

Meeting Minutes
Cascade Charter Township
Pathways Committee
Thursday, September 1, 2022
10:00 am
5920 Tahoe Dr

ARTICLE 1. Manager Swayze called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

Members Present: Jeff Coffey, John Driscoll, Kris Taylor, Mike Reese, Rik Brown, Scott Rissi, Supervisor Grace Lesperance, Manager Ben Swayze, Building and Grounds Supervisor Jim MacDonald, Planning Director Brian Hilbrands, and Mgmt Office Admin Assistant Jessica Stine
Members Absent: None

ARTICLE 2. Approve the current Agenda

Motion was made by Member Brown to approve the current Agenda. Supported by Member Rissi. Motion carried 7 to 0.

ARTICLE 3. Acknowledge visitors and those wishing to speak to non-agenda items.

Ginny Wanty, Parks Committee Chair, spoke on the Grand River Greenway Project. This project will connect the lighthouse and Millennium Park, through Kent County Trails, with the Lowell trails system. There will be a summit on September 28th to talk about funding for this project and how connecting municipalities can collaborate.

ARTICLE 4. Regular Meeting Schedule

Meetings will be held on the first Thursday of the month at 10:00am at the Township office. Meetings will be approximately an hour and a half long.

ARTICLE 5. Pathway Committee By-Laws

Manager Swayze distributed the Parks Committee by-laws as a starting point for creating the Pathways Committee by-laws. Members will be emailed a copy of the by-laws that the Parks Committee is in process of amending before the next meeting. The Pathways Committee will begin to develop their own by-laws at the October meeting.

ARTICLE 6. Strategic Priorities

Member Reese shared information about the Park's Committee Master Plan and said that they will be submitting a draft of the Master Plan to the Township Board in September. This Master Plan will help guide the committee's priorities. The Parks Committee recently recommended the purchase of the Wycliffe property which is set to become a trailhead to access the Cascade trail system. Member Reese will give an update on the parks plan at the next meeting.

ARTICLE 7. Financial Information

Cascade pathways are funded through a dedicated millage of .35 mils, passed in 2018 to extend through 2027 inclusive. The committee will take part in determining the appropriate requests for future millage rates. There are also DNR, MDOT, and MDBC grants available for 'alternative transportation,' such as non-motorized pathways. Members requested the detailed itemization of Pathways funds and the budget projections from the pathway's millage, through to 2028.

ARTICLE 8. Maintenance Concerns

The Township's new engineer will be starting in the next few weeks and one of their first projects will be to ride the trails and determine their maintenance needs. Members requested a maintenance itemization from the last two years, this year, and what is proposed for 2023. Committee Members will be invited to ride along on the trail inspection. Members are also able to submit their suggested areas needing improvement to Admin Assistant Stine to be compiled for the next meeting.

ARTICLE 9. Specific Projects

The committee talked about the proposed pedestrian pathway over the Thornapple River. The Township is currently looking to expand the bridge on each side of the roadway with a much more affordable plan than previously proposed designs. The Township has also pledged to work with the Kent County Road Commission on a small pathway extension on North Cascade Rd, Kenrob, and 36th St. The Road Commission is redoing part of the road in that area and will add in that path at the same time, enhancing pedestrian access on the bridge. Manager Swayze will speak with the Road Commission to see if they will be able to schedule the bridge expansion for spring of 2023. Member Coffey suggested raising the rails on the edge of the bridge for the purposes of safety; bikers can easily fall over the edge at the rail's current height.

ARTICLE 10. Any Other Business

The committee proposed a dedicated pathways email address. Admin Assistant Stine will check on this for the next meeting.

ARTICLE 11. Adjournment

Motion was made by Member Rissi to adjourn. Supported by Member Brown. Motion carried 7 to 0. The meeting was adjourned at 11:34am.

Approved by the Pathways Committee – October 6, 2022