



THOMAS TOWNSHIP
REGULAR PARK COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
8215 Shields Drive, Saginaw, MI 48609
October 23, 2023
6:30pm

1. The regular commission meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chairman, Scott Branch.
2. PRESENT: Rusch, Sova, Blower, Hoffman, Branch
ABSENT: Aimar, Alworden

ALSO PRESENT: Nature Center & Preserve Coordinator Lynda Thayer
3. Pledge of Allegiance recited.
4. Motion made by Sova, seconded by Rusch, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

THOMAS TOWNSHIP REGULAR PARK COMMISSION MEETING
8215 Shields Drive. Saginaw, MI 48609
October 23, 2023 @ 6:30 p.m.
AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Pledge of Allegiance
4. Approval of Agenda
5. Approval of September 25th, 2023 minutes
6. Approval of October 2023 Expenditures
7. Public Comment
It is requested that you state your name and address for the record.
8. New Business
 - a. Haunted Train Report.
 - b. Winter Wonderland update.
9. Old Business
 - a. None

10. Reports
 - a. Parks Report: Attached
 - b. Nature Center and Preserve Report: Attached
 - c. Sports Committee Report: None
 - d. Concert Committee Report: None
 - e. Finance Committee Report: None
 - f. Commissioners: None
11. Other Business
12. Adjournment

5. Motion made by Rusch, seconded by Hoffman, to approve September 25th, 2023 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

6. Motion made by Sova, seconded by Hoffman, to approve October 2023 Expenditures as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

7. Public Comment: None

8. Public Hearing: None

9. New Business:

- a. Haunted Train Report: Parks Director John Corriveau reported that the Haunted Train Ride & House was a great success and raised \$26,500. Despite the first Friday night being cancelled due to rain, the next three nights averaged to be almost identical to the past 2 years. Park Commissioners discussed the need to recruit more volunteers.
- b. Winter Wonderland Update: Corriveau reported that the Winter Wonderland Committee has approved Laurie Middlebrook to be the band for this year's event. A new layout to enclose the Farmers Market pavilion for live music with a seating area. The entrance fee will remain \$5, and a new movie screen will show short Christmas movies for children. The Roenicke Light Show has been cancelled this year.

10. Old Business: None

11. Reports:

- a. Parks Report: Presented by Park Director John Corriveau.

ROETHKE PARK

Haunted Train was rained out the first Friday but we had a very strong Saturday and made \$9,100 in sales. We are hopeful for good weather for next weekend and to finish strong.

ROBERTS PARK

We had to cancel our last weekend for soccer due to heavy rains, so we will make up our games on October 21st. Swan Valley Soccer has ended. After next weekend, we will be pulling nets and preparing the fields for winter. We have also started mapping out the 2023 Winter Wonderland event on December 8th and 9th. Tim's light show will not be back this year due to some family issues and them not having the time to invest in getting it ready this year.

COMMUNITY PARK

None

DAY PARK

None

SPORTS AND PROGRAMS

Fall Soccer wraps up next weekend. Registration for Boys Basketball, Basketball Skills Clinic and Archery are open and filling up.

NATURE CENTER PRESERVE

The Preserve is open daily from dawn to dusk. Not all the trails are open, as Dow is working on bank cleanups in two areas.

- b. Nature Center & Preserve Report: Presented by Nature Center Coordinator Lynda Thayer. Thayer noted that visitor numbers are increasing and discussed new calendar of events.

NATURE PRESERVE UPDATE

The trails are open from dawn to dusk and are being steadily used. The Dow work in the northern six acres of the preserve and two bank management areas is underway. Work started in earnest the last week of September and should be done by November. While the work is in progress, trail access will be limited.

NATURE CENTER UPDATE

The nature center building is currently open from 12-4 Tuesday through Friday. Attendance per day has been as low as three and as high as forty-three. We have begun to offer memberships and currently have eleven members. In November, we are adjusting our schedule and are offering programs. See attached calendar.

DNR LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND 2019 GRANT UPDATE

After all expenses have been submitted, we still have over \$30,000 on the table that we are planning to use for the interpretive signs in the preserve area. The bid was awarded to Barrett Sign at the October Township Board meeting. When the signs are done and installed, the grant will be closed out.

DNR TRUST FUND 2021 GRANT UPDATE

This grant will extend the gravel from the end of the current trail to the observation deck on the east and the breach in the berm on the west side, as well as provide multiple seating and observation areas and a fishing platform. The EGLE permit for the grant has been approved. A soil erosion and sediment control permit needs to be in place as well, then the work can be bid out. We are hoping to have the grant work start in the spring.

NATURAL RESOURCES DAMAGE ASSESSMENT (NRDA) UPDATE

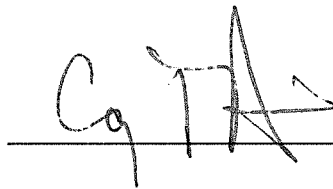
We are working on continuing the work started with planting and habitat restoration in the preserve. The drought and then heavy rains this summer put a wrench in some of our plans. We have spent over \$160,000 of our original \$382,000 allotment, mainly on equipment, plants, seeds, and invasive species control.

SAGINAW COUNTY ARPA FUNDS UPDATE

We are wrapping up our ARPA funds work. We have approximately \$63,000 left of the \$300,000. Additional furniture, technology items, and additional display items should wrap up the spending plan.

12. Other Business: None

13. Adjournment: Motion made by Rusch, seconded by Sova to adjourn the meeting at 6:53 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.



Craig Aimar, Secretary

12-18-23

Dated

The next regular Park Commission Meeting will be Monday, November 27, 2023 at the Public Safety Administration Building, 8215 Shields Drive, Saginaw MI 48609.