

REGULAR PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
January 16, 2019

The Regular Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Schulz at 6:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers.

Present: Horrocks, Schulz, LaLonde, Chastain and Clouser

Absent: Hayden

Also Present: City Manager Eustice
Sara Johnston, Council Liaison

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The Agenda was approved as presented.

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 19, 2018 MINUTES:

The December 19, 2018 minutes were approved as presented.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. **Report on 5 Year Plan - it was adopted by City Council 1/8/19.**
- b. **Requested Amendment to Ordinance r/t jurisdiction of commissioners (expand to School District)**
- c. **Goal #1: Maintenance and Development: we need an update on the riverfront project/grant and if the scope of work can be expanded to include some of the items listed in the plan. There is a 'Kraft' grant available to hockey arenas that the Bring It community is interested in pursuing.**

Chairperson Schulz asked City Manager Eustice when he has the meeting on February 22, 2019 with the Top of the Mitt Watershed that he reference the things that are listed in the Plan that are Major City Park improvements.

Chairperson Schulz informed the Commission of a grant she shared with Mr. Ralph Farver of the Cheboygan Hockey Association and someone from the Bring It Group for hockey arenas. This was not something we were going to pursue so she sent it on to them because it sounded like a crowd-funding. She told both parties in her e-mail that if they do get a fundraising plan together to share it with the Parks & Recreation Commission and we would help promote whatever crowd-funding or campaign they were going to do.

- d. **Goal #2: Programs: Pulling Together collaborative is developing database and will need help populating contact information. There is an event on January 22 at 6pm at the library on becoming a trauma-informed community, this event is appropriate for anyone that coaches or works with kids. The information is sensitive and not appropriate for children, but will become very important in training volunteers and anyone involved in youth sports.**

Chairperson Schulz commented this collaborative are representatives from the schools, 4-H, Junior Chiefs, Cheboygan Onaway Presque Isle Intermediate School District, and Molly, who is working on the drug-free initiative for Cheboygan County. They are working together to put together the database of all of the programs, which is an attachment to the Recreation Plan. She is asking that if the Commission could look at Attachment F, dealing with programs, and if someone

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has contact information, an e-mail address or telephone numbers for any of the groups to share it with Chairperson Schulz.

Chairperson Schulz went on to state Pulling Together is having an event that is directed for coaches, teachers, volunteers, mentors and anyone that works with youth in Cheboygan on how to become a trauma informed community. This event is Tuesday, January 22 at 6:00 p.m. at the Library. Attendees will learn about what the different types of trauma are, how to notice it, and what to do if you suspect that someone you are coaching or someone on your team you are working with has been traumatized. It is really important information; the more we get into applying for grants, i.e. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Grant to become a drug-free community. We need to make sure all of our programs and all volunteers with working with kids are trauma informed and aware of this important information is a really big part of that, especially because of the opiate epidemic and how many kids and families are affected by opiates and all substance abuse. Chairperson Schulz encouraged all the Commissioners and community members to attend especially if they work with kids. She will send the flyer on this event electronically to the Commissioners and will make sure it is posted at the Library, gas stations, etc.

Chairperson Schulz noted the Pulling Together collaborative meets the first Monday of each Monday at 12:30 p.m. and there is a possibility it may be changed to 12:00 p.m. They are also talking about combining the programming group and the Drug Free Coalition into one group because it all the same people participating in both of those meetings.

e. Goal #3: Trail Towns subcommittee report from January 7 meeting. Next meeting scheduled for January 24 at 9am. Report progress on Pure Michigan capital campaign.

Chairperson Schulz reported there was a Trails Town Sub-Committee meeting on January 7 but she did not attend. She asked City Manager Eustice, who chairs the Sub-Committee for a report. City Manager Eustice said it really wasn't an official meeting; they got the sub-committee together basically to organize and decided what they are going to do going forward. There is an officially scheduled meeting for January 24 at 9:00 a.m. in the City Council Chambers and the members are in place. The reason he says "officially scheduled" is part of the Trails Town Application requires that we have a standing committee and have minutes to those meetings because they have to be submitted with the Application as evidence that we are a committee that is focusing on trails. It is not just land trails; they are going to apply for both land trail designation and water trail designation. We may not qualify for the water trail side of it but he thinks we are prepared to be a designated trails town for our land trails. Hopefully we will get designated for both. City Manager Eustice went on to state that right now there are no designated communities that are designated trail towns as far as land trails are concerned. There are about seven water trail areas throughout the State that were just designated in December. He briefly reviewed these. They are looking at the inland water route as a designated water trail so they may need some participation from the adjacent townships; but they are moving forward to designate the City of Cheboygan as a Trail Town Community and with that will come some grant funding opportunities and we will be in some MDNR publications as far as the trails are concerned. City Manager Eustice stated the committee will be adding Mr. Owen Goslin, who is an avid bicyclist. The committee will meet at least on a two-week basis until we get the application prepared, which has to be in on June 1. He explained a land trail is a combination of bicycling and walking,

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noting the trails in Major City Park, which are not quite finished, will be included. Commissioner Horrocks inquired if the footbridge is included in the walking trails. City Manager Eustice replied yes, including the work that the Little Traverse Conservancy is doing next to the Coast Guard Station, which will be finished in the spring. They are putting boardwalks through the lowland area and they will have an observation station done on the waterfront for birdwatching, hopefully before the Application goes in.

Chairperson Schulz said one of the things the MDNR will look before they consider funding a project is that all of your past projects have the appropriate signage recognizing that funding source; she asked if the City is doing well with that or do we need to go through all of our projects and do an audit of the signage. City Manager Eustice said there is signage we are going to put up that is already here and that is something he can discuss with her as to whether or not we have adequate signage. Chairperson Schulz then stated under Maintenance and Development it is stated to look at signage overall and have a brand for our City parks so they all have the same sign that says this is a Cheboygan City Park or Cheboygan Recreation Park with its name, such as Project Playland, and whatever the funding source is. If we don't have it everywhere we need to have it documented as to what need needs why type of signage so if and when the MDNR comes to look at our proposed project we can show that we have addressed them. She then stated we have that listed as a Maintenance and Development activity in the Recreation Plan, but we also have signage as an objective under the Trails Town Goal. Where do we want to place this? City Manager Eustice said he felt it should be associated with the Recreation Plan and then he will have the DPW do all the signage installation. Chairperson Schulz noted under Trails Town there is just directional signage from the Trailhead to downtown and to downtown along the trails and pathways and then to public restrooms; so we have signs relating to trails and getting into downtown and then the park signs will be treated as a separate issue.

Commissioner Horrocks asked how much of the Black River Watershed berm is in the City, west of the school system. He suggested putting a route in there for a wildlife trail. City Manager Eustice commented it actually property that is outside the City but the City owns the property. He then asked if we could connect it right to our major trail easily. City Manager Eustice said that is certainly something we can look at for future development.

City Manager Eustice reported he has nothing new to report on the Pure Michigan Campaign letter to raise funds, although the Tourist Bureau is working on that. Chairperson Schulz asked that the Commission be advised if they need to do something to support that Campaign.

f. Goal #4: Commission needs to develop an action plan to move forward with the development of a recreational authority, discuss next steps and approach with stated goal of coordinating and community programs.

Chairperson Schulz explained this more of a communication plan to get the word out to the Townships within the municipality, asking how the City Manager wants the Commission to approach that. City Manager Eustice answered he does not think we should do that internally and is unaware of what the cost might be, but we had Mr. Harry Burkholder here in January 2018 who has developed recreational authorities throughout the State; there are 16 right now and Mr. Burkholder has been involved in about 5 of them. Mr. Burkholder works for a non-profit organization out of Traverse City and thinks we should use him as a resource on development. Not all the surrounding Townships were at the January 2018 presentation. Mr. Burkholder would

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charge us some cost, but thinks he would be a great moderator and liaison for the City and all the Townships. He would certainly be willing to come to a Commission meeting or multiple municipality meetings, and so forth. Chairperson Schulz commented she is looking for a strategy or communication plan as to who to approach and do we bring it to the School Board as we are talking about covering the School District and talking about educational outcomes, etc. Would Mr. Burkholder develop and communication plan or is that something the Commission needs to have a sub-committee working on. City Manager Eustice replied he thinks Mr. Burkholder would guide us, but not develop the plan.

Chairperson Schulz then stated she would add as an Action Plan – develop a sub-committee to communicate and build the board. She then asked that those in attendance think about chairing a sub-committee and this will be on the next agenda of the Commission. She then commented that whenever anyone in the County hears of a recreation authority they automatically equate that to building a pool. The most important thing is to make sure that we are very clear about the fact that the goal of the recreation authority is just to improve the coordination of programs, the communication of programs and has nothing to do with passing a millage at this point. We need to make sure we have representation from every municipality in the School District because we know kids that are involved in extracurriculars, whether it be sports, art, computer, or whatever, are going to do better than their counterparts who are not doing those resourceful things outside of school.

- g. Michigan Rural Community Demolition Grant: Michigan Land Bank \$350k available in grants to eliminate blight in communities of 50k or less. Will Cheboygan be applying for funding to decrease need for P&R staff to address blighted properties?**

<https://www.apnews.com/b1b05847864f4bc48d022b9f289d2e79>

Chairperson Schulz asked if Cheboygan is considering a Land Bank Grant for blighted property. City Manager Eustice replied yes and we are certainly eligible and it is certainly going to be a very competitive grant but we are considering writing a grant to demo a house the burned on “C” Street that has been an issue for a couple years and it not only an eyesore but a dangerous building. The owner would transfer it to the City. This was brought to the City Council about 18 months ago with the City bearing the cost to demo it, which was about \$16,000.00 because there is some asbestos in it; however, City Council voted not to obtain the building and bear the cost to tear it down. The issue is that we have done that in the past and when you do something like that you are spending taxpayer dollars and don’t ever recover the cost. Chairperson Schulz commented we cannot directly recover the cost but could indirectly recover the cost by raising property values. City Manager Eustice noted it is not significant enough and we would probably only get \$3,000.00 back out of the property. It is not just only that but if we set a precedent then how many times are we going to do that. Chairperson Schulz asked if we have to identify which properties are our priorities. City Manager Eustice replied yes, noting there is a scoring mechanism and thinks this property will score pretty high; the only thing it is going to lack in the application is that it is not going to make an economic impact. If it were near a commercial district or were a commercial property it would score very high. Chairperson Schulz asked if any of the properties in the commercial district that the City takes care of would qualify for this. City Manager Eustice replied there is nothing that the City owns, which is the other issue. Typically properties that municipalities own are in good condition unless you get them back on taxes, but those go to the County. In the last tax sale there were four properties, which were all homes. He

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noted the County has paid to demo properties in the City. The issue with the property is that it will sit there until 2020 when it goes back to the County. If we can get a grant to tear it down we want to do it now. Chairperson Schulz asked if the property has to be zoned commercial. City Manager Eustice replied not necessarily but you need to prove it makes an economic impact on a commercial district.

Chairperson Schulz inquired about the list of properties that the Parks & Recreation Department is getting paid overtime to shovel snow, maintain parking lots and such none of those would qualify for this. City Manager Eustice explained that we do not have any buildings that are dangerous and cannot be rehabbed. A building, such as Century Produces, which is a blighted building qualifies as a nuisance and a blighted building but you can rehab it. Chairperson Schulz asked if this is brownfield eligible. City Manager Eustice replied it could. The Cheboygan Hardware building, which is being redeveloped, is a blighted building, as well. He reiterated that again the grant is for counties under 50,000 people so that limits it in Northern Michigan and there is only \$350,000.00 available so it is going to be a very competitive grant and the maximum you can get is \$50,000.00 for one project.

Old Business:

- a. **Related to Goal #1 and Goal #4 it is important to consider, as discussed at our December meeting, that there are multiple fundraisers/capital campaigns but no clear presentation of fundraising efforts and sponsorship opportunities. This is a need to promote the success of all programs and projects.**

Chairperson Schulz stated she wants to schedule another fundraising meeting and does not know if Commissioner Chastain is still interested in participating. She gets a list of all the fundraisers that are happening and all of the groups that ask for sponsorship because we have many and there are many more coming down the pike and people that want to do capital campaigns and fundraisers. Commissioner Chastain said she still wants to work on fundraising with Chairperson Schulz. When they pick a date and time for a fundraising meeting they will share it with the rest of the distribution list.

- b. **Updates on the issues presented by Commissioner Horrocks at November meeting:
1) trailhead restrooms; 2) footbridge elevator; and 3) Kiwanis Park**

City Manager Eustice reported the trailhead restrooms are not locked at night. The police department checks the restrooms when they can. He noted there has been graffiti and some things have been taken. There have been no issues with people living in the restrooms.

Chairperson Schulz said there was a question with water being pumped out of the footbridge elevators. City Manager Eustice said he spoke with DPW Director Jason Karmol and the MDEQ won't let them put a sump pump in there because hydraulic fluid leaks in the base of the elevator shaft. Someone has to physically bail it out. The question was raised as to where the bailed water is then dumped.

Chairperson Schulz stated as they are looking at the Plan for green spaces, she wondered if there is an update on Kiwanis Park. There was a stated goal of the Kiwanis Club of getting restrooms and a picnic pavilion installed at the Park, wondering if this is something we are going to include in our Plan or maybe look at it in the future. City Manager Eustice replied we can look at it as a future plan; it is going to be completed by the Kiwanis Club eventually but we need to see to what

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extent they are going to complete it. It is not as far along as what they said it would be at this point. Once the Kiwanis Club is done we need to reevaluate what we can do with that Park. Commissioner Horrocks asked if there are grants that the Kiwanis Club can get from Kiwanis International. City Manager Eustice commented he knows the Kiwanis Club has gotten some monies but is not sure if they have gotten all the monies. He noted they did crowdfunding and raised \$50,000.00 with Kiwanis International contributing a significant amount of money so far. Chairperson Schulz asked who owns the Park property and if it is City property was it acquired through a land trust, etc. City Manager Eustice stated it is City property and does not know how it was acquired, noting it was part of the original Plat before 1900 and does not know if the City has owned it that long. Chairperson Schulz inquired if we should have title work information documented on all of the green spaces, as this is something we are going to have to address. City Manager Eustice noted there is title work done on the Water Street parking area and Major City Park and any other properties we acquired. We will have title work on the property we will obtain north of the County Marina but not on Gordon Turner Park. Chairperson Schulz asked when the City expects to get the additional property north of the County Marina. City Manager Eustice replied they hope it will transfer to the City by the end of February; there are some administrative costs involved to transfer the property. Commissioner LaLonde asked if water and sewer was run to that property before the paving was done. City Manager Eustice replied yes, the hook-ups are there. Chairperson Schulz said the Commission does not need to do any planning or discussion about possible use of that property at this time and just focus on what we have going on now. City Manager Eustice agreed. Commissioner Clouser commented the County Marina is planning on moving their gas pumps to the berm, north side of the Marina, wondering if that will interfere with the MDNR property. City Manager Eustice said the County will have to get easements from the City, which is one of the reasons we obtained the property and it is also going to get us some potential grant funding to develop that recreationally because of that. The County has earmarked \$400,000.00 for the new gas tanks and move them to the north side and get rid of the gas lines under the dock, so everything will be on land and eliminate that hazard. The Waterways Commission has given the County \$400,000.00. City Manager Eustice went on to state because they need use of that property we are going to write a grant through the MEDC and try and use the \$800,000.00 to match a grant to develop that property and Gordon Turner Park at no cost to the City. He is kind of skeptical as to whether or not it is going to work. We can get a maximum of \$750,000.00 from the MEDC can contribute without going through their Board. Commissioner Horrocks asked if the City has heard any more from the Yacht Club. City Manager Eustice replied yes, they still have interest in it. They would like to build a clubhouse somewhere in the community. He thinks they are going to end up buying a smaller piece of property that is a little more private and downsize their project because there are many members of the Club that don't want to spend money on it. Commissioner Chastain asked if an easement to the County would impede development. City Manager Eustice replied no, it is only an easement to get to the gas tanks and the City will have to keep it clear for fire purposes.

STAFF REPORT:

City Manager Eustice replied Parks & Recreation Director Hancock provided a brief Staff Report on the current activities via e-mail, which he did not print. He will e-mail it to the Commissioners. Chairperson Schulz asked how the Saturday nights are going. City Manager Eustice replied good, they are open from 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. and there are a lot of organizations that are buying pizza and water and bringing it to the high school kids. Chairperson

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Schulz asked if attendance is kept. City Manager Eustice replied they do, adding Director Hancock said it has been like 16 to 20 kids. Chairperson Schulz asked if the Parks & Recreation staff got approved for their wage increase. City Manager Eustice replies yes, both full-time and part-times staff received a 2% wage increase effective immediately.

COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS: None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Someone inquired on the \$25,000.00 grant for the plan for the kayak launch and canoe docks, is it possible that the \$25,000.00 can go a little bit further in the planning of more future development that we hope for, such as in Major City Park. Chairperson Schulz commented on the list written in the Plan of things we would like to see in Major City Park. She wondered in these things could be written into that drawing. City Manager Eustice said he does not know if the City can do it for that cost, but the City can always add some monies to it to do a complete plan. We will see to what extent they can work with for that kind of money when they are here on January 22. Chairperson Schulz asked if she had looked at the Michigan State Plan from five years ago, which was very elaborate. What we need is a scaled down and feasible version of that specific to that river bank and trails to the footbridge area, not necessarily the entire Park.

Chairperson Schulz asked if there was a conclusion or decision about connecting the trail to South Street or is this a trail sub-committee conversation. City Manager Eustice said that was talked about at the January 7 meeting. Chairperson Schulz then stated they will talk about it at the trail sub-committee meeting. She noted at the most recent MDNR meeting she attended it was mentioned the importance of having access via public streets and how you can designate your trails.

Mr. Rieger suggested adding in the engineering fee of \$25,000.00 an ADA accessible ramp for kayaks and boats. He and his wife have done quite a bit of research and he is not sure we need to have anything built to become a river trail/water trail town. City Manager Eustice said this was part of the original cost estimate – put in an ADA accessible launch adjacent to the existing boat launch. Mr. Phil Welch from Michigan Lake Products looked at it and said it would work. It is about a \$50,000.00 expense but it would work there. We wrote a \$150,000.00 and that was part of it, but the Great Lakes Fisheries Trust asked us to do some planning and design before they okay that part of the grant because all we gave them was cost estimates. Now we are going to do the planning and design part of it and then reapply in August to do all of that.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Catherine (Kate) Schulz, Chairperson

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Upcoming Meetings, Events and Dates:

- January 22, 2019 at 6:00 p.m., Library, on Trauma Informed Communities specific to youth sports and programs for coaches, volunteers and anyone that works with kids and families
- January 24, 2019 at 9:00 a.m., City Council Chambers, Trail Town Sub-Committee.
- February 14, 2019 at 9:00 a.m., Trail Town Sub-Committee.
- February 14, 2019 at 11:00 a.m., Fundraising Meeting.
- February 22, 2019, meeting with Tip-of-the-Mitt Watershed and talk about design with landscape architect – someone from the MDEQ will be there along with himself, Director Hancock, Caroline Keson and probably Keith Cheli.
- February 26, 2019, Amendment to Parks & Recreation Commission Ordinance on Council Agenda.
- End of February 2019 City will acquire the MDNR property north of County Marina
- Fundraising Sub-Committee meeting is yet to be determined, but they will on getting a list together, asking that Attachment F be looked at about programs and if someone has the contact information for programs to provide the same to Chairperson Schulz.
- Looking for someone to chair a sub-committee to address the formation of a recreation authority and to coordinate all of our recreational programs.
- February 20, 2019, Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting.