

PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES
COTTRELLVILLE TOWNSHIP
Tuesday, April 1, 2014
(DRAFT)

Chairman Spatafore called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL:

Present: Chairman Tony Spatafore, Board Rep Lori Russelburg, Treasurer Joseph Aiuto,
Secretary Ami Aiuto, Susan Biscorner

Absent: None

AGENDA APPROVAL:

Motion by Chairman Spatafore to approve the agenda as presented. Second by Board Rep Russelburg.

Vote on the motion: AYES: All NAYS: None Motion carried.

Motion by Chairman Spatafore to approve the Parks and Recreation March 4, 2014 meeting agenda minutes. Second by Secretary Aiuto.

Vote on the motion: AYES: All NAYS: None Motion carried.

OPEN SESSION:

Began at 6:33 p.m. and ended at 6:43 p.m.

One audience member addressed Township Attorney McNamee about topics not related to Parks and Recreation. This audience member also commented that the appointment of the new Parks and Recreation board member was appointed in violation of MCL-15. The audience member then left the meeting. Three board members commented during the exchange.

TREASURER REPORT

Began at 6:44 p.m. and ended at 6:47 p.m.

Treasurer Aiuto is still in the process of obtaining budget and account information to provide monthly report updates. Board Rep Russelburg will print budget information. Updated information needs to be printed as the new fiscal year just started and the county parks and recreation millage contribution is being determined.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Park event ideas update - Easter

The board members discussed postponing a park event due to timing and weather concerns. A meet and greet picnic event a little later in the season might have better attendance.

Motion by Board Rep Russelburg to not have an Easter Egg Hunt as voted in and save the approved funds for an event when the weather is more predictable. Second by Chairman Spatafore.

Vote on the motion: AYES: All NAYES: None Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. John McNamee to speak about the waterfront park

Township attorney McNamee came to speak about the closing of the waterfront park on 3/24/14. The previous administration added the purchase of the waterfront property to create a park it to the ballot for residents to approve. The acquisition was approved so long as no taxes, millages, nor general funds could be used for the purchase. A DNR Trust Fund Acquisition Grant provided 75% of the purchase with the remaining portion raised by the township or parks and recreation. The township's appraisal of \$435K was higher than the DNR's appraisal of \$420M, and the DNR only provides 75% of their appraisal value. The St. Clair County Parks and Recreation increased their portion to help cover the shortfall caused by appraisal discrepancies. Renegotiation also occurred with the seller for half of the township's portion upfront with an unsecured promissory note with repayment of \$8K per year for two (2) years.

Total costs of \$47,942.12 (including all real estate due diligence including appraisals, engineering samples – Phase I and Phase II, survey, title commitment and appraisal), with \$329K paid by DNR, \$61M from Parks and Recreation, Back taxes from 2008 of \$18K paid by the township at initial contract time with a credit back at the sale, and \$18M in the promissory note to Sam Rache. A contingency of 10%, or \$32K, was held back in a special escrow to pay the seller after a 30 day audit per DNR Trust Grant procedures. A clause of the sale is the addition of an item in memory of his parents on the park property, to be decided upon. A Michigan National Resources Trust Fund plaque is on order and required to be posted as a condition of the grant. Attorney McNamee has not collected any fees for his services at this time and will work with the township to review the bill and form a repayment plan.

Attorney McNamee urged the board to put thought into how the park should be developed. The DNR also offers a Development Grant, which is separate from the Acquisition Grant used to purchase the park. The deadline to apply for a Development Grant for 2015 is 4/1/15.

No motion.

2. Parks and recreation maintenance contact update

A park maintenance person has not yet been hired or appointed and the park is scheduled to open soon.

Motion by Board Rep Russelburg to bring to the board's attention a concern regarding paid maintenance worker versus volunteer with regard to the proper maintenance of the equipment.

Vote on the motion: AYES: All NAYS: None Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Began at 7:56 p.m. and ended at 8:06 p.m.

One audience member and two board members spoke during Public Comment. Susan Gadwell commented on possibly updated safety guidelines for the park, as rubber pellets might be needed on the playground in place of, or addition to the wood chips. Ms. Gadwell was also concerned about liability issues if the equipment is not fully checked prior to the park opening.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Board Rep Russelburg to adjourn the meeting at 8:07 p.m. Second by Treasurer Aiuto.

Vote on the motion: AYES: All NAYS: None Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Ami Aiuto, Secretary
Cottrellville Township

Tony Spatafore, Chairman
Cottrellville Township