

Meeting Minutes

Cascade Charter Township
Parks Committee
Tuesday, April 19, 2022
8:00 AM
2870 Jacksmith Ave SE

- ARTICLE 1.** Vice-chair Engel called the meeting to order at 8:00 am.
Members Present: Chair Ginny Wanty, Joe Engel, Mike Reese, Windy Korstange
Members Absent: Supervisor Grace Lesperance, Matt Douglas (excused)
- Others Present: Township Supervisor Ben Swayze, Planning Director Brian Hilbrands, Building and Grounds Supervisor Jim MacDonald, Management Office Administrative Assistant Jessica Stine, Rachel Walsh with Troyer Group, and those listed on the sign in sheet.
- ARTICLE 2. Approve the current Agenda**
- Motion was made by Member Reese to approve the current Agenda. Supported by Member Korstange. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- ARTICLE 3. Approve the minutes of the March 15 and March 24, 2022 meetings.**
- Motion was made by Member Reese to approve the March 15, 2022 meeting minutes with the secretary changed to 'Planning Director Brian Hilbrands as Acting Secretary' as Member and Secretary Engel had not attended that meeting. Supported by Member Korstange. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- Member Engel asked if McKenna had submitted their summary from the Strategic Plan meeting they participated in. Planning Director Hilbrands said he had not heard anything from them yet but he would reach back out.
- Motion was made by Member Korstange to approve the March 24, 2022, meeting minutes as written. Supported by Member Reese. Motion carried 4 to 0.**
- ARTICLE 4. Acknowledge visitors and those wishing to speak to non-agenda items.**
- There was no one who wished to speak.
- ARTICLE 9. Strategic Plan Update (moved up on agenda until Manager Swayze arrived)**
- Member Reese talked about the Strategic Planning workshops that have been taking place and stated that there were at least a couple dozen people in attendance at the first two meetings and at least a dozen at the third.
- ARTICLE 5. Updates from Manager**
- Planning Director Hilbrands passed out the letter that will be mailed to residents living within 500 ft of Burton Park to educate them about Oak Wilt and instruct them not to remove wood from township lands.

Manager Swayze let the committee know they had completed interviews and are offering the Director of Public Works (DPW) position to one of the candidates. Manager Swayze hopes that the candidate will accept and be able to attend the next Parks Committee meeting.

ARTICLE 6. Parks Master Plan Discussion

The committee went over the Parks 2014 Master Implementation Plan to determine what items had been completed or acted upon. Important topics to note included need for updating of the parks portion of the township website, update to the pathway map, interest in standardization of the kiosks across all parks, and enabling pickleball courts to be reserved online.

There was discussion on future programming and league rental at Cascade Rec Park. There were suggestions that the township may want to start charging for league use of the Cascade Rec Park fields and creating a 'Friends of Cascade Parks and Trails' organization. The potential for a portable, synthetic ice arena procured by the DDA was talked about but that was sidelined originally due to lack of a space to house the rink when it isn't in use; this topic may come back up for the DDA when completing the strategic plan. Pathway and trail connections to other communities is another feature that will carry over to the next Parks Master Plan. The new DPW will work on putting together a multi-year list of projects he thinks should be completed, as well as multi-year plan for pathway maintenance. Communication with the airport is moving slowly about a potential multi-use athletic complex on airport-owned land. Creation of a 'village' area has risen to the top on the list of priorities the township will be focusing on due to the results of the strategic plan.

According to the Strategic Plan survey, section five of the Township should be considered one of the most important areas for parks development and section four should also be considered as that area is underserved.

Next steps include discussing the property acquisition checklist and discussing goals and objectives for the new master plan.

ARTICLE 7. Update from the New Neighbors at the Church on Wycliff

Unity Spiritual Community Church members Ray Jaglowski (Church Treasurer), Lynne Hill (Church Gardener), and Kate Perlmutter (Church Secretary), attended and talked about their plans for the church and the adjoining parking lot they will be sharing with the township for access to the new township park. Their target opening date is June 25th and they are looking to landscape the area with native plants that promote drainage.

Their current concerns are the curb cut, parking lot size, and joint signage. The Parks Committee was not interested in utilizing an electric sign at this time. There was discussion about restoring the historic stairway on the property, but there was a general consensus that it was not a practical or safe project. The Parks Committee will work closely with the new church on parking matters.

ARTICLE 8. Naming Process for New Township Park on Wycliff

The township is looking into if the park will be named based on local history or if they will let a donor name the park. The Historical Society is currently finding out more information on the history of the site that may contribute to the naming. This will be brought back at the next Parks Committee meeting for discussion.

ARTICLE 10. Peace Park Addition

Member Engel shared that the potential property acquisition is currently at a standstill as one of the two owners wants to get another appraisal before they will sell. This will push the timeline out at least -30-60 days but the second property owner remains interested in selling the land to the township.

ARTICLE 11. Old Business

Garlic Mustard: The dumpster will be available starting May 6th and there will be a pull at Burton Park on May 7th. There will be another pull on May 11th, in the evening, at the cemetery. Kent County Conservation is holding an invasive species work day with GE Aviation on May 30th at Burton Park.

ARTICLE 12. Any Other Business

Deer Population Management: Chair Wanty shared that she received a commitment from Dr Rob Keys and his students from Cornerstone to come count the deer and complete a study for the township from September through December.

Emergency Phones at Cascade Rec Park and Tassell Park: Grounds Supervisor MacDonald explained that the emergency phones at Cascade Rec Park and Tassell Park don't work and he would like to remove them. He stated that they haven't worked for years and attempts to fix them haven't been successful. The committee unanimously agreed they should be removed, once approved by Manager Swayze.

Building and Grounds Capital Improvements: Chair Wanty asked Ground Supervisor MacDonald to compile a ranked list of capital improvements he believes are needed for the building and grounds of Cascade owned properties. He agreed to do so.

Park at Wycliff: Member Engel stated it is important to move forward with planning regarding parking and access at the Wycliff property, as well as the park configuration. Planning Director Hilbrands stated this might include a community meeting to find out what amenities citizens are interested in having at the new park. This will most likely be a joint project between the Parks Committee, the Planning and Zoning Department, and the Township Board.

Oak Wilt Education: Chair Wanty will be attending an upcoming session on Managing Oak Wilt at the Wittenbach Wege Center. Supervisor McDonald, Member Engel, and Ryan and Josh of the building and grounds crew will also be attending.

ARTICLE 13. Adjournment

Motion was made by Chair Wanty to adjourn. Supported by Member Reese. Motion carried 4 to 0. The Meeting adjourned at 9:47 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe Engel, Secretary