

**ORANGE TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY PARK BOARD**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, February 21, 2018**

**Orange Township Hall**

**1680 East Orange Road**

**7:00 PM**

Meeting called to order at 7:05 PM

**ROLL CALL**

- Barrett Ault - Present
- Jennifer Keck - Present
- Brian Hock - Present
- Marla Gilreath - Present
- Matt DeGraw - Present
- J.D. Hartwell - Absent
- Maintenance & Parks Director Beth Hugh - Present

*Minutes were prepared by Township Administrative Assistant Nancy Fay*

**Approval of Minutes of November 15, 2017**

Ault motion to approve. DeGraw second.

**Approval of Minutes of January 24, 2018**

Ault motion to approve. Hock second.

**OTCPB Liaison**

- Ms. Ault states that the park board no longer has a trustee liaison but the park board is free to speak to any of the trustees.
- Ms. Hugh says she will forward that to the trustees and to Lee (township administrator) tomorrow morning because the year they did away with liaisons is the year it was taken out of the park board bylaws. Now that liaisons are back, they may want to address that.
- James Stabl 6266 Westwick Place, Lewis Center asks why they were taken out (liaisons). Ms. Hugh replies 2 years ago, in 2016 or 2017; Ms. Ault interjects March 2017; Ms. Hugh continues they didn't have a trustee coming to the meetings and the park board requested a trustee come, the trustees responded by removing the liaison from the bylaws. This year they brought liaisons back, and there was one appointed to the park board but the bylaws are not consistent with that.
- Mr. Hock says any trustee is welcome to attend and they would be happy to have them.
- Ms. Hugh states Trustee Knapp sent an email saying she would not be at the meeting and giving the resolution modifying the park board bylaws as her reason why.
- Ms. Ault says they will look into it.
- Ms. Hugh says it is a public meeting so any of the trustees can attend at any time; however the public record law says if more than one trustee is at the meeting there would be a quorum and because it was not advertised as a trustee meeting, they would not be able to deliberate or discuss or make any decisions.

- Mr. Stabl voices his surprise that there is no longer a trustee liaison as he knows other departments have liaisons.

### **Discussion Regarding Orange Township Land Use Plan**

Michele Boni, Planning and Zoning Director introduced herself and presented the updating of Orange Township Land Use Plan

- Ms. Boni states she has been working on a big project - updating the Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The township partnered with OSU graduate students who put together the plan. Students dedicated a semester to our township specifically and put together this plan for us. Ms. Boni goes on to say she is here today because she believes the comprehensive plan is not only a zoning issue but also should be relevant to parks and the community as a whole. She understands the trail system is important to the community and park board and wants to make sure when a zoning application is received, it is in alignment with the trail master plan
- Ms. Boni says she and Ms. Hugh have been working with another student on the Complete Street Policy. Ms. Hugh explains Complete Street Policy is basically defining a complete street as transportation for all mobilities: vehicles, walkers, bikers, joggers. It includes trail functions as well as sidewalks and roadways. If you get federal dollars anywhere you have to abide by complete streets. It's something that MORPC is helping us with. We want to bring it to the forefront to let developers know that this is really important to us, not only do we have our trail and master plan but we are serious about providing pedestrian and bike connections with all new development.
- Mr. Hock asks how much available land there is that is not already commercial or residential that could still become houses or businesses.
- Ms. Boni replies we won't get another Evan's Farms; there is still land on Lewis Center Road and S. Old State that could potentially become commercial. We do have a lot of zoning in place but those texts are old and we have developers coming in now, and they can't be in compliance with that text so they are filing for re-zoning. Having the (Complete Street) policy in place would force them (developers) to abide by that.
- Ms. Hugh says zoning is not stagnant, a property could currently be zoned farm residential or even commercial and be re-zoned. It may seem we are trying to develop a plan for a small portion, but this is the plan for the vision of the township so that as things grow and change it follows that vision, that's why this plan is so important. We can show what kinds of businesses we want and attract those businesses, and shy away from the ones we don't want or don't fit our vision.
- Ms. Ault points out, in the back, in implementation strategies, we have a section that focuses on what we do here, and it overlaps with community image, natural resources and community facilities, you'll see that the park board falls into all three of those items so we suggest looking through and reading all three of the strategies the students had presented as well as, to go back into appendix c and read the questions that were asked by the students in the survey and any answers that were given.
- Ms. Boni says the students did a huge outreach plan. We reached out to over 500 people and got survey results and they weren't just yes and no questions. People really put their comments and feedback on these surveys and that alone helped to develop this plan. We've had public open house meetings that had a good turn out so everyone who wanted to be involved in this was able to. From the park board stand point if there is anything that we can address of your needs or wants in the township related to parks and trails we can take that into consideration with this plan.
- Mr. Hock asks: is this something that the trustees have given indication is going to be a guide to them?
- Ms. Boni replies yes, but they have to approve it. Before we contacted the students we had communication with the trustees up front, I didn't want to waste our time and the students time if they weren't going to consider it so I can say all the trustees are on board with this as of now and they ultimately have to approve the plan; they

will receive a recommendation from the zoning commission and we can receive a recommendation from any board and address that to the trustees.

- Ms. Ault says as a board, homework would be to go through strategies and pull out which ones you think fit our vision as a board for the township, what we realistically can and cannot do.
- Ms. Ault says lets all of us bring our top three things to the next meeting and shoot for April to finalize.

### **Discussion Regarding Trails and Connections**

#### **2017 Grant Applications - Update**

Both grant applications have been turned in (Lewis Center Road Phase 3 & the section of Lewis Center Road)

- Lewis Center Road Phase 3 (first COTF application), the total estimate that came in for that was \$447,500.00, that goes from Waukegan to the entrance into the beach; the trail is on the south side of Lewis Center and right now the County Engineer's Office said that the traffic on the trail would not warrant a Hock signal yet and so we will have flashing pedestrian lights.
- Ms. Hugh is working with the engineer's office on identifying the next phase (phase 4). The question is do we cross the entire trail over Lewis Center Road to the beach area and then the trail goes on the north side or do we keep it on the south side. Topographically, wetland wise it stays on the south side; on the north side there is a big pond that we would have to bridge. Staying on the south side would also significantly cut down on people crossing Lewis Center Road.
- Matt DeGraw asks if the proposed plan is to switch from the north side of Lewis Center Rd to the south side when it crosses over the rail road tracks by the high school? Ms. Hugh answers no, it will cross at S Old State because the trail through the Meadows at Lewis Center is already on the north side. It will stay on the southern side of Evans Farms. Evans Farms has committed to build their section of the trail.
- Ms. Hugh continues explaining Phase 4 of the trail. Staying on the south side picks up the Shores and Parkshore. Crossing to the north side picks up Willow Springs and that neighborhood. The north side also has the pond, Alum Creek and wetlands around it in addition to the fact that, that would put everybody that uses the trail crossing Lewis Center Road, that's a fairly heavily travelled road.
- Ms. Ault asks, behind The Shores, at the bend, there is also a lot of water; do we know how much of that land is useable? Ms. Hugh answers, that's the construction plans that are being designed right now, we will probably be pretty much at the base of the slope; we already have the license agreement from the Army Corps of Engineers for that property; its right of way but the right of way is over top of Army Corps of Engineers property. Ms. Hugh goes on to explain the area Ms. Ault asked about may or may not be wetlands because it will be drainage. The trail will probably stay within the right of way itself except for the northern bend. In that triangle we would find the easiest way to go.
- Ms. Ault asks if we have that right of way from them (Army Corps of Engineers)? Ms. Hugh replies we've not gotten the license for that section yet because we haven't done that design yet. Army Corps of Engineers has been very open in doing that because we've been working with them for the bridge and for phase 2; we talked to them about phase 3; they actually asked us to come into the beach and provide that access across Lewis Center Road. Ms. Hugh doesn't see an issue getting another supplemental for license agreement it just takes time because it has to go through the process.
- Ms Ault asks if we will notify residents? Ms. Hugh answers it's Army Corps of Engineers' land. Residents are welcome to attend any meeting; this has been on the trail master plan since 2008. We welcome people to participate, the earlier the better.
- The second COTF grant submitted, is the section of Lewis Center Road by North Road Park, along Lewis Center Road, Weeping Rock is required to build their

section of the trail; we'll build the school section and the school is going to participate dollar wise with that.

- Ms. Hugh asks what grants do we want to look at in 2019? Ms. Hugh tends to timeline things to county projects. We are looking at the next phase of Orange Road which will take us to the post office - actually combining two smaller phases that we had budgeted for because we've done Highfield intersection but we can't get the Green Meadows intersection unless we hit Blue Holly as well so we're not doing anything over the actual railroad crossing itself as part of the road improvements. We are still crossing the trails as soon as we can there will be a signal at Blue Holly and Green Meadows that are tied together so that when the train comes it triggers the signal so that people don't get stuck on the tracks. That's the next phase as part of that, we have a trail that is in part of the design but not part of the road improvements so the trail would be separate. It would depend upon grants and timing. If the timing would work my recommendation would be to go for a grant with Orange Road so that when Orange Road is built we can tuck the trail in with that, the grant would pay for the trail, and potentially OPWC money for Orange Road
- Mr. DeGraw asks Ms Hugh what she believes will be the first path from the west to cross the rail road tracks? Ms. Hugh answers Orange Road we've been working with PUCO for the last year; potentially we are revisiting an agreement to do the trail across on Orange Rd. Part of that may be a closure at Franklin Street because the PUCO wants us to look at Orange Township as a township and what the vehicular and bike and running and trail system looks like. Franklin Street is redundant to Lewis Center Road but it is important to that neighborhood.
- Unknown audience member voices concern about trail going into the beach and people crossing Lewis Center Road because the speed limit is 55 MPH. He thinks the speed limit should be lowered. Ms. Hugh replies the only person who can reduce the speed limit in the State of Ohio is the Director of Transportation of ODOT and it is done by certain criteria. Ms. Hugh doubts Lewis Center would meet the criteria.

### **2018 Events Discussion**

- Ribbon cutting ceremony for bridge - late spring
- Newsletter will have Movie / Music in the Park dates for June and August
- Ms. Hugh hands out pool calendar showing Movie / Music in the Park; Night Swims; BBQ
- Ms. Ault says items to post on Facebook:
  - Save the date for Movie / Music in the Park
  - Are you a local vendor/do you want to participate
- Movie - Stay with G or PG
  - Email Ms. Hugh top 5 choices
  - Decide at March meeting which ones will be sent to Survey Monkey
    - Survey Monkey vote late in April or early May
    - Movie with highest votes show in June, movie with second highest votes show in August
  - Ms. Ault says as far as food trucks and vendors - give it another month and then she will contact any previous that have been used
  - Ms. Hugh reached out to Franklin Express and they are available in June; has not heard from Bill Foley for August date. If Bill Foley can't do August date we will book Franklin Express for that date as well
  - Music will be two hours, from 7PM - 9PM

### **Discussion Regarding Park Memorials**

Ms. Ault opens discussion stating that the township does not name parks after people, and there is desire among residents to memorialize loved ones

- Offer memorials: Purchase a bench, tree, or plaque in certain areas of the township to memorialize anybody.
  - Define policy and put on website and Facebook that it is available

- Ms. Hugh to come up with policy before next meeting to present to park board
  - Benches all uniform - same as we have
  - Open to all parks but primarily along trails
  - Stick with bronze type plaque
- Need to consider the cost of maintenance and replacement
  - Should there be a cap on number of replacements allowed?
  - Possibly charge twice the cost for replacement
- Allow sponsoring of existing bench?
- Parks retain control over placement, maintenance, replacement
- Tree plaque
  - Hock raised concern over plaques marking trees - someone could get hurt
  - Unknown speaker states Westerville and Columbus both have plaques all over the place, on the front of benches, suggested contacting Westerville or Columbus to see how they handle it.
  - Mr. DeGraw will call Westerville and Columbus

#### **Discussion Regarding Born Learning Trails**

- Ms. Hugh says Born Learning Trails is a program by the United Way through sponsors; it's interactive with the trails; there are signs that tell you to do things (Preschool level activities). There's counting things, it teaches reading, and each station is a little bit different. Ms. Hugh anticipates, if there are no objections to it, taking it to the board (Township Trustees) for approval for an agreement with the United Way to do that first location in North Orange Park
- Mr. Hock asks so it promotes learning and literacy and it doesn't cost us anything?
- Ms. Hugh replies yes, it's a volunteer group that comes in and puts it in - and it doesn't have to be North Orange Park she wants to do it inside the park trails, not on the stretches of trails, because your interrupting the trail, the kids are doing stuff, they (volunteers) paint things on the trail with numbers and shapes. Another thought Ms. Hugh had was, since we have a lot of people at North Orange Park maybe we look first at Glen Oak Park where we don't have a lot of people and that maybe brings people to Glen Oak to go check it out.
- Ms. Ault asks, the United Way actually comes in and does all the signage and all the work, we're just giving them access to do it.
- Ms. Hugh: yes
- Unknown person from the audience says the library has something similar along their stretch of trail
- Ms. Ault thinks it's a good idea to put it in one park and see what it's like
- Glen Oak may be better - not so close to the library trail; close to school
- Ms. Hugh says to sponsor, we would buy the license and they send the templates to paint the stuff on and the signs. Ms. Hugh believes the paint and sign materials are included in the \$2,000.00 initial sponsorship fee.

#### **Discussion Regarding Fields and Uses**

- Ms. Hugh introduced J.D., the new Park Board alternate. J.D. is a soccer coach so from a field use agreement; we keep getting expanded requests, it's time to start looking at some options. J.D. had actually talked to Alum Creek about the below dam area. After speaking with J.D., Ms. Hugh called the Army Corps of Engineers and they're interested in potentially forming a kind of consortium. Maybe we talk to the school district, and to Liberty Township, because right now, if you've used the fields before, or if you know who to ask and when to ask, you're getting the fields. A large group can get field space when smaller groups aren't. Another thing to look at is when these groups come in, we typically lease field space for games and the coaches are left with finding space to go practice on. I'd like the park board to start thinking about and providing some input on: do we, and if we do, how do we provide areas for practice? Start sharing the fields, really through the area, maybe not just Orange? Orange has great fields but that means everybody in the area wants

them. Sometimes the coaches are from Orange Township, sometimes they're not. They all represent that they're Orange Township residents but they're not always. Ms. Hugh wants to be proactive in making sure that Orange Township residents who are paying the levy get what they want, and what they need and what they expect. Some of those Orange Township residents play in the Olentangy School district on all fields so Ms. Hugh is looking for some input and feedback to see if we can improve how we do field use agreements and allocate space.

- Mr. Hock asks: in Ro Park there's not baseball fields, it's just an open area, there are all kinds of practices there, is that done through the township, or first come first serve?
- Ms. Hugh replies its first come first serve. Right now the township's position is we don't reserve field space unless they sign a field use agreement. Field use agreement requires the payment, and it requires the minimum of a million dollar insurance policy. Independent coaches and small groups don't have this sort of thing. Ms. Hugh wants to look at how an Orange Township resident can reserve individual field space. Ms Hugh has seen groups using this park (Township Hall Park); she doesn't want to inundate parks because some park users want to come here (Township Hall Park) for quiet. Ms. Hugh states she is more than willing to reach out to Alum Creek, the schools, and Liberty Township to try to form something. She has already run that by some of them and right now they have existing contracts that run multiple years. Ours is only a one year contract.
- J.D. states we live in a beautiful county and have a beautiful community. The problem is we have finite resources and the demand as we grow is going to continue to be a burden on us. J.D. hopes he is going to be able to add value with his extensive experience in youth sports and sharing some of the inside information to try to alleviate some of the pressure or come up with fresh ideas. As the community continues to grow and the township has such a small field space areas, the demand is just going to get more and more. If we can develop, foster, build, some strategic relationship with the school district and Army Corps of Engineers sooner rather than later it will benefit us in the short, medium and long term.
- Mr. Hock asks is there any land at all that the township owns available. Ms. Hugh states there is no land that the township owns.
- Ms. Ault states she would love to buy the corner of Orange and Old State. Ms. Hugh replies in order to do that she thinks there would need to be a bond or a levy.
- Ms. Ault states it will be gone by then. Ms. Hugh replies she can take it to the next trustee meeting, that this is something we would like to explore. We have time right now to get it on the ballot in November.
- Mr. Hock asks if there are any other properties available. Ms. Hugh said there is nothing that has been identified, that's one thing we can do through the comprehensive plan as recommendations. We could look at a map and start identifying additional properties we want. Ms. Hugh reminded the park board that the more property we have, the more property we maintain, the more money that's needed. Ms. Hugh is not sure how sustainable the current 1 mil levy is. Ms. Hugh would recommend going back to a 1.5 mil levy, if we have a plan. Orange Twp residents have always been very supportive.
- Ms. Hugh asks if the park board would like her to put discussion about the White property (northwest corner of Orange Rd and S. Old State) on the next agenda. All members of the park board said yes

#### **Public comments**

There were no comments from the public

#### **Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned at 9:12 PM.

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**Barrett Ault**

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**Jenifer Keck**

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**Brian Hock**

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**Marla Gilreath**

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**Matt DeGraw**

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**J.D. Hartwell, Alternate**