

# Parks Commission

## Regular Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, December 9, 2014  
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: Cobbs, McAlear, Moore, Toneman, White, Reinert  
Absent: Fitzgibbon

**3. Introduction of Commissioner McAlear**

At Reinert's request McAlear briefly introduced himself and was welcomed by the board.

**4. Approval of Agenda**

Motion by McAlear, second by Toneman to approve the December 9, 2014 Regular Meeting Agenda moving item #9 to before Item #7.

All in favor. Motion carried.

**5. Approval of Minutes for the Record – October 14, 2014**

Motion by Cobbs, second by Toneman to approve the October 14, 2014 Regular Meeting Minutes as written.

All in favor. Motion carried.

**6. Public Comments and Inquiries Concerning Items not on the Agenda**

None at this time.

**6a. (was 9). Commission will be requested to review the donation of a sequoia tree to be placed in Stanley Johnston Park.**

Jon Jillson, 854 Phoenix Street. Recounted how he became aware of the Archangel Ancient Tree Project in Copemish, Michigan and expressed his wish to donate a Sequoia tree to the City, within Stanley Johnston Park.

Halberstadt pointed out the map in commissioners' packet on page 34 or 35 showing the approximate proposed location.

Discussion ensued regarding whether Sequoia trees will grow in Michigan. Halberstadt noted that links are included in the packet. Jillson is aware of a Sequoia tree on Lyons Street that has been there many years.

Halberstadt talked to the City Arborist, Aaron Priebe, who feels the tree will do well here.

There was discussion of when and by whom the tree would be planted. Jillson also expressed his desire to place a plaque at the base of the tree eventually in memory of his father's service to the city.

Reinert indicated that a plaque would require future review and approval by the Commissioners.

Motion by Moore, second by Cobbs, to accept the donation of the Sequoia Tree.

All in favor. Motion carried.

Reinert thanked Jillson on behalf of the city.

## REPORTS

### **7. Grant Application Status**

Halberstadt explained that he put this grant information in the packet for commissioners to be aware of progress with several grants the city has applied for. This information was part of one of the City Manager's weekly updates to City Council a few weeks back.

Halberstadt informed that three grants were applied for: Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund was for the North Beach Improvements. The City was not awarded this grant and staff is already looking at the application to determine how to get the score higher during the next application period.

The other two, according to Halberstadt, have not been awarded yet. The city applied for a Michigan Recreation Passport Grant to increase accessibility and safety at the Optimist Tot Lot and a Land & Water Conservation Fund Grant for expansion and improvements at Black River Park including riverbank stabilization, a fishing platform and a paved parking lot. After reviewing the latter two projects, Halberstadt stated there is still a possibility the city may get awarded one of those.

Moore asked how the scoring works. Reinert explained it is very detailed and the City has been very successful at getting grants. Halberstadt noted that the city has received three (3) awards under the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund.

Halberstadt stated that if the city is awarded either of the latter grants before the next meeting he will email the Parks Commissioners.

Toneman brought up the splash pad discussed at previous meetings, noting that everyone he has talked to has been very excited about it. Toneman hopes it will get added back to the

South Beach. Halberstadt knows the City has been looking at the design and location; assured it's definitely a project the City wants to do but where to get the funding is the issue. Toneman pointed out the benefits for beach goers when going in the water is too cold.

Halberstadt noted that the packet also includes information on a grant application staff is currently working on which would create accessibility at the Black River Park Boat Launch area. "It's an application to Coastal Zone Management to install a barrier free area for handicapped to launch their kayaks," Halberstadt noted, adding that the application is being submitted this month. Commissioners were enthusiastic, noting that this installation would make launching a kayak easier for the inexperienced able-bodied person as well.

## **8. South Beach Concession Stand/Restroom Improvements**

Halberstadt informed that staff is getting started with design improvements to the area of the restrooms and temporary concession stand at the South Beach. Noted that the concessionaire and the city worked to establish a temporary concession when the old South Beach Concession stand was torn down to allow the new water filtration plant to be built. Halberstadt informed that the concessionaire likes the temporary location; business has improved since he has been in that location, due to accessibility for people using the Harbor Walk and walking out on the pier. Halberstadt said staff is looking at rehabbing and possibly expanding the existing restroom to add more toilets as the current facility seems undersized at certain times during the season. After questions, Halberstadt informed that staff has talked of either rehabbing the pavilion or building a new building for the concessions.

Reinert questioned how long the concessionaire is willing to be in a temporary facility and whether the concessionaire wants to be in a permanent facility. Halberstadt noted that it is in the concessionaire's contract for the city to provide a permanent facility. After a question regarding how long the concessionaire's contract is, Halberstadt explained that when the old facility was torn down, part of the revised contract included giving the concessionaire a rather lengthy extension on his contract.

Halberstadt reminded that GMB Architecture + Engineering has been retained to assist in creating a master plan for the redevelopment of the restroom and pavilion area and will be holding a design charrette at the January meeting with the Parks Commission. Reinert noted that it would be good if as many of the commissioners as possible be in attendance. Discussion ensued regarding availability during the winter months.

## NEW BUSINESS

### **9. Commission will be requested to review the donation of a sequoia tree to be placed in Stanley Johnston Park.**

During Agenda approval this became Item 6a.

### **10. Commission will be requested to establish a schedule for Regular Meeting Dates for the 2015 Calendar Year.**

Discussion ensued about the necessity for establishing such a schedule.

Motion by Moore, second by Toneman to approve a schedule for the Parks Commission to meet on the second Tues of each month.

All in favor. Motion carried.

## 11. Commissioner Comments

Cobbs: None

Toneman: None

Moore: Asked about the Newcomb Beach overlook donor. Halberstadt said he has contact information to get in touch with the donor and discuss putting off the donation until after the sewer project, as discussed previously.

Asked for an update on the results of the evaluation of Kids' Corner. Halberstadt stated that he met with the representative from the Leathers group briefly and is waiting for the results of the report. After questions regarding the sub-committee formed, Halberstadt noted that if there is a recommendation for safety improvements, then the sub-committee will be meeting to determine what needs to be done.

Asked for the status of the Black River Park project. Halberstadt says we need to bring that plan back to the board for discussion. Halberstadt has met with the Celery Pond Advocates. There has been discussion regarding the no-mow grass as recommended by Cornelisse. Halberstadt noted that the City has some ordinances about grass height so he is not sure planting grass that will only be mowed twice a year is going to be acceptable.

Asked about an article that was published in the city newsletter with a picture of the Dyckman Beach Access. Stated that it was not easy to understand. Halberstadt pointed out that it was the same graphic that the board saw and agreed that it might be difficult for the public to understand.

White: Wondered why the Parks do not have decorative lights during the holiday season. Discussion ensued regarding who pays for and installs the lights and where. Donations are solicited for downtown decorative lighting. After discussion it seemed clear that the bottom line is that parks workers are temporary seasonal employees and not available to install lights in the winter and the bottom line is funding. It was pointed out that the ice rink is nicely decorated and a good draw during the winter months.

Reinert: Informed that the Maritime Museum is working on the Harbor Walk markers in collaboration with the city; locating sponsors and replacing all of the existing markers and adding a couple more. These markers are reminders of the city's historical background and provide a new fresh look. There is a sample sponsored by and located near Old Harbor Inn that is very attractive and easy to read. Reinert added that developing sponsors has not been difficult.

Moore: Noted that Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy's Pilgrim Haven project is nearing the end; this is twenty (20) acres on the beach south of town. Noted they also have one hundred twenty (120) acres on 8<sup>th</sup> Street that will soon be open to the public. Phase 1 trails are complete and work is starting on phase 2 now. This easily accessible property is on the Black River about a mile from South Haven.

## 12. Adjourn

Motion by McAlear, second by Moore to adjourn at 6:39 p.m.

All in favor. Motion carried.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Marsha Ransom,  
Recording Secretary