

## **PARK COMMISSION MEETING**

**March 20, 2024**

### **Minutes**

Attending: Harry Pulliam, Mark Pernitz, Jason Neton, Mona Sue French, Rose Pertzborn, Kelly Ruschman, Chris Narveson

Absent: Dana Emmerton

Also attending: Nancy Streiff, Town Deputy Treasurer; Ashley Haffner, Frank Grenzow, Marianne Oemichen

- 1. Call to Order.** The meeting was called to order by Chair Pulliam at 6:00 pm.
- 2. Proof of Posting.** Proof of posting was provided by Streiff.
- 3. Approve Minutes from February 21, 2024.** Motion to approve the minutes of February 21, 2024 by French, second by Pertzborn, motion approved.
- 4. Public Comments.** Narveson reported that the Town of Exeter donated 2 surplus porta potties which are now at the Park site.
- 5. Update on Community Input Night and Focus Group Meetings.** Pulliam reported that there was a good turnout at the Community Input night with over 40 in attendance. Approximately 10 people attended each of the 4 focus group meetings held on 2 consecutive nights. Vierbicher is now compiling the information and will provide a report at the April 17 Parks meeting. At subsequent meetings, we will discuss a preliminary park plan including what types of improvements will be included and where geographically they will be located. Completion will be done in phases with construction of the Town garage and restoration of the southern lowland being the first priority. Plans will be made to make the Park accessible. Pulliam will advise Cheryl Housley of the DNR that we are not far enough along in the planning stage to pursue any grants during this cycle but should be in a better position to do so next year. We will look for volunteer opportunities for high school students as we proceed to help them satisfy their volunteer requirements.
- 6. Report from Signage Study Committee.** Pernitz reported that he and French met and decided to wait until building was further along to determine the type and number of signs needed.
- 7. Update on Easements for Trail Along Hwy 39.** Narveson reported that he has had difficulty obtaining easements from the necessary property owners on both the north and south sides of Hwy. 39. The deadline to complete the trail is approaching so if we can't get the necessary easements we will have to reject the DNR grant and consider building the trail at a later time.
- 8. Discuss Outreach to 4-H Clubs per Ashley Haffner's Comments in Focus Group.** Haffner is involved in a 4-H Club based in Monticello. 4-H is no longer just farming activities; it also includes cake decorating, building bird houses, archery, air

guns, etc. There may be activities in developing the park property that we could solicit their help. There was discussion about also partnering with FFA, shop classes and the elderly for park projects.

**9. Discuss Asking Scouts to Help Sort Trees for Delivery.** Pulliam reported that we ordered trees from Sustainable Wildlife Habitat in Cambridge for the Town's annual tree sale. We haven't heard yet when they will be available for pick-up, but typically it's in April. Pulliam mentioned that we will need help sorting the trees and asked Narveson to contact the Boy Scouts to see if they would help. Ruschman reported that he knows some high school students who would make good volunteers and that he will contact them.

**10. Discuss and Possibly Approve Proposed Amendments to 2024 Park Commission Budget.** Pulliam reported that he and Town clerk Wright made some changes to the wording in the 2024 Parks Budget but that the numbers have remained the same. Motion to approve the revised budget by Narveson, second by Pernitz, motion approved.

**11. Discuss and Possibly Approve Proposed Changes to Chapter 204 Town Commissions and Boards.** Pernitz noted that there are a number of items in the current ordinance that are inconsistent with Town practice, worded poorly and/or are in need of change. He will prepare a revision for the April or May meeting.

**12. Discuss Potential Workshops for 2024.** A discussion took place that with the planning of the new park, we may not have time to offer workshops this year. An exception would be if we had a workshop on how to perform a task, and then coupled it with a workday for the new park; for example, how to pick prairie seeds.

Grenzow is a member of The Prairie Enthusiasts (TPE) and spoke to Tom Mitchell who is the site steward for most of their properties. Several properties have wet areas and we could pick seeds there under the supervision of TPE for use in the southern portion of the Park. Mitchell recommended that the Town purchase seeds for three short grasses: side oats gramma, prairie dropseed, and little blue stem. Then he recommended inter-seed with non-grass seeds collected from TPE's properties. There are always extra seeds from a few species at the end of the season, but the bulk of the seed would have to be collected by NG Park volunteers in conjunction with TPE's seed collecting work parties. Collecting seed outside of these work parties is strictly prohibited. Seed picking takes place between May–November, depending upon species.

Bluebird Ridge was burned this spring by TPE. The Bluebird Ridge burn was probably the most complete burn yet at this site. Unfortunately, the central oak savanna has been taken over by dogwood and will require a major cut-and-treat effort. Pulliam reported that we received a quote from Indigenous Restoration of \$3,000 to do this work.

**13. Schedule Next Meeting, April 17, 2024, at 4:30 PM (Town of New Glarus Annual Meeting is at 6 PM).**

Pulliam reported that Dana Emmerton has resigned because of time constraints.

Pulliam will recommend that the alternate, Pertzborn, be appointed to fill this position.

**14. Adjourn.** Motion to adjourn by Pernitz, second by Ruschman, motion approved.

Meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.

Minutes prepared by Pernitz and Streiff

Approved: April 17, 2024