

NORTHWEST OTTAWA RECREATION AUTHORITY

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NORA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Meeting date: June 19, 2025

1. Call to order: Chairperson - William Montgomery, Ferrysburg

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Board Chair William Montgomery

2. Roll Call.

Mary Jane Belter - GH Twp - pr

Howard Behm - GH Twp - pr

Adam MacMillan - Robinson Twp - ab

Rick Mikkelsen - Robinson Twp - ab

Karen Lowe - Grand Haven - ab

Lyndsey Huisman - Grand Haven - pr

William Montgomery - Ferrysburg - pr

Craig Bessinger - Ferrysburg - pr

Marc Eickholt - GHAPS - pr

Sarah Elliott - GHAPS - ab

Rebecca Hopp - At Large - pr

3. Approval of Meeting Agenda:

Motion by Eickholt, second by Hopp, to approve the amended agenda. Vote: 7-0

Discussion:

Add update of city fees under old business

4. Approval of Consent Agenda:

Motion by Belter, second by Hopp, to approve the consent agenda. Vote: 7-0

Discussion - Approval of Board Meeting Minutes of April 24, 2025 as printed.

B. Financial Reports:

1. May 2025 Financials - Revenue & Expense Sheet

5. New Business

A. Summer Planning & Updates

Recreation summer school camps are underway

Attendance is down about 25% - in part because of lack of funding to assist kids that fall into the homeless category. Families may be working to figure out their afternoon options since the Outdoor Discovery Center is offering the morning at no cost.

Summer classes include: Archery and mountain biking classes, canoe fishing classes

Fishing, Baseball, basketball, softball, beach volleyball

Enrollments are up for all summer classes

Jackie is doing the Tuesday night downtown programs. The DDA is funding part of Jackie's salary/time for working on the downtown activities.

NORA programs are being advertised during the activities.

Spring activities were successful with great participation.

Montgomery asked about Rec summer school scholarships. 7 were given.

B. Director's review:

Montgomery and Bessinger completed the review.

Noted areas: working with Robinson Twp, working on the bylaw amendments, and the other things beyond the role of a rec director that Chris does.

Compensation: last year the Director's compensation was increased to bring VanHekken in line with other rec programs. The COLA is 3.1%

Recommendation: an increase of 3.1%, additional vacation time

Motion by Hopp, second by Eickholt, to support the recommendation of a 3.1% increase and additional vacation time. . Vote: 7-0

C. NORA Articles of Incorporation Board discussion & decision

Vanhekken: This is basically removing Robinson from the authority.

Other considerations while the Articles are being revised: look at the appointed at large positions, should Robinson have an 'at large position or a position appointed by the Robinson Twp. Board.

Should this be offered to other govt units that are not part of NORA? Chris will be meeting with Spring Lake Village next week.

Hopp suggested reaching out to Robinson before the final version of the Articles is completed.

Discussion: if a governmental unit is paying according to the funding formula, they should have a representative on the NORA board. That unit would be responsible for appointing their representative. The only govt. unit now is Robinson. This could be offered to other communities.

Eickholt expressed that we keep the board at 11 – or at least have an odd number of board members. Discussing previous years of NORA meetings, a tie vote has never occurred.

The consensus: Municipalities not a part of the NORA but that pay their contribution to NORA as determined by the funding formula will have 1 member to represent their govt unit.

In drawing up the contract for compensation to NORA and their residents pay the resident fee, it was suggested that a clause be put into place so that if the unit has plans to withdraw they must notify NORA 1 year in advance so that NORA can make the necessary budget reductions.

VanHekken:

Work on the revised Articles with the attorney for discussion at the August NORA meeting

Talk with the Robinson twp. Supervisor regarding the position with NORA.

Belter asked if there is a written agreement with Robinson for paying the amount determined by the funding formula and affirming that Robinson residents will pay the activity resident fee. Robinson officials did pass a resolution formally withdrawing from NORA. There was nothing put in place about withdrawing from the new agreement, giving NORA notice a year in advance.

D. NORA Board - At Large Position

Hopp reapplied for the position, her 3-year term is up.

Montgomery asked if there was anything in place regarding term limits for appointed representatives. There is not. Terms are for 3 years and the terms of service is a decision by the individual or their appointing governmental unit.

Motion: Belter moved, Huisman seconded, that the NORA board receive the

application of Rebecca Hopp and confirm the appointment of Rebecca Hopp as a member at large of the NORA Board for a 3-year term.

Motion to accept. 7-0

E. Election of NORA Board officers - 2025-2026 term

Bessinger moved, Huisman supported, the following NORA officers for FY 2025-26:

Chair: William Montgomery

Vice Chair: Rebecca Hopp

Secretary: Mary Jane Belter

Treasurer: Howard Behm

Motion passed: 7-0

F. Approval of 2025-26 NORA Board meeting dates

Bessinger moved, Hopp supported, the NORA board meeting calendar for FY 2025-2026 as presented. Vote: 7-0

6. Old Business

A. NORA Summer Fundraiser event - July 15, 2025

Progress was discussed. Board members were asked to help with ticket sales and solicitation of items for the silent auction.

B. United Way updates

NORA is receiving the summer school grant in July - \$4200

C. GH city administration fees:

VanHekken met with Emily Greene, City of Grand Haven, to discuss the fees and the increase in the budget. She is reviewing items to find savings and come up with more of a set fee which would aid in budgeting and not create such a high budget item.

One item is to remove the fee for managing the continuous fees collected from the user groups – soccer, etc. Those were all paid out already.

Another issue was that of NORA of being treated as a dept of the city and we were expensed for items/personnel that would not benefit NORA.

Discussion then centered on contracting with the city for financial services as the Loutit district Library does.

Chris will get a copy of the library agreement to review

7. Public Comments - none

8. Advisory Board Comments

Hopp thanked everyone for accommodating the meeting change

9 . Next Scheduled Meeting - August 28, 2025

10. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: motion by Hopp, second by Huisman. Vote: 7-0

Meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Mary Jane Belter, NORA secretary

NORA Secretary

Date