

Duncan Park Commission

Meeting Minutes

DATE: June 21, 2022

MEETING HELD: Grand Haven City Hall, Council Chambers, Grand Haven, MI

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: 7:03 p.m. by President Jennifer Holland.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Roger Cotner, Jennifer Holland, Nancy Nagtzaam, Georgette Sass,

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Aaron Van Baal

OTHERS PRESENT: City Liaison, Derek Gajdos

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Cotner motioned to approve the agenda as circulated at the meeting. It includes two additional items, specifically related to irrigation and city services; seconded by Sass. Agenda passed 4-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Holland asked for approval of the circulated May 17, 2022 meeting minutes. Sass made the motion to approve, Nagtzaam provided the second. Cotner asked it be made clear that the minutes from April 19, 2022 had been approved and that the April 19, 2022 minutes as corrected be circulated (note these were circulated via email on May 24). Cotner asked that under New Business it be indicated who moved to activate the RFP, the roof repair and that in item F it be made clear that the request to table passed 4-0. All corrections were made and May 17, 2022 meeting minutes were approved 4-0.

NEW BUSINESS (continued):

- A. **Election of President.** Chair accepted the nomination of Sass for President. After no further nominations, chair declared nominations closed. Sass was elected by a vote of 4-0.
- B. **Election of Secretary.** Nagtzaam nominated Cotner, who declined. There were no other nominations for secretary.
- C. **Discussion of Urban Forestry Grant.** The intent is to identify the specific project to be proposed by the Duncan Park Commission with a motion and formal vote. Sass indicated Dr. Ali Locher offered to help with writing of the proposal, and wanted the Duncan Park Commission (DPC) to identify what should be its focus. Cotner indicated that he wanted the proposal to address loss of the understory in the woods, potentially through the use of an exclosure to help determine whether this issue is associated with overbrowsing by the deer population. Sass supported and noted that Dr. Locher had found significant hemlock regenerative potential still exists via hemlock seeds in the soil. After discussion, the following motion was generated; Request Dr Locher's assistance in the preparation of 2022 Urban Forestry Grant proposal addressing loss of understory due to impacts such as overbrowsing with the use of an exclosure to measure and analyze possible causes. Cotner moved to support, Holland provided second. Motion passed 4-0.
- D. **Discussion of an online repository of Duncan Park Commission documents.** Sass described the goal was to have an archive of documents, such as minutes or working proposals, for commission use. Gajdos stated all minutes were required to be available though they were not necessarily posted on the city website. (2021 and 2022 minutes can be found at: <https://grandhaven.org/city-services/boards-and-commissions/duncan-park-commission/>.) There was a discussion of the kind of internet repository that would be allowed as well as the necessity that it be accessible through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). The motion agreed upon was Sass would create a shared file system using Google Docs for the Duncan Park Commission. Cotner moved to accept; Holland provided the second. Motion passed 4-0.
- E. **Discussion of the feasibility of task-specific groups for work in the park.** It was noted that any work to be done by commissioners should be on a volunteer basis and that the task-specific groups would be comprised of two commissioners in order to maintain compliance with the Open Meetings Act. The motion decided upon was as follows: to allow the creation of task-specific groups of two commissioners to complete work on a volunteer basis. Cotner moved to accept this motion, Sass provided the second. Motion passed 4-0.
- F. **Discussion for updates and improvements to the Duncan Park kiosk.** Holland noted that the header needs to be changed to the legal name of "Duncan Park" and she has a piece of cedar and template that could be used. In addition, it was noted that it would be desirable to make the history and rules more visible. In addition, using the

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kiosk as a place to post announcements and direct patrons to additional information was also a stated goal. It was agreed that commissioners could share their ideas via Google Docs or a work session rather than bring a specific motion at this time. Holland and Nagtzaam agreed to form a group to take on the task of putting together ideas.

- G. **Discussion to create a community naming contest for the marked trails in Duncan Park and connectors to neighboring green spaces.** Holland indicated that wayfinding would be made easier if trails had identifying names. The lack of correlation between trails indicated on the map and how trails are used is an issue. The need to first accurately delineate trails that correlate with acceptable usage and effective management to minimize negative impact of foot traffic was discussed. Holland pointed out it would also be desirable to provide distance information for various trails. Cotner noted that Curt TerHaar (Coordinator of Planning and Development for Ottawa County Parks who generated the existing map) has that information and we should use him as a resource. It was decided that Holland and Nagtzaam would contact Curt TerHaar and report back to the commission.
- H. **Discussion to contract with the city, on a time and material basis, for maintenance in the park (including mowing, irrigation, leaf cleanup and the season shuffle of picnic tables).** Cotner reported that he had met with Derek Gajdos and Todd Brand. He felt that the city would do a more effective and efficient job than current contractors, as well as be more responsive. Furthermore, he was assured that the reporting of the expenses associated with this work would be presented to the commission in such a way as to be very clear and transparent. Gajdos made it clear that when there was work the city could not do, they would find a contractor to do it, and also wanted to make sure that the commission understood that they did not want their work to be "micromanaged" by the commission. Specifying the height of the mowing deck for Duncan Park was given as an example of micromanagement. How and to whom work in the park would be requested was clarified. Holland requested that Titan be given the choice to finish out the maintenance season in the park or end its obligations. Sass requested the commission have a clearer understanding of what maintenance costs would be charged to the commission. In the past, snow removal and trash pickup has been provided free of charge. Based on previous agreements with the city, Gajdos estimated that the total would be ~\$7000 per year (using the 5 year charge to the DPC of ~\$32,000 that was paid to the city in 2019). Cotner offered the motion to contract with the city on a time and materials basis for maintenance items in the park effective as soon as possible, subject to a conversation with Titan to continue mowing and the ongoing irrigation repair. Sass provided second. Motion passed 4-0.
- I. **Discussion to approve the updated cost to replace irrigation timer, battery pack and solenoid to activate the sprinkler system at the Sheldon St entrance for \$1170 (parts and labor).** Sass made a motion to approve all costs associated with irrigation repair, Cotner provided second. Motion passed 4-0.

CITY LIAISON REPORT: Derek Gajdos was asked about the status of the DPC's RFP for a forester. It was indicated that it will be reviewed. Holland asked about the status of the application for Duncan Park to be registered as an Old Growth Forest. Gajdos indicated that this designation had been expanded to include parts of Mulligan's Hollow and the cemetery, and is in process. DPC would be able to post this designation on its kiosk.

TREASURER REPORT: Amy Bessinger's financial reports were noted as received and circulated to commissioners. Sass requested clarification on the electric bill.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

PRESIDENT REPORT: Holland indicated that she had completed the boot cleaning stations. These still need to have signage as to their purpose and placement at each street entrance. She has also completed the ADA compatible table and it needs to be moved to the concrete pad. The lawn at the parking area was also fertilized and seeded by Sass and Holland. While working in the park, Holland and Sass met a group undertaking a tick project led by William Miller from Calvin College. This group is interested in using Dark Park as a research site and this will be discussed at our next meeting. Holland indicated she would also like to have a work session about design & marketing for the park and has been in touch with a local graphic artist, Jennifer Smelker, for a discussion of this work. We also discussed the

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placement of Adopt-a-Hemlock signage by Larry Burns. It was decided that any signage placed in Duncan Park needs to be approved by the commission.

NEXT MEETING: July 19, 2022 @7pm

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned by Holland at 9:09 pm.

These minutes were approved at the Commission meeting held on July 19, 2022



Georgette Sass, Secretary