

**REGULAR PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING**  
**July 17, 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, Hayden, Stempky, LaLonde, Chastain, and Clouser  
Also Present: City Manager Eustice, Councilwoman Sara Johnston, Liaison and  
Parks & Recreation Director Hancock

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

*Motion by Horrocks seconded by LaLonde to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion carried.*

Commissioner Horrocks arrived.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Cheboygan's 130<sup>th</sup> Birthday** – Commissioner Stempky reported the Little League has decided they will participate and do concessions and runners for the Birthday Party. One thing raised as a concern was the bathrooms not working. Ms. Emily Eckhart stated that people can probably use the restrooms by the chamber across the river and that could be used as a little bit of a propaganda to push people into going over the bridge to the public restrooms. Everything is going as planned and they will be getting the flyers out. City Manager Eustice asked what field is going to be used. Commissioner Stempky replied the men's field for the softball games with slight restricted balls and one of the Little League fields to do sack races, bag tossing, etc. City Manager Eustice then asked are the men's fast pitch bathrooms unusable. Commissioner LaLonde replied no, they are working. Commissioner Stempky expressed surprise that the bathrooms were working. Parks & Recreation Director Hancock commented the bathrooms are working and he closed them last night at 11:00 p.m.

**Michigan Main Street Community Forum** – Chairperson Schulz stated there is a printout on all the items that were identified as concerns for the community from the April Michigan Main Street Community Forum, as well as areas for improvement. Parks and recreation was included in the improvements, so Director Hancock, Commissioner Stempky and Chairperson Schulz participated in an action planning session, noting what they said was that most of the items that were brought up were addressed in our five-year Recreation Plan, which came out just before the Forum. There is still a lot of talk about a pool and building some type of new community center or purchasing a building that is not being used in town right now for the purpose of a community center. Chairperson Schulz went on to state at the Forum they restated what is contained in the Recreation Plan that the Commission at this time is focusing on maintaining existing assets and not building anything new. They can explore other things in their next five year plan, but right now they are focusing on coordinating and improving everything we have. Commissioner Stempky commented the Main Street was not all about the parks and recreation, but is what the public brought up as concerns. Chairperson Schulz asked when the next Forum session is. Director Hancock replied September 25, with City Manager Eustice adding the Northern Lakes Economic Alliance will have manage the session and have a summary of what was talked about and what the community's goals are, etc. Commissioner Stempky said she had to leave for yoga class, but Ms. Emily Eckhart did say that as they move forward the rest of the group talked about how they can support these various

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other concerns on getting more of the groups working together rather than just throwing Parks & Recreation or the DDA under the bus. The Commission will receive the results of the Forum.

**Water Street Park** - Chairperson Schulz stated they are looking at connecting this Park to Gordon Turner Park and previously talked about MEDC grants asking the City Manager for an update. City Manager Eustice reported there is nothing new at this time, they were trying to tie some grant funding for the Gordon Turner Park with the Water Street Park through the MEDC in connection with the County Marina changing out their gas tanks, using that for a match. It is his understanding that is moving forward but we need control of the MDNR property north of the County Marina in order to get the grant established. As of yet an appraiser has not been selected. Commissioner Horrocks asked what moving forward means. City Manager Eustice says the grant has been approved for the tanks and the County Marina; the County is contributing \$400,000.00 and the Waterways Commission matched that for \$400,000.00. Now that they are three years out from when they decided to do it, the cost of the project is about 1.1 million dollars, so they are trying to find another \$300,000.00 to do the project. The project is engineered, everything is in place and the Commissioners have approved it. Chairperson Schulz commented moving forward but slowly,

**Felix Merchant Park** – Chairperson Schulz mentioned the need to establish a workgroup to address the Felix Merchant Park; the workgroup could be responsible for thinking about what features could be added to that Park. She would be happy to work with someone to write a grant for it, but we need to know what we are writing a grant for so anyone interested in being in the workgroup can let her know.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **Approval of June 19, 2019 Minutes -**

*Motion by Horrocks seconded by Clouser to approve the June 19, 2019 Parks & Recreation Commission meeting minutes. Motion carried.*

### **Recreation Plan Updates:**

**Goal 1. Maintenance and Development** – Chairperson Schulz stated these are projects we have applied for and are working on. We will get a report tonight on the Recreation Passport and the Fishing Pier Project in Major City Park. After our last meeting, our regional representative from the MDNR came to do a walk the site and met with Director Hancock, City Manager Eustice and Commissioner LaLonde so the representative could see the buildings we applied for funding to improve – all of the outbuildings with very few exceptions at the baseball fields are in desperate need of repair. It sounds like the project was a pretty strong candidate but we were just missing some things on our site plan. For example the plan included two vault bathrooms, but on our picture that we submitted we did not include a path to get to the bathrooms, so we could really improve our site plan quite a bit, but we were rushing and an engineered plan was something we would have to pay for and request service far in advance. Chairperson Schulz went on to state there was a follow-up call to talk about the site plan and any considerations, asking if the City Manager looked into access to the press boxes and if he heard back from Ms. Lindsey Ross of the MDNR. City Manager Eustice replied he did not hear back. Chairperson Schulz commented anything that is paid for with recreation passport money has to be ADA compliant, our plan includes improving the exterior of the press boxes no work is planned for the interior of press boxes, so the question was if it is just the exterior just it still have to be accessible; she is guessing the answer is yes. She then explained in the press box at the football field there is a second story door and if someone is chair bound then

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you use a lift to get them up there. She is assuming we would have to do something similar. City Manager Eustice said she is checking on that and did say that as long as the first floor is accessible and the bathrooms are accessible and are ADA compliant maybe it is going to be okay. Chairperson Schulz noted that the City Manager raised the question that only staff or authorized personnel are allowed up in the press boxes so we will see what they have to say about that. The next follow-up is September and we should know how we scored. City Manager Eustice commented he is going to try and summarize on an aerial photo everything we want to do to each of those buildings. Chairperson Schulz asked if he needed help with that, but City Manager Eustice said he can figure it out as it is just a listing of everything we are going to do to each building and where located, even though an aerial photo was provided. Ms., Ross does not know the difference between the Jim Elenbaas field and concession stand and the men's concession stand and wants it to be clearer,

**Goal 2. Programs** – Chairperson Schulz asked for a report on the public comments at the Public Library in regards to the fishing piers. City Manager Eustice said that really is a grant that we have a very good chance of getting, noting we already have the matching monies. There was some concern about the number of fishing piers and the project being on the east river bank just north of the Great Lakes Tissue property. The plan is to put 7 fishing piers over about a 900 foot stretch along the bank, which will be handicap accessible. They will be tied into the walkway that Connie and Dale Rieger are working on. The concern from the fishermen was these piers are going to tighten up the width of the river so that fishing boats passing each other are going to be tighter. The piers themselves will not stretch out into the river very much at all. Chairperson Schulz asked if people can still submit public comments on this to the City Manager. City Manager Eustice replied yes, noting the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council is helping with the City with the grant through the Great Lakes Fisheries rust Fund. Commissioner Clouser asked if the new fishing piers will stick out as much as the ones near the bridge. City Manager Eustice replied no. not even close. The issue right now is that they will go out into the water about four feet, but the river bank is about six feet wider than it ever has been. When the river goes down the piers will be right on the bank. They are going to look at the three most northern piers and see if they can adjust them because as you go north on the river where the last three piers are it is the narrowest part of the river. City Manager Eustice noted that there is no reason to continue to obtain public comment because the entire application has not been submitted yet, and it does not need to be done until August 15.

[Regarding the trail in Major City Park] Mr. Horrocks asked if that trail would be paved. Commissioner Schulz noted that asphalt surfacing the length of the existing trail was included in the application. Someone commented on riding the trail from home to town there are several spots on the trail where even riding a bike is hard to navigate and there is no way a wheelchair can navigate it. Someone commented wherever the sun hits the packed Afton stone because of the loam they use, the sun dries it out and then it is not packable.

Chairperson Schulz commented she received the maintenance agreement with the MDNR. One of the things the Trail Sub-Committee is working on is a friends of the trails group, which would be a similar group to the Trailblazers, MDNR, and snowmobile clubs and we would have a similar group that helps with trail maintenance and identifies issues. Someone commented she was walking her dog down the trail and there was a pickup trucking driving down the trail who informed her they were taking care of downed trees. Chairperson Schulz commented this has been addressed in the Trails Council meeting.

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[Regarding the new fishing piers] Commissioner LaLonde commented one concern he has is where the buildings are on the west bank because it is pretty narrow there in a 200 foot section. If the fishing piers are out in the river four feet that could be a concern with boats coming up and down river. Chairperson Schulz explained the piers would be four feet from the bank of the river, so they are really not in the river at all. The wood crib pier would be the most shallow of the three options, as opposed to the concrete or dock style pier. She asked that City Manager Eustice get the pier styles posted online. She then stated the piers have to be handicap accessible and thinks four feet would be the minimum; anything less than four feet would not give the turning radius needed for accessibility. Someone stated where the piers are going to be he feels the river is going to be too shallow for boats to be going up the river anyway. Chairperson Schulz will send out a new picture of the wood crib pier. City Manager Eustice went to retrieve photos of the piers. Discussion held. Commissioner LaLonde asked why the piers cannot be recessed more. City Manager Eustice said he believes it is because of the river right now, noting there is water underneath the docks; as the river subsides the dock is eventually going to be on land. The river will not crest until October. Additional discussion held. Commissioner Chastain commented she was told that basically when water is high there will be water on those steps of the fishing piers, but when the water is low the steps will be dry. Commissioner Stempky stated part of the project was to help heal that part of the river bank because there is a lot of erosion. City Manager Eustice added that part of the river is unsafe, noting there are kids that fish down there that are sitting on the edge of the bank.

Chairperson Schulz stated the contact information will be shared for Caroline Keson at the Tip of the Mitt Watershed who is accepting all public comments; the City will also update this information on their website.

Commissioner Stempky reported on the status of the program directory noting they are moving forward and we are on target for August. Chairperson Schulz commented Commissioner Stempky and Ms. Emily Eckhart are adding information to our google sheet which will be imported into a database so we will have a whole electronic listing of all recreational, including athletics and cultural opportunities all in one place. This will be posted on the City's website; the City Manager will contact Mr. Ginop to see if there is any database platform available where we will be able to manipulate that information in a wide variety of ways so the public can see everything that is available in Cheboygan. Commissioner Stempky commented most of the supporters are happy this is happening.

**Goal 3. Trail Town Master Plan - Chairperson Schulz** commented with regard to trail maintenance, the group that worked on the designated trail application and trail town application that were submitted to Pure Michigan and the MEDC on June 1 continues to meet as it is a requirement of that program that you have a group that remains dedicated to supporting the trails, maintaining and improving the trails. They are meeting the second Thursday of every month at 9:00 a.m. As part of this, they are going to establish a friends of the trails, a volunteer group that will get involved in trail maintenance because the maintenance agreement we have with regard to our trails right now is not very comprehensive.

Chairperson Schulz went on to state they are going to begin the water trail application which is very similar to the land trail application; when they initially started the process the group wanted to apply for a designated land trail, designated water trail and trail town all at once, which was a lot of work. Because they had a lot of resources and information in place they started with the

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designated land trail and trail town applications. They will probably submit an application for designated water trail by the first of next year for the Cheboygan County part of the Inland Waterway. On August 1 at 9:00 a.m. they are having a special workgroup meeting to do a preliminary run through the application. Also, with regards to trails, she asked if Miss Dig has been called in order to get the directional signs from the North Central Trail to the downtown put up. City Manager Eustice said this has not been done yet, noting they have eight signs to put up. Chairperson Schulz said at the June meeting, it was stated they hoped to have the sign installation started after the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. City Manager Eustice said he will ask DPW Crewleader Fein as Ms. Guenther from the DDA was to set up the locations; they were going to put them up last year and the MDNR told us we could not put them close to the trail. Now the MDNR is lightening up on some of these things. Chairperson Schulz asked if the City Manager is comfortable in stating they will be up before Labor Day. City Manager Eustice replied yes.

Commissioner Horrocks said in the Pigeon River, they submit requests and get boy scouts and sports groups (football teams) to come in and work certain programs. He is hoping he can get Director Hancock together with [unsure of his contact's name] to talk about how some of the programs in the Pigeon River are done. Someone asked if friends of the trails could organize the different groups to do this kind of thing. Commissioner Horrocks replied yes.

Chairperson Schulz said one of the first public activities of our trail committee will be in conjunction with Cheboygan's 130<sup>th</sup> Birthday; we are going to dedicate the Duncan Bay Trail and the east of the river trail in Major City Park both on August 24. She says she has an Agenda and would like City Manager Eustice to announce the people that will be doing the dedication. At 10:00 a.m. they will be at Duncan Bay for a little presentation and ribbon cutting at 10:30 a.m. The Little Traverse Conservancy is working on the press release. Commissioner Horrocks commented he has a PA system that could be used for these dedications. Chairperson Schulz went on to state they will then go to the Major City Park where the City Manager will talk and introduce the Cheboygan County Community Foundation, who is going to dedicate the trail. The ribbon will be cut for the east of the river trail at the same time they are going to announce the naming contest. This is all tentative and is subject to change. Following the dedication, they will go over the footbridge into Washington Park for cake and coffee which will bring us up to noon when all of the birthday events start. She then noted the Storywalk has been put in and is very cute. Chairperson Schulz commented she has been working with the Riegers, Trail Committee, Chamber of Commerce (who is working with Ms. Guenther and the DDA), and Commissioner Stempky is aware of this along with the Birthday Planning Committee. When the information is solidified, everyone will receive it.

**Goal 4. Recreation Authority** – Chairperson Schulz noted at the last meeting they talked about their being a committee of City Council that is working on the recreation authority and asked if there is any report. Councilwoman Johnston explained that is not the Committee's focus, so thinks it would probably be best until they have a recreation authority Committee. The Council is obviously very interested in doing a recreation authority push. She thinks they should have a committee just focused on the messaging and planning and getting everything moving. Chairperson Schulz asked for anyone interested in a sub-committee to talk about a recreation authority, not implementation at this point. Councilwoman Johnston added it would be coming up with a plan for reaching out to the townships and developing a message. Chairperson Schulz said hopefully the sub-committee will start to get the message out at the same time we are getting the coordinated

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program information out. Commissioner Stempky said they talked about the program information including resources such as the trails map and various spurs to make it more inviting and available to people. Chairperson Schulz commented on the need for a marketing plan, which they are talking about in the trail committee, specific to what we have going on here. Someone mentioned getting someone who has a Bachelors in marketing. Councilwoman Johnston said she would be happy to throw something together.

**Appoint or Reappoint Chairperson** – Chairperson Schulz commented her term was up last month, asking if anyone is interested in being Chairperson.

***Motion by Stempky seconded by LaLonde to reappoint Catherine Schulz as Chairperson. Motion carried unanimously.***

### **UPCOMING DATES:**

**‘Protecting our Coastline’ tomorrow, July 18,** Two different sessions at the MSU Extension Office; study to prepare for Coastline – 2:30 p.m. or 3:30 p.m. Call 517-432-1124 for more information or if you want to RSVP.

**August 1, 2019** – 9:00 a.m. – Run through of the Water Trail Application [workgroup of the Trail Sub-Committee)

**August 8, 2019** – 9:00 a.m. - Trail Subcommittee Meeting

**August 21, 2019** – Regular Recreation Commission Meeting – 6:00 p.m.

**August 24, 2019** – Cheboygan’s 130<sup>th</sup> Birthday & Trail Dedications

### **STAFF REPORT:**

Director Hancock reported his Department is busy cutting grass and it is their busiest time of year. The swings are up and DPW did a great job installing them. They finally found a way to get black dirt cheap for the bike track and the two berms in front of the Ice Pavilion are there to keep the water in front of them; they are taking dirt from there because they do not need them so big. They are building big hills. He noted they are having trouble with poison ivy and think they have it wiped out. There is an employee who is donating the use of his tractor and on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and is doing an unbelievable job. By the middle of August he thinks the track will be packed so the kids can get up on it. As stated, there will be big hills but there will also be a little trail in the middle of that field for the little tikes with little bumps and a little circle. Commissioner Horrocks said there is a new killer out for poison ivy, which is a gallon of white cider vinegar, a cup of Epson salt, and dawn soap. Director Hancock commented they were using the same thing on the trail and it works good.

Director Hancock then reported there is a new program this summer, Summer Play Group, infants to 5. On Wednesday you can bring your little ones over to the Recreation Center; Sandy Woodruff runs the program for the Intermediate School District (COPESD) in the gym with play toys were the kids can run around. Ms. Woodruff started every other Wednesday in June, because she did not think she would have enough kids, but it turned out to be pretty busy so next year he thinks we can see it every Wednesday starting in June through the end of August.

Director Hancock commented Pickle Ball is going very strong and they are still using indoor courts. Pickle ball courts were going to be built at the high school but the bid came in too high; they are

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still debating on it but it looks like they are not going to be able to do it this year. It will be on the agenda to build next year. Open gym is very strong on Tuesdays and Thursdays with 17 guys in yesterday; there are guys from Alanson, Petoskey and Rogers City. They lost the City Beach for a day, there was water all the way to the parking lot; they just paid \$1,000.00 for sand and lost half of it. The water has receded now but the beach is small. A group of 7 kids and 2 supervisors from Camp Walden volunteered to come in today and they did the beach and walkways. Director Hancock went on to state the flowers on the lampposts and downtown are being watered by his staff and they had trouble with the flowers at the Recreation Center because they did not realize the dirt he brought from Derrick Dotski was compost; it is like planting flowers in fertilizer; they have to be watered all the time and they turn yellow. Commissioner Horrocks suggested putting a cup of lime and Epson salt (liquid) in the flowers and when watered it will kick the fertilizer out of there and they will green right back up.

Director Hancock further reported his Department is doing overtime cuts for those that do not cut their yards; they did basketball camp at the high school; the tents worms in Washington Park were taken care of; the Riegers are doing unbelievable work at the trail and the storybook walk.

### **COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS:**

Commissioner Clouser said she has been getting some comments about Kiwanis Park that the lamps do not go to all parts of the Park. They do to where the swings are but not to the landing on the other side. She also received an inquiry if there was going to be another ramp built across the grass directly to the other side of something, as they are having trouble pushing wheelchairs and strollers through the grass. City Manager Eustice said he will ask, noting he knows they are not done with the ramp yet but he does not know about all the way across the Park. Director Hancock commented this is Kiwanis' Park. Also it has been noted on Rant and Rave there has been trouble with kids at the Park. City Manager Eustice replied the City Police Department is trying to address this.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Someone commented they were walking on the other side of the River by the ballfields and the City workers were cleaning up crap on the sidewalks and throwing it in the River. People were down there fishing when this was being done, which should not have happened. He went on to state he noticed a logo on bike racks with 'Trail for All Seasons' and likes that and we should push that as a Cheboygan thing. Chairperson Schulz said that is in our marking plan in our Pure Michigan application. The logo was also on the front of our application.

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

*Motion by LaLonde seconded by Clouser to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 p.m.; motion carried.*

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Catherine (Kate) Schulz, Chairperson