

**PROCEEDINGS OF
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF WEST BLOOMFIELD
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
Township Board Room
4550 Walnut Lake Road
West Bloomfield, Michigan 48323
Thursday, March 26, 2020 APPROVED 4.23.2020**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chair Kirkwood

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Vincent Kirkwood
 Treasurer Merv Aronoff
 Commissioner David Barash
 Commissioner Robert Brooks
 Commissioner Michele Hembree
 Secretary David Barash

Staff Present: Jennifer Tucker, Executive Director
 Joe Ketchum, Parks Superintendent
 Kelly Hyer, Recreation Superintendent
 Administrative Assistant Patricia Helson
 Township Liaison Warshay
 Gregory Need, Esq.

Absent: Commissioner Sukenic

Public: None

PUBLIC FORUM

Township Liaison Warshay reported that the Board's first virtual meeting was held this past Monday where three emergency resolutions were adopted: The Board declared a State of Emergency and two Resolutions were passed regarding FMLA and Sick Leave regarding emergency responders. The Board also made a budget amendment of \$200,00 to fund the emergency management operations.

A couple public hearings were adjourned until the April meetings. Contract renewals were passed for the Township engineers, Township attorneys and the Environmental Consultant. Consideration for Fireworks Permits was moved until the April 20, 2020 meeting. The Board is looking at work that needs to be done in the police station so there will be a study on that issue. New computers had to be purchased for all the police cars because the old computers will not work anymore with the network.

The Road Commission sent out a notice that the work at Maple and Middlebelt Roads has been moved to April 15th.

Commissioner Brooks asked if there is anything the Commission should know about the Township's business continuation plan that would affect the Parks operations. Mr. Warshay said despite the fact that Town Hall is closed and many people are working from home, there is full staffing at this point. Township Supervisor Kaplan is in touch with Executive Director Tucker regularly so things are being coordinated.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Treasurer Aronoff, second by Secretary Barash, to approve the agenda, as presented.

Ayes: Aronoff, Barash, Brooks, Hembree, Kirkwood, Wenczel

Nays: None

Absent: Sukenic

Motion Carried 6-0

CONSENT AGENDA

Items A through G are Consent Agenda matters considered to be routine by the Commission and enacted by one motion unless a member of the Commission wishes to discuss one of the topics.

- A. Approval of Minutes from the February 27, 2020 Regular Commission Meeting.
- B. Approval of the February Financial Reports.
- C. Approval of prepaid expenditures in the amount of \$199, 544.31. Expenditures in the amount of \$326,232.03. Credit card refunds totaling \$1, 327.00 for the month of February 2019.
- D. Receipt of Memo re: Abridged March 26, 2020 WBRC meeting from Director Tucker dated March 18, 2020.
- E. Receipt of the Executive Committee Agenda dated March 18, 2020.
- F. Receipt of the Finance Committee Agenda dated March 26, 2020.
- G. Receipt of the Staff Report.

Motion by Treasurer Aronoff, second by Secretary Barash, to approve Items A through G on the Consent Agenda.

Ayes: Aronoff, Barash, Brooks, Hembree, Kirkwood, Wenczel

Nays: None

Absent: Sukenic

Motion Carried 6-0

COVID-19 Update

Executive Director Tucker stated the parks system is in good hands. She cannot say enough about staff and how dedicated, responsive and flexible they have been. Most of staff is operating from home and they are now starting to assemble a schedule in which they are not all in the building at the same time. On their way out they disinfect door handles and restrooms to ensure they are being cognizant of each other. Parks staff is on a rotating schedule and parks are continuing to be maintained. There is no more than one person per vehicle. They feel they are doing their best to keep staff safe. In regards to patrons, some hard decisions were necessary. The playgrounds have been mandated closed. The dog park is also closed as petting dogs other than your own is a potential transmission of the virus. They are looking at closing some of the other facilities where they are seeing folks gather; these are very hard decisions but they have to keep the community's best interest at heart. Decisions are not being taken lightly. As of what is known today, facilities will not be open until April 20, 2020. This date is subject to change as new information or executive orders from the Governor are obtained. Currently, online registration is open but many classes have had to be cancelled and refunded.

Director Tucker said she is part of the Emergency Operations Team and they are doing everything they can to help the community. She is in communication with Supervisor Kaplan nearly every day and they will

continue to keep the communication lines open. She encourages people to go out and exercise but be mindful of keeping social distance.

Secretary Barash thanked Director Tucker and her team for everything they are doing. He attended the Township's emergency meeting last week and was approached by a couple of Township officials who said the nicest things about Director Tucker and her staff and their efforts as part of the Emergency Operations Team.

NEW BUSINESS

- A) Consideration to Approve the Millage Language and Placement on the August 2020 Ballot for renewal.

Director Tucker stated that in 2019, the Park Commission made a motion to place the "Active" Millage renewal question on the ballot for the August 2020 Primary Election. This was a millage question that was going to be presented last year but the ballot was very heavily populated with other initiatives so they decided to wait until this year. The corrected millage yield amount will be added after it has been calculated. With a proposal that is a renewal, the language has to stay very similar to the original millage question. After the Park Commission approves the initial language, it will then be reviewed by the WBPRC legal counsel, submitted for approval of the West Bloomfield Township Board and the County Elections Office.

Renewal of Existing Parks and Recreation Millage

Shall the Charter Township of West Bloomfield be authorized to continue to levy up to ¼ mil tax for a period of ten years (2020 – 2030 inclusive) only for the acquisition, development, maintenance and operation of Township parks and places of recreation by the West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation Commission. It is estimated that approval of this proposal would result in the authorization to collect \$000,000.00 in the first year of levy.

Motion by Commissioner Wenczel, second by Treasurer Aronoff, to approve the millage language and placement on the August 2020 Primary Ballot for renewal.

Ayes: Aronoff, Barash, Brooks, Hembree, Kirkwood, Wenczel
Nays: None
Absent: Sukenic
Motion Carried 6-0

- B) Consideration to Approve the Creation of a Senior Services Facility Manager.

Director Tucker said it is hard to put into words how incredible successful Connect has been. From the January 15, 2020 opening through February they had already achieved their goal of 300 members. Staff is learning that the management of that facility is different than the management of the RAC in that some of the participants need more time and energy to have their needs taken care of. Staff wants to make sure Senior Services is done well. The plan was to have the Senior Services Facility Manager in the 2021 budget but at this juncture and because of the popularity of the space, they feel it is necessary to do this now.

Treasurer Aronoff asked if any candidates is someone who is currently working there. Director Tucker said currently they do not have a candidate that matches the prerequisites that they are asking for. The schooling and experience they are looking for this position they do not possess in-house. Commissioner Hembree asked if they are looking for someone from West Bloomfield to fill this role and if the salary range

for this position can be looked at compared to another recreation position. Director Tucker said she did gather information from the neighboring parks directors to ensure the salary was comparable. They want the position to be able to grow and advance. She also sees a potential Senior Superintendent position from this in the future. If a good candidate is from West Bloomfield that is even better. Secretary Barash said they all look forward to growing these services for the senior community so this will be an important role. He thinks it will be a slow growth before people are excited to be out in the public and be with others so there will be ample time for a new employee to adjust to this position.

Treasurer Aronoff asked if there is any construction ongoing in the space. Director Tucker said no construction is taking place other than what is being done in-house.

Motion by Commissioner Brooks, second by Secretary Barash, to approve the creation of a Senior Services Facility Manager position, timing TBD.

Ayes: Aronoff, Barash, Brooks, Hembree, Kirkwood, Wenczel

Nays: None

Absent: Sukenic

Motion Carried 6-0

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A) Consideration to Accept the Evaluation of Executive Director (Closed Session)

The Executive Committee as indicated in the WBPRC Bylaws has evaluated the Executive Director's performance for the 2019 work year. The Committee's findings will be discussed with the Executive Director in closed session. The meeting will be reopened for a motion of acceptance of the evaluation findings.

Chairman Kirkwood asked what is the purpose of Mr. Need's attendance at the Closed Session. Mr. Need said there are certain strictures on conducting Closed Sessions for personnel evaluations and he is there to answer any questions about what can and cannot be done and to make sure everyone stays on track. Commissioner Hembree said there has never been an attorney present in Closed Sessions before and she is concerned about Mr. Need attending; there has never been an attorney present in Director Tucker's last two evaluations and she is concerned about his presence. Treasurer Aronoff said there has been an attorney present in Closed Sessions in previous years. Mr. Need said it is up to a majority of the Commission to determine whether or not he should be in the closed session. Commissioner Hembree said it appears as if the Commission is changing the way they do this process and it is being done at the last minute. She does not think this decision should be made at the last minute.

Chairman Kirkwood said that before they evaluate the Executive Director the next time he thinks the Commission should look at the process of how they conduct their Closed Session to evaluate Director Tucker. The Executive Committee will meet on it and they can discuss the process moving forward.

Motion by Treasurer Aronoff, second by Secretary Barash, to allow Gregory Need, Esq to be present during the Closed Session.

Ayes: Aronoff, Barash, Wenczel

Nays: Brooks, Hembree, Kirkwood

Absent: Sukenic

Motion Carried 3-3

Mr. Need said a motion requires four votes to pass so therefore the motion fails.

Motion by Treasurer Aronoff, second by Secretary Barash, to go into Closed Session.

Ayes: Aronoff, Barash, Brooks, Hembree, Kirkwood, Wenczel
Nays: None
Absent: Sukenic
Motion Carried 6-0

Motion by Treasurer Aronoff, second by Commissioner Brooks, to accept the evaluation of Executive Director Tucker.

Ayes: Aronoff, Barash, Brooks, Hembree, Kirkwood, Wenczel
Nays: None
Absent: Sukenic
Motion Carried 6-0

PUBLIC FORUM

Joanne Tioran thanked the Commission for doing the meeting via Zoom. She thinks it is excellent and she appreciates it. Commissioner Hembree gave a shout out to everyone who has been looking out for their neighbors. She also thanked everyone who is sewing and trying to make masks as PPE. She also sent out blessings to Chief Flynn and Chief Patton and the Township Board as well as Parks and Recreation staff to stay healthy.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Brooks said that social distancing is very important and parks staff should not be the ones to enforce this. He made a plea to the public to collectively care about the families in West Bloomfield and parks are available as an outlet but as the weather improves there has been an increase in parks usage; respect one another and practice social distancing.

Treasurer Aronoff echoed the recommendations about social distancing and staying home. After looking at many videos and reading many articles about Coronavirus, it is his opinion that everyone should go on the internet and read about the foods that could possibly boost your immune system. Commissioner Wenczel advised everyone to wear a mask and gloves and disinfect. It is in everyone's best interest to overreact. She thanked those on the front lines who are doing so much. She is so thankful for the parks as an escape.

Chairman Kirkwood mentioned the 48th Annual Community Awards Breakfast. He is not sure that is still taking place on May 8th. Director Tucker said it has been moved to October. The Coalition Gala has also been moved into October. The Ferrari Fundraiser has been postponed as well. Chairman Kirkwood gave a shout out to Superintendents Hyer and Ketchum who attended the meeting tonight.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Commission, Treasurer Aronoff made a motion to adjourn, and unanimously supported. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Secretary David Barash

Pamela St. Peter
Recording Secretary

(As a permanent record, an audio tape of this meeting in its entirety is on file and will remain at the Parks and Recreation offices where it may be heard.)