

Casco Township Parks & Recreation Committee Meeting
December 10, 2013

1. **The meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm.** Those Committee members present were: Bruce Brandon, Pam Blough, Judy Graff, Louis Howerton, Tom Storr, Sandra Warren, John Johnson , David Dobreff and recording secretary Kathy Brandon. Absent: none
2. **The Agenda** was approved by all.
3. **The November 12, 2013 meeting minutes were reviewed.** Corrections were made. **A motion by David and seconded by Sandy to approve the minutes with changes was approved by all.**
4. **Correspondence received:** None
5. **Public Comments:** None
6. **2014 Meeting Dates:** A change to the February meeting date was **February 11th to February 4, 2014.**
7. **Friends of the Nature Preserve:** The Newsletter included within tax bills brought some interest from Township Residents. GiGi, our volunteer leader, received several inquiries about the Friends Group.
8. **Blue Star Pathway updates:** Nothing new to report. They are about \$10,000 or so from the needed matching Grant funds according to David.
9. **Casco Township Nature Preserve:**
 - a. Construction of the wooden portion of the stairway is complete. There are 111 stair steps. A nice round metal handrail will be fabricated by Oselka Construction. The walkway has not been put in; the weather has not been favorable for its completion. Pam communicated this with the Grant people and they are OK with this. Financially this will use all our Grant monies; beach access is what they are mostly concerned about. This will include two interpretive signs and a bench.
The split rail fence, along the bluff is completed as well.
 - b. **Beach Rules and Operation Discussion:** Pam cited a risk Management Document to help determine needed signage. A final signage document will be written and presented at the January meeting.
 - c. **Beach Rule signage:** A motion was made by David and 2nd by John that 2 signs be used for sign being, two sided, "No Lifeguard on Duty" along the stairway and on the beach More discussion was had and a vote was taken and passed.
 - d. The placement and wording of all signage for Preserve and the Beach was discussed at length. Committee Members took a huge step in getting the signage package completed. The signs will be ordered in January 2014. Placement will be early spring.

e. Maple Grove Trees: The Master Plan for the property submitted supported the use of picnic tables etc. as a park area.

What to do with the old and dying trees was discussed. We will revisit the Master Plan as to planting trees and cutting down trees.

"Revisit the Plan" will be added to a future agenda. What do we want the park to look like in the next five to ten years?

f. Operation and Maintenance: A spring cleanup will be set up in the future. It was also suggested by Tom that the Nature Preserve be closed at 5pm Nov. 1st thru April 1st. Then back to monthly in the summer.

g. Pam stated that we have been directed by the board to recognize other funding sources as well. A sub-committee was formed with Bruce, David, and Sandy to work on this for the Jan. meeting.

h. The MNRTF grant for the parking lot on the beach property was not funded. Pam will try for another Grant in the spring.

10. Update from our Township Board Representative: Judy corrected the figures from the Nov.2013 meeting: The Park and Recreation budget owes the general fund \$115,000, not the \$230,000 she quoted originally. She also suggested getting on the Agenda for the Feb. 8, 2014 for review of the Master Plan.

11. Committee Member Comments: Tom suggested that we look into inviting the public to make donations of trees, benches, etc. that we could make plaques for their donation.

Sandy shared an article from the Grand Rapids Press about Lucia Rios. She has been a great resource in helping Casco Township insure that our parks have universal access.

Bruce thanked Judy for her great job with the Parks Committee. She has been very instrumental in providing Board insight into the proper role of the Parks Committee.

12. Judy made a motion that the meeting be adjourned, 2nd by John. All in favor, meeting adjourned at 9:02.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted:
Kathy Brandon