

**ONEKAMA VILLAGE AND TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY  
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

July 17, 2014

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At 8:02 a.m. on Thursday, July 17, 2014, Co-Chairperson Jon Phillips opened the Onekama Village and Township Community Parks and Recreation Committee regular monthly meeting in the Onekama Township Hall. Agendas were distributed. Other Committee members present were Howard Hughes, co-chairperson; Mary Lou Millard, vice chairperson; Tom Gerhardt, secretary-treasurer; Roger Burger; Ken Franklin; Sally Koon; Paul Mueller; and Mary Reed.

**Secretary-Treasurer's Report**—Co-Chairperson Howard Hughes moved and Koon seconded that the **minutes of the June 19, 2014, meeting be approved. Roger Burger said that they need to be amended to include that there was a discussion on the Onekama web site. The motion carried with this amendment.**

**Gerhardt said that the Parks minutes are being sent to the web site by Millard, who is one of the two persons who can submit material to it from Onekama Township. He also said that to find the Five-Year Plan for parks and recreation, you have to enter "5 year plan" under "search," which hides it. Burger said that there should be a special section for parks and recreation. Millard said she would call the web site to see what could be done to make it easier to find parks and recreation items.**

Secretary-Treasurer Gerhardt presented the **financial report for the North Point Park Fund**. The bank balance was \$18,738.76 on June 1, 2014; and with no activity, the balance **remained at \$18,738.76 on June 30, 2014**. The checkbook balance was the same amount. The Township has not deposited the extra \$1,000 for the well to the North Point Park Fund, which the Board had voted at its May 6 meeting to accompany the \$8,000 previously deposited.

There was **no report for the Township's General Fund 2014-2015 Budget for Recreation/Parks Activities, other than \$25,000 was included on April 1 at the beginning of the 2014-2015 Township fiscal year, along with one-half of the anticipated grant match for Langland Park (\$43,500).**

Gerhardt asked if the Township Board had **made a decision to purchase Lots 12-18, Block 70, in Portage Park Addition (11-290-288-00), which adjoin lots in Portage Wetlands Park. Reed said that she had asked Township Clerk Helen Mathieu about this, and she said that the Board had acted favorably on this purchase.** The property had been seized by the Manistee County treasurer for nonpayment of taxes.

**Tree Subcommittee**—Mueller, chairperson of the Tree Subcommittee, reported that he had **talked with Township Supervisor David Meister about an irrigation system for trees in North Point Park.** Further contact is to be made with a person who has designed these systems that release a small amount of water through plastic tubes bringing it to the trees. Nothing can be done until the well at North Point Park is in operation.

**Explore the Shores Subcommittee**—Phillips said that the Explore the Shores Subcommittee had met on July 8 **to organize a dedication for the shoreline improvements at the Onekama Village Park. The dedication is to be at the Village Park, 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, August 2, during Onekama Days.** Burger said that the final grading has been done and that the playground equipment removed for the project has been reinstalled. Areas are being fenced to promote the growth of grass. The Peron steps are finished, and there will be clean beach sand moved into the area by the water. Mobi mats are to be installed.

**Explore the Shores is to meet again on Tuesday, July 22, 2014, 10 a.m., at Farr Center.**

**Park Watchers**—Co-Chairperson Hughes reported that Skip and Betsy Bergquist, who live across from the **North Point Park** parking lot, have donated two birdhouses. Hughes said that North Point Park looks great! Roger Burger asked if the Paldans were given permission to mow the edges of the asphalt trail in North Point Park, for which they volunteered at the last Parks meeting. Phillips said that they were given permission and are doing the work.

Hughes went on to say that signs prohibiting the cutting of trees are being prepared for **Glen Park.** Canfield Climbing Clippers are preparing an estimate for tree work in Glen Park. The repainting of the directional sign for Glen Park at the corner of Main Street (M-22) and Fourth Avenue was discussed. It was decided that the repainting of the present sign would not last long. Phillips was going to see what Amor Sign of Manistee could offer.

A second sign for the firerings is being made for **Langland Park.** There is some moving of the firerings, but they have confined the charred remains to keep them from spreading all over the beach. Someone does need to be hired to clean them out. Gerhardt mentioned John Nugent of Nugent Maintenance, Benzonia, does the ones at the Sunset House.

Hughes said that something should be done about planning and seeking grant money for **Portage Wetlands Park.** Tim Ervin had mentioned this at the last Parks meeting. Phillips said that the action should start with the Explore the Shores Subcommittee.

Reed reported that Vicky Smith of Wetlands and Wildlife has recently **surveyed the parks in Onekama Village and Township for invasive species present and will treat them.**

**Portage Lake Watershed Forever**—Reed reminded the Committee about the series of programs being presented by the Portage Lake Watershed Forever, “Tuesdays with Water,” July 15-August 19, 2014, 5-7 p.m., in Farr Center. The series features what you should know about living with, near, or on Portage Lake. The next program on July 22 is “Invasive Species & Fishing,” presented by Mark Tonnello, MI Fisheries; Herb Lenon, PhD Fisheries Biologist; and Kristin Sheffield, Manistee County Aquatic Invasive Species/Watershed Coordinator.

Participants are **monitoring the depth of the water in streams** feeding into Portage Lake. The program, CrowdHydrology, operates with readings reported on cell phones. The Watershed is trying to involve younger people who text on cell phones. There are twenty-two streams feeding into Portage Lake. The **Watershed fundraiser is Saturday, July 26, at the Portage Point Inn.** Reed, (231) 889-3781, can be contacted for more information. People are needed for the **Onekama Days Parade entry about boat washing.**

**Parks Appreciation Day—August 2, 2014, 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., is Parks Appreciation Day at the North Point Park parking lot.** Phillips said that there is nothing this year for youngsters, as no one would handle this activity when it was discussed at the last meeting. Koon said that maybe this activity should be every other year.

**Langland Park Sand Removal and Signs**—The application for sand removal at Langland Park is being prepared by Rudolph Milasich, who is consulting with another attorney who has handled legal matters involved with sand dunes. The Corps of Engineers is **supposed to place rip tide signs at Langland Park.** Reed said that **signs calling for no wake** are still needed along the Channel walls.

**1930 Pierhead Light**—Phillips reported that he, Howard Hughes, Millard, Gerhardt, and Jim Mrozinski had met on July 15 about the 1930 Pierhead Light wiring, plaque, and dedication. For the Pierhead Light, \$2,350 has now been donated. Donors include: Reverend Alec Brooks, Jack and Joyce Fischer, Paul and Ruth Anne Hickman, Lee and Lisa Nordloh, Bill and Babs Vaughan, Barbara Forwood, Sally Wood, Ralph and Shirley Baker, Ted Marty, the Portage Lake Garden Club, the Portage Point Summer Resort Corporation, and Gary Workman. An anonymous donation of \$50 for the 1930 Pierhead Light was reported at the July 18, 2013, Parks meeting. This has not been included in the total.

Gerhardt said that Mrozinski had found several sources for **bronze plaques**; he selected the one with the lowest prices—International Bronze of Albertson, New York. He suggested an 18-inch x 16-inch plaque. The text for the plaque had been adopted by the Harbor Commission; it had been written by Gerhardt for Bob Bennett to submit to a publication about lighthouses:

## **“The Portage Lake-Lake Michigan Channel 1930 North Pierhead Light**

The Portage Lake-Lake Michigan Channel was first dug in 1871, connecting Portage Lake in Onekama Township, Manistee County, Michigan, with Lake Michigan. A project to build a harbor of refuge at Portage Lake, of which the Channel would be a part, was adopted in 1879 by the United States Government.

The first light at the Channel was erected in 1891 at the head of the north pier. It was a wooden structure lighted with kerosene. Captain John Langland was the keeper of the light until 1917, when the wooden light was automated and lighted with acetylene gas. In 1930, the wooden structure was replaced with a steel skeleton tower, with a fuel bunker for its acetylene tanks at its base.

The steel skeleton tower was removed in 1985 and replaced with a steel cylinder lighted by solar power. The 1930 light was acquired by the Voyager's Cove Marina at 43 Arthur Street in Manistee, where it remained until 1997, when the Marina was demolished. The Portage Lake Association then purchased the light, sandblasted and painted it with primer, and stored it while some funds were raised and saved to erect it once more.

With additional funding from Onekama Township and donations, the Township's Portage Lake Harbor Commission, chaired by Jim Mrozinski, spearheaded the effort that led to the light's erection on July 15, 2011, at the Michigan Natural Resources Launch Site, Lake Park and West Fairway, by Portage Lake.”

Millard wanted a rope border on the plaque. It was decided it should be mounted on an existing stone at the site. Gerhardt submitted the text, and asked for a design and quote. [This came through after the meeting; the price was just \$3 more than in the 2012 brochure--\$759, with a 10 percent discount if ordered before the end of July. The shipping, which is within three weeks of the order, is free. But, the entire text was not there and the type was not right. Another design was requested.]

Phillips explained that he has had **difficulty reaching the Consumers Power field representative, who decides where the meter is to be and how it is to be placed for the Pierhead Light. This determination should be made at the same time for the North Point Park well.** The previous man, with whom contact was made last winter, has been transferred. Phillips is to know Monday when the replacement can meet about the two projects.

Solar power was mentioned. Gerhardt said that is fine if the panel could be placed in an area remote from the Light, because it does not belong near or on an historic structure.

**Plans for the dedication** include it being at dusk on Labor Day weekend, if the lighting and plaque are in place. Gerhardt said that he would do an historical booklet on the Light and the Channel, which would include the names of the donors and could be given to them and those attending the dedication. The booklet would be similar to the one done for Glen Springs in 2012. Koon had figured that 250 books would cost \$275.

Millard mentioned that Mrozinski had sent material in the Harbor Commission minutes that could be included in the booklet.

**Wiffle Ball**—Phillips took this opportunity to **recognize Ken Franklin and his wife, Jewelee, as the PLA Citizens of the Year for 2014.** Ken Franklin had flyers for the **introduction of Wiffle Ball to Onekama on Saturday, August 2, 3 p.m., on the field next to the Onekama School Tennis Courts, an event which the Community Parks and Recreation Committee is sponsoring.**

He was wondering how they could be distributed. It was suggested that they be available at events during Onekama Days, including Parks Appreciation Day. The flyer also is to be used as a poster before Onekama Days. Millard will make copies on color paper after the meeting. Tom Koon, Thomas Koon, and Howard Hughes are helping with the Wiffle Ball event.

**Onekama Consolidated Schools**—Koon reported the **current activities at the Onekama School.** T Ball is wrapping up, and a camp has been scheduled for football. Leann Burger is publicizing the fall recreation program with brochures. Summer school is ending. Koon invited people to let the School know about new programs in which they would want to participate. There also is need for mentors at the School.

**School Board candidates must file by July 22; there are four seats open now for the Board of the Onekama Consolidated Schools.**

**Onekama Village Parks**—Roger Burger reported that several of the **Village Council members at their regular monthly meeting last night stated that they want notification of events to be held in the Park, such as those sponsored by the Lions, Portage Lake Association, and the Community Parks and Recreation Committee,** so the events can be scheduled to prevent conflicts.

**Portage Lake Association**—Mueller said that the **traditional launch site for the Onekama Days Fireworks sponsored by the Portage Lake Association and the Lions cannot be used because the road leading to it off of Easy Street is flooded.** It is hoped to have them launched at Feldhak Park; the clerk is checking into this with the Feldhak family.

**Next Meeting and Adjournment**—The Community Parks and Recreation meeting for July 17, 2014, adjourned at 9:36 a.m. The next regular Committee meeting is on Thursday, August 21, 2014, at 8:00 a.m., in the Onekama Township Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom H. Gerhardt, Secretary-Treasurer

