

**MINUTES  
CITY OF BRIDGMAN/LAKE CHARTER TOWNSHIP  
JOINT MEETING**

**Monday, March 29, 2021**

*Electronic meeting via zoom, per Governor Whitmer's Order*

Recording:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/-](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/-F3WATM9ER4YfEa4QWUsGzje98HLmQ8wzuxVZunsGm5g5B9Xvxa3Nj7uDNmnb9f1.VBqi6iSEeefubEub)

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**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to Order at 6:30 p.m.

Clerk Payne called the roll. Representatives from Lake Township Board included John Gast, Gloria Payne, Robert Clark, Mike Essig, Zachary Carson, Nancy Mensinger and John Wilk.

Clerk Holm called the roll. Representatives from the Bridgman City Council included Vince Rose, Jan Trapani, Stacy Stine, Pam Hahaj, John Bonkoske and Sam Stine. Georgia Gipson was absent.

Forty-seven visitors were present via Zoom.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The pledge of allegiance was led by Nora Smith, 4<sup>th</sup> grader at Bridgman Elementary School, Bridgman, Michigan.

Supervisor Gast read the meeting procedure.

**MINUTES AUGUST 31, 2020**

Supervisor Gast asked if there were any corrections to the City of Bridgman/Lake Charter Township August 31, 2020 joint meeting minutes. There were none. The minutes were placed on file.

**BRIDGMAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Supervisor Gast turned the floor over to Shane Peters, Bridgman Public Schools Superintendent. Mr. Peters reported that they are in week 29 of in person instruction, thanks to staff and students adhering to the guidelines.

There are needs that need to be met regarding mental health, which Berrien County lacks in meeting those needs.

Graduation will be held on June 6, 2021 rain or shine.

The Bridgman Foundation Golf outing is scheduled for May 10, 2021 at Lost Dunes.

Thanks to Peggy Ferguson in food services who provided 300,000 meals since March 2020. There will be an Easter meal distributed on Thursday, April 1, 2021.

Bridgman Public Schools has successfully completed fall and winter sports. Spring sports are underway.

Band and Choir will hold concerts this spring.

The aquatic center will open April 3, 2021 and the weight room after the school year is finished.

The Bridgman School Board will discuss construction in regards to the existing buildings at their April board retreat.

A prom is currently being worked on.

New teachers have been hired for the new school year.

Received COVID-19 money for cleaning and PPE supplies.

School for the 2021/2022 year will begin August 30, 2021 so they can finish by June 2022.

76% of the Bridgman Public Schools staff have been vaccinated with both Moderna shots.

Diversity and Equity Inclusion is being looked at.

Mr. Peters thanked both Lake Township and the City of Bridgman for their working relationship.

John Wilk asked how many pupils are from school of choice. Approximately 25% are schools of choice.

John Bonkoske thanked Bridgman Public Schools and the schools are “as good as it gets.”

Vince Rose asked what percentage is online learning. It began with 20% in the fall and is now down to 12%.

Zach Carson indicated he has three children in the Bridgman Public School District and the children are doing great.

### **BRIDGMAN PUBLIC LIBRARY**

Dennis Kreps, Bridgman Public Library Director thanked the City of Bridgman and Lake Charter Township for these meetings, it helps to get better acquainted with the community. He is happy to continue working with the City and the Township.

The library is limiting visitors inside the building and curbside service is available between 2:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Monday, April 5, 2021 the library is opening, and no appointment is necessary.

Approximately 500 people attended virtual meetings and the library will continue with a hybrid kind of meeting in the future.

Summer reading programs are being scheduled and more outdoor programming is being looked at for concerts.

Mr. Kreps agreed with Superintendent Peters regarding the lack of mental health opportunities in Berrien County. They have an intern from Western Michigan University who is dovetailing to provide services.

Meeting rooms remain closed for the time being.

Since the COVID-19, the library has seen an influx of computer use.

They are working hard with people struggling to file for unemployment benefits and knowing where to go to get vaccinated.

Continue to look for programs on the Library's Facebook page.

The phone system is being replaced.

### **GREATER BRIDGMAN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND GROWTH ALLIANCE UPDATE**

Supervisor Gast turned the floor over to Arthur Havlicek, President and CEO of the Southwest Michigan Regional Chamber.

His presentation included a proposed social district in downtown Bridgman.

This would create a defined social district where patrons could purchase an alcoholic beverage of their choice and be allowed to drink it anywhere in the social district and common areas within it.

The hours and area of the social district are set by the City and approved by the Liquor Commission. The proposal is to have it mainly in the couple blocks of downtown business area extending to the LakeBridge building at the corner of Lake and Church Streets where food trucks have been brought in and a common area exists. The cups must be clearly identified for use in the social district and the merchant where they were purchased.

Since COVID-19 and capacity restrictions have been an issue for local restaurants to only allow a certain number of patrons in their building, this would be a game changer where patrons can take their food and beverage and use the common areas to eat and drink.

Robert Clark, Lake Charter Township Treasurer reported that he visited Muskegon where they are having success with this idea. They are working on trying to have a more normal summer. The merchants he talked to are excited about it and believe it will increase sales with the current restrictions. The Greater Bridgman Area Chamber of Commerce and Growth Alliance Board heard about the proposal and were generally interested in pursuing the idea.

Questions:

Sam Stine, is it typical to allow this for twelve hours? Arthur responded, it can be set at whatever is decided by the City Council, however keeping it consistent is

key. Also, social distancing would still be mandatory with six feet apart and masks.

Mike Essig asked how the school feels about using the school's logo on alcoholic beverages? Arthur responded, this was just a mockup, other options can be explored.

Vincent Rose asked what insurance is required for an event like this? Arthur indicated the Michigan Municipal League would require that each vendor be added to the city as an insured.

John Bonkoske asked about the places patrons can cross the street, will there be designated areas to cross? Arthur indicated that there would be two places marked where patrons can cross.

Other restrictions include that a cup purchased at one vendor, such as Lake Street Eats cannot be taken into another social district merchant, only into the outdoor social district and common areas. Only one beverage at a time is allowed. They may be allowed to take their beverage into another non-alcohol providing Merchant (i.e. Accents, Sandpiper, etc.) if they choose to allow it. More trash cans would have to be placed outside each establishment. There will be sandwich boards with instructions placed throughout the area.

Jan Trapani asked whether this would increase police officer shifts? Dan Unruh responded that the phones are always answered if someone is in the station, after hours, the recorder instructs people to call the Berrien County Sheriff's Department.

Pam Hahaj indicated that police officers do bar checks on foot.

Zach Carson asked whether common areas would have a start date and an end date? Arthur responded that this would be up to the City to regulate.

## **MUNICIPAL UPDATE**

### **Lake Charter Township**

Supervisor Gast reported the township has two positions open for employment, one for Maintenance/Grounds Superintendent and the other for Water Plant Outside Maintenance.

The Lake Charter Township Park opens April 1, 2021. The youth softball field fencing has been replaced, a joint effort with the Bridgman Schools Recreation Fund.

The pavilions are being upgraded with hot water and a kitchen sink.

An AED will be placed at the park in a weatherproof cabinet.

A development is being planned across from Reed Middle School on Church Street. The Lake Charter Township Planning Commission will review it at their April 5, 2021 meeting.

Thanked Jan Trapani who helped coordinate a COVID-19 shot clinic on March 31, 2021 at the Woodland Shores Baptist gymnasium.

The Lake Charter Township board passed a resolution in support of restaurants.

Lake Charter Township will be receiving Federal Relief fund monies.

#### City of Bridgman

Juan Ganum, City of Bridgman City Manager reported that Cassey's Gas Station is coming to Bridgman. They will be breaking ground next month at the corner of Red Arrow Highway and Rambo Road.

Ryan Kilpatrick, City of Holland is conducting a market analysis for a proposed housing development near city hall.

The retaining wall at Weko Beach will be revamped. The campground showers have been retiled, in house, by city personnel.

The Corridor Improvement is beautifying the ranger station by Anna Roeder, a local from Bridgman who will be adding her artistic talents.

The banners that are hung and displayed up and down the sidewalks in the city are all hand drawn by Reed Middle School students.

The open-air market will begin May 16, 2021 in the Edgewater parking lot with approximately 70 vendors.

The city will conduct a survey on residents' views regarding marijuana. The Planning Commission was intending to conduct it; however, it was delayed due to the pandemic. Supervisor Gast commented the Township conducted a survey and it was three to one, against any marijuana dispensaries.

The City Planning Commission is updating their master plan by reviewing each goals and objectives throughout the year.

Hoping to explore the shoreline protection issue which is on the agenda for discussion.

We are fortunate to live here and have the luxury of being able to discuss issues of mutual concern. This is not the case in many other communities.

*City of Bridgman Adoption of Resolution 2021-04 Approving a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund application for Toth Park Improvements.*

Supervisor Gast turned the floor over to Mayor Vince Rose who asked City Council members for adoption of the Resolution approving a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund application for Toth Park improvements.

Motion by Council Member Trapani, seconded by Council Member Bonkoske to adopt Resolution 2021-04, A Resolution Approving a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund application for Toth Park improvements,

Roll Call:|

Yeas: John Bonkoske, Jan Trapani, Vince Rose, Stacy Stine, Pam Hahaj, Sam Stine

Nays: None

Absent: Georgia Gipson

Motion carried.

**ISSUES OF MUTUAL CONCERN**

*Ad-Hoc Committee - Shoreline Preservation*

Supervisor Gast reported that since both municipalities have had residents from Dunewood, Wildwood and Woodland Shores who have asked the State of Michigan for help with regards to revetments, and who have asked the municipalities to take a stand with regards to this issue, it is prudent that an Ad Hoc Committee be formed with two City of Bridgman council members, two Lake Charter Township board members, one member from each Planning Commission, one city resident and one township resident.

Supervisor Gast indicated that each municipality should appoint and vote on who they wish to serve on the Ad Hoc Committee from their perspective boards and begin scheduling meetings for discussing topics which will include the science, public trust and property rights.

It was also suggested to have a neutral Chair who would direct the meetings.

### Joint Recycling

Supervisor Gast informed members that Lake Charter Township is holding an electronic recycling event and is securing a shredding service for their recycling event on October 9, 2021. Typically, Lake Township sends out a post card to all their residents and asks them to bring the post card with them to prove they are a township resident when they drop off their electronics and bring their boxes of items to shred.

If the City is willing to participate in this joint effort, more details can be worked out.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

It was moved by Payne seconded by Wilk to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Gloria A. Payne, Lake Charter Township Clerk