

Present: Chairperson Schmitt; Vice-Chairperson Greening; Members: Brink, Cobleigh, Davis and Harmon

Absent: Woodman

Also Present: Assistant to the Manager, Pasioka  
Council Liaison, Craig  
Council President, Kennedy

Chairperson Schmitt presided and called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Village municipal building at 18500 W. Thirteen Mile Road.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

MOTION by Davis, supported by Cobleigh, that the minutes of the November 19, 1998 Parks and Recreation Board meeting be approved as submitted.

Motion passes unanimously.

### **PRESENTATION BY SOCWA REPRESENTATIVE - LILLIAN DEAN**

Lillian Dean representing the Southeastern Oakland County Water Authority has been asked by Village administration to prepare a brochure about the Douglas-Evans nature preserve. She is present to seek input from the Board on what should be included in the handout.

Dean stated that she invited an expert to visit the site. Kim Herman, head of Natural Areas and Stewardship from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources walked the Douglas-Evans nature preserve with Dean in early December. They identified a wide variety of flowers and observed the plant and insect life. It is a very rich area to anyone interested in nature study.

Dean talked about a prairie being a landscape form that has ecological value. She used a map to emphasize the importance of the Douglas-Evans site. The map shows the vegetative cover of southeast Michigan before the settlers came and designates a few prairie sites. Douglas-Evans is one of the only spots that a student interested in native tall grass prairie could come to observe this ecological treasure.

A memo was distributed with an outline of some thoughts for a tri-fold brochure. It could include a schematic sketch map of the site showing the Rouge River. Uses permitted on the site could be listed. The brochure would address what a prairie is and how it benefits the water quality. What is being done in the Douglas-Evans nature area is part of an area-wide effort to restore both the land and the water near the Rouge River. There will be a picture of some of the wild flowers. A restoration logo showing houses and the river may or may not fit on the brochure.

Harmon asked if it was planned to identify features of the site. Dean said that there will be a few examples in the brochure. A booklet with pictures is needed to do a thorough job which may be a

project for a year from now. The goal for this brochure is to get something out there that will help residents understand the use limitations and the purpose of this site.

Pasieka thinks that brochure should indicate that it is a nature preserve. He mentioned instances where people have dumped trash in the area. Dean suggested saying something in the brochure like, "leave only footprints".

The brochures will be placed in a box attached to the Douglas-Evans sign so that people can take one as they go in. The cost of preparing a camera-ready copy of this brochure will be paid for by SOCWA through a Rouge River grant. The Village will have the original and can do the printing after the first run.

Craig suggested that the brochure provide a brief explanation of the Combined Sewer Overflow facility on the site.

Dean wants to give homage to conservationist Paul Thompson who contributed greatly to this area being a model of prairie restoration. Dean anticipates having a draft to the Board in early March.

#### **REPORT ON SPECIAL EVENT - WINTER FAMILY FUN DAY - JANUARY 10, 1999**

Brink stated that the winter event in the park went very well and had a terrific turnout. She estimated that 300-350 people attended. Brink thanked the Parks and Recreation Board members who helped.

Brink reported on the costs incurred. Drinks, snow paint, and everything she had to buy came to \$114. There was \$350 spent on the ice sculpture activity. The cost of printing flyers was \$70. The cost of the banner was \$250 and \$70 was spent on new reflective vests. The total expenses for the event were \$780.

Brink will make notes and file them for the person who organizes next year's winter park event. She asked for input on what should remain the same or be done differently next year.

Brink informed the Board that the cost to have a person doing ice sculpturing will increase next year. It was the sense of Board members and others in the audience that the ice sculpturing which went on all day was fascinating and an attraction that was a great addition to this special event.

Brinks suggests eliminating the snow sculpturing contest. She suggests having snow paint and bird seed art for children. The snow shoes were a big hit. The habitat hikes need to be promoted more next year. Barbara Pepper who is an environmental teacher and consultant volunteered her time to conduct nature hikes. Better signage and announcements of when the hikes are ready to start was suggested.

One porta john was adequate. More water should be poured on the ice skating rink. We could have doubled the amount of hot chocolate available. Brink mentioned the possibility of having hot chocolate available in the park during the winter months as a fundraiser for various scout troops and youth groups.

Schmitt commented that the only complaint he heard all day was the inadequacy of the parking lot.

MOTION by Harmon, supported by Cobleigh, to thank Andrea Brink for her special efforts in organizing the Winter Family Fun Day.

Motion passes unanimously.

### **PARK ENTRANCE PRESENTATION**

David Jensen distributed a plan he developed for the entrance to Beverly Park. The plan separates the pedestrian entrance from the vehicle entrance. Jensen went through the elements of his plan with the Board members. There will be a garden entrance type of sign and lighting on the walkway. There is a place for benches. The park entrance will provide an area where garden clubs can plant flowers, hedges, and ground cover. It was suggested that something other than a cyclone fence may be appropriate, such as an iron fence. He is suggesting that the piers be done in some sort of brick or stone.

There were questions and comments on the plan. Board members were very receptive to the design. Jensen estimated the cost to construct the entrance way as shown in the plan as \$50,000. The cost estimated on the priority list was \$30,000.

Jensen suggested that a plan like this reinforces a sense of community pride and the Village may find that people are willing to donate to complete portions of the project. There are tasteful ways to credit donors.

Sheila Seaver of 19795 Beverly Road, representing the Village Woman's Club, stated that the Woman's Club would be willing to take on some part of this project but she cannot say to what extent.

MOTION by Davis, supported by Cobleigh, that it is the consensus of the Parks and Recreation Board that they like the park entrance plan submitted by David Jensen and are interested in pursuing it further.

Motion passes unanimously.

Jensen suggesting that, once an entrance plan and an implementation goal are adopted, a committee should be formed to address the financial aspect and fund raising.

### **PARK DOG RUN INSURANCE REPORT**

Board members received a letter from the Michigan Municipal Liability and Property Pool dated January 12, 1999 relative to providing a fenced dog run in Beverly Park. Pasioka stated that a loss control consultant visited the park to look at a proposed area for a dog run. Insurance liability concerns are indicated in the letter. The dogs could not be left unattended in the designated area. There should still be a rule requiring the pet owner to be responsible for cleaning up after his pet.

Pasieka commented that there is a concern about aesthetics and the fact that a cyclone fence is not in keeping with the overall concept plan for the park.

There was discussion on the site for a dog run. The site suggested has two sides fenced already. It was pointed out that the proposed area is far away from the parking lot and it is near residential property. There may be objections from abutting property owners.

Schmitt suggested that if anything is done, it should be on a trial basis with the understanding that it would be reviewed and reconsidered after a certain period of time.

Jole Kaufmann-Laker of 30720 Georgetown Drive stated that she likes to let her dogs run loose but she picks up after her animals. She asked if there has been any research into how other dog parks are run. Schmitt answered that dog parks have not been researched. The resident thinks that a designated area for dogs would be an asset to the park.

Administration was asked to look into this further to determine the best location for a dog run and an approximate cost.

#### **PROPOSAL FOR REGULAR MAINTENANCE PLAN FOR DOUGLAS EVANS**

Patty Clark of 20051 Wellesley stated that she spends a lot of time at Douglas Evans and she is concerned with the amount of trash in the area. Clark is interested in getting it cleaned up and having regular maintenance done. She suggested placing a trash receptacle in the nature preserve. She was informed that, due to deed restrictions, it is not possible to install anything on the property including trash receptacles or a portable bathroom.

Brink mentioned the idea of high school students doing community service projects which would entail cleaning up the nature preserve.

Craig thinks a lot of the trash comes down the river. There is a heavy band of garbage along the high water mark. There was discussion about coordinating a volunteer clean up of this area with the Friends of the Rouge Clean Up which is held area-wide in the Spring. The Parks and Recreation Board involvement in the Friends of the Rouge program will be a topic of the joint meeting with Council.

Clark volunteered to spearhead an effort to encourage high school students who want to do community service or boy scouts to clean up in Douglas-Evans. It was mentioned that Lillian Dean from SOCWA is another contact person who may be able to coordinate this with other Rouge River clean up activities.

#### **PREPARE FOR FEBRUARY 18 JOINT MEETING WITH COUNCIL**

Schmitt drafted a list of proposed topics for the joint meeting with Council which he distributed to the Board for discussion purposes.

Craig referred to topic number four, "Removing heavy equipment and construction piles from Beverly Park". Schmitt stated that the deed from the Dodge Brothers indicated that the property was to be used for park purposes. He does not think the heavy equipment needs to be parked in the parking lot. Craig agrees that the deed restrictions do not allow bulldozers and dirt piles in the park.

Kennedy suggested researching this topic before the joint meeting so there may be something to report at that time.

MOTION by Greening, supported by Davis, that the Board ask administration to look into removing the piles of debris and heavy equipment from the Beverly Park parking lot.

Motion passes unanimously.

Schmitt asked if there are items to be added or deleted to the list of joint meeting topics. The list includes the high priority items from the Board's priority list of master plan projects (parking lot, north fence, play area, landscaping, and pedestrian entrance). Council will receive the Board's list of priorities and cost estimates for implementation of the master plan. The Parks and Recreation Board is interested in learning what Council is interested in doing with respect to these items.

Craig stated that the joint meeting is a start of the budget process. In addition to capital expenditures, the topics will include special events. He suggests estimating what funding would be requested of the Village for events in the park whether or not they are sponsored by the Board to assure that money is available in the budget for these events. Pasieka will prepare this report.

There was discussion of the line under the funding topic, "Parks and Recreation authorization to solicit funds". It was indicated that raising money for park improvements is a mandate of the Resolution to create a Parks and Recreation Board. A copy of that Resolution will be distributed at the joint meeting to make everyone aware of the responsibilities of this Board.

Pasieka stated that he has discussed the items requested for the 1999-2000 Special Events budget with Schmitt. They estimated the cost to the Village of the various special events including the Memorial Day Carnival (\$1,500), the Halloween Hoot (\$1,500), Winter Family Fun Day (\$1,000), support for the Easter Egg Hunt (\$500), Art in the Hills (\$1,500), and four concerts in the park (\$6,000). The cost of having Comeau's equipment available for use in the Rouge River Clean Up was estimated at \$2,000. Park clean up is budgeted at \$750. An amount of \$1,250 was added to be used at the discretion of Council. The recommended budget for 1999/2000 for community action special events is \$16,000.

Pasieka stated that this budget reflects that there are more things going on in the park that will require spending money. There is more maintenance in the park by the DPW. This is a realistic number. It was the consensus that the special events budget should be discussed at the joint meeting.

Brink questioned the goal of the joint meeting. Craig stated that the Parks and Recreation Board brings up what it wants to do in the next year to start a groundswell of Council support for those

projects. It is the beginning of a budgetary process where you agree with items and dollars so that the budget can be prepared for the next fiscal year.

Craig stated that Council member Mooney mentioned that he will not be able to attend the joint meeting with the Parks and Recreation Board. He has expressed the concern that if Pat Greening or the other volunteers that make things happen leave the Village, the only Parks and Recreation sponsored special event is the winter fun day. He suggested the possibility of "institutionalizing" these programs so that these events don't leave the community with the people who have been organizing them. He questions whether this should be a topic for the joint meeting.

There was some discussion on this matter. Brink agrees that someone else should be able to pick up an event. It was questioned whether people would be discouraged from creativity if the events were institutionalized.

Greening stated that her concern has been that the community events she planned would take too much of the Parks and Recreation budget. She has pursued outside funding for that reason.

Craig's view is that an event sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Board will not cease if there is no outside funding available one year. However, these types of events are the first things to be cut from the budget if there is a shortfall.

It was suggested that the budget request for the special events specify that the Village only provides a portion of the total cost of the event. Council should be aware of the cost of the event and what the Village is being asked to contribute.

The item on urban reforestation was discussed. The Parks and Recreation Board is compiling information in preparation of a proposal to Council for a tree planting program for the Village rights-of-way. The idea is to obtain a group price on trees for right-of-way planting by residents. Schmitt stated that the Board will need Council support if it is going to proceed with this program.

#### **ADMINISTRATION COMMENTS**

Pasieka informed Board members of a program sponsored by SOCWA entitled "Trees in the Urban Landscape" that will be held in Lathrup Village on Tuesday, January 26. It is a program to make people aware that urban reforestation is going on in a number of communities.

Pasieka reported on the status of the concerts in the park this summer. The showmobile has been reserved for the four concert dates. The dates are the fourth Sunday of the months of May, June, July and August. Concerts will start at 4 p.m. and are approximately two hours long. Two of the four entertainers have been contacted and have agreed to perform. The Groves High School Jazz Ensemble and Choir will perform at the first concert in May. A stipend of \$500 has been requested to cover their costs. The second concert will feature the Birmingham Concert Band playing patriotic music at the end of June. Their stipend will be \$600 this year.

Pasieka has a demo tape and the names of three or four potential groups that can be contacted for the two final concerts with fees ranging from \$600-\$1,000. The selection will be made by administration if there is no Board input.

Pasieka mentioned there could be discussion with Council about pursuing fund raising events like the auction for a picnic lunch that was organized last year to offset the cost of the concerts. There is always an interest in involving more people with the park and special events.

Schmitt explained that last May Council gave this Board direction to come up with a priority list and cost estimates on park improvements and provide it to the Finance Committee for their August meeting. This list was completed in July. Before it got to the Finance Committee, there was a major storm and flooding on the east side of the Village and a decision was made not to present this to the Finance Committee.

### **BOARD COMMENTS**

Cobleigh stated that a personal friend of his heads the largest paving company in the state of Michigan. He may be able to get a substantial discount if the Village decides to pave the parking lot in Beverly Park.

Harmon commented that Pasieka gave him information from another tree vendor with comparable prices. He will look into this further. Harmon is pleased to hear that there may be interest in becoming involved in the Rouge River clean up effort.

Schmitt thought that the Winter Family Fun Day worked out spectacularly. Council and administration deserve some credit and thanks from the Board for their participation. Schmitt mentioned that the parking lot is in bad shape and it stays about an inch deep in mud from two to four months a year when it is wet.

Brink thanked Pasieka for his support at the winter event in the park and for being the photographer.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

**Phillip Schmitt, Chairperson  
Parks and Recreation Board**

**Ellen E. Marshall  
Village Clerk**