

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD

MEETING MINUTES  
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14, 2013  
6 PM – MERIDIAN SERVICE CENTER

Members Present: Julie Brixie, Frank Hatfield (arrived at 6:07 pm), James Kielbaso, Robert Rusch, Margo Smith, Mark Stephens

Members Absent: Jon Mayes, Steve Webster

Staff: Land and Management Coordinator Jane Greenway; Chief Engineer Younes Ishraidi; Parks and Recreation Department Secretary Robin Faust

Others: None

1. Call Meeting to Order

Chair Kielbaso called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

2. Approve Agenda

BOARD MEMBER BRIXIE MOVED, BOARD MEMBER SMITH SECONDED, TO APPROVE THE MEETING AGENDA AS SUBMITTED. Voice vote. Motion passed

3. Public Remarks

None

4. Approve Minutes for June 12, 2013 and July 10, 2013

June 12, 2013: Page 3, third paragraph, change Board Member Hatfield for Coordinator Greenway.

July 10, 2013: Page 1, first paragraph, capitalize "Bailey".

BOARD MEMBER BRIXIE MOVED, BOARD MEMBER RUSCH SECONDED, TO APPROVE THE JUNE 12, 2013 AND JULY 10, 2013 MEETING MINUTES AS AMENDED. Voice vote. Motion passed.

5. Communications

Board Member Brixie reported Judy Linn has contacted her to state her property has been selected for the United States Fisheries and Wildlife Wetland Reserve Program. By accepting this offer, she has placed her property in the program for perpetuity, meaning that her property is no longer available for purchase by the Township. She

recommended the Board contact the family of Grover George who resided on Piper Road to see if his property would be available for purchase in the Land Preservation Program.

6. Presentations

None

7. New Business

None

8. Old Business

a. Davis/Foster Land Preserve – Buildings Demolition

Coordinator Greenway summarized her staff memorandum and reported on her conversations with past board member Tom Woiwode and the recommendation to demolish the white farmhouse and the brick house.

BOARD MEMBER STEPHENS MOVED, BOARD MEMBER SMITH SECONDED, THAT THE LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD APPROVE TO SPEND UP TO \$15,000 FOR THE PURPOSE OF DEMOLISHING THE BRICK HOUSE AND WHITE FARMHOUSE AND PROPERLY DISCONNECTING THEIR ASSOCIATED UTILITIES, RESTORING THE AREA IN A SENSITIVE MANNER, AT THE DAVIS FOSTER LAND PRESERVE, 5120 VAN ATTA ROAD, OKEMOS, MICHIGAN.

Discussion:

- When asked about the barn, Coordinator Greenway replied the barn is used for storing equipment at current time. Members discussed if the barn roof was in need of repair. Staff was asked to bring estimates to repair barn for future meeting.

Roll Call:

AYES: Margo Smith, Mark Stephens, Frank Hatfield, Robert Rusch, Julie Brixie,  
James Kielbaso

NAYS: None

The motion passed.

b. Deer Management Approval, 2013 Program

Coordinator Greenway summarized her staff memorandum. After a brief discussion on the proposed harvesting locations, it was recommended to add the Red Cedar Glen to the list of harvesting locations.

BOARD MEMBER BRIXIE OFFERED THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION:

WHEREAS the Charter Township of Meridian has documented numerous complaints relative to the issue of the over-population of white-tailed deer including: over-grazing of landscape plants, a high number of deer/car collisions, threats to public health, and threats to the ecological health of natural areas; and

WHEREAS a Deer Management Plan has been developed for the purpose of outlining measures for conducting a highly managed, safe and humane managed deer harvest on township-owned properties; and

WHEREAS it is recognized that controlled hunting may help control the overpopulation of white-tailed deer; and

WHEREAS the Charter Township of Meridian has authorized staff to conduct a managed deer harvest on township-owned properties that will occur seven days per week during the regular archery season (October 1, 2013 through January 1, 2014 and also during the early antlerless season on September 21 and September 22, 2013); and

WHEREAS the managed deer harvest will utilize qualified, competent, and experienced volunteer hunters; and

WHEREAS the township-owned properties are not open to unauthorized hunting; and

WHEREAS the Charter Township of Meridian will work with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to operate under the Deer Management Assistance Program for the purpose of purchasing a large number of antlerless deer permits; and

WHEREAS the Charter Township of Meridian's Deer Management Program will comply with all State of Michigan rules and hunting regulations; and

WHEREAS the public will be properly notified of the deer harvest through posted signs on the designated hunting properties, township website postings, press releases in the local newspaper, and letters to owners of properties adjacent to designated hunting properties ; and

WHEREAS the majority of the venison from the harvested deer will be distributed to the hungry through local food banks; and

WHEREAS the Charter Township of Meridian has constructed an enclosure within Lake Lansing North Park for the purpose of visually observing areas that are open to deer browsing versus areas that are not, which has indicated a significant level of damage due to over-browsing of the natural vegetation; and

WHEREAS parks and natural areas provide ecological and aesthetic beauty, improve water quality, protect groundwater, prevent flooding, improve the quality of the air we breathe, provide vegetative buffers to development, and produce habitat for wildlife; and

WHEREAS the Charter Township of Meridian recognizes the benefits derived from parks and natural areas and appreciates benefits of local wildlife

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD OF THE CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN THAT A TOWNSHIP-MANAGED DEER HARVEST WILL OCCUR ON THE FOLLOWING LAND PRESERVATION PROPERTIES IN 2013: NORTHWEST, NORTHRIDGE, FOREST GROVE, MERIDIAN CENTRAL WETLAND, HUBBEL, CENTRAL MERIDIAN UPLANDS, TIHART/CORNELL WETLAND, DAVIS/FOSTER, FOSTER/CROUSE, SOUTHWEST MERIDIAN UPLANDS, SOWER WOODS, AND RED CEDAR RIVER EAST.

SUPPORTED BY BOARD MEMBER STEPHENS.

Discussion:

When asked about including Lake Lansing North Land Preserve, Coordinator Greenway reported the 120-acre portion will not be included but is working with the Ingham County Park Staff to recommend the remainder of the park be included in the bow hunting program.

Recommended doing more educating on the importance of the harvest program and including as many properties as possible.

Suggestion was made to include the Red Cedar Glen parcel.

FRIENDLY AMENDED WAS APPROVED BY BOARD MEMBER BRIXIE, AND SUPPORTED BY BOARD MEMBER STEPHENS, TO INCLUDE THE RED CEDAR GLEN PARCEL IN THE LIST OF HARVESTING LOCATIONS IN THE RESOLUTION.

When asked about the hunting area and need for neighbors permission, Coordinator Greenway replied need permission from neighbors within 450 feet of a hunting area.

When asked if Sapphire Lakes will be part of the program, Coordinator Greenway replied yes

When asked about changing the ratio to 1:1, Coordinator Greenway replied she spoke with the DNR and they recommend the Township to stay with the 2:1 ratio but that the township is looking into an option of allowing the hunter to harvest two antlered deer.

Roll Call to approve the proposed resolution as amended:

AYES: Julie Brixie, Robert Rusch, Frank Hatfield, Mark Stephens, Margo Smith,  
James Kielbaso

NAYS: None

The resolution passed.

9. Land Management Coordinator Report
- a. Southwest Meridian Uplands Site Restoration Project – Coordinator Greenway referred to the emails from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services which report they are still interested in the project but are working on their budget. Board members discussed matching funds for the grant; matching funds could be made through in-kind donations such as equipment rental as well as funds; suggested speaking with Jim Giguere who has received the Township Environmental Award to see if he could help enhance the site such as he did on the Song Bird site; members asked if any of the work could be done; staff will investigate and report at next meeting.
  - b. Lake Lansing North Park Site Visit – Coordinator Greenway referred to the minutes from the walk. Board members enjoyed the beautiful walk, deer enclosures, the different vegetation, plantings by the Murphy Elementary School students and the demonstration garden.
  - c. Davis/Foster Land Preserve Site Visit – Coordinator Greenway reported everyone enjoyed the meeting and walk around the site on July 21. Bruce Cohen, Capital Area Audubon Society, brought a scope to see the Henslow's sparrows. When asked about the burn on the site, Coordinator Greenway reported there may be a partial burn conducted this fall and if not, in the spring of 2014. Coordinator Greenway also reported that since pesticide treatments have to be made by a licensed individual; Township staff will be handling future treatments rather than Paul Morrow.
  - d. Red Cedar Glen Preserve Drain Project – Coordinator Greenway reported the project has been moving quickly and everyone is invited to the weekly meetings which are held on Tuesdays, at 1:30 pm, on the site. The contractor proposes to have the project completed within the next three weeks.

Discussion:

- When asked about the pathway on the Red Cedar Glen Preserve, Coordinator Greenway replied no decisions have been made but it needs to be considered and will be addressed during construction. The board members asked to have the pathway added to the next agenda for further discussion.
- Coordinator Greenway reported two huge and three small trees are being cut down as part of the project because of their potential to fall and damage the new boardwalk. Assistant Drain Commissioner Clos stated the Drain Commissioner's Office will pay to cut them down but if the Land Preservation Advisory Board would like to have the stumps ground, the cost would have to be covered by the Township. When asked the cost, Coordinator Greenway replied approximately \$250. When asked cost for removing dead ash tree, Coordinator Greenway replied approximately \$500. Suggested they chip what they can, move the logs to block vehicle access or drop trees where appropriate; don't need to grind stumps because they are natural for area; could use wood chips in new erosion areas
- Concern expressed on the amount of damage the beavers are doing to some of the large trees; it appears they have already killed one or two oak trees in the area.
- Signage – Nick Sanchez and Frank Hatfield have put up signs asked people to stay off recently planted areas; do we need a more permanent solution; will laminate signs at the current time.

- Questioned who would be responsible for future maintenance of the bridge; Coordinator Greenway will ask
- Are there additional trees the Advisory Board would like to see removed while the crew are already in the area;

COMMISSIONER STEPHENS MOVED, COMMISSIONER BRIXIE SECONDED, TO AUTHORIZE STAFF TO SPEND UP TO \$500 TO REMOVE THE DEAD TREES NEAR THE EASTERNMOST CHANNEL IN THE RED CEDAR GLEN LAND PRESERVE, IF NECESSARY.

Roll Call:

AYES: Julie Brixie, Robert Rusch, Frank Hatfield, Mark Stephens, Margo Smith, James Kielbaso

NAYS: None

The motion passed.

- e. Northwest Land Preserve Site Restoration – Coordinator Greenway reported the contractor and volunteers began clearing the five acres. Nick Sanchez will be at the September 2013 meeting to give an update on the project.

Discussion:

- Need something to protect the new trees, maybe tree guards
- Do we need breakaway bollards or some kind of system to avoid motorized vehicle traffic
- Need to have signage ready when the project is complete
- Need to be respectful of the neighbors

10. Other

- a. Joint Meeting with Park Commission, no date has been set

Coordinator Greenway reported a draft agenda is being prepared and asked if the members had a meeting night preference. After a brief discussion, the dates offered were November 6, November 7 or November 14. Staff was asked to send out an email to confirm these dates and then offer to the Park Commission.

11. Public Comment

None

12. Closed Session

COMMISSIONER STEPHENS MOVED, COMMISSIONER BRIXIE SECONDED, TO ENTER INTO CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS LAND ACQUISITION.

Roll Call:

AYES: Julie Brixie, Robert Rusch, Frank Hatfield, Mark Stephens, Margo Smith, James Kielbaso

NAYS: None

The Advisory Board entered into closed session at 7:20 pm.

COMMISSIONER SMITH MOVED, COMMISSIONER STEPHENS SECONDED, TO RETURN TO OPEN SESSION.

Roll Call:

AYES: Julie Brixie, Robert Rusch, Frank Hatfield, Mark Stephens, Margo Smith, James Kielbaso

NAYS: None

The Advisory Board returned to open session at 7:43 pm.

13. Adjournment

BOARD MEMBER SMITH MOVED, BOARD MEMBER RUSCH SECONDED, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.

The meeting adjourned at 7:44 pm.