boards that out of the endowment, they will spend up to but not to exceed \$8,000 for the items that are necessary to proceed with the grant.

Ms. Strole stated that the SSAC Board only gets involved when they are talking about acquisition of a property. She stated that the Park Commission needs to make a motion and authorize so that the Park Commission and Parks staff can move forward on this and not have to come back to the Park Commission. They first need to authorize expenditures from the endowment funds for these types of services. This fulfills the Commission's authorization to use endowment funds and then SSAC Board and Township Board will authorize the same. All three parties will then have the same authorization.

Director Richmond stated that the second part of this is the award of the appraisals tonight.

Ms. Strole suggested that this would be contingent on the necessary approvals from SSAC Board and Township Board.

Director Richmond summarized what the two motions should say.

Commissioner Vallad moved to authorize the use of Endowment Funds for the appraisal, title work, legal fees or any other fees and charges incidental to the acquisition of the 8+ acre Lake Shiawassee property with the total estimated cost not to exceed \$8,000.00. Supported by Commissioner Baker. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Omell, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Christensen, Danishevskaya. The motion carried by a 5-0 vote.

Commissioner Baker moved to award the appraisal of 8.2556 acres commonly referred to as the Lake Shiawassee property to Williams and Associates Inc. at a price not to exceed \$1,750.00 contingent upon any other requirements or required approvals per the Springfield Natural Areas Preservation Endowment Fund Agreement. Supported by Commissioner Spicer. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Omell, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Christensen, Danishevskaya. The motion carried by a 5-0 vote.

Ms. Strole reiterated the role of the SSAC Board.

C. Discussion of River Run Preserve

Director Richmond stated that the Township Board is going to enter into an agreement with U.S. Fish and Wildlife in order to accomplish some of the stewardship activities on the property. The Agreement has a match of which the Township is providing \$5,000 toward having a machine come out and do cutting and they will have \$1,500 of in-kind services. The in-kind services include having Parks and Recreation and Township staff going out and

treating invasives. This is a great opportunity to get onto the property and accomplish some of the stewardship activities that are needed. It also allows them to get some work done in the Park to hopefully get it open this year. She stated that in order to open up the Park, they are going to have to bring in a machine to cut the scrub brush because it is so thick that it is impassable. The best time to do the cutting is in the winter time when it is cold and not so wet as it would be in the spring. She looked into the rental of the machine and it was roughly \$3,000 plus staff time. She showed a picture representative of the machinery required. She stated that the company that is coming in to do the stewardship activity has their own equipment which Director Richmond showed a picture of. It is an excavator type machine with a forestry head which is capable of clearing this area. She contacted the company and asked them for an estimate of cutting in a trail from the parking lot. The company gave a high estimate of \$3,000 for this work. She will confirm with him after he sees the Park and the work required. She asked the Commission to approve a budget up to \$3,000 with the contractor. The other alternative would be to bring in another company but she does not know if they have adequate equipment to handle this area. She demonstrated on a map the area that was going to be cleared. She suggested adding a couple of benches and some signage and this would get the park opened.

Chairperson Bower asked how much it would cost to maintain it and prevent it from growing back.

Director Richmond replied that they are going through it continually with tractors. There are also some spots that need to be addressed with a chainsaw. She has consulted with Mr. Losey regarding this clean up. She stated that when they walked the area the first time, they did not see a lot of invasives in this area which is a good thing. She stated that once the Township Board approves the agreement, the contractor could be out there at the end of January. She stated that residents will see that they are working on this Park area but it is going to take time to make the Park great.

Ms. Strole stated that she thinks residents will understand this.

Chairperson Bower stated that they might want to outline the steps that they are undergoing at an event like the Heritage Festival.

Director Richmond stated that eventually after a few years they should look at opening the Clark Road side.

Ms. Strole concurred. She stated that if they have a circular trail that will take them to the north side, they will get a chance to experience this undisturbed side of the park.

Director Richmond stated that she is suggesting 8 to 10 feet of an area cleared. She stated that not many contractors have machinery like this.

Ms. Strole asked how much money is left in the River Run Stewardship Fund.

Director Richmond stated that she doesn't have that exact amount; they earmarked \$5,000 this year for trail work.

Ms. Strole stated that the SSAC Board does not have to approve stewardship activities. They needed to approve \$300,000.00 that was used to purchase the property. It included 10% (\$30,000) that would be used for stewardship and to get the park open.

Director Richmond stated that it will be billable out of the Parks fund and then reimbursed from Stewardship back into the account.

Ms. Strole stated that there are funds there that need to be judiciously used. Once the Park is opened, it will be a positive benefit for residents and Park staff. She provided the history for the acquisition of River Run.

Director Richmond reviewed the financial estimate given by the company. She stated that they spoke when developing the five year plan about getting the park opened so it can be used. She is asking for a motion to move forward with the contract with Drag Line Works of Stockbridge.

Commissioner Baker moved to hire Drag Line Works of Stockbridge to do clearing work not to exceed \$3,000.00 for the work that they are to do at River Run Preserve. Supported by Commissioner Vallad. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Omell, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Christensen, Danishevskaya. The motion carried by a 5-0 vote.

D. Staff Wages 2016

Director Richmond stated that it is her recommendation that the Commission award the 3% wage increase that was discussed during the budget renewal process for the current staff. She would like to know also what the per meeting rate will be for the Commissioners. She summarized the total salaries after the 3% raises: Kathy VanGilder would be at \$17.05/hour, Rebecca DeSimpelare would be at \$16.74/hour, Kyle Ryan would be at \$17.00/hour, Kyle Wade would be at \$14.94/hour and the Director's salary would be \$54,590.00. Ms. DeSimpelare's employment letter offered her a potential \$.25 per hour raise which has not been awarded yet but her evaluation was done and she is doing a great job. She stated that when Ms. DeSimpelare is awarded this \$.25 per hour raise, she could potentially be at \$16.99/hour. This could happen within the next six months. At this time, they do not have the office clerical position filled because there were so many new people that had started and had to be trained. She will be advertising in the next month or so to add this position and will be advertised at between \$9.50/hour to \$10/hour. There is \$10,000 budgeted for this position so it will be an average of 20 hours per week. The Building Custodian/Gate Attendant position is now vacant due to a situation prior to Christmas. She is looking at splitting this position into two separate positions. She stated that she will probably post this position internally so seasonal employees that have worked for them in the past will have an opportunity and then post it externally if they are not able to fill it. She is interviewing a candidate this week for the Building Custodian position. These positions are not scheduled for increases.

Chairperson Bower asked if revenues were going up 3%.

Director Richmond stated that the 3% raises are covered in the budget.

Commissioner Omell asked if they are expecting an increase in taxable value.

Director Richmond stated that the market has done better; she would have to ask the Assessing Department this question.

Commissioner Vallad moved to approve a 3% raise for the following Parks and Recreation Department employees: Director, Administrative Assistant, Recreation Superintendent, Maintenance Superintendent and the Parks Maintenance person. Supported by Commissioner Omell. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Omell, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Christensen, Danishevskaya. The motion carried by a 5-0 vote.

Commission Vallad moved to set the Commission per meeting rate at \$45.00. Supported by Chairperson Bower. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Omell, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Christensen, Danishevskaya. The motion carried by a 5-0 vote.

IX. TREASURER'S REPORT

A. Bills List

Commissioner Vallad moved to approve the December bills list totaling \$9,153.48 and \$450.00 for Trust and Agency. Supported by Commissioner Omell. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Omell, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Christensen, Danishevskaya. The motion carried by a 5-0 vote.

One of the Commissioners asked why there were three payments to Mary Borgerson.

Director Richmond confirmed that the three payments to Mary Borgerson, an instructor, were for three different sessions of Strength and Tone.

X. COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT

XII. COMMISSIONER COMMENT

Commissioner Baker thanked the staff for a great job in 2014 and they are lining up to have a great upcoming year. She thanked Director Richmond for all of the work on the Eaton Road house.

Commissioner Spicer commended the Parks Staff on the new programs coming up.

Commissioner Omell hoped that the Parks Staff had a good holiday season and he is looking forward to the Spaghetti Dinner.

Commissioner Vallad stated that she is not going to be able to volunteer for the Easter Egg Hunt or the Spaghetti Dinner and she urged Commissioners to volunteer. She will not be able to attend the February meeting.

Chairperson Bower stated that the asphalt trail around the baseball fields is very nice.

Director Richmond stated that she will be calling for volunteers for the Spaghetti Dinner and she handed out fliers to the Commissioners. She is proud of the staff and what they have accomplished.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Baker moved to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Springfield Township Parks and Recreation Commission at 8:43 pm. Supported by Commissioner Spicer. Vote on the motion: Yes: Baker, Bower, Omell, Spicer, Vallad; No: None; Absent: Christensen, Danishevskaya. The motion carried by a 5-0 vote.