

**Glen Arbor Township
Parks & Recreation Board Meeting Minutes - APPROVED, July 21, 2022
June 29, 2022 - Glen Arbor Township Office**

Call to Order

This special meeting of the Glen Arbor Township Parks & Recreation (PARB) was called to order at 10:00 am. The following PARB members were present: Ron Calsbeek, President, Kim Volk, Secretary, John McIlvried, and Annabel Moore. Rick Shanbals, Treasurer, was absent. Also attending were township trustees Tom Laureto and Don Lewis. In addition, Mark Robinson and Tyler Sprague of Johnson Hill Land Ethics Studio were also present.

Pledge of Allegiance

All in attendance stood and said the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment

No members of the public were present so no public comments were offered.

Glen Arbor Parks & Recreation Master Plan

The purpose of this meeting was to kick-off planning for the Parks & Recreation's new five-year master plan, following the approval of the Township Board to enter into a contract with Johnson Hill Land Ethics Studio to assist the PARB with this project.

Mark Robison had submitted an agenda prior to the meeting and began discussing the following items:

Item 1: Identify park and program development objectives, issues, and opportunities.

The group identified the reasons for developing a 5-year master plan, beyond the fact that a 5-year plan is required by the State of Michigan's Department of Natural Resources to be considered for any grant monies which may be available to offset costs for a community's parks and recreation activities. The reasons cited included the need for a common understanding between the PARB, the Township Board, and the community-at-large as to what kinds of parks and recreation programs are desired and what the community is willing to pay for and maintain; to help set priorities for the future, to further define "recreation" aspects of the PARB's mandate, and to feed into the process for the Township's overall master planning.

An objective might be to ensure that Glen Arbor Township has robust parks and recreation offerings for residents and visitors that we can afford and maintain. Opportunities might include winter recreation programming for full-time residents, as well as collaborations with other community businesses or organizations that might allow for shared facilities, equipment, workforce, etc. Challenges include demographics (more snowbirds, an aging population, fewer kids, etc.) and the fact that of the \$14 million dollars that Glen Arbor residents pay in state property taxes, only about \$300,000 comes back to the township each year.

Item 2: Confirm Township-owned properties to be included in the parks inventory.

The township owns the following properties: 1) The Township Park with tennis, pickleball, and basketball courts, as well as other park amenities; 2) a narrow piece of property on Little Glen Lake across from the Marina at the Narrows; 3) a small piece of property on the Crystal River by the fire hydrant, 4) 40 acres on Miller Hill, 5) the boat launch on Lake Michigan near Blu; 5) the Garden Park near the public restrooms by Art's Tavern; and 6) the township hall which includes

a gymnasium and a stage and a space outdoors that is suitable for certain activities, e.g., the farmers' market, etc.

Item 3: Confirm other properties that support recreation opportunities that should also be included in the inventory.

The following government owned properties were mentioned: Sleeping Bear National Lakeshore; Old Settlers Park; Leelanau School, Glen Lake School, Miles Kimberly; and Empire Beach.

The following privately owned commercial places were noted: Sleeping Bear Bay Club, Homestead Resort, Leelanau Camp, Glen Lake Yacht Club, Glen Arbor Arts Center, and the Crystal River Recreational Area.

Item 4: Discuss Township funding capabilities and priorities for parks and recreation projects.

Item 5: Discuss current park maintenance costs and potentially how such costs can/should be included within the plan's development. Identify key people to meet with to discuss specific maintenance requirements at the Township Park.

In 2017 a bond was passed in the amount of \$675K to renovate and remodel the current township park. Grants were received from several entities and the township funded the rest of the development to \$1Million. It costs approximately \$70K to operate and maintain the park annually, which does not include major repairs like replacing the cracked tennis courts. The bond should be paid off in the next couple of years.

Sources of revenue could include a renewal of that bond, parking fees, user fees, donations, grants (public and private) and even a QR code that would allow non-resident park lovers to make a donation if they wished.

As the community ages it may be more difficult to get the same people to volunteer their time to maintain the park. One option might be to create a Public Works Department and hire one or two people to maintain all of the township's buildings and assets (rather than relying on volunteers and individual contractors). Another option might be to create a Friends of the Park or similar organization akin to what's in place for the Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail.

The PARB board has created a spreadsheet of several "to do" lists (daily upkeep, monthly maintenance, needs, repair and capital improvements and Rick Shanahals, is the keeper of these lists. They may be helpful in creating a maintenance plan, which should be part of the 5-year master plan which would also address issues like how often courts need to be resurfaced (annually, every 3 years, 5 years), etc.

Item 6: Review basic public input strategies, formats, and logistics.

Item 7: Identify stakeholder groups and key contacts.

The plan calls for getting public input through a survey as well as at large public meetings and small group or one-on-one discussions with key stakeholders. Since it does not seem the Township has an email list for all residents, the survey may need to be conducted on paper with an electronic option for those willing to provide feedback this way. Johnson-Hill will design the survey using formats that have worked for them in the past as well as the draft survey questions that John McIlvried developed earlier this year. Initially, the schedule called for conducting the survey July 13 via email; however after discussion, it was decided to release the survey at the

first public input meeting to be held at 7pm on Thursday, July 28 (rather than on July 27 as originally scheduled). This will give the PARB and Johnson Hill a chance to announce the overall project and give the community some context for the survey. The second public meeting will be held on September 14 at 7pm. Notice of these meetings will be published in the Enterprise, the GA Sun, the Township's website and portable sign.

In terms of stakeholders, members of the PARB were asked to send up to 10 names of individuals within the community that we should talk to as part of gathering community input. Kim will consolidate the list, removing duplicate names, etc. for the board to finalize at its next meeting. July 21. Ideally these stakeholders can speak for themselves or various groups important to the community (Chamber of Commerce, Women's Clubs, Art Center, National Park, etc.).

Other agenda items for the July PARB meeting include: Tennis Tournament, Pickleball Tournament, QR Code, Friends of the Park, and the survey.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kim Volk, Secretary
June 30, 2022