

**PROCEEDINGS OF
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF WEST BLOOMFIELD
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
Township Board Room
4550 Walnut Lake Road
West Bloomfield, Michigan 48323
Thursday, September 27, 2018**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Brooks

ROLL CALL

Present: Treasurer Merv Aronoff
Chairman Robert Brooks
Acting Secretary Fiszman-Kirsch
Commissioner Michele Hembree
Commissioner Jerry Sukenic
Commissioner Sally Wenczel

Staff Present: Joe Ketchum, Parks Superintendent
Ruth Lyons, Finance Accountant
Township Liaison Warshay

Absent: None

Public: 4

PUBLIC FORUM

None.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Treasurer Aronoff, second by Commissioner Wenczel to approve the agenda as revised.

Ayes: Aronoff, Brooks, Fiszman-Kirsch, Hembree, Sukenic, Wenczel

Nays: None

Absent: None

Motion Carried

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 August 23, 2018 Regular Commission Meeting.
- B. Approval of the August Financial Reports.
- C. Approval of prepaid expenditures in the amount of \$491,454.35. August expenditures in the amount of \$100,727.39. Credit card refunds totaling \$6,859.50 for the month of August 2018.
- D. Approval of the Revised 2019 Park Commission Meeting Schedule.
- E. Acceptance of the Resignation Letter from Mr. Joe Green.

- F. Approval of the addition of a Roth Savings Option for the ICMA 457 Retirement Plan as indicated by the West Bloomfield Pension Board.
- G. Receipt of the October 9, 2018 WBPRC Special Meeting Tentative Agenda.

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

Ayes: Aronoff, Brooks, Fizman-Kirsch, Hembree, Sukenic, Wenczel
Nays: None
Absent: None
Motion Carried

Commission Candidate Self-Introduction

Chairman Brooks stated that Commissioner Joe Green served on the Parks and Recreation Commission for 8 years and the commission will be making a resolution for him; he will be sorely missed on the commission. The executive team has met with some candidates that were brought to them either by people from the township or had themselves expressed interest and these candidates were then vetted. In that vetting they have found a candidate they would like the commission to meet. It is the executive team's job to bring someone before the commission within 45 days of the effective date of the resignation. Chairman Brooks then introduced David Barash.

Mr. Barash said he appreciates the opportunity to speak to the commission in consideration of filling the open seat on the Parks and Recreation Commission. He is a financial consultant, married with two children. He has been a resident of West Bloomfield for 16 years. The path that led him here tonight started about two years ago when he realized his children were getting older and he thought it time to start doing something for himself, independent of his wife and children. He joined the West Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce and is now a member of the board of directors. He is a regular participant on the Cable Community Panel for the Cable Commission. He also continued to expand his education of the township by attending many Township Board, Planning Commission and ZBA meetings. Attending those meetings made him appreciate those who serve their communities. After getting to know many people on various boards he was introduced to Executive Director Jennifer Tucker and immediately scheduled a meeting to learn more about Parks and Recreation. Director Tucker's attitude and enthusiasm gave him a reason to consider Parks and Recreation as a place to serve his community. Everything this commission does is about fostering education and building places for people to have fun. He feels his 18 years in hotel operations and special event planning will benefit West Bloomfield and those who come to visit. He believes he is well adept at taking on projects from conception to completion. He understands and welcomes the opinions of others, their needs and cultural differences and he would like to continue the longstanding goal of the commission to grow a vibrant community. He would like to do something worthwhile and impactful for the community. Mr. Barash continued by saying that he has firsthand knowledge of the many parks programs and facilities as they have spent many days on the playgrounds and ball fields with their children, swimming at the RAC and attending events. His wife also enjoys the extensive trail system. He would be excited and dedicated to help others achieve and build lifelong memories in West Bloomfield.

Commissioner Hembree asked Mr. Barash if he has volunteered in the community before. Mr. Barash said he has done a lot of volunteer work in his life. He was an EMT in New York for about 7 years in two different ambulance companies. He has also done charitable work and worked in food banks. Treasurer Aronoff asked Mr. Barash to tell the commission some of the things that he likes about West Bloomfield. Mr. Barash said he has been to most of the parks in the township. He believes the condition and upkeep of the parks is wonderful. The parks are clean, the ball fields are well maintained and he loves the trail expansions. He and his wife see progress; when there is room for improvement things develop. The Pickle ball courts are new and different and current. His children enjoyed Traffic Town. He thinks there is opportunity for enjoyment for every age group. He is also amazed at the Recreation programming.

Township Liaison Warshay said he met Mr. Barash when he was interested in joining the ZBA. He was quite impressed with his knowledge and background and caring for the community and he thinks he would be an excellent choice. Commissioner Fiszman-Kirsch said that the commissioners often need to make difficult decisions such as getting rid of a property, and asked Mr. Barash if he is able to do so. Mr. Barash said those decisions will require a lot of joint conversations between the commissioners and residents as the needs of the community may not always be about what is needed now but making decisions for the long term good of the community. He said he will always try and make the best decisions for the community. Chairman Brooks asked what Mr. Barash sees as being the challenges in executing the township's Strategic Plan. Mr. Barash said it is considering the long terms effects that a project might have and what the impact might be in relationship to the way the township is moving demographically and the need to keep a balanced community. He wants this to be a community for every age group which is why he is not only excited about senior housing but also the new splash pad.

Chairman Brooks said Mr. Barash's candidacy will be discussed at the upcoming Special Meeting. He thanked Mr. Barash for attending tonight's meeting.

STAFF REPORT

Chairman Brooks stated that Executive Director Tucker and Recreation Superintendent Hyer are out of town at National Parks Week in Indianapolis. Parks Superintendent Ketchum presented the Administration report. The Family Aquatic Center redesign was approved by the Township Board this past Monday; it is now at the DEQ. Once it is approved by the DEQ the architect will put a bid package together. Construction should start in early 2019. The Name the New Spray Park Contest had approximately 200 entries. The top three entries will be selected and will be open to public voting on October 1st. The WBPRC Senior Advisory Team (SAT) had its first meeting on August 1st. Staff gave an overview of WBPRC, its Mission Statement and current programming balance to the 7 members in attendance of the 9 member group. Staff is looking forward to working with the new SAT to make recommendations to the commission for senior activities and projects in the future. The next meeting was set to occur on September 6th.

Superintendent Ketchum next presented the Parks report. Staff continues to look for part-time and full-time seasonal help with fall clean ups and getting ready for the winter. It is a flexible job with flexible hours. Cricket was a great addition to the summer activities, filling in the space when baseball and softball ends at Drake Sports Park. Superintendent Ketchum stated that this is budget season and staff has been doing a lot of equipment demonstrations. Drake Detention Pond renovations are almost finished. The basketball court at Bloomfield Knolls has been removed and the new replacement court has been excavated, stone base installed and the first course of asphalt has been installed. The court was moved closer to the front of the park, trying to get it away from the back corner and houses so the activity does not disturb the neighbors. Staff has been busy with parking lot crack sealing and scraping; this is done on a yearly basis.

Commissioner Wenczel asked if the Senior Advisory Team will have a liaison that will report to the WBPRC meetings. Superintendent Ketchum said he does not know the answer and it is a question best answered by Superintendent Hyer.

Superintendent Ketchum next presented the Recreation report. He said it was a great summer of camps in the township. The Nature Camp ice-cream social had 103 attendees which doubled the number from last year. Wild Kratts Nature Program was sold out with 25 campers. In this program kids use their imagination to learn about animals and their super powers. Marvelous Monarchs is an educational program to teach about the life cycle of monarchs; 35 people attended this program. Staff had an anonymous volunteer who donated the butterflies. Staff is making a concerted effort in the parks to try and keep Milkweed in the parks and alive in the natural setting. The last Kids Komotion concert was August 30th with 635 attendees.

Upcoming events are:

Senior Health and Wellness Expo	October 18
Trick-or-Treat Trail	October 28th
Heroes Breakfast	November 9
Hayride	October 18 & October 19
Mom/Son Dance	November 1
Harvest Day Lunch 50+	November 15

Superintendent Ketchum said there is always a need for volunteers! A big event for which staff needs volunteers is Trick-or-Treat Trail. Additionally, if any businesses are looking to sponsor a trick-or-treat station, WBPRC is looking for more sponsors to hand out candy, advertise their business and have fun with the community.

Commissioner Sukenic asked what the pay rate for the seasonal help is. Superintendent Ketchum said it starts out at \$9.75/hour but is dependent on the shift you are working and how the employee is classified. Commissioner Sukenic asked how long the seasonal help can expect to be employed with WBPRC. Superintendent Ketchum said they can expect to work through the end of the year and possibly through the winter. There are weekend hours. Retirees are welcome to apply! Chairman Brooks asked how staff is marketing the opportunity for employment with WBRPC. Superintendent Ketchum said they leave that to the Marketing Coordinator Meagan Kurnat, but first and foremost it is word of mouth. It is also on Indeed.com and MParks. In the wintertime staff goes out to college campuses to recruit during job fairs. Staff goes into the high schools as well. Commissioner Sukenic asked where Parks staff is located. Superintendent Ketchum said that Parks staff is out at Marshbank Park but there is a substation at Drake Road Sports Park and employees report there also.

Commissioner Wenczel said Parks staff does a great job of keeping the natural areas in the parks. She encouraged residents to take a look at their own yards and see where they can throw down some seeds; one little patch of Milkweed attracts many butterflies. Commissioner Fiszman-Kirsch asked if the Community Gardens have been put to sleep for the winter. Superintendent Ketchum said this is harvest time right now. Commissioner Fiszman-Kirsch said she believes there was a volunteer who was picking up extra crops and donating them to local food banks. She asked how residents may obtain Community Garden plots next year. Superintendent Ketchum said Amy DeRosier runs the Community Garden program. He believes at the end of the year staff sends out a letter to existing members to ask if they will be coming back the following year. If there are openings in the garden that information is passed along to the public. Once all plots are filled, residents are put on a waiting list.

ITEMS FROM THE OFFICERS

A. Items from the Chairperson

Chairman Brooks thanked Commissioner Hembree for attending the most recent Township Board meeting where they voted on the special land use for the splash pad. She made outstanding comments to the board on behalf of the commission.

B. Items from the Secretary

None.

C. Items from the Treasurer

Treasurer Aronoff reminded residents with children under the age of 5 that there is an event at the West Bloomfield Library this Saturday. There will be stories, songs and interactive group activities and an introduction to STEM skills.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Executive: Report from Chairman Brooks

Chairman Brooks stated that the committee met on September 5th. They talked about the September 27th Commission meeting draft agenda: Date for the Special Meeting is October 9th; Filling the Recording Secretary position; Orchard Mall Partnership Update; Bloomfield Schools Partnership Update; Key dates for ReFAC project. The next meeting is scheduled for October 9th at 6 pm.

Chairman Brooks stated that as the commission started the process of looking for a replacement for Commissioner Joe Green, they received recommendations from the Township Liaison, the Township Board and Executive Director Tucker based on people who had contacted them. The Executive Committee met with or talked to each of these people who had been recommended to them and brought forth Dave Barash to the commission. He noticed there are other people in attendance at tonight’s meeting and stated that there is the potential for some future need as well. He asked people that have an interest in serving on the commission to take a look and get an understanding of WBPRC to see if it is something they’d like to do in the future.

B. Finance: Report from Treasurer Aronoff

Treasurer Aronoff stated the committee met before tonight’s meeting and discussed and reviewed August invoices, vouchers and the monthly budget status. Next meeting is scheduled in October prior to the regular Commission meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

A) Approval of Updated MERS Contract.

Finance Accountant Ruth Lyons stated that the MERS Health Care Savings Program was established in 2007 by the Commission as an employer-sponsored savings account designed to help set aside money to cover the escalating costs of post-employment health care. Upon adoption of the HCSP in 2007, a mandatory leave conversion provision was elected. The new agreements no longer requires a leave conversion which insures the HCSP plans are in compliance. These changes would allow for a more flexible option that would permit employees to choose how they receive leave conversions. MERS requires the agreements to be approved by the WBPRC and signed by Chairman Brooks. The agreements will then be submitted to MERS for approval.

Motion by Treasurer Aronoff, second by Commissioner Wenczel, to approve the MERS Health Care Savings Program Participation Agreements eliminating the mandatory leave conversion provisions.

Ayes: Aronoff, Brooks, Fizman-Kirsch, Hembree, Sukenic, Wenczel
Nays: None
Absent: None

Motion Carried

ITEMS FROM THE TOWNSHIP LIAISON

Township Liaison Warshay stated that Development Services Director Marshall Labadie left West Bloomfield Township to become City Manager in Island City, Florida. Hazardous Waste Day is this Saturday at Town Hall from 9:00 am – 2:00 pm. You can also drop off hazardous waste Friday from 4:30 – 6:30 pm, by appointment only. At the August 27th board meeting the township authorized issuance of a bond up to \$4.1 million. The township is building a new fire station so that bond will be for capital improvements. The board also approved a couple of condominium and storm water management plans for West Trail Preserve and Balmoral Park. This past week the board approved the WBPRC's plan for the spray park as well as the taxes for the coming year and the Cable Commission's budget. The board extended the moratorium on multi-person dwellings in single-family residential districts and then approved a liquor license for Maria's restaurant.

PUBLIC FORUM

Lois Schulman said that attending tonight's meeting has been very interesting and she learned a lot. She encouraged residents to come to the meetings and hear what is going on in their community. Chairman Brooks said the commission is here to hear the residents' voices and to be able to act upon their wishes. The community will only be better if what the commission is doing and supporting in their operations is the right thing for the community. Ms. Lyons stated the special meeting on October 9th will be held at the RAC. Chairman Brooks asked that anyone who is intending to attend the special meeting, call the front desk beforehand so the commission will know they are coming and have sufficient seating.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Fiszman-Kirsch thanked the staff for another fabulous summer. There are less than 3 dozen people who work full time for the commission and they only gave the tip of the iceberg tonight in terms of the programs that are put on. She said she is very proud to be part of the commission. Commissioner Hembree said she wants to compliment all the hard work of staff. She was at the Camp Out and it was fantastic. The commission and programs are growing every year. She also thought the fliers and shirt designs at the camp out were fantastic.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Commission, Treasurer Aronoff made a motion to adjourn, and unanimously supported. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,



Acting Secretary Margie Fiszman-Kirsch

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.)