

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GARFIELD
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING**

Tuesday January 3, 2023 at 6:00 pm
Garfield Township
3848 Veterans Drive
Traverse City, MI 49684
Ph: (231) 941-1620

AGENDA

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Call Meeting to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call of Board Members

Introduction of William Scott – New Commission Member

Election of Officers

1. Public Comment

Public Comment Guidelines:

Any person shall be permitted to address a meeting of The Parks and Recreation Commission, which is required to be open to the public under the provision of the Michigan Open Meetings Act, as amended. (MCLA 15.261, et.seq.) Public Comment shall be carried out in accordance with the following Board Rules and Procedures: a.) any person wishing to address the Board is requested to state his or her name and address. b.) No person shall be allowed to speak more than once on the same matter, excluding time needed to answer Commissioner's questions. Where constrained by available time the Chairperson may limit the amount of time each person will be allowed to speak to (3) minutes. 1.) The Chairperson may at his or her own discretion, extend the amount of time any person is allowed to speak. 2.) Whenever a Group wishes to address a Committee, the Chairperson may require that the Group designate a spokesperson; the Chairperson shall control the amount of time the spokesperson shall be allowed to speak when constrained by available time.

2. Review and Approval of the Agenda – Conflicts of Interest

3. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes – December 5, 2022

4. Correspondence

5. Reports

- a. Commissioner Reports
- b. Staff Report / Updates
 - i. Parks Steward Report

6. Old Business

- a. PD 2023-2 – Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area Design Plan Implementation

7. New Business

- a. PD 2023-1 – Parks and Recreation Commission 2022 Annual Report

8. Public Comment

9. Items for Next Agenda – February 6, 2023

10. Adjournment

Garfield Township will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting to individuals with disabilities upon the provision of reasonable advance notice to Garfield Township. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact Garfield Township by writing or calling Lanie McManus, Clerk, Ph: (231) 941-1620, or TDD #922-4412.

**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF GARFIELD
PARKS and RECREATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
December 5, 2022**

Roll Call of Commission Members:

Present: Denise Schmuckal, Andy Hoort, Chris DeGood, Chris Remy and Art Bukowski

Absent and Excused: Fern Spence and Lynne Fricke

Staff Present: Deputy Planning Director Steve Hannon, Parks Steward Sean Kehoe

Call to Order: Chair DeGood called the meeting to order at 6:04pm.

1. Public Comment (6:05)

A student asked about the funding and organizational structure of the parks. Northern Michigan Mountain Bike Association (NMMBA) members commented on the Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area trails and asked to be involved in the process of implementing the Design Plan.

2. Review and Approval of the Agenda – Conflicts of Interest (6:10)

Schmuckal moved and Hoort seconded to approve the agenda as presented.

Yeas: Schmuckal, Hoort, Bukowski, Remy, DeGood

Nays: None

3. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes – November 7, 2022 (6:11)

Schmuckal moved and Remy seconded to approve the minutes of November 7, 2022.

Yeas: Schmuckal, Remy, Bukowski, Hoort, DeGood

Nays: None

4. Correspondence (6:11)

None

5. Reports (6:12)

a. Commissioner Reports

Schmuckal stated that the 2023 budget would be approved at the next scheduled Board Meeting.

b. Staff Report/Updates

i. Parks Steward Report

Kehoe reported that a sledding hill is being constructed at Silver Lake Recreation Area and there is a beaver issue at Boardman Valley Nature Preserve which damaged the kiosk. Staff are also busy clearing trees at all parks that were blown down.

6. Old Business**a. PD 2022-107 – Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area Design Plan Public Comments (6:17)**

Hannon reviewed public comments that were received on the Commons Natural Area Design Plan. Commissioners agreed that all designs will need to be safe and serve all user groups since the trail will be shared. Public comments highlighted issues to keep aware of including concerns about access, protection of the natural environment, separation of users, and protection of the “freeride” mountain bike area, although many also expressed support for the overall Design Plan. Ownership of the trails was discussed pertaining to waivers and liability.

b. PD 2022-109 – 2023-2027 Parks and Recreation Master Plan (6:46)

Hannon gave an overview of the proposed Parks and Recreation Master Plan and explained how feedback has been incorporated into the Plan. The Commons Natural Area Design Plan will also be included as part of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan is now ready for a 30-day public review period.

Hoort moved and Remy seconded THAT the draft 2023-2027 Five-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan attached to PD Report 2022-109 BE MADE AVAILABLE for public review for a 30-day period and that a notice BE PUBLISHED for the public review period.

*Yeas: Hoort, Remy, Schmuckal, Bukowski, DeGood
Nays: None*

Remy moved and Bukowski seconded THAT Resolution #2022-1-PR, RECOMMENDING THAT the Township Board ADOPT the 2023-2027 Five-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan attached to PD Report 2022-109 and following the 30-day public review period, BE ADOPTED.

*Yeas: Remy, Bukowski, Schmuckal, Hoort, DeGood
Nays: None*

7. New Business**a. PD 2022-108 – Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area Design Plan Implementation (6:58)**

Hannon gave an overview regarding four major areas as they pertain to the Commons Natural Area Design Plan – Funding; Volunteers / Further Public Engagement; Final Designs, Construction, and Maintenance; and Policy Development. Commissioners discussed applying for grants as a part of the funding for implementation projects, including the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) grant application due April 1. Commissioners asked if an RFP needs to be issued to assist with grant applications and agreed to meet on January 3, 2023 to discuss an RFP and other items regarding Design Plan implementation.

b. 2023 Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Schedule (7:17)

Schmuckal moved and Bukowski seconded to adopt the 2023 Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Schedule as amended, with the addition of a meeting on Tuesday, January 3, 2023.

Yeas: Schmuckal, Bukowski, Remy, DeGood, Hoort,

Nays: None

8. Public Comment (7:18)

NMMBA members stated they would attend all future meetings dealing with the Commons Natural Area Design Plan. Discussion took place on how to rebuild the relationship with the bike riders who built rogue trails and to include them in the discussions on Design Plan implementation.

9. Items for Next Agenda – January 3, 2023 (7:29)**a. Election of Officers****b. Scope of Work for Grant Application – Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area Design Plan Implementation Projects****c. Parks and Recreation Commission 2022 Annual Report****10. Adjournment**

DeGood adjourned the meeting at 7:32.

Chris Remy, Secretary
Garfield Township Parks & Recreation
Commission
3848 Veterans Drive
Traverse City, MI 49684



Charter Township of Garfield

Parks Report

Silver Lake Recreation Area

Dog park still seeing activity during winter months.

Small toilet paper fire found in women's bathroom – no damage. Monitoring situation. CPO notified.

Met with Steve Duell ref using tractor to clear sledding hill.

Working on door locks and timer.

Need to replace men's countertop.

Roping off parking lots once snow is here to stay.

Commons

Pruned a few trails back.

Cleared down trees weekly from wind.

Walked property listed off N. Long Lake Rd.

Assisting with Master Plan and Planning Dept.

River East

Status quo and River East. More dog walkers getting the word out of the trails there.

Boardman Valley

Clearing multiple trees.

Replacing board walk boards.

Hoping beaver issue has been resolved.

Damaged kiosk roof. May relocate kiosk closer to trail head off parking lot.

Had second meeting with GTCD and NPS ref wayfinding solutions for BRV, GTNP and Boardman Lake Loop so that mapping is similar throughout the connecting parks.

Miller Creek

More trees down. Cleared trees and fixed boardwalks.

Kid's Creek

More trees down on trails. Cleared trees.

Buffalo Ridge Trail


Had site visit with EcoSeeds on Garfield Twp. owned section of

Trail for future tree planting project.

Submitted December 21, 2022

Derek Morton

Sean Kehoe

 Charter Township of Garfield Planning Department Report No. 2023-2		
Prepared:	December 21, 2022	Pages: 1
Meeting:	January 3, 2023 – Parks and Rec Commission	Attachments: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Subject:	Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area Design Plan – Implementation	

BACKGROUND:

Once the Parks and Recreation Master Plan is adopted, implementation of the Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area Design Plan will be a primary focus for the Township. The Parks and Recreation Commission can provide guidance and feedback on implementation activities.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION:

After further evaluation, Staff recommends the following steps for implementation of the Plan:

- Define Costs for Initial Projects. Using the priorities identified in the Plan, initial projects will be the Red Drive Trailhead and Conservation Recreation Trail. Using the Plan, Staff will prepare costs for these projects.
- Prepare and Submit Grant Applications. Application will be made to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Trust Fund for a development grant. Grant applications are due by April 1. Before application can be made, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan must be approved by the DNR. Staff will seek out other possible grant sources, including the following:
 - DNR Spark Grant
 - National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) - Sustain Our Great Lakes
 - Rotary Charities

While grants will certainly be identified, Staff will investigate other means of funding, including use of the Township's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) allocation and donations.

- Conduct Discussion about Mountain Bike Section. In light of the last public open house, another area that could be addressed is the proposed mountain bike trails on the west side of the Natural Area, specifically west of the proposed Conservation Recreation trail. Staff may have an initial conversation with key mountain bike stakeholders. The purpose of the meeting would be to see how this area could be developed early in the phasing development of the park in accordance with the approved Plan.
- Review by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). A portion of the eastern side of the Commons Natural Area is within the Historic Easement for the Grand Traverse Commons. See attached map. Staff submitted the Plan to SHPO for review and provide any comment to ensure compliance with the Historic Easement.
- Discuss and Develop Park Policies. The Plan identifies several policy subjects requiring further study, including e-bikes/e-sports, public safety, events, and conservation easements/deed restrictions. Additional policy subjects may be identified. The Parks and Recreation Commission may study these subjects and provide recommendations to the Township Board.

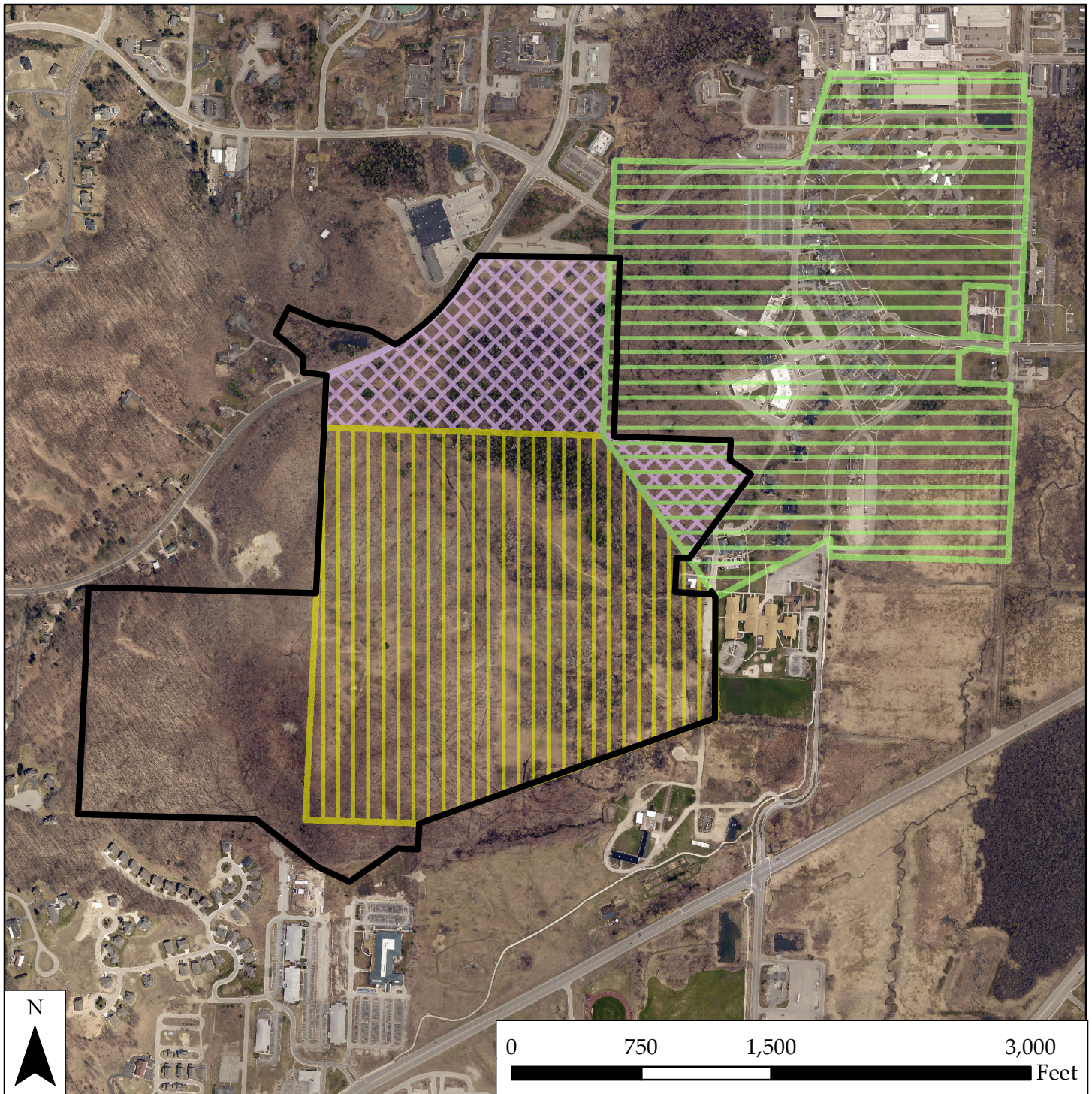
ACTION REQUESTED:

To help initiate the implementation of the Plan, Staff recommends the Parks and Recreation Commission consider following motion:

MOTION RECOMMENDING that the Township Board prepare and apply for a Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Trust Fund Development Grant for the initial implementation of the Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area Design Plan.

Attachment:

1. Commons Natural Area - Easements and Deed Restrictions



Commons Natural Area - Easements and Deed Restrictions

Legend

 Township Parkland Boundary

Easements and Deed Restrictions

 Conservation Easement

 Historic Easement

 Original Commons 100 Area

Garfield Charter Township

3848 Veterans Drive

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This map is based on digital databases prepared by Garfield Township. The Township does not warrant, expressly or impliedly, that the information on this map is current or positionally accurate. Always contact a surveyor to be sure of where your property lines are located.

NOT A LEGAL SURVEY

 Charter Township of Garfield Planning Department Report No. 2023-1		
Prepared:	December 27, 2022	Pages: 5
Meeting:	January 3, 2023 Parks and Recreation Commission	Attachments: <input type="checkbox"/>
Subject:	Parks and Recreation Commission 2022 Annual Report	

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT:

The Garfield Township Parks and Recreation Commission is required to submit an annual written report to the Township Board concerning its operations and the status of parks and recreation activities.

PARKLANDS OVERVIEW:**SILVER LAKE RECREATION AREA (SLRA):**

Dog Park: The dog park continues to be an extremely popular amenity, drawing dog owners from around the region. The Facebook group “East Silver Lake Dog Park” includes almost 1,100 members as of this writing, up from almost 1,000 members as of last year’s report.

Tennis Court Resurfacing: The resurfacing of the tennis courts was first anticipated in 2020, but this was delayed for two years because of other projects which had taken higher priority, and issues with acquiring needed materials. This project was completed in 2022.



Tennis court resurfacing project at Silver Lake Recreation Area

Well House: Commissioners had previously identified a project to construct a well house surrounding the existing well. The well house was built in late 2020, but there were some delays in acquiring the gate for the well house. The gate was installed in 2022 to complete this project.

Pavilion and Multi-Purpose Athletic Field Reservations:

The SLRA pavilions are a popular amenity. The total number of reservations in the past four years is shown in the table on the right. There were 161 total reservations in 2022, generating a total of \$6,860 in reservation fees. The baseball field continues to be used for tee-ball in the summer months.

Year	No. of Reservations
2022	161
2021	151
2020	113
2019	75
2018	101

GRAND TRAVERSE COMMONS NATURAL AREA:

Design Plan: In January 2022, the Township Board approved a consultant agreement with Environmental Consulting & Technology, Inc. (ECT) for the Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area Design Plan. The planning process included extensive outreach to a wide range of stakeholders and three public open house events. The first open house provided an overview of the existing conditions and two conceptual designs, and people indicated a preference for more trail separation by use type. The second open house showed the concept plans for trails, trailheads, hubs, and amenities. The third open house presented the preferred design concept and explained the next steps of the process, including potential project timelines.



First open house public engagement event for the Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area Design Plan at the Cathedral Barn, Historic Barns Park on May 11, 2022

The preferred design scenario envisions three main trailheads: Red Drive, Copper Ridge, and North Long Lake Road, with additional access enabled to other neighboring sites. The trail system design envisions four trail types to provide different experiences to different users, with trails primarily separated and hubs providing clear connection points between the different trails. The next steps to implement the preferred design are to develop detailed and fully engineered projects, to prepare applications for grant funding, and to determine additional funding sources.

RIVER EAST RECREATION AREA:

Development of River East Recreation Area continued in 2022. Construction of a new pavilion finished in fall 2022 and a fee schedule was established for it which matches the similarly sized Dog Park Pavilion at Silver Lake Recreation Area. Staff also constructed picnic tables for the pavilion. Bids were awarded for the next phase of projects including clearing and grubbing, a dog park, and irrigation.



New pavilion completed at River East Recreation Area

Development of this park has been identified as a major near-term priority. Further discussion and public engagement in 2023 will determine the direction and scope of any future improvements at this park.

KIDS CREEK PARK:

Oleson Pond: A project for dredging and fish restocking was included in the list of 2022 priority projects. Although the pond was not dredged in 2022, it was stocked with about 200 trout in the spring. The pond was frequented by many users fishing throughout the spring and summer. The pond was also raked to cut back on algae growth.

BOARDMAN VALLEY NATURE PRESERVE (BVNP):

No major projects occurred at this park in 2022, but the park continues to be a popular destination for the community, especially the pickleball courts. Staff have also managed an issue with beavers in the park dropping trees, some of which have damaged the kiosk at the entrance to the Peace Trail.

Staff have met with the Grand Traverse Conservation District, Grand Traverse County Parks Department, and others to coordinate on a consistent wayfinding system between BVNP, the Grand Traverse County Natural Education Reserve, and the Boardman River Trail.

MILLER CREEK NATURE RESERVE:

No major projects occurred at this park in 2022, but the park and hiking trail system continues to be well-used, especially by the nearby residents. Staff have replaced several boards on the boardwalks within the park and cleaned up several areas of graffiti.

PARKS PLANNING ACTIVITIES:

Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area Design Plan: This planning process took place throughout 2022 and is summarized in an earlier section of this report. The Design Plan was ultimately included as part of the 2023-2027 Five-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

2023-2027 Five-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan: The Township's previous five-year Parks and Recreation Plan made the Township eligible for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) grant programs through December 31, 2022. The Parks and Recreation Commission and Staff worked on an update to this Plan in Fall 2022. Public input was gathered including from the Commons Natural Area Design Plan process and from the 2021 Park User Survey. The Plan is scheduled for public hearing at the Township Board of Trustees meeting on January 10, 2023 and is anticipated to be submitted to MDNR by February 1, 2023.

Michigan State University (MSU) Urban Planning Practicum: In early 2022, a team of students from the MSU urban planning program completed a project on the sidewalk and trail system in Garfield Township. This included analyzing which neighborhoods would benefit the most from investments in sidewalks and trails and developing a methodology for determining future priorities. Priority areas identified for future sidewalk and trail investments included along South Airport Road from the Mall Trail to the Miller Creek Nature Reserve, South Airport Road from the Boardman Lake Loop Trail to the Barlow / LaFranier Road intersection, and LaFranier Road from South Airport Road to Hammond Road.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETINGS:

The Parks and Recreation Commission held eight meetings in 2022 on the dates listed below. The Parks and Recreation Commission has adopted a bi-monthly meeting schedule to ensure that they meet at least six times per year. This scheduling format will continue in 2023.

- February 7, 2022
- April 4, 2022
- June 6, 2022
- August 1, 2022
- September 12, 2022
- October 3, 2022
- November 7, 2022
- December 5, 2022

PARKLAND ORDINANCE (TOWNSHIP ORDINANCE NO. 50):

The Parkland Ordinance (Township Ordinance No. 50) provides for operating rules and regulations for, and to apply to, all Parkland under the jurisdiction of the Charter Township of Garfield. The most recent amendment to the Parkland Ordinance was adopted on June 23, 2020. No amendments to this Ordinance were considered or adopted in 2022.

HUNTING ON TOWNSHIP PARKLAND:

The Township issued 25 hunting permits for 16 different people in 2022. Hunting is currently allowed at Boardman Valley Nature Preserve, Miller Creek Nature Reserve, and River East Recreation Area with a Township permit during hunting season.

Year	No. of Hunting Permits	No. of Hunters
2022	25	16
2021	27	15
2020	18	12

OTHER:

Boardman Lake Loop Trail: Garfield Township has partnered with the TART, the City of Traverse City, and Grand Traverse County over the past several years to complete this loop trail around Boardman Lake. The final segment of this trail from Northwestern Michigan College (NMC) University Center to Logan's Landing and Medalie Park was completed in July 2022. Future trails are anticipated to connect with this loop and the broader regional trail network.

Tree Planting on Buffalo Ridge Trail: On October 7, 2022, the Township led a tree planting event on the Buffalo Ridge Trail behind the West YMCA, in collaboration with ReLeaf Michigan and funding support from the DTE foundation. Over a dozen volunteers planted 20 trees to provide additional tree canopy and shade cover for the trail.



Volunteers planting trees along the Buffalo Ridge Trail

Updated Kiosks, Drone Flyovers, and Park Maps and Handouts: Staff worked to update the posters for all park kiosks with new photos and information, and the new posters were installed throughout the year. Most of these posters included aerial photography from drone flyovers which were performed over all the parks. Staff also developed updated individual maps and informational handouts for each park, which are available on the Township website and at Township Hall.

Equipment: The Township has acquired several pieces of equipment including a trailer and mower. The additional equipment allows Staff to operate efficiently in maintaining the parks and to respond quickly to any emergency situations.

CONCLUSION:

Looking ahead to 2023, key projects will include implementation of the 2023-2027 Parks and Recreation Master Plan including the Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area Design Plan. The Plan will guide the annual parks priority project list as recommended by the Parks and Recreation Commission and approved by the Township Board of Trustees.

ACTION REQUESTED:

That the Parks and Recreation Commission review this report and request any changes prior to directing Staff to forward it to the Board of Trustees. If the Commissioners are satisfied with this report, then the following motion is suggested:

THAT THE Parks and Recreation Commission 2022 Annual Report as presented in Planning Department Report 2023-1 BE RECEIVED and FILED and FORWARDED to the Township Board.