

# Parks Commission

## Regular Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 8, 2016  
6:00 p.m., Council Chambers



City of South Haven

### 1. Call to Order by Reinert at 6:00 p.m.

### 2. Roll Call

Present: Dorothy Cobbs, Bob McAlear, Chuck Moore, Warren Toneman, Marilyn White, Patti Reinert

Absent: Jeff Arnold

### 3. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Moore, second by Cobbs to approve the March 8, 2016 Regular Meeting Agenda as presented.

All in favor. Motion carried.

### 4. Approval of Minutes for the Record – February 9, 2016

Motion by White, second by Cobbs to approve the February 9, 2016 regular Meeting Minutes as written.

All in favor. Motion carried.

### 5. Public Comments and Inquiries Concerning Items not on the Agenda.

None at this time.

## REPORTS

### 6. Project Updates.

Halberstadt updated the board that city staff has a bid in hand for reroofing the restroom at Kid's Corner which came in \$10,000 less than we expected; staff hopes to get some work done on the pavilion at South Beach with those dollars. Halberstadt explained both projects will be a simple strip and reroof.

On North Beach, Abonmarche has been reviewing some of the utility needs as part of that project.

Moore asked the time frame for the beach flags to which Halberstadt responded that the beach flags should be in place by the beginning of the season, which is May 15, but sooner, if possible.

## NEW BUSINESS

### **7. Commission will be requested to review a proposal from Foundry Hall for installation of a permanent performance stage in Riverfront Park.**

Charlotte (Lotte) Resek, 702 Lee Street, representing Foundry Hall. Resek explained that Foundry Hall has been booking and sponsoring the Riverfront Concert Series and been involved with some of the festivals. Noting that the city does not have a good spot for the performers to be in Riverfront Park, Resek explained that placing the temporary stage right in front of the restrooms at the South Marina facility requires people to climb over the musician's equipment to get to the restrooms and people are not very close to the performers. Learning that some of the bigger festivals rent stages as part of the activities, Resek stated, "We started thinking about a permanent structure. Seeing something like this, a band shell or amphitheater in a community, people realize there are activities, arts and music occurring in the community.

Resek pointed out the photos of such structures in other communities which she provided for the packet, noting that she prefers an open back structure to keep the view. Resek also noted that there would not have to be a roof but for the festivals and some events there would be need for lights and other things which would be more easily accommodated by a roofed structure.

Resek pointed to the drawings, noting that she has learned that setting up near the marina building causes disruptions in services. It was during Harborfest that someone came up with the idea of putting the stage at the other end of the park, where the beer tent was for Harbor Fest and Blueberry Fest and Resek feels it would be an ideal spot. Music would be projected more towards downtown rather than towards neighborhoods, although a few homes would still be affected.

Moore noted if you put it so it's facing away from the lake there is a limit to how many people can be accommodated to which Resek responded that she has not been aware of there being a problem of overcrowding and noted, indicating the pictures she provided, from the top of the hill, any structure would not block the view of the lighthouse or pier. Sightline-wise it would not be in the way.

Toneman said he has been to the one in St. Joseph several times and thinks the lake is a great backdrop. "The nice thing about the one in Saint Joseph is that it is built up closer to the main drag; you can park elsewhere and walk."

Moore commented that it is too bad it is not part of the master plan for this area to which Halberstadt responded that the city does not have the funds immediately available, but that is what we need from this board is an indication of whether you are interested in and want to have something like this added to future plans.

Reinert expressed her thought that the timing is good because the commission is looking at some activity in that general area. Resek noted that the larger space she is recommending is kind of a no-man's land and explained that there are larger acts for the Riverfront Concert Series so a smaller stage wouldn't do what we need. "This is such a nice location for this."

Moore said looking at a birds-eye view of that area would be ideal and Halberstadt responded that city staff can work with Lotte to come up with something like that. Resek said there could even be stairs at the sides which could be used for other things, perhaps even seating.

McAlear said that is a great idea, to have the structure be as transparent as possible and multi-functional. Halberstadt asked about the next step being to have staff work with Resek on this concept.

Reinert suggested looking at the "bowl" near the keeper's house, a natural spot that is still a great spot without being in the middle of the park area and something to consider as an alternative location.

**8. Commission will be requested to hold a Public Hearing and recommend approval of the Splash Pad Final Conceptual Plan to City Council.**

Reinert asked if there was any more discussion on the Splash Pad. When none was forthcoming, Halberstadt reminded that the primary discussion revolved around the need for providing a sail/shade structure over some of the seating. "We have shown what that looks like on this drawing."

Reinert noted she did some exploring while she was in Florida and a lot of the parks there use something similar; it has a nautical feel, we've talked about doing something similar over the Evelyn S at the Maritime Museum. Doing this in multiple locations would provide continuity. Discussion ensued regarding doing the project as a stepped concept so if funding were limited it could be done a little at a time.

Motion by White, second by Toneman, to support the Splash Pad project plan and recommend that City Council proceed with the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant application.

Halberstadt noted that council will formally open the public hearing, take comments if any, and close the public hearing, so this should be done for the record.

Motion by Toneman, second by McAlear to open the public hearing.

There were no comments.

Motion by McAlear second by Moore to close the public hearing.

All in favor. Motion carried.

The motion to support the Splash Pad still being on the floor, the vote was called.

All in favor. Motion carried.

**9. Commission will be requested to consider approval of the City Gift Policy.**

Reinert noted we have had a lot of discussion and procrastinated a little bit.

Moore noted we kind of copied our gift policies from Ann Arbor and Grand Haven but we do not have the same situation as either city. There are no limitations of how long the bench can be there. Moore stated that he also heard some people were promised benches who sold pieces of property to the city and that he does not know if that is true. Moore said some people who are not vested in this community want a bench with their name on it. "I think we haven't answered every question here. Should I be able to get a bench for the next 50 years?"

Halberstadt noted that if someone donates a bench, the city would maintain that to the extent we could, knowing that at some point it will reach the end of its life span, probably in the area of ten years. The policy stated that the life cycle will be determined by Parks staff based on industry standards and inspection. On page 2, 4c. Halberstadt noted that the policy states that if current contact information is on file, the donor will be contacted and have first right of refusal, which still means perpetuity.

Reinert said one reason benches are possible are that it is affordable and something that can be used; the Parks Commission was just thinking of other locations and encouraging people to donate other items. Reinert asked whether Moore thinks people want a bench because of the location to which Moore responded, "Yes." Reinert asked if city staff has turned down benches to which Halberstadt responded, "Yes, we turned down one bench because there was already one donated for the same individual."

Halberstadt confirmed that the city manager told the people who sold the parcels to the city that they could have the first chance to place a bench in the area of the land that was sold. Discussion ensued regarding putting benches there and Halberstadt explained that one of those property owners has already donated a bench and it is placed just south of his the property he sold; there are two more that are interested. There is probably room for two (2) more benches in this area and maybe a total of four (4) more down the bluff without overloading things. At some point it is going to be full, according to Halberstadt. Reinert added that staff should be proactive to encourage gifts to be given in other areas of need. Moore talked about charging a very large amount for the benches and charging a higher fee for maintenance.

McAlear stated, "The answer is in the document. Staff has the right to veto a proposed gift item and I see the control there and have no concerns," and indicated Page A1, guidelines, #1 of the policy. Moore asked, "How can they say yes to one and no to another?" Toneman asked why it comes back to us (Parks Commission) if it is going to the city council. Reinert explained that we are trying to provide a policy which we can recommend to city council. Halberstadt explained that the original gift policy was drafted by Parks Commission and approved by city council.

Moore asked if this policy can be sent to the council with concerns. McAlear said our assignment is to review this; polish it up and approve it for recommendation to the city

council to take in as policy. "I don't think we will ever get a perfect document; the section I referred to answers that question."

Moore asked if the Parks Commission has the ability to move it on with questions. Halberstadt stated he would not be comfortable doing that. McAlear said, "We would be passing the buck." Halberstadt explained that he has to take something that Parks has either approved or turned down. Reinert noted that the council still has the ability to make revisions to what is recommended.

Motion by McAlear to approve the revised draft of the City of South Haven Gift Policy, recommending adoption of the revised policy by City Council.

Ayes: Cobbs, McAlear, White, Reinert

Nays: Toneman, Moore

Motion carried.

#### **10. City Engineer Comments**

None at this time.

#### **11. Commissioner Comments**

Moore: The project updates are very valuable to keep us up to date so we don't forget about a project.

#### **12. Adjourn**

Motion by McAlear, second by Cobbs to adjourn at 6:37 p.m.

All in favor. Motion carried.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Marsha Ransom  
Recording Secretary