



Rochester Hills Minutes

1000 Rochester Hills Dr
Rochester Hills, MI 48309
(248) 656-4600
Home Page:
www.rochesterhills.org

Green Space Advisory Board

Chairperson Dahlvin Peterson, Vice Chairperson Darlene Janulis

Members: Peter Beightol, Gerald Carvey, Tim Gauthier, Jayson Graves, Donald Price, Julia Rodriguez, Terry Stephens

Council Member Susan Bowyer Ph.D.

Youth Representatives: Mallory Boyd, Ramona Johnson and Joshua Morgan

Tuesday, February 28, 2017

6:00 PM

1000 Rochester Hills Drive

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Dahlvin Peterson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present 6 - Tim Gauthier, Darlene Janulis, Dahlvin Peterson, Donald Price, Julia Rodriguez and Terry Stephens

Excused 2 - Peter Beightol and Gerald Carvey

Absent 1 - Jayson Graves

Non-voting members present: Ken Elwert, Lance DeVoe (arrived 6:02 p.m.), Susan M. Bowyer, Ph.D., Mallory Boyd, Ramona Johnson

Non-voting members absent: Joshua Morgan

Others present: Audrey Weber, Sandra Niks (arrived 6:50 p.m.)

Board Members Beightol and Carvey provided notice that they would be unable to attend and asked to be excused.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2017-0047 Regular Meeting - January 24, 2017

Attachments: [Resolution 2017-0047 1-24-17 Minutes.pdf](#)
[GSAB Meeting Minutes 1-24-17 Draft.pdf](#)

**A motion was made by Gauthier, seconded by Price, that this matter be Approved.
The motion carried by the following vote:**

Aye 6 - Gauthier, Janulis, Peterson, Price, Rodriguez and Stephens

Excused 2 - Beightol and Carvey

Absent 1 - Graves

Resolved that the Green Space Advisory Board hereby approves the minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 24, 2017 as presented.

Member Graves arrived at 6:02 p.m.

Lance DeVoe arrived at 6:02 p.m.

Present 7 - Tim Gauthier, Jayson Graves, Darlene Janulis, Dahlvin Peterson, Donald Price, Julia Rodriguez and Terry Stephens

Excused 2 - Peter Beightol and Gerald Carvey

STAFF REPORT

Director Elwert announced that Maureen Nakonek, staff support for the Green Space Advisory Board (GSAB), had taken a full-time position with the Rochester Community School District. He explained that the Clerk's Office will be providing support through the transition. He announced that Museum Staff Assistant Patrick Endres who previously assisted the GSAB with events in a volunteer role has accepted a full-time position with West Bloomfield as their Naturalist. He noted that both these individuals left for great professional opportunities and will be missed.

Director Elwert reported that DPS Staff have been reviewing drainage problems that have been occurring in the parking lot of Lifetime Fitness. He noted that the City's DPS staff have identified some deficiencies that they have asked Lifetime to correct; and he stated that if results are not shown within a reasonable time, Code Enforcement staff will be asked to intervene. He commented that he will keep the GSAB updated on the issue.

Park Ranger DeVoe reported that Niswander Environmental staff have been doing a significant amount of work at both the White and Harding properties. He commented that the Harding Property should look good for the Discovery Hike, noting that things are beginning to green up approximately three weeks ahead of normal weather this time of year.

Director Elwert reported that the 1st Quarter Budget Amendments were approved by City Council last night, which included a transfer of \$700,000 from the Green Space Operating Fund to the Green Space Perpetual Trust Fund. He pointed out that the transfer will now allow the monies to earn approximately five percent interest per year rather than the 0.25 percent it previously earned. He explained that should a property come available for purchase, funds could be pulled out of the Trust, and paid back to the Trust over time. He noted that the interest earnings could represent another potential project to be undertaken each year.

Member Carvey questioned how much would be remaining in the Operational budget after the transfer.

Park Ranger DeVoe responded that it would leave around \$300,000 to \$400,000.

Dr. Bowyer noted that once the Ruby Property costs have been paid for and closed out, there could be funding remaining for the Six Rivers property acquisition.

Director Elwert pointed out that the funds for Niswander Environmental and any other incidentals for the properties will come out of the Operating Fund. He reported that the Ruby Property is in the hands of the Building Department, where more detailed environmental studies on the house and any potential storage tanks are being undertaken. He commented that no major problems are expected to be encountered, and the cost for any studies are expected to come in under budget. He noted that demolition of the house is slated for sometime late Spring. He mentioned that the previous owners have requested to be notified when demolition would be taking place, and he commented that the Fire Department is considering whether the home could be used for training prior to demolition. He stated that Park Ranger DeVoe is working with staff to determine whether there might be a different way developed to enter the property that would preserve the two large oaks on either side of the driveway.

COMMUNICATIONS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Rochester Hills Government Youth Council Representative Audrey Weber introduced herself and stated that she wished to be assigned to the GSAB for next year. She noted that she is a Junior at Rochester High School and commented that she has always been very interested in the Parks and Recreation Department.

GSAB members welcomed Ms. Weber and briefly introduced themselves to her.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Member Graves provided an update for the GSAB Discovery Hike. He distributed a draft of a flyer promoting the walk.

It was determined that the flyer would be sent out electronically to everyone to be distributed and shared via their social media pages. Director Elwert commented that he might be able to update the flyer with additional photographs; however, anyone could share the flyer at this point to get the information out sooner.

Dr. Bowyer suggested including a QR code that would give directions to the start of the Hike.

Director Elwert noted that A-Frame signage would be used to direct attendees to the back of the professional buildings at 940 West Avon. He noted that he and Park Ranger DeVoe would take care of contacting the property owner to let them know of the intention to utilize the parking lot that day.

Member Graves questioned whether anyone had an electronically-editable version of the "I Spy" flyer to be distributed during the Hike.

Park Ranger DeVoe responded that he might be able to locate one.

Discussion ensued regarding utilizing the Rochester Hills Government Youth Council (RHGYC) to help with events. Park Ranger DeVoe stated that he would be attending the RHGYC's March 9th meeting to discuss what their role could be.

Director Elwert suggested that they could be used as docents along the trail to help move attendees from the parking lot to the Harding Property to meet the Niswander representatives, and could provide some information as they walked.

Park Ranger DeVoe noted that he would schedule a time some afternoon prior to the walk to meet with RHGYC members who would be participating at the property.

It was suggested that depending on how many RHGYC members were able to participate, they could be scheduled in shifts to allow for more students to be involved.

Dr. Bowyer questioned whether the Mayor's Office had been approached regarding providing some of the souvenir tree pens for giveaways.

Additional details of the walk plans were discussed, including whether to have GSAB members at assigned locations and where Niswander staff would be stationed. It was mentioned that GSAB members could wear something to identify themselves, and Park Ranger DeVoe noted that he could bring reflective green vests that each member could wear.

Member Janulis reported that she contacted both school districts to have the event placed on their school calendars.

Audrey Webber stated that she would publicize the event with over 100 members of her school's Green Club.

2017-0015 Appointments to GSAB Sub-committees for 2017

Attachments: [2017 Sub-committee members.pdf](#)
[Resolution.pdf](#)

Chairperson Peterson noted that there have been discussions about the possibility of eliminating the various existing subcommittees and forming committees as ideas and activities present themselves. He stated that most of the subcommittees have not been active recently and have had no reports to present to the GSAB. He commented that this would allow the various board members to utilize their talents on various projects as they arise. He added that the GSAB's structure and purpose has changed, and has moved from grading properties and developing a Natural Features Inventory to now undertaking projects on the various City properties.

Member Price commented that temporary committees could be formed based on the current needs of the GSAB, allowing these committees to be more project-based or along the lines of maintenance and education.

Member Rodriguez suggested that a work team rather than a standing committee be formed for the various interests.

Member Graves noted that a project such as the Discovery Hike would warrant more of a permanent committee. He commented that this could be under the topic of communication and education.

Discussion ensued whether to eliminate standing committees altogether and form project committees as needed, or to keep some subcommittees. It was noted that having projects rather than standing committees would avoid having members assigned to one subcommittee rather than being able to work on another.

Member Janulis stated that Robert's Rules would suggest that subcommittees should be temporary.

Director Elwert noted that he would suggest that a more formal structure should be maintained to allow staff to better support the Board. He commented that a lack of structure could hinder staff from keeping abreast of the various projects and the support needed. He stated that while this might not happen with the GSAB group, it is a risk of organizations that lack structure.

Member Graves commented that having a specific subcommittee helped him in knowing who to speak with.

Chairperson Peterson mentioned that perhaps individual subcommittees could be reviewed, noting that the Property Nominations and Acquisitions Subcommittee is no longer active, and Member Gauthier's talents could be utilized in a different manner.

Member Graves noted that the current subcommittee structure was set up to have less than five members and cautioned that the GSAB members had to be careful about having quorums.

Director Elwert commented that he would confirm that a project that is a volunteer function and has no formal structure would not fall under a subcommittee function.

Member Janulis stressed that a project would not include any voting. She noted that any decision making would come to the board for a vote.

After additional discussion, Director Elwert stated that he would check with the structure of the GSAB bylaws and review the history of why the subcommittees were created. He commented that there may be a reason to maintain a particular subcommittee. He noted that a vote on whether to dissolve the subcommittees could be taken at the next meeting.

Chairperson Peterson stated that the topic would be brought back to the board next month along with a possible motion.

2008-0130 GSAB Administrative & Strategic Sub-Committee

No report.

2015-0503 Concept plans for individual Green Space properties.

No report.

2008-0131 GSAB Communication, Promotion & Education Sub-Committee

No report.

2008-0132 GSAB Property Nominations & Acquisitions Sub-Committee

No report.

2008-0133 GSAB Stewardship & Advocacy Sub-Committee

No report.

NEW BUSINESS

Director Elwert requested that GSAB members share any ideas they had for specific projects that they may have a passion for that they would like to see the GSAB consider.

Member Graves suggested developing signage for Green Space properties.

Member Gauthier suggested that more community education and engagement in volunteerism. He mentioned that volunteer work days have typically been scheduled in spring and fall, and he commented that it would be helpful to reach out to more school groups or master gardening organizations. He also suggested that efforts to seek out grants for programs to be accomplished, such as removing invasives or engaging the community could be a valuable component.

Chairperson Peterson commented that community involvement could entail a larger project as there are PTA organizations, church earth ministries and a number of schools that could be approached. He mentioned that Niswander Environmental was going to develop age-appropriate activities that could be geared to various groups. He mentioned garlic mustard pulls that require volunteer manpower.

Member Stephens commented that this is a valid argument for the elimination of subcommittees, as she would be willing to work on more than just the subcommittee she has been assigned to. She noted that there are thousands of grants that are potentially available that could be brought to the GSAB's attention.

Director Elwert suggested that while grants could be identified, the application

process is typically a staff function as it entails various supporting materials, contract signing or a variety of engineering or other studies that would need to accompany any application.

Dr. Bowyer mentioned that she would be taking a grant writing course. She stated that she prepares grant applications as a part of her research position.

RHGYC Member Ramona Johnson questioned whether the date for a garlic mustard pull had been set.

Park Ranger DeVoe responded that it would depend on when the frost comes out of the ground. He noted that with the warm weather, things seem to be about three weeks ahead of the average year. He stated that he would try to have a date set before he attends the RHGYC meeting and suggested that May 6 might be an option. He noted that 20 to 30 volunteers would make a difference.

Chairperson Peterson suggested that flyers for a garlic mustard pull could be distributed at the Discovery Hike.

*(Mallory Boyd left at 7:00 p.m.)
(Julia Rodriguez left at 7:02 p.m.)*

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Sandra Niks mentioned that the Meadow Brook Naturals is a new group put together by Meadow Brook Hall that will be cleaning up the woods on the property in order to allow for the planting of new trees. She offered that anyone interested in helping could come to the Meadow Brook Hall staff entrance this coming Thursday morning at 9 a.m. She stated that the group is preparing for what will become an annual Arbor Day event. The event will feature a few brief speakers.

Director Elwert stated that he mentioned the event to the City's Forestry Manager in the event that he might be interested in a partnership.

Dr. Bowyer suggested that concept plans could be developed for the individual Green Space properties which could be treated as individual projects that members could be involved in.

Director Elwert commented that the GSAB could also provide recommendations or directions to staff, and as funding and time allows plans could be developed to be presented to the group.

Chairperson Peterson noted that these are good points for discussion for the March meeting. He commented that earlier in the meeting it was suggested that the Board could develop goals and objectives for what it would like to accomplish in the future.

NEXT MEETING DATE

- Tuesday, March 28, 2017, 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Chairperson Peterson adjourned the meeting at 7:12 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Mary Jo Pachla.

Minutes were approved as presented at the April 25, 2017 Regular Green Space Advisory Board Meeting.

Dahlvin Peterson, Chairperson