

NORTHWEST OTTAWA RECREATION AUTHORITY

Grand Haven Area Public Schools

1415 Beechtree Street, Grand Haven, MI 49417
Phone: 616.850.5125 Fax: 616.850.5127 nora.ghaps.org

SPECIAL NORA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Date: August 28, 2014 **Time:** 5:30 P.M. **Location:** 1415 Beechtree St., Grand Haven

1. Call to order: Chairperson Craig Bessinger - 5:30pm
2. Present: Karl French, Grand Haven Twp. Mary Jane Belter, Grand Haven Twp.
 Kathy Kuck, Robinson Twp.
 Mike Fritz, Grand Haven Bill Hunter, Grand Haven
 Scott Blease, Ferrysburg Craig Bessinger, Ferrysburg
 Joanne Query, GHAPS

Absent: Tracy Mulligan, Robinson Twp

Also Present: Jill Vander Stel, NORA Coordinator
 Liza Dora, NORA Assistant

3. Approval of Meeting Agenda Motion by Blease, second by Fritz. Approved unanimously.
4. New Business
 - A. NORA Millage Planning- Pam Blough
 1. Building Authority – Blough explained the definition of a Building Authority and that there are a variety of ways it can work. She then handed out a diagram to show a sample of one option. She explained that the Building Authority would be completely separate from NORA and have a stand-alone board. It would also be able to take on debt and additional groups would be able to use the Building Authority for that same thing.

Fritz has continued discussions about a Building Authority with Grand Haven City Manager McGinnis and then explained to the board that a Building Authority could issue bonds to each municipality that is part of said authority. That bond debt would be held at the municipalities. Development of a Building Authority includes completion of the Articles of Incorporation that would have to pass in all communities to work. This is the same process that was done to become a Recreation Authority. He suggested setting up a committee for land acquisition to include a realtor. That real estate committee could then determine how much land we need, what land is available, or what land may become available in the future. Fritz noted that Grand Haven Charter Twp. and Robinson Twp. should be part of this committee with some area realtors as they have the largest amount of possible property available. He stated that right now everyone has an opinion of what is available, but we really need a realtor to help find the property. The real estate committee needs to be formed first to see what we need and then start the Building Authority second, stated Fritz. Query added that this is a very constructive step and has momentum. French felt that the Building Authority needs to be established prior to looking for property with a realtor to avoid any undermining of the information. Vander Stel noted that our research shows that we would need 80-100 acres of land to build the Recreation Complex that is needed in our area. Blough mentioned that we may be able to piece the property pieces together over years to make the property large

enough to fit our needs. Kuck mentioned a 100 acre tract that might be available in Robinson Township, but wouldn't allow us to expand. Vander Stel reminded board that it is difficult to be all things to all people. We may not be able to meet every need at this time, but we've assessed the current issue of lack of facility space (Fields and gymnasiums) and it doesn't have to be all located in one place. Yet, that would be the best option. Hunter suggested that the interested municipalities need a joint resolution to get everyone on board to form the Building Authority. This is the process as a Recreation Authority and then we could build without a millage. Then after it's built the Recreation Authority can ask for a millage to bond it to run the complex and expand it with a lease to the Building Authority. Bessinger asked Blough and Vander Stel to draft a joint resolution for the Building Authority. Blough also reminded the board that there is grant trust fund money available through the MNRTF and that those grants are due by April 1st. French asked if there are resources available to acquire land that might come available and don't want it to get away. Blough stated there are foundations that are willing to buy land and hold for a time for projects that they are backing. Bessinger suggested getting land parcel book and look at all the parcels and see what we know about them. French reminded the board about the Ottawa County GIS program you can look up land online.

2. Planning Time Line – Blough distributed a proposed timeline that identifies what we should be doing right now and lays out what needs to be done. Develop resolution for September meeting, get it all signed by all municipalities, and have it back for the October meeting.

3. YMCA Collaboration - Blough stated she is drafting a letter of understanding and Ron Bultje, Scholtent Fant Attorney and YMCA Board member is reviewing for legalities. Blough stated that the YMCA and NORA have pretty much the same needs. Fritz stated that by having NORA and YMCA working together it may entice other groups to be a part of this effort as well. French asked the question, "How do we prime the conversation to Spring Lake Village and Spring Lake Twp.?" We want to ask for their support and suggested meeting with Spring Lake to show what we are doing and that we are working toward a joint resolution. French doesn't want to see the same thing happen as when the concept of CARA came out by not keeping everyone in the loop. Everyone is in agreement that we need to ask all area communities to listen to what we are thinking of doing including Crockery Township, Port Sheldon Township, and Spring Lake Township. Fritz recommends first getting the letter of understanding with the YMCA and then meet with the other area communities to formulate the resolution.

5. Old Business - none

6. Public Comments - It was asked if results from LIAA study are available yet. Blough stated that it is not as of tonight.

7. Next Scheduled Meeting: September 25, 2014, 5:30 P.M. at the ESC

8. Adjournment 6:16pm

Submitted by Liza Dora, NORA Assistant
Jill Vander Stel, NORA Coordinator

Approval Minutes Date: _____

NORA Board of Trustee Secretary Signature: _____