



PARKS AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
March 28, 2023

The Parks and Public Works Committee met for Regular Committee Meeting at 10:00 a.m.
City Hall
102 Butler St., Saugatuck, MI 49453.

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Chair Baldwin at 10:00 a.m.

Attendance:

Present: Chair Baldwin, Committee members Charak, DeJong, Johnson, Kimble, & Roche.

Absent: None.

Others Present: City Manager Heise, Superintendent Herbert, DPW Asst. Supervisor Hardy, Director of Planning, Zoning, & Project Mgmt. Cummins, Deputy Clerk & DPW Asst. Williams, Fleis & VandenBrink Engineer Moxey.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Kimble, second by Roche, to approve the agenda. Via voice vote, motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes from 2/28/23:

Motion by DeJong, second by Roche, to approve the minutes from the February 28, 2023 meeting. Via voice vote, motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments (agenda items only): None.

Review/Discussion:

A. Department of Public Works and Administrative Updates:

Department of Public Works Superintendent Herbert updated the committee on Spring projects for the City. Each year they do a lot of tree work. In the wintertime they remove the trees, in the Spring they do the stump grinding and work to plant the new trees in the same place the old trees are removed from. Arbor Day is April 28 and the City will host a tree planting ceremony at 10am to satisfy the Tree City USA requirements. Brush and leaf pickup began in March and will continue once a month until fall and then they will start picking up twice per month.

DPW has recognized the severity and started filling in potholes aggressively. The asphalt plants open April 4th, and they will be first in line. As of right now, they have just been supplementing with a cold patch material. They have a more permanent solution for the City in the works but will fill the committee in on that once the details are completed. Superintendent Herbert said that they have started the hiring process for DPW and Oval Beach seasonal employees. They are still in need of Beach

patrollers but are well staffed for ticket booth and concession stand positions. He was happy to report that the Oval Beach swing set has been installed. Herbert thanked Pete and Susan Swanson, Gordon Stannis and the Daniel J. Reed Foundation for the wonderful donation to the City.

Superintendent Herbert updated the committee on the status of the DPW motor pool. Their new 2023 International Dump truck will be sent to Truck & Trailer Specialties in April for its final outfitting and should be in service by mid-summer. Once that is back in their possession, they can send the 2009 International to auction. The department also ordered a new pickup last year but due to supply issues they won't take possession of that for another month or two.

DPW staff will continue to pick away at the road maintenance work. There will be a combination of mill and overlay work and Herbert said that Park Street and Elizabeth Street are worthy candidates just to name a few. They will be completing some crack sealing on major roads and then will follow everything up with some line striping. They will be contracting some of that work out due to the workload of the department. Sidewalk replacements along with some broken curb repair will take place in the spring on some of the main artery roads that come into town. They are going to focus on Village Square Park with more pressure washing at the tennis and basketball courts. The Willow Park deck will also be pressure washed, and sealed and repaired.

B. Study Group Updates:

a. Park Street:

Committee member Johnson said that the next meeting will be held April 21st. The goal is to have a presentation ready that will highlight the things that they would like to see happen on Park Street. This will include top priorities, priorities, seasonal priorities, and projects that will need to wait a couple of years.

b. Mt Baldhead Improvements:

City Manager Heise said they are finalizing plans with Jon Moxey and AT&T to design the new restroom facilities. The City has been sending them updates on their needs. They are still on track for a very aggressive start date in the fall. AT&T is also working with their landscape architect for the landscape component on the project. Heise stated that they spoke with the ODC briefly regarding the potential for them to come up with a revegetation plan along the stairway. AT&T was open to funding that and ODC is open to developing the plans for revegetation.

c. Invasive Species:

Committee member Charak started working on a map segmenting the City properties and what's invasive. He said that it is a little process regarding what we can do on our property versus other neighboring properties that the owners aren't maintaining, and we aren't able to go on their property and do anything about it. No other updates currently.

City Manager Heise said that the Allegan County Conservation District reached out to City staff, and they are going to be treating phragmites along the Kalamazoo River on City owned property such as street ends.

DPW Superintendent Scott Herbert added that he reached out to the Outdoor Discovery Center regarding Japanese Knotweed, and they put a number together for him. He will discuss that further with the Invasive Species Group. They did mention that there is still Oriental Bittersweet on the slope of Mt. Baldhead and that they went out and did an assessment. He

received an email for two different options for treatment. The first is a targeted cut stump treatment only in the amount of \$3000. The second is a more permanent and more effective solution would be a targeted fuller treatment of creeping vines and the cut the stump treatment. That was in the amount of \$6000. Given the damage that Mt. Baldhead has sustained on the vegetation on that slope, it may be appropriate at some point soon to consider that treatment.

d. Village Square:

Committee member Roche said that she and Committee member DeJong will be getting themes together for the play area. Committee member DeJong said that they are waiting on the land survey and the playground inspection is scheduled for Thursday, March 30.

City Manager Heise that they are going to have another meeting with the ODC on site for the Village Square playground. They previously had a meeting with them to address three projects which included Village Square, the Airport property, and then the revegetation at Mt. Baldhead. In the case of Village Square, he would need to develop a basic scope of work for them, and then they will send us a proposal. They are extremely interested in partnering with the City.

e. Airport Property:

Chairwoman Baldwin spoke with the ODC and there needs to be an ecological and sustainability evaluation. She also said that what they need to do logistically to open some of the trails that are already existing to the public. The ODC came back with information on what we would have to do for the ecological and sustainability evaluation, as well as planning and other services that are available for planning sessions between City Council and whoever needs to be involved in that. She said that her objective is to get them to a place where they can open the trails that already exist, legitimize them, and open it to the public. This is the first step in that, which is also a conservation step. There is nothing about this step that would prevent them from conserving it in the future or at any time. She said that she is a big believer that people don't miss what they don't know they have and right now, the community does not know that they have this.

C. O.D.C Airport Property Proposal:

Chair Baldwin stated that she is going to be looking for the committee to approve this proposal to get it to City Council. Although it is below the threshold, for full transparency to the public and DPW, they will take it to Council in the formal way.

Motion by Baldwin, second by Johnson to recommend that City Council approve the proposal for conservation services from the Outdoor Discovery Center in the amount not to exceed \$6,500. Via roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

D. Tri-Community Parks & Recreation Master Plan Update:

Chair Baldwin gave update on Tri-Community Parks & Recreation Master Plan.

Review Next Steps: None.

Public Comments: None.

Member Closing Comments:

Committee Member Kimble: Committee member Kimble had a few comments on the Blue Star Trail. They are currently trying to get the contract signed and approved by C2AE, the engineering firm that will be doing the detailed design work for the trail. There has been a little bit of a road bump because Saugatuck Township did not get all their funding. The groups have met together and decided that they will proceed anyway. There was question of who would pay for the engineering work that needs to be done. It was decided that they would prorate those costs according to how much each group is contributing, which everyone agreed upon. They are currently waiting for attorney comments from Saugatuck Township. Committee member Kimble said that they have theirs from the City and hope to take it to City Council at their next meeting on April 10. Saugatuck Township would still need to get it approved at their next meeting on April 12. If they can get it signed, she said that they would then be able to start the detailed design work. Friends of the Blue Star Trail are still working to raise more money. A lot of the focus right now is on their Toast Gala which will be held on June 26th, which since the committee is all stakeholders, they are invited to attend.

Committee Member DeJong: Committee member DeJong said that she is looking forward to the meeting on Thursday with the ODC, she hopes to attend. She is concerned about the kids playing on the playground and thinks it would be great to look at the inspection. She is anxious to see the survey and really see where the survey sticks are and after that they can plan their next steps.

Committee Member Roche: Committee member Roche said that when she was going through the packet this week, she loved that the ODC headlined sustainability as part of what their offering to the community is going to be with hiring them. In that regard, she would love for when she went through the five-year Master Plan, she noticed that they don't have anything specifically called out on sustainability or conservation. In the goals, it talks about the quality of life and the wellness in the community, but there is nothing called out specifically in terms of metrics, and how we will measure this. She wonders how they would know that people are doing well and that they are offering the things that help people live healthier lives. She would love for the committee to start thinking about if they are collaborating on the 30,000-foot view with the other communities that they are adding those points in so that it is something that they can create big goals around and then break it down on how they would get there. She says that the Tri-Community plan is very thorough, and she agrees with it, but doesn't see that they have made a lot of strides with it. She would love for the committee to start acting on this stuff.

Committee Member Charak: Committee member Charak said that he is going to contact the Allegan County Conservation District and Michigan State University to see what the options are. He suggested instead of killing things, looking for things to overlay it with that promotes sustainable growth so we don't have to use poison. He would like to come up with environmental solutions for what to use on lawns.

Committee Member Johnson: Committee member Johnson said that she spoke to Chris Clark and he is interested in doing the Mount Baldhead study group when they get back together. He has some ideas about including the trails of Mount Baldhead within the study group and she likes that idea.

Chair Baldwin: Chair Baldwin thanked everyone on the Committee because she knows it is a lot of work and effort that goes into it. She feels that they have some solid momentum. She loves the fact that they are getting this proposal to Council, she can't imagine it being turned down as it is a solid proposal. She thanked DPW as well.

Adjournment:

Motion by Charak, second by Roche, to approve adjournment of the meeting. Via voice vote, motion carried unanimously. Chairwoman Baldwin adjourned at 11:09 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara Williams, City Deputy Clerk & DPW Administrative Assistant