

ALAMO TOWNSHIP PARK BOARD

7901 North 6th Street
Kalamazoo, MI 49009

Minutes – Special Meeting

December 23, 2010

Present: T. Britain, L. Conti, N. Covault, B. Fisher, J. Landon, S. Podewell

Absent: D. Knight (excused per J. Landon)

Rangers: D. Bennett, L. Stoneburner

Interested Others: 3

I. CALL TO ORDER

J. Landon called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

J. Landon noted the minutes of November 30, 2010 cannot be approved until the blanks are filled in and requested assistance in doing so. B. Fisher requested revisiting the approval of the October 26 minutes and cited specific areas.

MOTION by S. Podewell to approve changes to the October minutes as part of the November 30, 2010 minutes approval process, **support** by L. Conti. B. Fisher suggested the October minutes be addressed separately. Motion withdrawn.

MOTION by L. Conti to approve the November 30, 2010 minutes. Motion died for lack of support.

Members contributed that L. Conti with support from N. Covault completed the blanks contained in Section VII.H. The spelling of “rangers” was corrected in Section III.3. (statement), the accessibility statement was removed and VIII.D will reflect that T. Britain supported the motion and that it carried. S. Podewell took the minutes and will sign the official file copy.

MOTION by S. Podewell to accept the November 30, 2010 minutes, as discussed and corrected, **support** by L. Conti. 5-0-1 (Fisher - not present at the meeting).

M. Stoneburner stated she was present at the November 30 meeting and requested the minutes reflect that her understanding of portions of the meeting is not reflected in the minutes.

B. Fisher noted the October published minutes were correct in terms of the restricted funds and the statement read by Mr. Conti at the October meeting was attached to the published minutes (both clarified in a note provided for the November Board meeting). A proposal was made to modify Section (VII.C.) to strike all but the last two sentences and replace the struck content with “Discussion of the future possibility of the car show moving to the Kalamazoo Speedway” and to strike the corrections (made November 30) to the restricted funds and statement.

MOTION by B. Fisher to modify and approve the October 26, 2010 minutes as discussed, **support** by T. Britain. Carried.

III. RESPONSE TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES: 5 MEMBER BOARD

T. Britain felt there was no reason to reduce the Board to 5 members. Each member possesses a different social network and each individual brings important attributes to the Board; a reduction will reduce overall community input.

S. Podewell values the input of B. Fisher and N. Covault.

N. Covault expressed there is a toxic person on the Board who has turned Township officials against the Park Board which he stated is not merely an advisory Board. He supports going to a 5-member Board to get rid of B. Fisher.

S. Podewell asked if the Township Board’s intent was to reduce the size of the Board because this would be better or to remove specific people, the latter of which he did not support. (It was noted the Township Board works well with 5 members.) He concurred with T. Britain regarding input. It was felt any issues should be addressed as a Board.

L. Conti thanked R. Feniger for requesting Park Board feedback related to the proposed change. He noted he sees pros and cons concerning the reduction and that it is a tough decision.

J. Landon noted, regardless of size, the Park Board can still have a lot of input and complete all the work. The only downfall is the Board's voice.

B. Fisher noted the crux of the recent issues appears to be the advisory nature of this Board and the attractiveness of some assigned tasks over others. She felt Board size was not an issue and that mobilization for projects is possible as has been recently demonstrated further noting her desire to mobilize direct input of residents to create parks desired by residents.

D. Bennett favors a 7 member Board. He believes sitting on the Board or being appointed a ranger adds a level of commitment. He referenced the resources brought to the table by members, and cited equipment as an example. He spoke to cooperation amongst Board members being in the best interests of the Township.

MOTION by S. Podewell to recommend to the Township Board that the Park Board membership stay at 7 members as best serving the community, **support** by T. Britain. L. Conti – no; S. Podewell – yes; N. Covault – no; T. Britain – yes; J. Landon – yes; B. Fisher – no. Motion failed to carry.

Reference was made to offering a new motion or sending the current vote to the Board with comments contained in the minutes. No further action was taken.

Reference was made to the size of a board not being the measure of success but what it can accomplish (e.g., recycling and a "Board" of 1). The Township Board was asked to consider the reasoning behind the suggestion when making its decision.

IV. RESPONSE TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES: COMPLAINT

J. Landon provided a draft response. Brief comments included expressions of anger, lack of validity and lack of awareness that any attempt was made to keep information from anyone. Minutes will be available within designated timeframes. B. Fisher and T. Britain suggested removal of editorial or emotional statements. T. Britain noted ignorance doesn't excuse the Board from responsibility.

MOTION by S. Podewell to excuse the oversight of the 8-day rule. Motion died for lack of support.

Delete last sentence in the "Gates" section. Place a period after years and delete the remainder of Town Board Approval section. Delete last sentence in the conclusion section. Modify the note of December 17.

MOTION by J. Landon to submit the letter as modified as the Park Board response to Mr. Ray's complaint, **support** by T. Britain. Carried.

V. PROPOSED PLACEMENT OF SIGNS CROSSING KAL-HAVEN TRAIL

Approval was not previously sought. The standard perimeter signs will be placed by D. Bennett and L. Stoneburner if approval is given.

MOTION by N. Covault to place signs where the Park trail crosses the Kal-Haven Trail, **support** by L. Conti. Carried.

VI. 2011 PARK EVENTS

Deferred to January.

Reminder that due to a member's absence, additional agenda items may not be added to the agenda.

VII. CITIZEN COMMENT

D. Bennett (Requested the 3 Board of Trustees members who are present seriously think about what they have witnessed at the meeting. He noted micromanagement doesn't work and hopes the Board doesn't scrutinize everything the Park Board does, preferring the Park Board do its job and be held accountable. All individuals bring good and bad to the table but in the long run all have to do what benefits the Township. Don't strip of empowerment.)

N. Covault (Inquired about a box he returned to the Township when he resigned). B. Fisher and M. Stoneburner noted the box was missing, having tried to locate it a number of weeks ago following a query by J. Little. The box was present shortly prior to that time.

VIII. ADJOURN

MOTION by N. Covault to adjourn, **support** by L. Conti. Carried. The meeting was adjourned at 3:37 p.m.

Submitted,

Barbara Fisher
Park Board Secretary