

**PROCEEDINGS OF
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF WEST BLOOMFIELD
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
West Bloomfield Township Hall Boardroom
West Bloomfield, Michigan**

**Thursday, March 23, 2023
7:00 PM**

APPROVED

CALL TO ORDER

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

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Robert Brooks
Secretary John Erich
Treasurer Terrance Adams
Commissioner Merv Aronoff
Commissioner David Barash
Commissioner Vincent Kirkwood
Commissioner Sally Wenczel

Staff Present: Joe Ketchum, Interim Executive Director
Kelly Hyer, Recreation Superintendent
Chris Frey, Parks Superintendent
Steven Kaplan, WB Township Supervisor
Carrie Manning, Recording Secretary

Absent:

Public: Barbie Siger- AmyCell LLC
Ashley Walicki- AmyCell LLC

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC FORUM- Chairman Brooks read a letter from Resident Sylvia Whitmer dated March 16, 2023, addressed to the West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation Board.

First: Thank you for having this meeting and letting us share our concerns.

Second: I want to compliment the Township for their long-range Strategic Plan, which contains many excellent goals for our challenging, climate changing future including health goals for community walking and for reasonably distributed parks for gathering, for limited exercise, for some sports and for maintaining the continuing heartbeat of a valued community.

Specifically, I would like to focus on the Southeast Quadrant of the Township. I spoke to this at a former Strategic Planning meeting prior to our corner's concerns.

We are a significant area of the Township that does not have a park. Previously, we could use the Walnut Lake School playground for a variety of gatherings or sports, frequently baseball. Depending on your Parks and Rec decisions, this may be impossible in the future. In that case the Southeast Quadrant has no park,

or even a small public place to sit during walks as a preferred strategy of the long-range plan. Hopefully, at least one portion of the old site can be considered in the new use. Perhaps a small track!

In addition, the Southeast Quadrant essentially has no designated public/community walking areas apart from the roadbeds. There are no sidewalks in the residential areas, only on Walnut Lake Rd. itself! Indeed, for the many homes on Inkster road, residents cannot go out their back doors even to walk to a beach without going straight through their neighbor's backyard! Or daring to cross Inkster Road to collect mail or use Bloomfield's sidewalks! Furthermore, the beaches are only useful perhaps four months per year, and they are not public, but privately maintained as are the several area golf courses. Quite honestly, we need a destiny for our walks!

In conclusion, the Southeast Quadrant of the Township, one of the most densely housed portion of the taxpaying population, needs a public park space. At the very least, it needs a green space to stop, gather and catch our breath to fulfill the healthy, community goals put forth in the West Bloomfield Strategic Plan. We are hopeful for your consideration, Sylvia Whitmer.

At the conclusion of the letter, Chairman Brooks expressed his appreciation to Sylvia Whitmer for reaching out to the WBPRC and for the good discussion.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion by Commissioner Aronoff, seconded by Commissioner Wenczel to approve the agenda.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Absent: 1 -Commissioner Kirkwood arrived after vote was taken.

Motion Carried: 6-0-1

CONSENT AGENDA

Items A through I 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 Regular Commission Meeting February 23, 2023.
- B) Approval of Minutes from Special Commission Meeting on March 8, 2023.
- C) Approval of February Revenue and Expenditure Report.
- D) Approval of Prepaid Expenses in the amount of \$263,808.22.
- E) Approval of Expenditures paid by Check in the amount of \$44,484.08.
- F) Approval of Credit Card Refunds totaling \$3,225.00 for the month of February.
- G) Receipt of the February Cash Balance.
- H) Receipt of the Plante-Moran Pre-Audit Letter.
- I) Receipt of the First Annual Report.

Motion by Commissioner Aronoff, seconded by Commissioner Wenczel to approve items A through I on the Consent Agenda.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Absent: 1 - Commissioner Kirkwood arrived after the vote.

Motion Carried: 6-0-1

ITEMS FROM THE TOWNSHIP LIAISON

Township Supervisor Kaplan Updated the Commission on some exciting businesses coming to the township soon. Schuler's Books should be opening in the former Stein Mart location in April. In addition to that opening, some new restaurants will be coming to the area, including 5th Tavern, which will be adding a second story and moving into the Village Palace location, an upscale restaurant will be moving into the former Nectar's location, called West End. In addition, the same owners as Prime 29 will be opening an Italian restaurant where Ciao's was located. Supervisor Kaplan congratulated the Commission on finding a location for Connect. Supervisor Kaplan spoke highly of the WBPRC at the recent State of the Community address and the Commissioners thanked the Supervisor for all his kind words.

STAFF REPORT

Interim Executive Director Ketchum delivered the Administrative report. He updated the Commission on a variety of events the Leadership Team has been involved with. The team is working with AmyCell LLC to give feedback on the Executive Director Search, they have initiated conversations regarding funding options for the Recreation Activities Center expansion and a new lease has been signed for the future home of Connect. He met with Superintendent Hyer and staff regarding planning for the new location. Interim Executive Director Ketchum informed the Commission that the new HR Manager begins work on Monday, March 27, 2023. West Bloomfield Parks are still hiring, especially looking for Camp Counselors. Staff have been holding meetings and training with an Active Listening workshop held on March 22, 2023. Staff realizes how important listening is when dealing with residents. Staff have been busy attending training and conferences, including Superintendent Hyer and Finance Manager Stephanie Smith, who attended NRPA Revenue School. Interim Executive Director Ketchum thanked the Commission for allowing Staff so many training opportunities and pointed out that the recognition that Staff has been receiving is directly related to the training. Megan Tehako and Abby Burgess were recognized by mParks for the Outstanding Marketing Award for Seasonal Brochure Activity Guide for 2022. West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation annually wins many awards at the Conference and it's important recognition for the Staff and Community. The new website will be launched on March 29, 2023. The new website will be Mobile friendly and ADA compliant, which turns the written page into voice as well as an easy-to-use calendar of events. Superintendent Hyer provided the Commission with a "Sneak Peek" of the new website showing the highlights and the calendar function which makes the site more intuitive and user friendly, overall. Interim Executive Director Ketchum thanked Superintendent Hyer, Megan Tehako and staff for all their hard work on the new site.

Superintendent Frey updated the Commission on all the ongoing winter park maintenance that has been happening including the delivery of over 280 yards of engineered playground surfacing and landscaping mulch. As the weather permits, these products will be distributed throughout the playgrounds and parks. With the changing of the season, damage also begins to show on the asphalt from the various freeze/thaw cycles that we see in the winter. Park staff have been keeping up with repairing the areas and potholes that open in an effort to keep the water out and the asphalt in place. Major work will be addressed during the summer months. Superintendent Frey commented that tree trimming, and storm cleanup is an ongoing task for staff after the ice storm in February. All 7 1/2 miles of the trail had some sort of damage to trees with downed limbs and sticks. Many limbs were broken and left hanging and staff had to drive the entire West Bloomfield trail network to move things out of the way. Due to the weather, staff also had to sand the parking lots at the West Bloomfield dog park after the ice storm. Salt cannot be used there due to the parking lot surface being gravel. Also, during the winter months, Superintendent Frey commented that this is the time to complete all annual inspections of fire extinguishers and the fire suppression systems throughout the park system. This maintenance program is completed yearly, each February. As in other areas, Parks Staff have also been taking advantage of all the educational opportunities available to them, attending the Great Lakes Park Training Institute Conference as well as training provided by local suppliers.

Superintendent Hyer provided the Recreation Staff Report to the Commission. The Second Annual Black Expo, held at Orchard Mall, in partnership with the West Bloomfield Diversity Task Force, Library, and the Township, was very successful, attracting double the vendors from last year. Next year, the event is looking

to expand to more vendors and expand the hours. Despite the fluctuating weather, Nature Staff was able to lead the Senior Snowshoe Hike but re-named the Valentine Snowshoe with your Sweetie to Hike with Your Honey, due to no snow that weekend. Nature Education has proved to be very popular programming. Seniors also held their Valentine's Luncheon and Superintendent Hyer is looking forward to being able to accommodate more participants in the new Connect space next year. Over one hundred Seniors were in attendance throughout the 4-hour Fat Tuesday "open house" event where Connect Members socialized over paczkis and coffee. Some upcoming events include Opening Day Celebration for age 50 and above is being held on April 14, 2023, and there are still a few spaces left for the Spring Fling Easter Egg Scramble with expanded programming this year to keep the participants engaged for more of the day. Also, the Community Garage Sale is open for residents' registration to be held on Saturday, May 13, 2023, in the RAC parking lot. Space is limited for the sale and open only to West Bloomfield residents. Lastly, the RAC has hosted AARP Tax Aid on Thursdays, offering tax aid to Seniors. To date, assistance has been provided to 58 Seniors. In response to questions from the Commissioners, Superintendent Hyer confirmed that some of the signage from the former Connect location would be used in the new location. Superintendent Hyer announced some important upcoming registration dates. Camp registration opens on April 21, 2023 for returning campers and April 24, 2023 for first time campers. Private rental sales for Lily Pad Springs will be taken beginning April 26, 2023. Regular reservations for Lily Pad Springs are also available, starting that same day. Tickets will be available for purchase 30 days in advance for residents and 15 days in advance for non-residents. All the dates are listed on the website, now, and the new website will be up and running to take reservations by those dates. Regular programs open on April 3, 2023.

ITEMS FROM THE OFFICERS

A. Items from the Chairperson

Chairman Brooks thanked Interim Executive Director Ketchum, Superintendent Frey and Superintendent Hyer for their Staff reports. He sent a welcome out to the new HR Manager, congratulated the entire staff for listening and attending training, and thanked and congratulated Megan Tehako for her work and accolades on the activities guide. Chairman Brooks also sent kudos to staff on the launch of the new website and thanks to Superintendent Chris Frey for giving the Commissioners the "behind the scenes" look at all that goes on at the Parks and all that goes into making them as great as they are.

B. Items from the Secretary

Secretary Erich complimented the Summer Activity Guide and all the activities offered. He was happy to see the additional fourth concert at Marshbank this summer.

B. Items from the Treasurer

Treasurer Adams offered his congratulations to the staff for the awards they have received from MPARKS and from the conferences.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive: Chairman Brooks

Chairman Brooks stated they met on March 16, 2023, at 5:30PM. Present were himself, Secretary Erich, Treasurer Adams and Interim Executive Director Ketchum. They discussed tonight's meeting and the Consent agenda, future Commission training, Marketing ideas and the onboarding process for the new HR Manager. Their next scheduled meeting is April 13, 2023, at 4:30pm.

Finance: Report from Treasurer Adams

Treasurer Adams indicated the Finance Committee met prior to tonight's meeting, March 23, 2023, at 6:00pm. Present were himself, Commissioner Aronoff, Commissioner Barash, Interim Executive Director Ketchum, Finance Manager Smith (via phone) with Stacy Reeves, from Plante Moran. Stacy Reeves reviewed the Pre-Audit letter with the Committee. The Committee assessed the budget to actual spending for the month ending February 28, 2023. This included the divisions of administration, recreation, parks, transportation, and the Commission. The data indicates line-item budgeting of the year, the amount spent on each item for the month, the amount spent on each item year to date and percentage of the budget spent on each item for the year to date. The Committee was also provided revenues associated with property taxes, recreation, and other sources of income. The committee was satisfied with positive results and reported they are under budget year to date. The committee reviewed invoices, vouchers, and prepaid expenses for the month. The committee reviewed agenda items for tonight's meeting. Any questions or concerns were addressed and satisfied. The next meeting is scheduled prior to the regular Commission meeting on April 27, 2023, at 6pm, prior to the monthly Commission Meeting.

Strategic Planning: Report from Commissioner Wenczel

Commissioner Wenczel stated that there was nothing to report at this meeting.

HR Committee: Report from Commissioner Erich

Commissioner Erich stated they met on Monday, March 20, 2023. Present were himself, Commissioner Barash, and Interim Executive Director Ketchum. Commissioner Erich reported the Committee discussed some items that Consultant Deb Hines had laid out regarding restructuring. Staff newsletter, The Insider, has been going out to staff since October 2022. Commissioner Erich has asked Interim Executive Director Ketchum that the Commissioners also get sent a copy of the newsletter in the future. He commented on the hiring of the new HR Manager and that the interviews were very thorough and professional. Other items that were discussed in the meeting included the upcoming All Staff Retreat, annual department goals have been established, the Humanity timesheets have been implemented, cost recovery meetings have resumed, and the clean-up of the shared network drive. Other items included a more transparent relationship between the Commission, Staff and the public, and the Leadership team continues to meet weekly. The Organization Chart has been updated, shifting some operations and a bi-weekly Operations meeting will be held with Recreation and Parks managers and Operations teams. Upcoming items include a Staff Survey scheduled for April 2023 and a first update on the strategic and master plans in June 2023.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Consideration to Review and approve the Executive Director Job Posting, Assessment Plan, Timeline, and Interview Schedule.

The Commissioners and representatives from AmyCell LLC went over the outline of items in the Executive Director Job Posting and the Commissioners asked for revision and clarification on a point about policy and procedure. There was discussion on adding some items to the Experience section of the posting, but it was decided that that information would be brought up in the interview process. Barbie Siger informed the Commission that they would be receiving weekly updates from AmyCell LLC. Still to be determined was the compensation range to be included in the posting. The team was planning on presenting 7 to 9 final candidates to the Commission. AmyCell LLC and the Commission agreed on the dates presented in the Timeline: Posting March 24th and closing on April 16th. Candidate information would be referred to the selection team on April 21st, with the Commission reviewing candidates at the regularly scheduled WBPRC meeting on April 27th. The first round of interviews is planned for Tuesday, May 9, 2023, at 6PM. Following that, feedback would be gathered, and next steps would be determined on May 11, 2023.

Motion by Commissioner Kirkwood, second by Commissioner Barash to approve the Executive Director Job Posting, Assessment Plan, Timeline, and Interview schedule with the consideration of items discussed and agreed upon.

Ayes: 7
Nays: 0
Absent: 0
Motion Carried: 7-0

B. Consideration to Approve the purchase of a Green Flush Technologies Restroom.
Presented by Interim Executive Director Ketchum, this request includes everything involved with a two stall, prefabricated bathroom building, including water bottle filling station. This project is budgeted for 2023 under Capital Projects Arrowhead Bathroom.

Motion by Commissioner Aronoff, second by Commissioner Wenczel to approve the purchase of a Durango II Restroom from Green Flush Technologies for the amount of \$170,539.00.

Ayes: 7
Nays: 0
Absent: 0
Motion Carried: 7-0

C. Consideration to Approve to Revise the West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation Purchasing and Bidding Guidelines.

The background was provided by Interim Executive Director Ketchum. He informed the Commission that the current purchasing policy was approved and adopted in September 2007 and he presented some recommended updates and changes to the policy to the Commission. The changes would align more with other municipalities and streamline operations. Commissioner Barash suggested a comprehensive review of all the Commission purchasing and by laws in the future.

Motion by Commissioner Wenczel, second by Commissioner Aronoff to approve the revised changes to the West Bloomfield Parks and Recreation Commission Purchasing Policy effective March 23, 2023.

Ayes: 6
Nays: 1
Absent: 0
Motion Carried: 6-1

PUBLIC FORUM- None present.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Erich extended Congratulations to Commissioner Kirkwood for being named as one of the 11th Oakland Together 40 under 40 class.

Commissioner Wenczel presented two upcoming events for the West Bloomfield Rotary Club. A fundraising event with silent auction to be held on April 27, 2023, at the Steinway Gallery, and West Bloomfield High School Laker Nature Preserve clean up on Earth Day, Saturday, April 22, 2023.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Commission the meeting was adjourned at 8:38pm.

Reviewed by,
John Erich

(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.)