

AGENDA

Ingham County Parks & Recreation Commission
121 E. Maple Street, P.O. Box 178, Mason, MI 48854
Telephone: 517.676.2233; Fax: 517.244.7190

The packet is available on-line by going to www.ingham.org, choosing the "Monthly Calendar," and clicking on Monday, February 27, 2012

Monday, February 27, 2012

6:00pm

PUBLIC HEARING

To Hear Suggestions and Comments from the Public
Regarding the Proposed Master Plan Update

6:15pm

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Human Services Building
Conference Room A, Second Floor
5303 S. Cedar Street, Building #3
Lansing, Michigan

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Public Hearing**
The purpose of this Public Hearing is to Hear Suggestions and Comments from the Public Regarding the Proposed Master Plan Update
4. **Approval of Minutes**
[Minutes](#) of the December 19, 2011 regular meeting and Minutes of the January 23, 2012 regular meeting and public hearing will be considered
5. **Limited Public Comment** ~ *Limited to 3 minutes with no discussion*
6. **Late Items / Deletions / Consent Items**
7. **Election of 2012 Officers**
 - A. Chair
 - B. Vice-Chair
 - C. Secretary
8. **Commission to Consider 2012 Committee Assignments**
9. **Presentation**
 - A. Overview of County Advisory Board Training and the Open Meetings Act – Ralph Monsma
 1. Sample of Planning Committee Minutes & Handouts (provided at the meeting)

10. ACTION ITEMS

- A. [Resolution](#) Recommending an Application be Submitted to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for a Recreation Passport Grant for a Handicap Accessible Restroom at Burchfield Park
- B. [Resolution](#) Recommending an Amendment to the Permanent Conservation Easement Agreement with Meridian Township.
- C. [Resolution](#) Rescinding the Second Vehicle Annual Parking Pass
- D. [Resolution](#) Recommending a Transfer of Funds to Accommodate the Purchase of Cages for the Discovery Building
- E. [Resolution](#) Recommending a Transfer of Funds and Authorization to Proceed with Replacement of Lighting within the Coral Reef Exhibit
- F. [Resolution](#) Recommending a Transfer of Funds and Authorization for the Potter Park Zoological Society to Provide Seasonal Workers for Customer Service Related Positions
- G. [Resolution](#) Recommending Increasing the Vacant Part-Time Zookeeper 400 Position to a Full-Time Position and Approval of a Line Item Transfer
- H. [Resolution](#) Recommending a Fund Transfer to the Potter Park Zoological Society for 2012 Marketing

11. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. Budget and Personnel Committee Report
- B. [Proposed Names](#) for the Burchfield Disc Golf Course

12. Director's Report

- A. Monthly Grant Status Report
- B. Report Regarding Time Spent on Friends of Ingham County Parks Tasks
- C. Hawk Island Snow Board/Snow Tube Hill Status
- D. Lake Lansing Park-North
 - 1. ["Draft" Easement Wording](#) for the Operations and Maintenance of Newly Acquired 120 acres
 - 2. Meridian Township Land Preservation [Board Minutes](#) Relating to the Lake Lansing Park-North Prescribed Burn
 - 3. Ingham County Parks & Meridian Township Land Preservation Board [Stewardship Plan](#)

13. [Correspondence & Citizen Comment](#)

14. Board Comments

15. Limited Public Comment ~ *Limited to 3 minutes with no discussion*

16. Upcoming Meetings

- A. Date: March 12 & 26, 2012; Time: 6:00pm
Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting

17. Informational Items – *Distributed at Commission Meeting*

- A. County Services, Finance Committee, and Board of Commissioner Meeting Minutes (Items pertaining to the Parks Department)
- B. Interim Zoo Director/Society's Report
- C. Parks Director's Zoo Report
- D. Newspaper Articles

18. Adjournment

Official minutes are stored and available for inspection at the address noted at the top of this agenda. The Ingham County Parks & Recreation Commission will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as interpreters for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting for the visually impaired, for individuals with disabilities a the meeting upon five (5) working days notice to the Ingham County Parks & Recreation Commission. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Ingham County Parks & Recreation Commission by writing to the Ingham County Parks Department, P.O. Box 178, Mason, Michigan 48854, or by calling 517.676.2233.

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Monday, February 27, 2012

6:00pm

PARKS DEPARTMENT PUBLIC HEARING

TO HEAR SUGGESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC REGARDING THE PROPOSED MASTER PLAN UPDATE

1. **Chair to Call Public Hearing to Order**
2. **Introductions**
3. **Chair to State Purpose of the Public Hearing and Inform the Public of the Commission's Rules for Public Hearings**
4. **Presentation of Survey Results and Draft Master Plan**
5. **Chair to Open the Floor for Questions from the Public**
6. **Chair to Recognize and Ask for Presentations on the Proposed Master Plan Update from Members of Other Public Agencies, if in attendance**
7. **Chair to have Recording Secretary Read into the Record any Correspondence Received**
8. **Chair to Open Public Comment**
9. **Chair to Adjourn Public Hearing**

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DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING

**INGHAM COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
121 E. Maple Street, Suite 102, Mason, Michigan 48854
December 19, 2011**

The Ingham County Parks & Recreation Commission held a Regularly Scheduled Meeting at the Human Services Building, Conference Room A, 5303 S. Cedar Street, Lansing, Michigan.

Board Members

Present: Paul Pratt, Pam Weil, Ralph Monsma, Laura Davis, Commissioner Tsernoglou, John Czarnecki, Sarah Nicholls, Ray Rustem, and Norm Gear

Absent: Bill Matt

Also Present Recording Secretary Deb Bavery; Park Director Willis Bennett, Park Managers Pat Witte, Jeff Gehl and Brian Collins; Park Financial Coordinator Karen Fraser; Zoo Society Board Chair Kevin Feuka, and Volunteer of the Year Damian Redman and Family

Call to Order: Chair Weil called the Regularly Scheduled Parks & Recreation Commission meeting to order at 6:02pm.

Minutes: **Moved by** Commissioner Tsernoglou, **Supported by** Mr. Gear to approve the November 28, 2011 minutes of the regular meeting as written. **Yes-8; No-0. MOTION CARRIED.**

Late Items / Deletions:

- Correspondence re: Rayner Park in Mason

Limited Public Comment:

None.

Presentation of the Volunteer of the Year Award to Damian Redman

Chair Weil read the resolution and thanked Mr. Redman for his contributions to the Disc Golf Course at Burchfield Park. All members present applauded Mr. Redman’s volunteer efforts.

Presentation of Resolution Honoring Laura Davis

Chair Weil read and presented the resolution and thanked Ms. Davis for her hard work and contributions to deliberations on the Parks Commission. All members present wished her the best in her future endeavors.

RESOLUTION #64-11 ~ RESOLUTION HONORING LAURA DAVIS

WHEREAS, Laura Davis has shown a remarkable level of leadership and devotion to the idea of community involvement by actively seeking out ways to benefit the community in which she lives; and

WHEREAS, Ms Davis served as an Ingham County Commissioner from 2009 thru 2010 and served on the Parks & Recreation Commission as Board of Commissioner Liaison from September of 2009 thru December of 2010 and as Secretary to the Parks & Recreation Commission in 2011; and

WHEREAS, after she left the Board of Commissioners at the end of 2010 Ms. Davis felt so strongly about the role County parks play in the community she applied and was appointed to serve as a community representative to the Parks & Recreation Commission in 2011; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Davis was able to bring into the Parks and Recreation Commission's deliberations relevant ideas and insights from her previous public service and personal experience; and

WHEREAS, through her diligence, tact, and personal integrity, she has promoted a relationship of mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation between the Ingham County Parks & Recreation Commission, the Board of Commissioners, other local governmental agencies, and the community at large; and

WHEREAS, throughout her term as a Parks and Recreation Commission member, Ms. Davis has helped to advance, develop, and implement effective parks policies; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Davis' efforts have contributed to the Parks Department's ability to provide exceptional service to the citizens of Ingham County.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ingham County Parks and Recreation Commission, by adoption of this resolution, recognizes the impact and quality of Laura Davis' work, and expresses its sincere appreciation to her for the services and benefits which have been received by the citizens of Ingham County.

ACTION ITEMS

Mr. Feuka spoke regarding the resolution approving reimbursement terms and conditions to the Potter Park Zoological Society for Interim zoo Director Services.

RESOLUTION #61-11 ~ RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING REIMBURSEMENT TERMS AND CONDITIONS TO THE POTTER PARK ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY FOR INTERIM ZOO DIRECTOR SERVICES

WHEREAS, on November 8, 2011, the Ingham County Board of Commissioners approved Resolution #11-346, authorizing a contract amendment with the Potter Park Zoological Society to appoint Sherrie Graham as the Interim Zoo Director; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with Resolution #11-346, Ingham County Controller Mary Lannoye and Attorney Richard McNulty have met with Potter Park Zoological Society President Kevin Feuka and Executive Director Sherrie Graham to negotiate mutually agreeable terms and conditions of a contract amendment; and

WHEREAS, by the authorization granted in the approved resolution, and upon the two parties reaching mutually agreeable terms and conditions, the Chairperson of the Board of Commissioners and the County Clerk signed the necessary contract documents including the resulting Amended Agreement Between Ingham County and the Potter Park Zoological Society and Interim Zoo Director Services Agreement, also signed by the Potter Park Zoological Society President, thereby subsequently executing the two Agreements; and

WHEREAS, item III. Compensation of the Interim Zoo Director Services Agreement provides for

County reimbursement to the Society for that portion of the personnel costs for Interim Director Services as mutually agreed upon by both contracting parties for periods after January 18, 2011; and

WHEREAS, the Potter Park Zoo Board supported these reimbursement terms and conditions with the passage of a resolution at their December meeting.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Ingham County Potter Park Parks & Recreation Commission recommends the Ingham County Board of Commissioners approve the provided reimbursement in the amount of a lump-sum \$4,000 (Four Thousand and 00 Dollars) per month throughout the agreement duration specified in the executed agreements.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Potter Park Zoological Society shall provide on a monthly basis to the Ingham County Director of Parks an invoice for these services, which is due within 30 (thirty) calendar days of the date of invoice.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that said invoice shall be approved for payment in a timely fashion and in accordance with all County policies and procedures so that said invoice will be paid within the timeframe stated above.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that said payment of any invoice within the timeframe stated above and any accrued interest shall not be withheld for any reason including, but not limited to, the County's dispute regarding the compliance or satisfaction of invoiced services within the terms of the executed agreements, is provided in writing by the Director of Parks to the Potter Park Zoological Society Executive Director within 5 (five) business days of when cause of said dispute occurred, or 10 (ten) business days of when said dispute was brought to the attention of the Director of Parks, whichever is earlier.

Moved by Mr. Monsma and Supported by Ms. Davis that Resolution #61-11 be approved.
Yes-8; No-0. MOTION CARRIED.

Mr. Bennett provided background information regarding the resolution accepting charitable donations from the Friends of Ingham County Parks

RESOLUTION #62-11 ~ RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING ACCEPTANCE OF CHARITABLE DONATIONS FROM THE FRIENDS OF INGHAM COUNTY PARKS FOR THE INGHAM COUNTY PARKS

WHEREAS, The Friends of Ingham County Parks whose mission, since the year 2000, is to support the Ingham County Parks through fundraising and volunteerism; and

WHEREAS, the Friends of Ingham County Parks, Band Shell Committee donated over \$13,000 to support Friday evening band shell concerts at Lake Lansing South Park, the Hawk Island Snow Tubing Hill received a \$4,000 grant from the Capital Region Community Foundation used for construction of the hill, \$8,900 in funding supported stewardship efforts in the parks, \$1,100 from the community supported the Hawk Island Boarding Hill project and \$1,000 of miscellaneous expenditures for the parks, for the total 2011 donation of \$28,000 to the Ingham County Parks; and

WHEREAS, over the course of more than a decade of service to the Ingham County Parks this group of supportive citizens have now raised over \$555,000; and

WHEREAS, the Friends of Ingham County Parks are a private, 501c(3) nonprofit, fundraising organization that raises funds to support the Ingham County Parks; and

WHEREAS, the intent of this charitable gift is that the funds are to be used solely and exclusively to benefit the Ingham County Parks; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ingham County Parks & Recreation Commission recommends to the Ingham County Board of Commissioners to authorize acceptance of the 2011 donation of \$28,000 from the Friends of Ingham County Parks for the Ingham County Parks.

Moved by Mr. Rustem and Supported by Commissioner Tsernoglou that Resolution #62-11 be approved. **Yes-8; No-0. MOTION CARRIED.**

RESOLUTION #63-11 ~ RESOLUTION TO COMPLY WITH PROVISIONS OF THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT SETTING PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETINGS FOR JANUARY 2012 THROUGH DECEMBER 2012

WHEREAS, it is necessary for the Parks & Recreation Commission to adopt an annual resolution to comply with the provisions of the Open Meetings Act of 1976, P.A. 267, as amended, and set dates, time, location and meeting rules and regulations of Ingham County Parks & Recreation Commission meetings for 2012, pursuant to the provisions of said Act;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Parks & Recreation Commission adopts the following meeting dates for 2012, time, location and amended meeting rules and regulations, pursuant to provisions of the Open Meetings Act, Public Act 267 of the Public Acts of 1976, as amended:

I. The Ingham County Parks & Recreation Commission shall conduct meetings the fourth Monday of each month, except for the months of May and December of 2012. This meeting shall be conducted on the 3rd Monday of the month. Meetings commence at 6:00 p.m. and are held at the Ingham County Human Services Building, Conference Room A, Second Floor, 5303 S. Cedar, Lansing, Michigan unless otherwise posted.

January 23, 2012
February 13 & 27, 2012
March 12 & 26, 2012
April 9 & 23, 2012
May 21, 2011 (3rd Monday)
June 25, 2012
July 23, 2012
August 27, 2012
September 24, 2012
October 22, 2012
November 26, 2012
December 17, 2012 (3rd Monday)

In the event of a special meeting, rescheduled meeting or cancellation of a regularly scheduled meeting, a notice of same will be posted at the offices of the Ingham County Parks Department, 121 E. Maple St., Suite 102, Mason, MI 48854 at least 18 hours prior to the time of the meeting or canceled meeting.

II. All regularly scheduled meetings shall be held at the Ingham County Human Services Building, Conference Room A, Second Floor, 5303 S. Cedar, Lansing, Michigan unless otherwise posted. Notice of meeting will be posted at the offices of the Ingham County Parks Department, 121 E. Maple St., Suite 102, Mason, MI 48854 at least 18 hours prior to the time of the meeting. Requests for information regarding meetings are to be directed to the Ingham County Parks Department, 121 E. Maple St., Suite 102, Mason, Michigan 48854; telephone (517) 676-2233.

III. All meetings of the Parks & Recreation Commission shall be open to the public and all persons shall be permitted to attend any meeting; except a closed meeting may be held in accordance with Sections (7) and (8), as required by the Open Meetings Act of 1976, Public Act 267, as amended.

IV. This Commission authorizes the Recording Secretary or his/her designee to post all required notices of regular, rescheduled or special meetings of this Commission, or any other postings, as required by the Open Meetings Act of 1976, Public Act 267, as amended.

V. The Recording Secretary or his/her designee shall be responsible for preparation, distribution and storage of all minutes of this Commission as required by the Open Meetings Act of 1976, Public Act 267, as amended.

VI. The minutes of open meetings shall be available for public inspection at the office of the Recording Secretary, Ingham County Parks Department, 121 E. Maple St., Suite 102, P.O. Box 178, Mason, Michigan 48854, and shall be available to the public at a reasonable copying cost, as required by the Open Meetings Act of 1976, Public Act 267, as amended.

VII. To provide the public its right to address this Commission during any regular or special meeting, any member of the public may address the Commission for up to three (3) minutes per individual as scheduled on the agenda at the beginning of each meeting, and up to three (3) minutes at the end of the meeting at the time scheduled on the agenda for public comment; except that comments on an item scheduled for a public hearing may be made at that time pursuant to Section VIII hereof. At the discretion of the President, this time may be extended by granting an additional one (1) minute. During an agenda item, members of the public may not address the Commission unless recognized by the President. To accommodate public comment, the Commission President, at his/her discretion, may combine an agenda item into the public comment portion of the meeting in order to facilitate input from the public.

VIII. To provide the public its right to address this Commission during scheduled public hearings, any member of the public may address the Commission for up to five (5) minutes per individual, when recognized by the President. All comments are to be directed to the President. Comments are to be specific and address only the subject of the public hearing, otherwise the speaker may be ruled out of order at the discretion of the President.

IX. The Chair may call to order any person who is ruled out of order or who otherwise disrupts the orderly conduct of business at meetings, including speaking without being recognized, interrupting speakers, the Chair, Commission members or staff, exceeding designated time limits, failure to be

germane to the issue at hand, use of vulgarities, or otherwise being disruptive. A person may be prohibited from speaking again at the same meeting, may be asked to leave the premises or may be removed from the meeting at the discretion of the President and/or may be subject to arrest.

X. Members of the public desiring to speak to the Commission may be required to identify themselves before speaking, as required by the Open Meetings Act of 1976, Public Act 267, as amended.

XI. The Ingham County Parks Department will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at meetings to individuals with disabilities, at all public meetings and public hearings upon ten (10) days notice to the Ingham County Parks Department prior to the date set for the public hearing or meeting. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the ADA Coordinator for the Ingham County Parks Department.

Moved by Mr. Rustem and Supported by Commissioner Tsernoglou that Resolution #63-11 be approved. Yes-8; No-0. MOTION CARRIED.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Sponsorship Opportunities in the Parks & Friends of Ingham County Parks Memberships ~ Ms. Fraser distributed materials relating to possible sponsorships that could be available in the parks. She further indicated the Friends of Ingham County Parks would like to begin to sell memberships and passed out materials regarding this endeavor. Mr. Czarnecki asked Commissioner Tsernoglou how the Board of Commissioners would feel about sponsorships in the parks. She responded by stating it was a good question and she doesn't object personally. Chair Weil stated she would like to see the exact details regarding the size of the signage.

Mr. Pratt entered the meeting at 6:30pm

Commissioner Tsernoglou stated some Commissioners have talked about having ads on CATA busses which is somewhat similar to this concept. Mr. Czarnecki asked staff to continue working on the concept of sponsorship opportunities and bring back an answer to Chair Weil's question. Commissioner Tsernoglou indicated Animal Control has something similar and Mr. Bennett indicated something like this had been done at the Hope Soccer Complex. Ms. Davis suggested adding the word annually to the cost information. Commissioner Tsernoglou stated she would bring this up in caucus to see if there would be any issues. Chair Weil stated she would like to see this concept go through the Friends group for their input. Ms. Fraser stated the materials were going to them next. Chair Weil posed the question "how practical is it for staff to work on Friends projects." In response to Commissioner Tsernoglou's suggestion Mr. Bennett indicated he would get an attorney's opinion as to how staff should interact with the Friends group. Chair Weil asked that the Friends of Ingham County By-Laws be included in the packet at the next Parks Commission meeting. Mr. Witte spoke regarding how important staff time is with regard to Friends projects. In response to Chair Weil's question regarding whether or not the Bandshell Committee felt they were undercut Mr. Witte responded bandshell funds are held separately for bandshell activities. Ms. Fraser stated Mr. Witte has individuals come back year after year to work specifically on the Bandshell Committee. Discussion ensued regarding the amount donated year to year. Ms. Davis spoke regarding how fundraising was handled at the Fair Board and Commissioner Tsernoglou talked about Animal Control. Mr. Monsma encouraged people to not make this too complicated. Commissioner Tsernoglou stated everyone is supportive of what has been done unless it interferes with

other work and from what she sees other departments are encouraged to look into other avenues of fundraising. Mr. Czarnecki stated this is a fine line and care should be taken as to whose name is on documents. It is his opinion that the Friends group would be more autonomous and staff e-mail should not be included.

Financial Report ~ Mr. Czarnecki reported more money was being spent than was being taken in. He further reported the only endeavors that made money were the Soldan Dog Park and the Hawk Island Concession. Discussions will be held at the Budget Committee level to determine how projects will be funded in the future with only \$145,000 left in the current enterprise fund. Chair Weil asked if it was time to talk to the Controller and ask that charge backs to the 508 fund be modified.

Mr. Rustem left the meeting at 7:00pm.

Mr. Czarnecki stated we needed to break even and Chair Weil concurred. In response to Mr. Czarnecki's question Ms. Fraser explained the retirement program line item and indicated the cost of pensions were higher than budgeted by the County Budget Department.

Director's Report

Mr. Bennett spoke regarding the following items:

- Season Passes for the Hawk Island Snow Park and why the resolution went directly to the Board of Commissioners
- Progress of the Tubing/Snowboard Hills – wiring is buried and waiting for the electrician to hook it up – the transformer was installed last week – the Board of Water and Light donated poles – affordable lighting is still being sought out – will be bringing resolution next month to recognize the work that was done by staff in uncertain conditions. Discussion ensued as to why threading the pipes for water didn't work.
- Grants Status – Burchfield boardwalk – decking is in place – railing and fish habitat will be completed in the spring – quality of work is outstanding
- Accessible Sign Replacement – replacing signage to ensure it is enforceable will cost \$2,000 for the entire park system. Commissioner Tsernoglou indicated there is interest in going forward with this on the Board of Commissioners. Chair Weil suggested doing it as a CIP project in 2013 and expressed her concern that this is an expenditure for something that isn't a problem.
- Letter from the City of Mason re: Rayner Park – Mr. Bennett reported on his walk through with the City. Chair Weil stated it is wonderful to see the City of Mason happy with the park.
- Prescribed Burn – Mr. Witte reported he is looking at three prescribed burns and the Meridian Township Land Preservation Board has agreed to pay for three back to back burns in addition to paying \$3,000 for future replanting of the areas. This comes to a total of \$15,000 and will take place from mid-March to the first part of April.
- Zoo and the AZA Inspection – Ms. Graham has been working on the paperwork and all is going well – the shift doors are under construction – Baby tigers are back on exhibit and two new lions were received last week with the goal to reproduce with the younger male tiger already onsite. Mr. Bennett will ask Dr. Harrison to put together a document as to what we are going to do with all of the cats.
- Union Negotiations _____
- Deer Hunt Status – Mr. Witte spoke regarding his decision to back off on the hunt for one year. He will start public hearings in June and July and apply in September. He further reported Meridian Township has gone forward with a deer hunt and having a lot of success. Mr. Witte

stated he will be putting in a deer resistant garden to show the neighbors what they can do. Chair Weil stated she would like to see a multi faceted deer management plan as opposed to just the hunt. Mr. Witte replied that if their food source is limited they will move on. Mr. Monsma commented that the East Lansing website has an area to comment as to whether or not East Lansing should look into a deer hunt.

Board Comments

Ms. Davis thanked the Parks & Recreation Commission for her time on the Commission and the donation to her school's gingerbread competition.

Limited Public Comment

None.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:36pm.

Minutes submitted by:
Deb Bavery, Recording Secretary

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING
INGHAM COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
121 E. Maple Street, Suite 102, Mason, Michigan 48854
January 23, 2012

The Ingham County Parks & Recreation Commission held a Regularly Scheduled Meeting and a Public Hearing at the Human Services Building, Conference Room A, 5303 S. Cedar Street, Lansing, Michigan.

Board Members

Present: Pam Weil, Paul Pratt, John Czarnecki, Ralph Monsma, and Sarah Nicholls

Absent: Bill Matt, Commissioner Tsernoglou, Norm Gear, and Ray Rustem

Also Present: Director of Parks Willis Bennett, Recording Secretary Debra Bavery, Park Manager Pat Witte, Financial Coordinator Karen Fraser, Park Manager Brian Collins; Park Employees Bret Muter and Matt Lerch

Public Hearing – Called to Order at 6:02pm

To Hear Suggestions and Comments from the Public Regarding the Proposed Master Plan Update

Chair Weil called the Public Meeting to order at 6:02pm, stated the purpose and the rules of the Public Hearing, and noted there was no public present at the meeting.

Ms. Fraser introduced Bret Muter and Matt Lerch and thanked them for their work on the draft master plan and the park survey. Ms. Fraser and Mr. Muter narrated a PowerPoint presentation showing a description of the public input process and responded to the following questions put forward by members of the Parks & Recreation Commission.

In response to Mr. Czarnecki's question, Mr. Muter responded he has seen surveys that ask the question "would you pay more for park facilities." Chair Weil suggested saving the email list that was generated from the surveys and using it as an outreach tool in the future. Ms. Nicholls stated she had the same concerns as Chair Weil, she couldn't skip a question, she would have liked to skip some and comment instead. Ms. Nicholls further stated that in the future more time should be spent reviewing the questions on the survey prior to release. Chair Weil questioned the need for a master plan this year as there are no funds for match money. Mr. Czarnecki assured Chair Weil that the master plan could be amended to include an unanticipated project. Mr. Czarnecki asked Mr. Bennett if he had talked with Clinton County as to how their barrier free unisex bathrooms were working out. Mr. Bennett responded he would follow up. Mr. Czarnecki stated he struggles with what should a county park provide vs what amenities do people want and how do they want to pay for it. Mr. Pratt stated he would be reluctant at this point to start the process over due to cost concerns, but he would like staff to have a protocol for this process and begin it 6 months earlier. In addition, he expressed concern that the survey didn't reach out to a completely different set of people instead of only park users. Mr. Pratt suggested involving Mr. Propst in the process in the future as a resource. Ms. Nicholls stated that she felt a county system should compliment a city system, with tourist attractions worthy of driving across the county. Mr. Czarnecki stated he thought the Conservation District would be prime land for a county park. Mr. Pratt encouraged the Commission not to give up on acquiring more land.

Members present requested Ms. Fraser e-mail the PowerPoint presentation to all members.

Mrs. Bavery reported no correspondence was received.

Limited Public Comment

None.

Public Hearing Adjourned at 6:45pm

Call to

Order: Chair Weil called the Regularly Scheduled Parks & Recreation Commission meeting to order at 6:47pm.

Minutes: Approval of the Minutes of the December 19, 2011 regular meeting were tabled until the February meeting due to a lack of a quorum.

Late Items / Deletions:

Suggested Names for the Burchfield Disc Golf Course
2012 Events at the Potter Park Zoo

Limited Public Comment:

None.

ELECTION OF 2011 OFFICERS

Tabled until the February 27, 2012 meeting due to a lack of a quorum.

COMMISSION TO CONSIDER 2012 COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Tabled until the February 27, 2012 meeting due to a lack of a quorum.

OVERVIEW OF COUNTY ADVISORY BOARD TRAINING AND THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT

Tabled until the February 27, 2012 meeting due to a lack of a quorum.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

2011 Year End Security Statistics ~ Mr. Czarnecki talked about taking the hard line with respect to warnings as those numbers increased significantly. Mr. Collins responded there are more dogs using the dog park so it stands to reason the violations would increase. Mr. Bennett reported he was contacted by the Undersheriff and told Ingham County will be able to patrol within Hawk Island. He will be sharing peak times and event schedules with them. Chair Weil stated keeping an orderly and tidy facility brings people up to that level for a positive experience.

2011 Day Camp Year End Statistics ~ Mr. Bennett reviewed the statistics and stated all but the first session was completely full of happy campers.

2011 Parks & Zoo Reservation Survey Results ~ Information materials for Commission members to review at a later date.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Bennett reported on the following:

- Monthly Grant Status ~ Mr. Witte reported about a National Foundation with a \$5,000 Everyday Grant for stewardship efforts that had been submitted and awarded. Mr. Bennett stated the Burchfield Dock project is wrapping up and the railing will be installed in the spring.
- 2011 Grievance Report ~ No grievances to report in 2011.
- Hawk Island Snow Tube/Board Hill Status ~ Mr. Bennett reported on the electrical issues that have been resolved and provided details regarding the pump, control panel, lights, and speakers. He stated he is confident the hills will be open some days this year. He hopes to have a soft opening this year and a grand opening in 2012.
- Lake Lansing Park-North ~ Items on the agenda relating to Lake Lansing Park-North will be discussed

at the February 27, 2012 meeting.

- Dr. Harrison's Report on the Big Cats at the Potter Park Zoo ~ Mr. Bennett provided information regarding the plans to relocate some of the big cats at the zoo.
- Dakin Street Bridge ~ Mr. Bennett reported the Dakin Street Bridge at the Zoo has been inspected and pedestrian access has been restricted. He further reported he is in talks with the City of Lansing for repairs because a second egress is required by the AZA and the City needs to make it happen.
- Sponsorship Opportunities in the Parks ~ This item was not discussed.
- City Maintenance Contract ~ Mr. Bennett reported the crew is working quite well and comments have been heard from neighbors of the various parks that are positive. He further reported the Chair of the City Parks Board is very impressed with what has been accomplished so far and he is working with the City of Lansing to put together a proposal to take over park maintenance at more parks.
- Bill Earl Fishing Event ~ Mr. Bennett reported this very successful event has been scheduled for 2012.

Board Comments

Mr. Bennett reported Mike McDonald has won an MRPA award.

Limited Public Comment

None.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:22pm.

Minutes submitted by:

Deb Bavery, Recording Secretary

INGHAM COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

**Meeting of February 27, 2012
RESOLUTION # -12**

RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING A MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES RECREATION PASSPORT GRANT FOR A HANDICAP ACCESSIBLE RESTROOM AT BURCHFIELD PARK BE SUBMITTED

WHEREAS, The Ingham County Parks Master Plan was developed under the direction of the Ingham County Board of Commissioners to establish a systematic plan to meet the goal of providing adequate recreational facilities for the residents of Ingham County; and

WHEREAS, Burchfield Park received over 110,000 visits in 2011, serving visitors from many Ingham County communities; and

WHEREAS, customer surveys have determined a deficiency of restroom facilities at Burchfield Park; and

WHEREAS, staff has recommended replacing an existing portable restroom with a handicap accessible restroom facility; and

WHEREAS, installation of this handicap accessible restroom facility will increase the aesthetic value, better serve those with disabilities, and improve the overall visitor experience; and

WHEREAS, the total project cost is expected to be \$60,000, with Michigan Department of Natural Resources Recreation Passport Grant funds of \$45,000 (75%) and Ingham County matching funds of \$15,000 (25%); and

WHEREAS, if awarded the project must begin within 1 year from the date the project agreement is issued and be completed within 3 years.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Ingham County Parks & Recreation Commission recommends the Board of Commissioners authorize an application to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources requesting a Recreation Passport Grant to replace the existing portable restroom at Burchfield Park with a handicap accessible restroom facility with a total cost of \$60,000 as detailed below:

Ingham County Matching Funds	\$15,000
Michigan DNR Passport Grant	<u>\$45,000</u>
 TOTAL PROJECT COST	 <u>\$60,000</u>

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Ingham County Board of Commissioners be asked to commit the local match of \$15,000 as approved in the Parks 2012 Capital Improvement Budget contingent upon the Recreation Passport grant being approved.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, as required in the Ingham County Grants Approval Process the Controller's Office be provided a copy of the grant application once it has been completed and submitted.

INGHAM COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting of February 27, 2012
RESOLUTION # -12

RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING AN AMENDMENT TO THE PERMANENT CONSERVATION EASEMENT AGREEMENT WITH MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP

WHEREAS, Board of Commissioner Resolution #09-296 authorized the acceptance of a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant to fund the acquisition of 120 acres of natural area to expand Lake Lansing Park-North; and

WHEREAS, a large portion of the required matching funds of \$850,000 came from \$675,000 provided by the Meridian Township Land Preservation Board; and

WHEREAS, in order to receive the \$675,000 in matching funds from Meridian Township, the County entered into a Permanent Conservation Easement with Meridian Township with the passage of Board of Commissioner Resolution #11-086; and

WHEREAS, Ingham County Parks staff and Meridian Township wish to make the following modifications/amendments to the Permanent Conservation Easement Agreement:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ingham County Parks & Recreation Commission recommends the Board of Commissioners authorize the requested modifications/amendments to the Permanent Conservation Easement with Meridian Township:

1. Section III.D is amended to read as follows:

- Construction.** The placement or construction of any human-made modification such as, but not limited to, structures, buildings, fences, roads, and parking lots is prohibited, except as follows:
- a. boardwalks and nature overlooks that are constructed for the purpose of supporting the primary purpose of the conservation easement, as described in Section I;
 - b. fencing or staking (posts or bollards) constructed for the purpose of defining property boundaries, providing direction to trail users, for educational or research purposes (such as an enclosure or to protect sensitive ecological features), and pedestrian gates;
 - c. such other construction that is specifically authorized by the Township in writing.

2. Section IV.E is amended to read as follows:

Right to Recreational Use. The Owner retains the right to use, and to permit others to use, the Property for recreational and/or ecological management purposes. Such may include hunting and fishing, pursuant to applicable state and federal regulations that may be in effect at the time, and upon approval by the Township. To enhance access for recreational use, the Owner retains the right to construct and maintain natural, unpaved trails provided that any trail or trail system is sited and constructed in accordance with a plan approved by the Township. Any structures erected for recreational use, such as, but not limited to, tents and blinds, shall not be permanent.

3. Except as modified above, the Permanent Conservation Easement Agreement remains in full force and effect.

INGHAM COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

**Meeting of February 27, 2012
RESOLUTION # -11**

RESOLUTION RESCINDING THE SECOND VEHICLE ANNUAL PARKING PASS

WHEREAS, in an effort to increase revenue the Parks Management team recommended fee increases to certain revenue generating activities within the Ingham County Parks system for implementation in 2012; and

WHEREAS, Board of Commissioner Resolution #11-165 authorized a 2012 second vehicle annual parking pass at a reduced rate of \$15.00; and

WHEREAS, the Parks Management team has identified difficulty in administering the sale of the second vehicle pass and determined there is a very real possibility of fraud by users and staff; and

WHEREAS, this determination has led the Parks Management team to recommend the elimination of the second vehicle annual pass fee.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ingham County Parks and Recreation Commission recommends to the Ingham County Board of Commissioners that authorization to charge for a second vehicle annual parking pass be rescinded.

INGHAM COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting of February 27, 2012

RESOLUTION # -12

**RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING A TRANSFER OF FUNDS TO ACCOMMODATE THE
PURCHASE OF CAGES FOR THE DISCOVERY BUILDING**

WHEREAS, Potter Park Zoo Staff completed the Otter Exhibit glass and slide repair and repairs to the Cement Trees within the Lemur Exhibit in 2011 with existing funds; and

WHEREAS, the Animal Management Team and Zoo Management have recommended replacing the cages within the Discovery Building due to the poor design and age of the existing cages; and

WHEREAS, by replacing the cages, care and health of the animals will be improved as well as the safety and efficiency of Zookeeper staff; and

WHEREAS, Zoo staff recommends that funds previously approved in the 2012 Capital Improvement Budget for the Otter and Lemur exhibits be transferred to allow for the replacement of the cages.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ingham County Parks & Recreation Commission recommends the Board of Commissioners approve the transfer of \$5,000.00 approved for the 2012 Cement Trees-Lemur Exhibit project (line item 258-699000-977000-1203Z) and \$1,500 approved for the 2012 Otter Exhibit-Slide & Glass project (line item 258-699000-977000-1205Z) to accommodate the purchase of cages for the Discovery Building from line item 258-699000-726010-1209Z.

INGHAM COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting of February 27, 2012

RESOLUTION # -12

RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING A TRANSFER OF FUNDS AND AUTHORIZATION TO PROCEED WITH REPLACEMENT OF LIGHTING WITHIN THE CORAL REEF EXHIBIT

WHEREAS, the Ingham County Facilities Department staff assigned to the Potter Park Zoo completed the necessary repairs to the Mandrill exhibit floors in 2011 using existing funds; and

WHEREAS, the Mandrill exhibit floor project was an approved 2012 Capital Improvement Project in the amount of \$3,000.00 and those funds are no longer needed for that project; and

WHEREAS, Facilities staff have researched replacing the existing lighting in the Coral Reef exhibit with LED lighting and determined that LED lighting will provide for immediate savings in utility costs and maintenance; and

WHEREAS, Facilities staff can purchase materials and provide installation, thus saving additional funds; and

WHEREAS, the Cost Recovery on Investment (ROI) is less than two years.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ingham County Parks & Recreation Commission recommends the Board of Commissioners authorize Facilities staff to proceed with the replacement of lighting within the Coral Reef Exhibit.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Ingham County Parks & Recreation Commission recommends the Board of Commissioners authorize the \$3,000.00 approved for the 2012 Mandrill Floor project (line item 258-699000-9777000-1204Z) be transferred to the Maintenance Supply line item (258-69300-931000-37000) for the Coral Reef Lighting Project.

INGHAM COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting of February 27, 2012

RESOLUTION # -12

RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING A TRANSFER OF FUNDS AND AUTHORIZATION FOR THE POTTER PARK ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY TO PROVIDE SEASONAL WORKERS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE RELATED POSITIONS

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Potter Park Zoo Board and the Zoo Management Team to work towards a successful Private/Public relationship with the Potter Park Zoological Society; and

WHEREAS, the Zoo Management Team wishes to continue to provide excellent customer service and be able to improve upon existing standards and proceed in a financially prudent manner; and

WHEREAS, the Zoo Management Team recommends that combining resources in the key customer service areas, by having all revenue staff be hired, trained, supervised and paid by the Potter Park Zoological Society, will allow the Zoo to provide the most effective and consistent customer service; and

WHEREAS, the Zoo Management Team has identified funding within the approved Potter Park Zoo budget, which will provide for adequate staff as determined by the Zoo Interim Director and the Director of Parks.

WHEREAS, the Potter Park Zoological Society has agreed to, on a monthly basis, supply the County with statistical reports verifying hours worked, revenue collected and expenses associated with the various seasonal positions; and

WHEREAS, the Potter Park Zoological Society has agreed to follow all County revenue collection protocols, policies and procedures, and funds collected will be deposited into the Potter Park Zoo/Ingham County bank account and receipted into the County financial system.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ingham County Parks & Recreation Commission recommends the Board of Commissioners authorize the Potter Park Zoological Society to provide seasonal employees for the customer service related positions at Potter Park Zoo.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Ingham County Parks & Recreation Commission recommends the Board of Commissioners approve the transfer of funds for the year 2012 to the Potter Park Zoo Society in the amount of \$102,000 from the Potter Park Zoo Millage from the following line items:

- \$35,874 from admissions seasonal wages, line item #258-69200-705000-32000
- \$27,198 from seedeater seasonal, line item #258-69200-705000-31300
- \$11,890 from parking seasonal, line item #258-69300-705000-35000
- \$21,236 from animal/care seasonal, line item #258-69200-705000-31000
- \$5,802 from equipment seasonal, line # 258-69300-705000-34600

INGHAM COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting of February 27, 2012
RESOLUTION # -12

RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING INCREASING THE VACANT PART-TIME ZOOKEEPER 400 POSITON TO A FULL-TIME POSITION AND APPROVAL OF A LINE ITEM TRANSFER

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Potter Park Zoo Management Team to have an adequately staffed animal care department; and

WHEREAS, the Zoo Management Team has identified funding for the additional costs associated with the full-time position within the existing Potter Park Zoo budget; and

WHEREAS, the Zoo Management Team recommends that the vacant part-time Zookeeper 400 position be increased to a full-time Zookeeper 400 position; and

WHEREAS, the savings from reductions in the full-time overtime line item by having a full-time position plus savings realized from the Potter Park Zoological Society assuming responsibility for the seasonal revenue positions will fund this position.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Ingham County Parks & Recreation Commission recommends the Board of Commissioners authorize increasing the vacant part-time Zookeeper 400 position to a full-time position and that line item transfers be made to fund this position.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that \$16,000 be transferred from the full-time overtime line item (258-69200-706000-31000) and \$15,000 from the seasonal wage line item to the full-time wages and benefits line item within the approved 2012 Potter Park Zoo Millage.

INGHAM COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting of February 27, 2012
RESOLUTION # -12

RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING A FUND TRANSFER TO THE POTTER PARK ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY FOR 2012 MARKETING

WHEREAS, the electorate of Ingham County overwhelmingly approved the millage renewal proposal in November of 2011 to fund the operation and improvement of Potter Park and the Potter Park Zoo; and

WHEREAS, the Potter Park Zoological Society is a private, 501c(3) nonprofit, fundraising organization that raises funds to support the Zoo; and

WHEREAS, in that capacity the Zoological Society supports: Marketing, Educational Programming, the Docent Association, the Teen Zookeeper Program, Special Events and the Zookambi Summer Camp; and

WHEREAS, the Zoological Society operates on a \$1,600,000 budget, all of which is spent on supporting the Potter Park Zoo through educational programming, special events, operating costs, and capital improvements; and

WHEREAS, the Potter Park Zoological Society Board of Directors is comprised of eight prominent community leaders; and

WHEREAS, the Ingham County Parks & Recreation Commission approved the transfer of \$60,000 from the proceeds of the Potter Park Zoo Millage to the Potter Park Zoological Society for 2011 marketing purposes; and

WHEREAS, the Potter Park Zoological Society Board has proposed \$15,000 for advertising within the 2012 Society budget for a total of \$75,000 to be spent on advertising and marketing; and

WHEREAS, the Potter Park Zoological Society has agreed to, on a monthly basis, supply the county with invoices detailing spending of these funds; and

WHEREAS, County staff will, on a quarterly basis, include with monthly financial reports a marketing expense report to the Potter Park Zoo Board.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Parks & Recreation Commission recommends the Board of Commissioners approve a transfer of \$60,000 from the proceeds of the Potter Park Zoo Millage to be used by the Potter Park Zoological Society for the 2012 marketing of the Potter Park Zoo.

**Burchfield Park Disc Golf
Suggested names**

SUGGESTIONS FROM THE CAPITAL CITY RENEGADES

Existing Course

The Old Course
Burchfield Links
Burchfield North
Renegades Trail
Renegades Wall

New Course

Iron Woods
Burchfield Woods
Burchfield South
Burchfield Iron Woods

CCR liked Renegades Trail for the existing course and Iron Woods for the new course.

STAFF SUGGESTIONS

Existing Course

The Meadows

Rivers

New Course

Edge

AGENDA ITEM #12D1

From: Leslie Kuhn [kuhn@sol.bch.msu.edu]
Sent: Thursday, January 05, 2012 12:22 PM
To: Witte, Patrick
Subject: FW: Lake Lansing North Conservation Easement

On 1/5/12 9:48 AM, "Jane Greenway" <greenway@meridian.mi.us> wrote:

Leslie,

This is the email that I sent to our attorney, requesting that we amend the easement. Hopefully I did not forget anything.

Jane

>>>> Jane Greenway 1/5/2012 9:46 AM >>>
Peter,

Attached please find the conservation easement for LLN park. This is not the signed version, but it matches it.

We would like to amend the easement to allow for the following uses:

Section III, D, Construction:

1. Allow for boardwalks and nature overlooks (deck structures), constructed for the purpose of supporting the primary purpose of the conservation easement, as described in Section I.
2. Allow for fencing or staking (posts or bollards), constructed for the purpose of defining property boundaries, providing direction to trail users, for educational or research purposes (such as an enclosure or to protect sensitive ecological features), and pedestrian gates.

Section III, E, Cutting Vegetation:

1. Trail maintenance: we want the owner (Ingham County) to have the ability to prune vegetation for the purpose of trail maintenance and safety.

Section IV, E, Right to Recreational Use:

1. We want to include "and management purposes" after the first "recreational". (Reason being, that we want Ingham County to be allowed to conduct a managed hunt, for the purpose of protecting the ecological features of the property).

Right now I am putting together the packets for the Land Preservation Advisory Board meeting that will be held on January 11, 2012. If we (you!) could draft this by that date, I would be very appreciative. Thanks for your help.

Jane L. Greenway, RLA
Parks and Land Management Coordinator
Charter Township of Meridian
2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court
East Lansing, MI 48823
Office: (517) 853-4610
Fax: (517) 853-4099
Email: greenway@meridian.mi.us
www.twp.meridian.mi.us

"Creating Community through People, Parks & Programs"

PERMANENT CONSERVATION EASEMENT AGREEMENT

This Permanent Conservation Easement Agreement is made this 23 day of February, 2011.

WHEREAS, Ingham County, a political subdivision of the State of Michigan, whose address is 121 E. Maple St., Mason, Michigan 48854, and its personal representatives, heirs, successors in interest and assigns (hereafter referred to as "Owner") is the owner in fee simple of certain real property (hereafter referred to as "Property"), situated in Meridian Township, Ingham County, Michigan, and more fully described as follows:

Parcel Numbers 33-02-02-01-326-003, 33-02-02-01-375-001, 33-02-02-01-351-003, 33-02-02-02-476-007:

This is the Agreement Currently in Force

Land in the Township of Meridian, Ingham County, Michigan, to wit:

A part of sections 1 and 2 of T4N, R1W, Described as beginning at the most northeasterly corner of plat of trails at Lake Lansing No. 3, said plat also being the northeast corner of Port Commons in said plat, south 89 degrees 47'06" east 1126.05 feet to the east line of section 2, south 89 degrees 04'33" east 1170.52 feet south 220 feet to east-west ¼ line section 1, southeasterly 362.49 feet to a point on east line of west ½ of southwest ¼ of section 1, point being 330 feet south of the northeast corner of west ½ of southwest ¼ of section 1, southwesterly 362.49 feet to a point 660 feet south and 150 feet west of northeast corner of west ½ of southwest 1/4 , south to south 1/8 line of section 1, west to west line of section 1, north 01 degrees 08'22" east on east line of section 2 to the northeast corner of lot 84 trails at Lake Lansing No. 3, north 89 degrees 47'06" west 188.11 feet south 01 degrees 08'22" west 9.60 feet north 89 degrees 47'06" west 703.03 feet north 0 degrees 14'21" west 380 feet north 89 degrees 47'06" west 215 feet north 0 degrees 14'21" west 478 feet to the point of beginning, sections 1 and 2 T4N, R1W, Ingham County records.

Land in the Township of Meridian, Ingham County, Michigan, to wit:

Commencing at the southwest corner of section line, north 01 degrees 08'21" east along west section line 317.75 feet to the north right of way line NYC Railroad north 59 degrees 03'54" east on right of way 1379.24 feet to the point of beginning north 01 degrees 11'04" east 935.39 feet north 25 degrees 33'10" east 363.54 feet, south 89 degrees 04'33" east 1035 feet south 01 degrees 11'04" west 527.35 feet to north right of way line NYC Railroad south 59 degrees 03'54" west on right of way 1399.41 feet to the point of beginning, Ingham County records.

Land in the Township of Meridian, Ingham County, Michigan, to wit:

That part of the southwest ¼ of the southwest ¼ lying north of GTW Railroad except Consumers Power Company right of way and except the east 150 feet thereof section 1, T4N, R1W, Ingham County records.

Land in the Township of Meridian, Ingham County, Michigan, to wit:

That part of the east 60 acres of the south ½ of southeast fractional ¼ lying north of GTRR right of way, except Consumers Power right of way also except commencing at the southeast corner of section 2, north 01 degrees 08'22" east on east section line 451.08 feet to the point of beginning, south 89 degrees 50'53" west 1832.39 feet to the southwest corner of outlot "D" Trails at Lake Lansing Subdivision north 0 degrees 40'18" east along east line said Subdivision 817.19 feet to southerly right of way line of Lake Drive, north 53 degrees 46'45" east along right of way 89.42 feet to southerly line of Sunset Cove Subdivision; thence north 89 degrees 58'29" east 483.43 feet; thence north 89 degrees 47'57" east 1284.55 feet to east line of section 2; thence south 01 degrees 08'22" west on east section line 870 feet to the point of beginning T4N, R1W, Ingham County records.

WHEREAS, Charter Township of Meridian, a Michigan municipal corporation, of 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, Michigan 48864-1198, and its assigns and successors in interest (hereafter referred to as the "Township"), seeks a Permanent Conservation Easement over and across all of the above described Property; and

WHEREAS, the Owner desires to convey and warrant to the Township a Permanent Conservation Easement over the Property, under the scope set forth in this Agreement; and

WHEREAS, this conveyance is made in consideration of One Dollar (\$1.00), receipt of which is acknowledged, and therefore this transaction is exempt from Transfer Tax pursuant to MCL 207.505(a) and (h)(i), and MCL 207.526(a) and (h)(i); and

WHEREAS, the Property possesses natural, scenic, historic, open space, biological, and ecological values of prominent importance to the Owner, the Township, and the public, which values are referred to as the "Conservation Values" in this Easement, and include the following:

OPEN SPACE AND SCENIC VALUES:

1. A scenic landscape with natural character that would be impaired by modification of the Property.
2. Relief from urban closeness.

WILDLIFE, ECOLOGICAL AND HABITAT VALUES:

3. The Property contains significant, sustainable natural habitat in which fish, wildlife, trees, and a diverse range of other plants and animals, and the ecosystems that support them, thrive in a natural state.
4. Wetlands, as described in Part 303 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (Wetland Protection), MCL 324.30301, *et seq.*, are present on the Property and provide habitat for aquatic invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians, and aquatic and/or emergent vegetation.
5. Native forestland exists on the Property, which includes diverse native species and trees of many different age classes and structural diversity, including a multi-story canopy, standing dead trees and downed logs.

WATERSHED PROTECTION:

6. The Property, in its natural and open space condition, helps to ensure the quality and quantity of water resources within the Meridian Township area.

WHEREAS, the State of Michigan has recognized the importance of protecting natural resources through the Michigan Constitution and various statutes; and Public Act 451 of 1994 (MCL 324.2140-2144) contemplates the creation of permanent conservation easements as non-possessory interests in land or water and permits such easements to be held by charitable and other entities; and

NOW, THEREFORE, OWNER AND TOWNSHIP AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

I. PURPOSES OF THIS CONSERVATION EASEMENT AND COMMITMENTS OF THE OWNER AND THE TOWNSHIP

A. This Conservation Easement assures that the Property will be perpetually preserved in its predominately natural, scenic, historic, agricultural, forested, and open space condition. The Purposes of this Conservation Easement are to protect the Property's natural resource and watershed values, to maintain and

enhance biodiversity, to retain quality habitat for native plants and animals, and to maintain and enhance the natural features of the Property. Any uses of the Property that may impair or interfere with the Conservation Values are expressly prohibited.

B. The Owner is committed to preserving the Conservation Values of the Property. The Owner agrees to confine use of the Property to activities consistent with the Purposes of this Easement and the preservation of the Conservation Values.

C. The Township is a qualified Recipient of this Conservation Easement, is committed to preserving the Conservation Values of the Property, and is committed to upholding the terms of this Conservation Easement. The Township protects natural habitats of native plants and animals, including fish and wildlife, and the ecosystems that support them. The Township also preserves open spaces, including farms, forests, grasslands, and wetlands, where such preservation is for the scenic enjoyment of the general public or pursuant to clearly delineated governmental conservation policies or both, and where it will yield a significant public benefit.

II. BASELINE DOCUMENTATION. The specific Conservation Values of the Property have been documented in a natural resource inventory, consisting of maps, a depiction of all existing human-made modifications, prominent vegetation, identification of flora and fauna, land use history, distinct natural features, and photographs. The parties acknowledge receipt of a copy of these documents.

III. PROHIBITED ACTIONS. Any activity on, or use of, the Property which is inconsistent with the Purposes of this Conservation Easement or which is detrimental to the Conservation Values is expressly prohibited. By way of example, but not by way of limitation, the following activities and uses are explicitly prohibited:

- A. **Division.** Any division or subdivision of the Property is prohibited.
- B. **Commercial Activities.** Any commercial activity on the Property is prohibited except as associated with permitted activities as specified in Section IV below.
- C. **Industrial Activities.** Any industrial activity on the Property is prohibited.
- D. **Construction.** The placement or construction of any human-made modification such as, but not limited to, structures, buildings, fences, roads, and parking lots is prohibited.
- E. **Cutting Vegetation.** Any cutting of trees or other vegetation, including pruning or trimming, is prohibited, except for the cutting or removal of trees or vegetation which may pose a threat to human life or property or in furtherance of permitted uses as outlined in Sections IV and V.
- F. **Land Surface Alteration.** There shall be no filling, excavating, mining or grading, and no removal, addition or alteration of topsoil, sand, gravel, rock, peat, or other materials that result in the alteration of surface topography in the Property. In addition, exploring for, developing, and extracting oil, gas, hydrocarbons, or petroleum products are all prohibited activities.
- G. **Dumping.** There shall be no dumping of pesticides, other hazardous chemicals, refuse, trash, junk, dead animals, abandoned vehicles, ashes, manure or waste material. There shall be no use of the Property for sanitary landfill, for underground storage tanks, or for the installation and use of an incinerator.
- H. **Water Courses, Ground Water.** Natural water courses, lakes, wetlands, or other bodies of water may not be altered. In addition, water from ground or surface sources may not be diverted.
- I. **Off-road Vehicles.** Motorized off-road vehicles such as, but not limited to, snowmobiles, dune buggies, all-terrain vehicles, and motorcycles may not be operated on the Property except as associated with permitted activities as specified in Section IV.
- J. **Signs and Billboards.** Billboards are prohibited. Signs are prohibited, except the following signs may be displayed to state:
 - The name and address of the property or the owner's name.
 - The area is protected by a conservation easement.
 - Prohibition of any unauthorized entry or use.

- An advertisement for the sale or rent of the Property.
- Directional signs for hiking/skiing trails
- Interpretive signs on trails

IV. PERMITTED USES. The Owner retains all ownership rights which are not expressly restricted by this Conservation Easement. In particular, the following rights are reserved:

A. **Right to Convey.** The Owner retains the right to sell, mortgage, bequeath, or donate the Property in whole. Any conveyance will remain subject to the terms of the Conservation Easement and the subsequent Owner or lien-holder will be bound by all obligations in this agreement.

B. **Right to maintain timber operations.** The Owner retains the right to use the property for timber operations. Timber operations are confined to those areas currently utilized for timber operations or any areas converted to timberland. All timber operations must conform to the accepted best management practices for conservation (e.g. selective harvesting) at the time of occurrence. The goals of such timbering practices or plans shall include the preservation of the conservation and scenic characteristics of the woodlands and wetlands and the maintenance of a healthy forest, and shall assure sustainable forest productivity in a manner not inconsistent with the purpose of this Easement. No practice or plan shall include provisions allowing clear cutting or even-aged management.

C. **Right to convert vegetation on lands.** The Owner retains the right to convert lands to native vegetation. Conversion may happen by natural succession or by management actions such as planting, prescribed burning, and vegetation manipulation. All management actions shall conform to the current best management practices accepted at the time of the management action. Before beginning conversion, the Owner will provide a written plan to the Township for the Township's review and approval.

D. **Right to use vehicles.** The Owner retains the right to use vehicles on the property as required for allowed and permitted uses of the property such as timber operations, and restoration work.

E. **Right to Recreational Use.** The Owner retains the right to use, and to permit others to use, the Property for recreational purposes, including hunting and fishing, pursuant to application state and federal regulations that may be in effect at the time. To enhance access for recreational use, the Owner retains the right to construct natural, unpaved trails provided that any trail or trail system is sited and constructed in accordance with a plan approved by the Township. Any structures erected for recreational use, such as, but not limited to, tents and blinds, shall not be permanent.

F. **Right to further restrictions.** The Owner retains the right to place further property management restrictions on future Owners. These restrictions include, but are not limited to, maintenance of current or future prairie restorations. These restrictions must be put in place by means of deed restrictions or other pertinent instruments and may not conflict with the terms of this easement.

G. **Right to control invasive species.** The Owner reserves the right to control or eliminate diseased, non-native or invasive species on the Property, provided that activities necessary for the control or elimination of such species are reviewed and approved in advance by the Township.

H. **Rights consistent with Easement.** All rights reserved by the Owner or not prohibited by this Conservation Easement are considered to be consistent with the conservation purposes of this Easement, and shall be exercised so as to prevent or minimize damage or degradation to the Conservation Values of the Property.

V. RIGHTS OF THE TOWNSHIP. The Owner confers the following rights upon the Township to perpetually maintain the Conservation Values of the Property:

A. **Right to Enter.** The Township has the right to enter the Property at reasonable times to monitor the Conservation Easement Property. Furthermore, the Township has the right to enter the Property at reasonable times to enforce compliance with, or otherwise exercise its rights under, this Conservation Easement. The Township may not, however, unreasonably interfere with the Owner's use and quiet enjoyment of the Property.

- B. **Right to Preserve.** The Township has the right to prevent any activity on or use of the Property that is inconsistent with the Purposes of this Conservation Easement or detrimental to the Conservation Values of the Property.
- C. **Right to Require Restoration.** The Township has the right to require the Owner to restore the areas or features of the Property which are damaged by any activity inconsistent with this Conservation Easement.
- D. **Signs.** The Township has the right to place signs on the Property which identify the land as protected by this Conservation Easement. The number and location of any signs are subject to the Owner's approval.
- E. **Right to control invasive species.** The Township reserves the right to control or eliminate diseased, non-native or invasive species on the Property.

VI. TOWNSHIP'S REMEDIES. This section addresses cumulative remedies of the Township and limitations on these remedies.

A. **Delay in Enforcement.** A delay in enforcement shall not be construed as a waiver of the Township's right to eventually enforce the terms of this Conservation Easement.

B. **Acts Beyond Owner's Control.** The Township may not bring an action against the Owner for modifications to the Property resulting from causes beyond the Owners' control, including, but not limited to, unauthorized actions by third parties, natural disasters such as unintentional fires, floods, storms, natural earth movement, or even an Owner's well-intentioned action in response to an emergency resulting in changes to the Property. The Owner has no responsibility under this Conservation Easement for such unintended modifications.

C. **Notice and Demand.** If the Township determines that the Owner is in violation of this Conservation Easement, or that a violation is threatened, the Township shall provide written notice to the Owner. The written notice will identify the violation and request corrective action to cure the violation and, where the Property has been injured, to restore the Property.

However, if at any time the Township determines, at its sole discretion, that the violation constitutes immediate and irreparable harm, no written notice is required. The Township may then immediately pursue its remedies to prevent or limit harm to the Conservation Values of the Property.

If the Township determines that this Conservation Easement is, or is expected to be, violated, and the Township's good-faith and reasonable efforts to notify the Owner are unsuccessful, the Township may pursue its lawful remedies to mitigate or prevent harm to the Conservation Values without prior notice and without awaiting the Owner's opportunity to cure.

D. **Failure to Act.** If, within 28 days after written notice, the Owner does not implement corrective measures requested by the Township, the Township may bring an action in law or in equity to enforce the terms of the Conservation Easement. In the case of immediate or irreparable harm, or if an Owner is unable to be notified, the Township may invoke these same remedies without notification and/or awaiting the expiration of the 28-day period.

The Township is entitled to enjoin the violation through temporary or permanent injunctive relief and to seek specific performance, declaratory relief, restitution, reimbursement of expenses, and/or an order compelling the Owner to restore the Property.

E. **Unreasonable Litigation.** If the Township initiates litigation against the Owner to enforce this Conservation Easement, and if the court determines that the litigation was initiated without reasonable cause or in bad faith, then the court may require the Township to reimburse the Owner's reasonable costs and reasonable attorney's fees in defending the action.

F. **Actual or Threatened Non-Compliance.** The Township's rights under this Section, Township's Remedies, apply equally in case of either actual or threatened violations of the terms of this Easement. The Owner agrees that the Township's claim for money damages for any violation of the terms of this Easement is inadequate. The Township shall also be entitled to affirmative and prohibitive injunctive relief and specific performance, both prohibitive and mandatory. The Township's claim for injunctive relief or specific

performance for a violation of this Conservation Easement shall not require proof of actual damages to the Conservation Values.

G. Cumulative Remedies. The preceding remedies of the Township are cumulative. The Township may invoke any, or all, of the remedies if there is an actual or threatened violation of this Conservation Easement.

VII. NOTIFICATION PROVISION. The Township is entitled to 60 Days written notice whenever its approval is required under this Conservation Easement. If the Township fails to respond within 60 Days after it receives the written request, then its approval shall be deemed given. This implied approval shall not extend to any activity contrary to this Conservation Easement or impairing a Conservation Value. The Township's approval shall continue for three years. If the approved activity is not completed within three years after the approval date, then the Owner must re-submit the written application to the Township.

VIII. CONSERVATION EASEMENT REQUIREMENTS UNDER MICHIGAN LAW AND UNITED STATES TREASURY REGULATIONS.

A. This Conservation Easement is created pursuant to the Conservation and Historic Preservation Easement, Subpart 11 of Part 21 of the Michigan Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (NREPA), MCL 324.2140, *et seq.*

B. This Conservation Easement is established for conservation purposes pursuant to the Internal Revenue Code, as amended, at 26 USC 170(h)(1)-(6), 2031(c), 2055, and 2522, and under Treasury Regulations at 26 CFR § 1.170A-14, *et seq.*, as amended.

C. The Township is qualified to hold conservation easements pursuant to these statutes.

IX. OWNERSHIP COSTS AND LIABILITIES. In accepting this Conservation Easement, the Township shall have no liability or other obligation for costs, liabilities, taxes, or insurance of any kind related to the Property. The Township's rights do not include the right, in absence of a judicial decree, to enter the Property for the purpose of becoming an operator of the Property within the meaning of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act. The Township, its members, trustees or directors, officers, employees, and agents have no liability arising from injury or death to any person or physical damage to any property on the Property.

X. PROPERTY TAXES. The Owner agrees to pay any real estate taxes or assessments levied by competent authority on the Property and Easement Area. Under no circumstances shall the Township be held responsible for these or other financial obligations on the property incurred by the Owner.

X. HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. The Owner warrants that Owner has no knowledge of a release of hazardous substances or hazardous wastes on the Property. The Owner agrees to protect and defend the Township against any claims of hazardous materials contamination on the Property.

XI. TRANSFER OF EASEMENT. If the Township shall cease to exist or if it fails to be a "qualified organization" for purposes of Internal Revenue Code Section 170(h)(3), or if the Township is no longer authorized to acquire and hold conservation easements, or if the Township determines to no longer hold this Easement, then this Conservation Easement shall become vested in another "qualified organization" for purposes of Michigan law and the Internal Revenue Code Section 170(h)(3). The Township's rights and responsibilities shall be assigned to any entity having similar conservation purposes to which such right may be awarded under the *cy pres* doctrine.

XII. TERMINATION. This Conservation Easement may be extinguished only by an unexpected change in condition, which causes it to be impossible to fulfill the Conservation Easement's purposes, such as an exercise of eminent domain. If the Property is taken, in whole or in part, by power of eminent domain, then the Township will be entitled to compensation by the method as is set forth in IRC Treasury Regulations Section 1.170A-14(g)(6)(ii).

XIII. LIBERAL CONSTRUCTION. This Conservation Easement shall be liberally construed in favor of maintaining the Conservation Values of the Property and in accordance with the Part 21 of the Michigan Natural Resources and Environmental Act, MCL 324.2140, *et seq.*

XIV. NOTICES. For purposes of this agreement, notices may be provided to either party by personal delivery or by mailing a written notice to the party (at the last known address of a party) by First Class mail.

XV. SEVERABILITY. If any portion of this Conservation Easement is determined to be invalid, the remaining provisions will remain in force.

XVI. SUCCESSORS. This Conservation Easement is binding upon, and inures to the benefit of, the Owner's and the Township's successors in interest. All subsequent Owners of the Property are bound to all provisions of this Conservation Easement to the same extent as the original Owner. Furthermore, Owner agrees to notify the Township in writing of the names and addresses of any party to whom the Easement Area is to be transferred at or prior to the time said transfer is consummated, and agrees to reference the existence of this Conservation Easement in any subsequent deed or transfer.

XVII. TERMINATION OF RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS. A party's future rights and obligations under this Conservation Easement terminate upon transfer of that party's interest in the Property. Liability for acts or omissions occurring before transfer will survive the transfer.

XVIII. MICHIGAN LAW. This Conservation Easement will be construed in accordance with Michigan Law.

XIX. ENTIRE AGREEMENT. This Conservation Easement sets forth the entire agreement of the parties. It is intended to supersede all prior discussions or understandings.

OWNER:

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN:

By: Mark Grebner
Its: Chairperson, Ingham County
Board of Commissioners

By: Gerald Richards, Township Manager

STATE OF MICHIGAN)
)ss
COUNTY OF _____)

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this _____ day of _____, 2011, by Mark Grebner, Chairperson, Ingham County Board of Commissioners (Owner).

Notary Public

County, Michigan
My Commission expires: _____
Acting in _____ County, Michigan

STATE OF MICHIGAN)

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN

LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 14, 2011

7:00 p.m. Meridian Service Center

Members Present: Tom Woiwode Chair, Mary Helmbrecht Vice Chair, Members Dave Caszatt, Frank Hatfield, Margo Smith, Mark Stephens, Jim Kielbaso

Members Absent: Steve Webster

Staff: Jane Greenway, Land Management Coordinator

Public Present: Pat Witte, Leslie Kuhn, Nick Sanchez, Michael Thomas

1. Call meeting to Order

Chair Woiwode called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm., Land Manager Greenway requested the following items be moved up on the agenda: 8.b, Old Business, Leslie Kuhn, Pat Witte, Nick Sanchez, Lake Lansing North Stewardship Plan and Prescribed Burn Proposal. Hearing no objections, Chair Woiwode accepted the changes to the agenda and moved item 8.b., to the next item on the agenda.

3. Approve Minutes for September 14, 2011

MOTION was made by Dave Caszatt, seconded by Margo Smith to approve the minutes of September 14, 2011 Land Preservation Advisory Board. MOTION carried unanimously.

(The November 9, 2011 meeting minutes were not approved because there was not a quorum at that meeting; therefore, minutes did not need to be taken.)

4. Communications: none

5. Presentations: none

8. Old Business (taken out of order)

b. Lake Lansing North, Stewardship Plan – Leslie Kuhn and Pat Witte

1. Pat Witte, Ingham County Parks Manager, requested approval to conduct a prescribed burn on 30 acres of the 120-acre portion of the property. The purpose of the burn will be to control the invasive red maple seedlings and to benefit the park's oak woodlands. The biodiversity in the park is being suppressed by the lack of fire because the maples are dominant. The oaks are more important for wildlife and the acorns need sun to germinate.
2. Leslie Kuhn, Friends of Lake Lansing North Stewardship Group, distributed the draft of the Lake Lansing North Stewardship Plan, dated December 5, 2011. The Stewardship Plan includes a prescribed burn program, which will run for two years. Ingham County will be responsible for the site preparation, which includes clearing downed trees and creating firebreaks. The Friends group is covered under Ingham County's liability insurance policy. The LPAB funding for the prescribed burn will go to the Friends group, which is a 501c3 organization.
3. LPAB members discussed the proposed prescribed burn. The discussion topics included natural succession of maples, questions about management technique, the benefit of treating invasives such as barberry and autumn olive, and the effects of fire as a regeneration tool. LPAB members questioned the need for fire, considering that red maples are native, and will eventually shade each other out. They would like to see exclosures to document the "before" and "after" effects of the fire. Concerns were expressed about the deer simply eating the new plants that are generated. The best way to grow oaks may be to plant them and protect them with cages.
4. The LPAB discussed the funding of the prescribed burn and ultimately determined that they will give a grant to the Friends group.
5. Mike Thomas, Chair of the Environmental Commission, requested that the LPAB fund an educational presentation on prescribed burns by David Mindell, Plantwise, at the February Environmental Commission (EC) meeting. The EC meetings are televised, so the presentation will serve as public education for the prescribed burn.

6. LPAB also discussed the proposed native plant restoration planned for the Oakpark pond area. Suggestions were made to have local schoolchildren grow and install the native seeds. The LPAB could make a grant to the school with the condition that they will plant the seeds in 2013.
7. LPAB briefly discussed the Stewardship Plan, and will continue the discussion in January 2012.

MOTION was made by Margo Smith, seconded by Mark Stephens, that the Land Preservation Advisory Board support the Friends of Lake Lansing North Park’s efforts toward land stewardship, through the implementation of a prescribed burn within a portion of the 120-acre portion of the park, recognizing that controlled burns may help control the invasive species. The prescribed burns will take place in 2012 and 2013, on designated days, per a burn plan that will be presented by the chosen burn expert. The conditions of the \$15,000 burn grant are as follows:

1. Ingham County Parks and the Friends of Lake Lansing North Park group (“Friends” group) shall construct a collection of defined areas, for the purpose of observing the differences between areas that have been subject to a prescribed burn, not subject to a prescribed burn, and subject to mechanical harvest. The locations and design of the definition areas shall be subject to approval by the LPAB.
2. The “Friends” group shall obtain at least one other bid for the prescribed burn.
3. David Mindell shall attend the February or March, 2012, Environmental Commission meeting to present the topic of prescribed burns in woodlands.
4. Permanent educational interpretive signs shall be installed near the prescribed burn observation areas.
5. The “Friends” group will provide an annual report describing the effects of the prescribed burn.

Roll Call Vote:	YEAS:	Caszatt, Stephens, Smith, Woiwode, Helmbrecht
	NAYS:	Hatfield and Kielbaso

6. Land Management Update (taken out of order)

A. Jane Greenway, Land Manager

1. Local Aquifer Information

- a. Jane distributed the aquifer model poster/map and a USGS aquifer book to Frank Hatfield, LPAB member.

2. Deer Management Plan

- a. To date, 29 antlerless deer have been harvested from township properties.

3. Prairie/Savannah Book

- a. Per Margo Smith's request, Jane will order a copy of "Prairies and Savannahs in Michigan", O'Conner, Kost, Cohen, for each LPAB member.

7. New Business

a. 2012 Land Preservation Advisory Board Meeting Schedule

MOVE that the Land Preservation Advisory Board meeting schedule as outlined in the December 8, 2011 memorandum be accepted, the attached meeting resolution be approved and adopted and copies of the meeting schedule and/or resolution be forwarded to the appropriate individuals. MOTION carried unanimously.

8. Old Business (taken out of order)

a. Terms of Office

1. Vice-Chair Clerk Helmbrecht distributed existing zoning code language relative to LPAB terms of office.
2. Two new LPAB appointees were made at the December 2011 Township Board meeting: Steve Webster and Ken Sink.
3. No other boards or commissions have term limits.
4. The procedure and policy state that the Chair and Vice-Chair are selected at the January board meeting.

9. Other: None

10. Public Comment: None

11. Closed Session

MOTION was made by Dave Caszatt, seconded by Frank Hatfield, to enter into closed session to discuss the possible purchase of real estate.

Roll Call Vote: Caszatt, Stephens, Smith, Woiwode, Helmbrecht,
Hatfield and Kielbaso

9:50 p.m. Return to Open Session: **MOTION** was made by Mark Stephens, supported by Mary Helmbrecht, to leave the closed session and return to open session.

MOTION was made by Dave Caszatt, seconded by Jim Kielbaso to take such action as was discussed during closed session.

MOTION carried unanimously.

12. Adjournment

Hearing no objection, Chair Woiwode adjourned the meeting at 10:00 pm.

• LAKE LANSING PARK NORTH 120 ACRE ACQUISITION •

INGHAM COUNTY PARKS & MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD STEWARDSHIP PLAN

(Updated – December 30, 2011)

Executive Summary

Ingham County Parks acquired this 120 acre natural area in October 2010 through a combination of Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, Meridian Township Land Preservation Advisory Board, community philanthropy, and Ingham County funds. Meridian Township Land Preservation Advisory Board included a Conservation Easement along with its contribution to the purchase, in order to conserve the natural values of the land. The goal of this document is to address how conservation of its natural features can be advanced, given what we know about the land. The property forms an approximate triangle surrounding the Trails at Lake Lansing neighborhood, on the east side of E. Lake Drive. Since the mid-1980's, the trails on this land have been constructed and maintained as part of the Ingham County Parks Lake Lansing Park North (also known as North Park) trail system by agreement with the previous owner, HDI Builders. The trails are used for nature viewing, walking, running and cross-country skiing. Stewardship activities to inventory native species, map, monitor, and control invasive species, and restore native habitats have been ongoing through a community-based volunteer program with Ingham County Parks and Mid-Michigan Stewardship Initiative. Management of the 120 acre acquisition is integrated with stewardship of the adjacent 440 acres in North Park and the neighboring properties owned by Meridian Township (Transfer Station and Spengler Marsh), as well as privately owned property south of the Grand Trunk Railroad and along E. Lake Drive.

Introduction

The Land Preservation program aims to preserve and enhance the Township's natural heritage, natural resources, and open space for current and future generations. This 120 acre acquisition presents a unique situation in that the land is owned and managed by Ingham County Parks. The county park system shares the aim of conserving Lake Lansing Park North's natural features while maintaining low-impact trail use, and continuing to build community educational and volunteer programs and research projects that enhance our understanding, conservation, and appreciation of nature.

Ingham County Parks and the Mid-Michigan Stewardship Initiative have drafted this stewardship plan based on site visits and ongoing technical recommendations from the following professional ecologists, botanists, wildlife biologists, and land stewards:

Christopher Reidy, State Biologist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Chris is an expert in botany and native fauna. He guides statewide USDA projects involving hydrologic and native plant restoration of former farmlands.

Christopher May, Director of Stewardship for The Nature Conservancy, Michigan. Chris oversees the stewardship of the 35,000 acres of natural areas owned and managed by The Nature Conservancy in Michigan, including extensive wetland holdings. We also benefit from his experience in overseeing volunteer land steward efforts and his advice on effective techniques for invasive species control.

Steve Thomas, Conservation Associate in Ecology, Michigan Natural Features Inventory. Steve is an ecologist who performs wetland assessments and botanical inventories, and previously worked with Chicago Wilderness in prescribed burns and ecological restoration. Steve has identified several woodland and vernal pool sites at North Park as high-quality natural areas.

Doug Landis, Professor of Entomology at Michigan State University. Doug's research is aimed at natural area restoration to support diverse insect and wildlife communities. He has consulted on high-priority areas in North Park for prescribed burns, prairie restoration, and canopy-opening in the woodlands, as well as identifying areas that have undergone changes in land use.

Additional consultants:

Members of the Meridian Township Land Preservation Advisory Board. Board members performed a site visit in summer 2008 and identified some invasive species control priorities, as well as the high-quality natural features of the land, resulting in its acquisition.

Lisa Brush, Executive Director of the Stewardship Network. Lisa oversees this public-private partnership in natural areas stewardship and invasive species control across Michigan and Indiana and is an expert in community networking.

David Mindell, Owner, PlantWise Native Landscape and Ecological Restoration. David is a forest ecologist and natural area restoration and prescribed ecological burn expert. He has provided valuable advice on prairie and woodland restoration.

Bill Schneider, Owner Wildtype Native Plant Nursery and Ecological Services. Bill is an expert in native plant propagation and restoration, including in wetlands. His crew works on restoration projects throughout Michigan.

Daniel Kennedy, Wildlife Biologist, Department of Natural Resources. Dan has provided guidance in deer management planning.

Phyllis Higman, Senior Conservation Scientist, Michigan Natural Features Inventory. Phyllis is an expert in botany and native plant communities and invasive species early detection and rapid response, with a focus on wetland species.

Vernon Stephens, Wildlife Division, Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Vern is a leader in the Mid-Michigan Stewardship invasive species control partnership with MSU. He also advises on techniques for invasive species control, and collaborates on prairie restoration and native plant propagation at North Park.

Susan Tangora, Wildlife Division, Department of Natural Resources. Sue coordinates the development of shared goals and projects in invasive species control across multiple agencies in Michigan, including the Mid-Michigan Stewardship/Ingham County Parks *Phragmites* control project in the Lake Lansing watershed.

Kit Rich and Kati Adams, Park Naturalists at Harris Nature Center. Kit and Kati have participated in educational programming and interpretive walks, and Mid-Michigan Stewardship's regional invasive species control effort.

Justin Schlanser, DVM, Zoological Medicine Resident, MSU and Potter Park Zoo. In spring and summer, 2010, Justin carried out herpetological research (to establish baseline xenobiotic and parasite levels in turtles) in North Park and provided data on turtle species and locations.

Jason Martina and Professor Steven Hamilton, Kellogg Biological Station, MSU. They are completing a multi-year study of nutrient cycling in *Phragmites* colonies in North Park.

Richard Merritt, University Distinguished Professor of Entomology, MSU. Rich and his graduate student, Michael Higgins, carried out a multi-year study of invertebrate/nutrient relationships in seasonal ponds in North Park.

David Ewert, Ornithologist, The Nature Conservancy. Dave is an international expert on migratory songbirds and has provided 10 years of detailed bird observations (species and counts) for North Park. He identified deer-browsing and fire-suppression as causes of shifting tree species in North Park, as well as indicating conifer habitats favored by the park's less common songbirds.

Site Description

Area: 120 acres

Location: East of E. Lake Drive, surrounding the Trails at Lake Lansing neighborhood, north of the Grand Trunk Railroad and Meridian Township Recycling Center, and south of the intersection of Oakpark Trail with East Lake Drive, in sections 1 and 2, Meridian Charter Township, Michigan. See Figure 1.

Parcel I.D. numbers: 33-02-02-01-326-003, 33-02-02-01-375-001, 33-02-02-01-351-003, 33-02-02-02-476-007

Adjacent Properties and Land Use

The property surrounds the Trails at Lake Lansing neighborhood to the west. It is bounded on the north and east by wetlands and woodlands in North Park, and on the south by marshes and ponds belonging to Meridian Township, the Trustees of the Blanchard Estate, and the Country Place neighborhood. Its hydrology is closely connected with that of Lake Lansing, into which its wetlands drain.

Natural Communities

Of the 500 acres classified in Lake Lansing North Park, 61.7% are forested, the majority of which is natural woodland. The remaining forested acres consist of tree plantations or other cultural (human-modified) sites. Wetlands comprise 46.7% of the surveyed area, the majority of which is southern wet meadow (16.3%), dominated by the sedges *Carex lacustris* and *Carex stricta* or southern shrub-carr (14.5%), which is dominated by willows (*Salix* spp.) and dogwood (*Cornus* spp). Although representing only 1.1% of the total acreage of the park, the rich tamarack swamp and adjacent shrub-carr near the southern boundary of the 120 acre acquisition (Figure 2) host several species not found elsewhere in the park including leatherleaf (*Chamaedaphne calyculata*), showy lady's slipper (*Cypripedium reginae*), smooth white violet (*Viola macloskeyi* ssp. *pallens*) and small green wood orchid (*Platanthera clavellata*). Uplands are primarily a combination of dry and dry-mesic southern forest, dominated by black oak (*Quercus velutina*) and Penn sedge (*Carex pensylvanica*). See the Michigan Natural Feature Inventory natural community type definitions at <http://web4.msue.msu.edu/mnfi/index.cfm>. Their natural community entries for dry and dry-mesic southern forest state the following on biodiversity conservation:

“Fire is the single most significant factor in preserving oak ecosystems. The use of prescribed fire is an imperative management tool for promoting oak regeneration, deterring the succession of shade-tolerant species, and reducing the encroachment by invasive shrubs such as honeysuckles and autumn olive. Fire management should be orchestrated in conjunction with the management of fire-dependent communities such as oak barrens, dry sand prairie, prairie fen, and coastal plain marsh. Many current dry-mesic southern forests are degraded oak openings that have been long deprived of fire. Open canopy conditions can be restored by mechanical thinning or girdling. Restored sites will need to be maintained by periodic prescribed fire and may require investment in native plant seeding where seed and plant banks are inadequate. Herbicide application to stumps is likely necessary where woody invasive species or red maple are well established.

Monitoring and control efforts to detect and remove invasive species are critical to the long-term viability of dry southern forest.”

Rare Plants

From March 2010 through October 2011, a vascular plant inventory project was undertaken at Lake Lansing Park North by Christopher Reidy, State Biologist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service. Chris follows in the footsteps of the father of American horticulture, Liberty Hyde Bailey, Professor at MSU from 1885-88, who collected plants extensively in the Lake Lansing area, particularly in the area that is now North Park. When given the opportunity to host a visit by the preeminent biologist Alfred Russel Wallace (co-founder of the theory of evolution, along with Charles Darwin), Bailey “went out with my old gray mare and the buggy all day with Alfred Russell Wallace, wandering through the fields; we went out to Pine Lake in Michigan, ten miles away, which is now Lake Lansing.”

The comprehensive botanical information Chris Reidy has collected in the past two years is being used to document existing conditions, including species diversity and natural community types. Specimens of each (non-threatened or endangered) plant have been deposited in the MSU

Herbarium, and a manuscript on the observations is being prepared for publication. A total of 660 species/subspecies of vascular plants in 104 families have been documented, as summarized in Appendix 2. Of these species, 78% are native and 22% are introduced. 98 are county records (first record of occurrence), 2 are state records, one is state threatened (*Carex trichocarpa*), one is state endangered (*Hypericum sphaerocarpum*), and one was believed to have been extirpated in Michigan (*Eleocharis radicans*). Five orchid species have been identified, and 56 species of sedges (genus *Carex*). Dry southern forests commonly occupy the park's knolls, while its lowlands contain a mosaic of southern hardwood swamp, shrub-carr and wet meadow.

At the end of the first year of the botanical survey, Chris Reidy calculated the Floristic Quality Index (FQI) for Lake Lansing Park North based on the habitat specificity and species diversity. Both Swink and Wilhelm (Flora of the Chicago Region) and Herman et al. (Floristic Quality Assessment for Michigan) indicate that most sites register FQI scores < 20. If the FQI is >35, the site is noteworthy from a statewide perspective. Sites with an FQI >50 are extremely rare and are of significant importance statewide. Looking only at the native species, North Park has an FQI of 84. Even including the non-natives found, the FQI value is 76. Thus, the sheer number of species at the park makes it a hotspot of biodiversity in the state. Previous work by Alan Fryday (Assistant Curator of the MSU Herbarium) and colleagues identified more than 60 species of lichens in the park, which also supports its great biodiversity.

Invasive Plants

As with most natural areas near human settlements, Lake Lansing Park North is also endowed with a diversity of invasive species. For the southern 120 acres, the most widespread and problematic for its ecological health are autumn olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*), Japanese barberry (still commonly planted in nearby gardens; *Berberis thunbergii*) and a combination of narrowleaf and hybrid cattail (*Typha angustifolia* and *Typha X glauca*). There are small (< ¼ acre) patches of invasive common reed (*Phragmites australis*) on Township property near the tamarack swamp, and a more extensive infestation of *Phragmites* on adjacent properties south of the railroad tracks. Common and glossy buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica* and *Frangula alnus*) are found sporadically on the 120 acres. The second largest Japanese knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*) colony in the Lake Lansing watershed is found at the northwest corner of the property, along East Lake Drive. Localized infestations of garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) and ground ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*) occur along the northern and eastern boundaries of the Trails at Lake Lansing neighborhood with the park. Private landowners have been highly cooperative in garlic mustard control, and its extent has significantly decreased over a four-year period. Reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*) is becoming widespread in the sedge meadows in North Park and throughout the wetlands of Mid-Michigan. Due to its extent, this species likely will require biological control, similar to the *Galerucella* beetles that were tested by Doug Landis (MSU entomologist) and colleagues in Lake Lansing Park North and which eventually brought purple loosestrife under control. An emerging invasive species along the trail system is Japanese hedge parsley (*Torilis japonica*), resembling Queen Anne's lace (*Daucus carota*), which spreads aggressively by attachment of its Velcro-like seeds to walkers and wildlife. The locations or contours of these and 20 other exotic species in North Park have been mapped by Ingham County Parks and Mid-Michigan Stewardship using GPS. This location data is stored

overlaid with aerial photographs and trail locations (Figure 3) in Lake Lansing Park North in the publically available Google Maps system at <http://g.co/maps/3kdjy>.

Management of invasive species will be aided significantly by the experience Mid-Michigan Stewardship Initiative and Ingham County Parks have in tackling autumn olive, barberry, Phragmites, Japanese knotweed, and garlic mustard infestations in North Park. Nine acres of heavy autumn olive infestation have been cleared to date, and the foci of the autumn olive infestation as well as satellite areas are well characterized (see contours for this species at <http://g.co/maps/3kdjy>). Barberry is more uniformly spread and is being treated alongside autumn olive. The same is true for garlic mustard and Phragmites, for which Mid-Michigan Stewardship leads regional campaigns each year. In 2011, 20,000 pounds of garlic mustard were pulled through the Stewardship Network effort in Mid-Michigan, and 35 infested acres of Phragmites and 2 acres of Japanese knotweed were treated and/or mowed. This involved mapping, treating, and monitoring 66 sites spread across thousands of acres, as well as documenting and applying for Ingham County Road Commission and Department of Environmental Quality aquatic nuisance treatment permits. Forty landowners cooperated with Mid-Michigan Stewardship in the Phragmites/knotweed control program this year, along with Ingham County Parks, Meridian Township, MSU, and the Lake Lansing Watershed Advisory Committee, which contributed financial support. Six volunteers worked a total of 270 hours on the Phragmites control project, with similar staff commitment by Ingham County Parks. On a yearly basis, the park's stewardship program engages more than 300 different volunteers from the community, and these volunteers contributed 2630 hours in the field in 2010. The stewardship program is designed to teach volunteers about nature at each restoration outing, as well as engage them in invasive species identification and control. Additional education is done via project-related signage developed for the park and seasonally changing informational displays on the stewardship kiosk at the Sandhill trailhead. The Lake Lansing Watershed Phragmites project was viewed by DEQ and MNFI to be such a success that the Great Lakes Commission's Symposium on *Phragmites Invasions in Michigan: Building Capacity for Management* selected Lake Lansing Park North for its educational field trip in March. The local project team presented its progress on botanical inventorying and wetland restoration, distinguishing native from invasive Phragmites, and effective Phragmites control techniques.

Water Features, Wetlands, and Floodplains

The property includes a matrix of wetland types, as shown in Figure 2: hardwood swamp, southern shrub-carr, southern wet meadow, and rich tamarack swamp. Five glacial kettle depressions occur in a series just south of the blue trail, imbedded within the belt of dry-mesic southern forest. They are seasonally inundated and likely to host interesting invertebrate species. An invertebrate study on a nearby seasonally inundated hardwood swamp along Wild Ginger Trail was the basis for a Ph.D. thesis by Michael Higgins, working with Richard Merritt at MSU.

There are two excavated ponds on the property. One is found between the street called Oakpark Trail and the North Park's blue trail. It apparently was dug during the development of the Trails at Lake Lansing neighborhood, perhaps associated with nearby wetland filling along Oakpark Trail and Wild Ginger Trail in the late 1980's or early 1990's. A second small excavated pond is found next to a utility pole by the railroad tracks and tamarack swamp. It provides habitat for green herons, spatterdock (*Nuphar*), and arrowhead (*Sagittaria*).

The hydrology of these wetlands in relation to Lake Lansing is beginning to be understood. Water on the southern 120 acres comes primarily from the south, with heavy flow northward via culverts under the railroad tracks during spring rains. The water then flows west through Township marshes and along a small ditch adjacent to a residence on the west side of Lake Drive (formerly the site of a stream, according to long-time residents), where it enters Lake Lansing. Other water entering the tamarack swamp area flows to the northeast, where it enters a swale just east of the blue/orange trail intersection, then flows through the central southern wet meadow and enters the lake primarily through the Clawson drain. Groundwater flow is also a major factor in this area, evidenced by both the plant types (seep-associated species like skunk cabbage) and seasonal fluctuations in the kettle ponds, which are groundwater fed. The tamarack swamp is one of the most unique and sensitive habitats in the park, and changes in water levels (and their causes) are thus important to monitor.

Wildlife

Michigan Natural Feature Inventory records indicate that rare (state special concern, threatened or endangered species) species such as Blanchard's cricket frog, least shrew, barrens buckmoth, woodland vole, and king rail have been identified in the area. Chris Reidy observed territorial (nesting-related) behavior of the state special concern marsh wren in the southern wet meadow immediately north of the 120 acre acquisition. Sandhill cranes use several areas of the park for nesting and are commonly seen and heard. Blandings' turtle (special concern) sightings are also common, with at least five observations in the past two years in diverse reaches of the park. Snapping turtles breed in North Park, and the 2010 turtle study by Dr. Justin Schlanser established that painted turtles are also common, while Chris Reidy has observed musk turtle. A number of higher-quality wetlands in the park are nurseries for wood frogs, spring peepers, and chorus frogs, with green frogs, leopard frogs, and American toads also common in the area. David Ewert noted that two uncommon bird species, blue-winged warblers and kinglets, frequent the tree plantations east of the 120 acres. Barred and great horned owls have also been noted in that area by Chris Reidy and Leslie Kuhn. Wild turkeys are common, especially in the northern reaches of the park. Coyote packs are sporadically heard near the residential areas, and dens of coyotes and foxes are found in several areas. White-tailed deer are highly abundant (frequently observed in herds of 5-15 individuals) and heavily browse the park's herbaceous plants and saplings, with the result that deer-resistant ferns and sedges dominant the woodland understory. Deer bedding areas are seen everywhere among the cattails and *Phragmites* colonies in the park. Muskrat lodges are common in the western part of North Park. In fact, the marshlands south of the railroad tracks were used as a muskrat farm in the 1930's.

Notable Trees

In the 1800's before heavy logging occurred, the eastern shores of Lake Lansing were once the home for the most substantial white pine forest in Ingham County. Remnant giant white pines are found in North Park, and a goal in the coming year is to compile GPS records of these Big Tree locations so they can be adequately protected. A 4' diameter swamp white oak, likely 300 years old (nicknamed "Ma Bailey", since she certainly was here when Bailey performed his surveys), has been found near the eastern junction of the blue and orange trails. Chris Reidy has

also found what could be the largest serviceberry tree in the state, near the northern boundary of North Park.

Soils Information

A soil map from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is available (Figure 4), and its soil type boundaries largely align with natural communities boundaries (Figure 2). Professor Randy Schaetzl of MSU Department of Geography has expressed interest in having his graduate students perform a detailed soil survey of North Park that would provide new insights and clarify regions where the NRCS soil boundaries do not align well with changes in plant communities. Another gain from such new data, which would include soil drainage, would be to provide more specific guidance on native plant choices when restoring areas that had been heavily infested with invasive species.

Topographic Map Information

The USGS topological map for this area is shown in Figure 5, emphasizing the east-west sandy ridge along the blue trail which is 10-20' higher than the surrounding wetlands. This ridge is directly in line with Wild Ginger Trail. Historically, together the two formed Hardy Road, one of early roads in the area.

Structures

No structures exist on the land, except for a fire hydrant placed halfway along the southern leg of the blue trail, dating from the 1970-80's.

Trash or Potentially Hazardous Conditions

There is little trash in the area. However, metal debris from previous land uses, including rusted wire fencing in several sections on either side of the blue trail, a large steel gate (at the eastern blue/orange trail junction), and car parts and deer stands (concentrated on the southern peninsula; see Figure 3) are found. Their locations are noted in the Google Maps system (<http://g.co/maps/3kdjy>). Removal of these items would enhance safety and esthetics.

Parcel History

The lake area was settled by Native Americans and then early Europeans. Copies of deeds for the land going back to 1837 indicate that the central 120 acres directly east of Sunset Cove (see Figure 3) were first purchased from the U.S. government by Henry Cleveland. Farming and timber operations were carried out between the east side of the lake and Green Road, encompassing parts of what is now North Park. Conifer plantations now existing on the east side of the park were established by a more recent owner, Walter Price, in the mid-20th century. Harvesting of Christmas trees from that area by the daughters of the next owners, John & Florence Snell, raised enough money to put them through college in the 1960's. The tan brick farmhouse that still stands on Green Road just north of the railroad (tucked into the southeast corner of North Park) is one of the earliest significant residences in the Haslett area. The land's

history includes other colorful episodes. In the late 1870's, when the central part of North Park was Smith Farm, Liberty Hyde Bailey spent so much time collecting plants there that he ended up marrying the Smith's daughter, Annetta. She was also a student at Michigan Agricultural College (now MSU). The southern peninsula of the 120 acres, which is now remarkable for its relatively open woods (characteristic of woodlands in the 1800's and before, when fire was a natural part of the environment), was used around the 1960's as a site for drag racing. Occasional car parts can be found in that area. Historic aerial photos are available from as early as 1938, giving us a sense of how the landscape has changed. The main differences between 1938 and 2011 (Figures 6 and 3, respectively) are the construction of the Trails at Lake Lansing neighborhood, reforestation of adjacent areas that had been cleared for farming, and excavation of ponds just south of the railroad tracks.

Easements and Restrictions

The Land Preservation Advisory Board has a conservation easement on the property, and the present stewardship plan is intended to provide more detailed guidance on how the property can best be conserved. Additional easements on the property involve a Consumers Energy (and possibly DTE) power line corridor that runs along the southern edge of the property, parallel to the railroad tracks. Meridian Township's Land Management Coordinator, Jane Greenway, is researching those easements and ways in which they affect the land's management and possible trail enhancements. Canadian National Railroad owns a narrow strip of land along the railroad tracks, possibly encompassing the two-track road that was formerly the Interurban Railway bed. The two-track road forms one segment of an enhanced trail under consideration by Ingham County Parks (see Figure 3).

Historic or Pre-settlement Condition

Historically most of the 120 acre area is likely to have been oak-hickory forest and hardwood swamp, according to the Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI; Figure 7). However, the MNFI map is a coarse scale interpretation and does not include the known historical prevalence of mature upland pine along the east shore of Lake Lansing in the mid-1800's. Based on the current presence of many forb species that are characteristic of barrens, Chris Reidy believes that parts of the 120 acres may have been black oak barrens historically. He will assess this further by studying tree age distribution. Current conditions reflect both similarities and differences with historical conditions. In uplands, oaks are still dominant and hickory is present, but red maple and black cherry dominate the younger trees, likely due to fire suppression. The recently common ash trees in the area have succumbed to emerald ash borer, but there remain diverse species in the understory, including serviceberry, sassafras, witch hazel, and occasional ironwood and spicebush. MNFI's historical land cover map shows the wetlands to have been mixed conifer swamp (Figure 7), consistent with the current remnant of rich tamarack swamp in the same area. The surrounding wetlands are now primarily shrub-carr (likely the product of wet meadows and tamarack swamps undergoing fire suppression). The small wetland region assessed by MNFI historically to be wet prairie is clearly now wet meadow.

Management Opportunities and Recommendations

- Monitor and control invasive species, focusing on Phragmites, autumn olive, garlic mustard, Japanese knotweed, barberry, hedge parsley, and ground ivy. Early detection and rapid response to new invasive species should continue. The goals are to steadily decrease the burden of well-established invasive species, eradicate newly emerging invasive species before they become established, and widely inform and engage the public in addressing these species on their own.
- Manage the park deer population. Establish a deer management plan and ongoing managed hunt that reduces the level of deer browsing and restores the ability of diverse plants (not only deer-repellent species) in the understory to thrive and reproduce. Education should be a major part of this, as neighborhood gardening and wildlife-feeding practices contribute to the deer problem.
- Design and install (ideally with neighborhood participation) a native plant, deer-resistant garden at the neighborhood trail entrance to the 120 acres, including interpretive signage. This is near the intersection of Woodwind Trail and Wild Ginger Trail in the Trails at Lake Lansing neighborhood (see Figure 3).
- Conduct prescribed ecological burns to promote health of the forests and other natural communities. Fire was a traditional part of the landscape that is essential to the health of oak woodlands (see Natural Communities section, above), and aids in keeping the tree canopy open. The open canopy transmits light needed by native forbs, shrubs, and tree seedlings in the understory. In addition, fire tends to reduce woody invasive shrubs and shift the equilibrium in favor of native plants. Burns also stimulate the growth of native plants by activating seeds and making nutrients available. Burns are recommended during the fall or spring dormant season, or roughly from October through April, depending upon weather and current management goals. The three highest-quality areas for prescribed burns with readily definable burn perimeters have been identified by the park's scientific advisors (Doug Landis, Chris Reidy, Steve Thomas, and David Mindell) and are shown in Figure 8.
- Selectively harvest trees in densely overgrown and non-native areas to increase woodland biodiversity.
- Restore wetlands with native plants in areas in which Phragmites infestation has been controlled (reduced to 1% coverage or less). According to Bill Schneider and Chris Reidy, in the absence of removing Phragmites thatch by burning, and reseedling if the native plant seed bank proves insufficient, the cleared areas may be quickly invaded by non-native cattails or reed canary grass. The Oakpark Trail Phragmites site is expected to be cleared of Phragmites and ready for restoration in 2013. This would first involve a prescribed burn in fall 2013 or the following early spring to remove the heavy Phragmites thatch in that area.
- Enhance the native plant diversity of the dry prairie-like uplands under the Consumers power lines by collecting and propagating native plant seeds at the site (see Figure 3).
- Continue to address potential human and wildlife safety issues:
 - Prune branches overhanging the trails so they are low and flat to the ground to avoid potential injuries.

- Remove wire fencing, deer stands, and metal and glass debris when a trail vehicle becomes available in 2012. A number of debris locations are already marked at <http://g.co/maps/3kdjy>
- Address trail erosion/tripping hazards by installing sandbars made of natural materials (e.g., logs; see Figure 9) in steeper areas through the pine plantations
- Evaluate whether inexpensive curb modifications along wetlands in the Trails at Lake Lansing neighborhood could reduce Blandings' turtle mortality. This occurs when turtles enter the road then cannot crawl over the high curbs and are hit by cars.
- Design and place occasional interpretive signs and directional trail markers to enhance community appreciation of the land's natural features
- Enhance the two-track trail on the southern peninsula, which is currently brushy or muddy in some areas, by installing boardwalks where needed to traverse wet areas, and connect the southern peninsula trail to the two-track that parallels the railroad. (See Figure 3)
- Construct a wooden wetland overlook (similar to that at the north end of the blue trail, about 0.5 mile south of Sandhill Shelter) with interpretive signage on the southern peninsula (Figure 3) to enhance visitors' understanding of the importance of wetlands for wildlife habitat and water quality.
- Once Phragmites infestations are substantially under control, address narrowleaf/hybrid cattail infested areas near the tamarack swamp and in the shrub-carr region at the southern and northwestern corners of the property.
- Continue community ecological education and engagement through invasive species removal/native plant restoration outings led by Ingham County Parks and Mid-Michigan Stewardship. Also continue hosting community-oriented stewardship workshops and presentations centered on the park's natural features.
- Construct a pedestrian gate at the Woodwind Trail neighborhood entrance, similar to those in MSU natural areas, to discourage bicyclists and other wheeled vehicles from entering the trails. Bicycling is disallowed but still occurs, increasing erosion problems and the spread of invasive seeds such as hedge parsley and garlic mustard. Include a gate that allows occasional entrance by a trail vehicle (e.g., Gator) for maintenance.
- Place a second stewardship information kiosk near the neighborhood trail entrance, since many who enter the trails there walk locally, and do not have a chance to see the information at the Sandhill Shelter trail entrance.
- Continue to work with adjacent property owners to ensure they recognize invasive species and other threats to their natural areas, and help them address those problems.

Acceptable Uses of Property

- Walking, running, cross-country skiing
- Wildlife viewing and nature study
- Research that supports the natural value of the land (e.g., wildlife and plant inventories; DNA analysis to assess possible phragmites hybridization; soil surveys; hydrologic modeling; controlled comparison of efficacy of different invasive species treatments)
- Dog walking with leashes when trails are not in use for skiing
- Managed hunting for deer population management

- Seed collection or plant division for use in native plant restoration on-site, under the supervision of Ingham County Parks
- Plant voucher specimen collection for deposit in the MSU Herbarium collection, for non-threatened/endangered species.
- Invasive species removal
- Photography

Unacceptable Uses of Property

- Bicycling or wheeled/motorized vehicles, except for park maintenance vehicles designed for trail use
- Removal of plants or animals
- Off-leash pets
- Camping, except when part of an organized educational activity (e.g., Girl Scouts)
- Trapping and fishing
- Campfires
- Construction of forts, tree houses, etc.
- Construction or maintenance of hunting stands or blinds
- Earth-moving/grading, adding fill, paving, or constructing permanent structures

Scope and Cost of Recommendations

Here, ICP indicates Ingham County Parks, whereas LPAB indicates the Meridian Township Land Preservation Advisory Board.

- ICP: trail maintenance, trash removal (several times a week) and debris removal.
- ICP: southern trail enhancement and interpretive signage, boardwalk and wetland overlook construction
- ICP: deer-resistant native-plant garden and interpretive signage design & installation
- ICP: invasive species monitoring and mapping; native species monitoring and mapping
- ICP: establishing partnerships on natural area conservation and restoration with neighboring landowners
- ICP: engaging and educating the community via restoration outings, workshops, presentations, flyers and informational signage
- ICP: supporting the cost of prescribed burning and partnering with Vern Stephens of the DNR on a prairie installation demonstration project sited near the center of the northern leg of the blue trail (see Figure 3)
- ICP: preparing sites for all four prescribed burns (anticipated to take one week of 2 staff members' labor, clearing leaves from the trails and around deadwood to create burn perimeters)
- Meridian Twp: constructing pedestrian-friendly bicycle gate at neighborhood entrance
- Meridian Twp: supporting prescribed burns at sites 1-3 for two successive years, followed by evaluation of the ecological effects on those sites. Cost: \$5990 in year 1. It is suggested that we pre-commit to the recommended second-year burns, which will guarantee the same cost in year 2. This price reflects a 35% discount over the cost of doing the burns individually and covers almost 30 acres in area. See Appendix 3.

- Meridian Twp: supporting restoration of the previously Phragmites infested Oakpark pond area in 2013. A prescribed burn of that area to remove thatch would likely cost \$1,000, based on an existing quote for a similar area.

Appendix 4 provides site photographs

Bavery, Deb

From: Bennett, Willis
Sent: Wednesday, February 22, 2012 3:02 PM
To: Christian & Beth Ann
Cc: pratt@mail.ingham.org; Bavery, Deb; Witte, Patrick; icdclindemann@mac.com
Subject: RE: Lake Lansing Park South Play Structure Concern

AGENDA ITEM #13

Beth

Thank you for contacting us regarding the playground issues. We are finally having some time to look at this issue now that we have our winter operations coming to an end. I will be meeting with our management team to review all of the East Lansing information and speak with staff at E.L. to make sure we have a good understanding of their situation and the process they used to reach their decisions. We can then use that information to examine our play structure and make an appropriate decision.

Again, thank you for your comments. We will keep you posted as we progress with this issue.

Willis Bennett.

From: Christian & Beth Ann [mailto:bechtelc@msu.edu]
Sent: Sunday, February 05, 2012 5:05 PM
To: Bavery, Deb; Witte, Patrick; Bavery, Deb; icdclindemann@mac.com; plindemann@ingham.org; inghamrainlindemann@mac.com
Cc: Bennett, Willis
Subject: Re: Lake Lansing Park South Play Structure Concern

Hi Everyone,

I saw in the Towne Courier an article today referring to East Lansing plans to rebuild their Patriarche Park play structure, <http://www.lansingstatejournal.com/article/20120202/ELANSING01/302020062/East-Lansing-rebuild-Patriarche-playground?odyssey=tab|topnews|text|Communities> . It states in this article 3 quotes below:

"The existing wooden play structure, constructed in 1995, was scheduled to be renovated last fall in a project again led by Rotarians. The project was delayed after it was discovered the wood contained chromated copper arsenate, now discontinued because of arsenic's status as a known carcinogen."

"Replacing the existing structure with a completely new one, utilizing the latest in materials and technology, gives us a unique opportunity to create a playground that is more accessible, especially for children with physical disabilities; incorporates the latest safety standards; and provides features promoting physical fitness," Rotary Club President Tim McCaffrey said."

"Extensive research hasn't given the club a definitive answer about whether the current structure is safe for kids."

In light of the city of East Lansing's research and future plans to demolish and rebuild a new play structure at Patriarche Park, I am very concerned for the children's health safety in regards to using a similar structure at Lake Lansing Park South. Obviously sealing the play structure was not adequate health protection for the city of East Lansing thus their decision to rebuild. Ingham County residents deserve the same health protection that East Lansing provides within their park borders.

In light of this new information above, can you please provide me your timeline when you plan to take similar actions in regards to rebuilding Lake Lansing Park South play structure?

Thank you,

Beth Bechtel

Haslett, MI

2/22/2012

----- Original Message -----

From: [Bavery, Deb](#)
To: [Christian & Beth Ann](#) ; [Witte, Patrick](#)
Cc: [Bennett, Willis](#)
Sent: Tuesday, August 02, 2011 2:35 PM
Subject: RE: Lake Lansing Park South Play Structure:

All of our wooden play structures are sealed as we build them. They are then sealed each and every year after construction. This process not only ensures the longevity of our play structures, but prevents any transfer of chromated copper arsenate to humans. Thank you for visiting the parks and please feel free to contact me should you have any additional questions.

Debra Bavery
Office Coordinator
 517-244-7185

From: Christian & Beth Ann [mailto:bechtelc@msu.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, August 02, 2011 3:12 PM
To: Bavery, Deb; Witte, Patrick
Subject: Lake Lansing Park South Play Structure:
Importance: High

Dear Ingham County Parks,

As a concerned parent, I am writing you today concerned about the Lake Lansing South Park wooden play structure. East Lansing Patriarche Park recently announced their study of their play structure made with wood treated with chromated copper arsenate (CCA),

<http://www.lansingstatejournal.com/article/20110731/ELANSING01/107310323/East-Lansing-s-Patriarche-Park-project-put-hold>.

Since Lake Lansing South Park has a similar play structure made of wood, can you reply back and let me know if Ingham County has done similar testing on this play structure? If so, what were the results? The East Lansing Patriarche Park test samples of the wooden play structure were according to this article, "Drilled wood samples taken from the structure in late June yielded levels of arsenic -- a known cancer-causing agent -- well above levels of contact recommended by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality."

Any information or your future plans with Lake Lansing South Park play structure would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you,
 Beth Bechtel
 1165 Cliffdale Drive
 Haslett, MI 48840
 Telephone: 517-339-0428
 E-Mail Address: bechtelc@msu.edu