



PARKS AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
July 25, 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, Johnson, Kimble & Roche.

Absent: Committee member DeJong.

Others Present: Superintendent Herbert, Deputy Clerk & DPW Asst. Williams

Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Kimble, second by Charak, to approve the agenda for July 25, 2023. Via voice vote, motion carried 4-0.

Approval of Minutes from 6/27/23:

Motion by Roche, second by Charak, to approve the amended minutes from the June 27, 2023, meeting. Via voice vote, motion carried 4-0.

Public Comments (agenda items only): None.

Review/Discussion:

A. Department of Public Works and Administrative Updates:

DPW Superintendent Herbert gave an update and said that Public Works is pretty heavily weighted with routine maintenance this time of year as they have a lot of special events that they are assisting with and keeping town up and operational for their visitors and business owners. Over the past month, they have assisted with the Waterfront Invitational Art Fair, the Fourth of July Parade, the Fourth of July extravaganza and fireworks event, and Music in the Park. For the Fourth of July parade, they rented some Archer 1200's which are vehicle blocking barriers. He explained that as the years have progressed, they have identified a need where they have to start thinking about things like keeping crowds safe. He thinks that the city is doing a good job of taking that seriously and a good step to exploring the purchase. They are expensive, like \$80-100,000 for a trailer with eight or nine of the barriers. They thought it would be appropriate to spend a couple of thousand dollars on renting these archers for one of the biggest parades of the year, the Fourth of July parade, to see how it goes. People were fascinated by them, and he was able to take himself out of the parade to get some hands-on experience with them and was able to block off two intersections by himself. He said that it was a

good experience, and it is probably the direction that staff will ultimately be recommending that council purchases in the future.

Herbert said that beyond special events, DPW has done some routine maintenance with concrete work around town. Every year, they come through some of the sidewalks around town that are either unsafe or just unsightly or deteriorated. They will do some sidewalk tear-outs and replacements. The most recent round they focused primarily on Allegan Street on top of the hill between Mason and Elizabeth Street, and they also replaced broken curbs around town that have been damaged during winter plowing. Consumers Energy had to do some tree removals in front of the Post Office area and the Inn of Saugatuck and had to remove these really beautiful mature trees, one was a Sycamore and the other a Japanese Zelkova because an adjacent property needed some added power. Those trees had probably outgrown their useful space because they had a very narrow green space in between the sidewalk and the street, and the trees kept growing to the point where it pushed the curb of the street out towards the centerline. The root systems made the sidewalk in front of it wavy and uneven and it didn't drain well. When ice or snow melted in the wintertime and puddle up it would freeze. It was a good opportunity for them to create some more space for the trees that are going to get replanted in that area. Herbert said that they could do that by tearing out the sidewalk and doing some regrading. He thinks the project turned out really well and they ended up gaining roughly 1.8 feet of room for the new tree which doesn't sound like much, but it is pretty significant. He is happy to wrap up the concrete work for this year.

B. Study Group Updates:

a. Airport Property:

Chair Baldwin said that there was not too much to report. She checked in with the ODC and they have not received a report back from them yet. They are working on that as they owe them a full report. She is hoping to have this by mid-August.

b. Blue Star Multimodal Path:

Committee member Kimble said that she has complaints because she has nothing to report. Since the last meeting she was kind of harassing C2AE to schedule the project kickoff meeting. Finally, they got an email from a guy named Jared Secor, which had not been introduced but he does work for C2AE. He was trying to figure out who should be on the project kickoff meeting which basically everyone is suggesting that it should be whoever is on the Tri-Community Committee board committee for the trail, which is a long list of people. He didn't have the membership correct because there have been changes. She told him the changes that she knew about, and he got it all figured out. Finally on July 18, he sent out a doodle survey with three different meeting dates for the first week of August. She responded and she got nothing. She called yesterday and got no response. Before, they had a guy named Eric Kronk who was supposed to be taking over the project, so she called him. He explained to her that he was no longer on the project that instead, Jared was taking over. She sent over a nice email to Jared and said that she was on the committee for the Saugatuck City Parks and Public Works Committee and has been designated as a lead role for the Blue Star Trail and explained that the PPW meeting was the next day, and she was supposed to give an update on the trail progress. She said that if things have been happening, please advise her because she has nothing tangible to report. She told him that it would be helpful if she could at least tell the committee that the kickoff meeting has been scheduled. She promptly received a response that he was out of the office until July 27. She then received a message from Roger Marks, his boss, that said that the full communication plan is set at the kickoff meeting. They did not get

responses from each party, August 1-August 4 of the two dates available to all the respondents so far. At the next meeting they will review the background work and process for the survey and the archaeological study and also confirm the project milestones. He then says to preview their additions to the team, Jared is assigned to schedule all events and keep the project on track that they choose together. Eric continues with the leadership of the project plans and design elements. She said that when she talked to Eric, he acts like he was off the project, and that was yesterday. She looks forward to their kickoff meeting.

c. Park Street:

Committee member Johnson said that they received good suggestions, ideas, and stuff from their Park Street people, and they are happy with it. She said that the Chain Ferry still needs the John Woollam sign removed, it has been taken down but is still sitting on the property. The removal has left two big holes and it is a safety concern for people and animals. She suggests that it be filled in and the sign be replaced. She thinks that they need some kind of temporary signage for the John Woollam trail to show people where to go. She would also like some direction signs there as people get off of the Chain Ferry and have no idea where to go. She also suggests putting signs on the other side of the river as well. Most of the people are confused, they don't know where to go because they have never been here. They don't know that there is a trail one way, beach another way, and Mt. Baldhead in the other direction. The people need guidance, and she thinks adding some directional signage would help with the issue.

d. Mt Baldhead Improvements:

Chair Baldwin gave the Mt. Baldhead updates as City Manager Heise was not in attendance. She said that there has been a backup on some of the AT&T work as they have located some Native American tools and such. It has put a wrench in the project and will probably result in the bathrooms remaining in their current location, but they do not have a full update on that yet.

City Engineer John Moxey added that AT&T is to take all of the equipment that was to be in the building at the bottom of the dune and put it up at the top of the dune. It was not their first choice because that means their personnel are going to have to climb the stairs every time they need to do their maintenance. The current plan is to not touch anything at the bottom of the dune other than just the drilling work to get cables and conduits and everything up to the top with the rest of the equipment. He said that they are still involved to help with the critical dunes permitting. The restroom design has kind of gone by the wayside at this point. Chair Baldwin added that City Manager Heise had previously said that the bathrooms could still be updated to the same footprint of where they are currently located.

d. Invasive Species:

Committee Member Charak said that he is trying get a though process on runoff, which promotes Japanese Millfoil which is an aquatic plant. The amount of phosphorus and other pesticides and herbicides that are put on the lines that are put on the lawns with the lawn services that come into town, every lawn is green and there is not a weed in sight on his block except in his area. Twenty to Forty percent of the pesticides and herbicides that are put in the lawn actually contribute directly to the groundwater runoff that goes into the creeks and streams, which therefore promote invasive species in the rivers and the creeks. He is trying to

figure out a plan and the route that it takes to see if there is anything that they can do and things that you can do. There are different combinations of chemicals, herbicides and pesticides that are probably more inert on a faster basis. Lawns have such a short root system that they go into the ground and hence, especially on the hill with such a high claim base, they have better run off. Not this summer as it has been particularly dry. He is just trying to figure out what he can come up with down the line to make a recommendation to Council so they can give a recommendation to lawn services.

e. Village Square:

Committee Member Roche said that she shared at the last meeting where they were in terms of moving forward with the existing school playground and then they started to get bids from different companies. She said that she has been talking to Sinclair who is local in Holland, and they have provided some renderings which she will share over the next few days once her and Glenna have had a chance to go over them. There is also a company called Landscape Structures that has done a lot with the West Ottawa School system. They are going to go out there and check them out. They had a rep come out this week and they met with them. They would like to do a themed playground. She said to expect to have larger commands for them to share for the next meeting. She said that both groups say that if they are able to decide by early fall, that they would still be able to order things and then have a teardown and then group what they hope to be a community build in the spring.

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

Chair Baldwin gave update on Tri-Community Parks & Recreation Master Plan. They did have their kick-off meeting with Veritas. They have a steering committee that selected a consultant to do this, and they are partnering with the community. There will be three communities as well as Saugatuck Public Schools and they will split the cost four ways which is \$15,500. One thing she didn't know was that when you read the five-year plan a lot of it looks like a big wish list, which is by design. You can't apply for a grant for anything that is not in that plan. There is a requirement by the State of Michigan that they have to have some by February 2024 for every community. If you don't have this done, you will not be eligible for any grants. It is important to do, they are doing it and they are a partner with the other communities. They definitely want to take a big picture view. She was adamant in the kick-off meeting that what she didn't want to do is just check every box so that they can apply for grants. She would like to look at the big picture so they can talk about sustainability, conservation, and other things. They are very aware that we are looking to do that and work with Daniel DeFranco on that from the Township. She thinks that they have some good traction in that and that was only the kick-off meeting. They are just getting started but it is going full steam ahead and they are going to have some deliverables for them pretty soon. She will share with them the Gantt chart that they have. There are going to be two meetings with each individual community which is about eight meetings. They will have input from all of them and from the whole community as well. She will share that with them, and she will email the other documents that were sent last week.

Review Next Steps: None.

Public Comments: None.

Member Closing Comments: None.

Adjournment:

Motion by Charak, second by Roche, to approve adjournment of the meeting. Via voice vote, motion carried 4-0. Chairwoman Baldwin adjourned at 11:03 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara Williams, City Deputy Clerk & DPW Administrative Assistant