



MEMORANDUM

REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING

April 3, 2023, at 7:00 PM

TO: City Council

FROM: Rich LaBombard, City Manager

SUBJECT: Five Year Parks and Recreation Plan Update – Ad hoc Committee

In 2019, the City of Douglas, Saugatuck Township, and the Saugatuck Public Schools adopted the Saugatuck Douglas Area Parks and Recreation Plan. The document served as a joint five-year plan for the three entities. The main purpose of the plan is to facilitate collaborative planning among the three groups to accomplish regional planning of park amenities and recreational opportunities. However, the plan does provide separate governmental control of the facilities within each municipality or jurisdiction. The plan will expire in 2023. A full copy of the 123 page 2019-2023 Parks and Recreation Plan is available on the City's website at: <https://douglasmi.gov/parks-rec/>

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requires a Parks and Recreation Plan to be approved by their Grants Management Division in order to be eligible for grant programs. In addition, the plan helps guide City Council with future capital budgeting decision making. The plan must be approved by February 1 of the year a community intends to apply for grants and must be adopted by resolution of each community.

With the need to renew the Parks and Recreation Plan, an initial meeting of Saugatuck Parks and Public Works Committee, Saugatuck Township Parks Committee, and the Saugatuck Public School Community Recreation was held to lay the initial groundwork and restate the interest in working collaboratively on the next five-year plan. I represented the City of Douglas at the organizational meeting. The City of Douglas does not have a Parks and Recreation Committee to represent the City at the joint meetings.

Saugatuck Township is represented by a five-member committee, Saugatuck is represented by a six-member committee, and Saugatuck Public Schools is represented by an eight-member advisory board. Councilman Seabert is a member of the Saugatuck Public Schools Community Recreation Advisory Board.

I'm seeking input from City Council to establish an ad hoc committee of elected / appointed officials and interested citizens to represent the City of Douglas at future Parks and Recreation Master Plan meetings. I recommend City Council appoint 5-7 members to the ad hoc committee with at least one representative from City Council. One member of the Douglas Harbor Authority may be beneficial as an appointed member.

If approved, the City Clerk will advertise for open positions for boards and committees for the vacant ad hoc parks and recreation committee. City Council will appoint members to the committee based on a review of the applications. Members of the ad hoc committee shall be appointed for a term of one year. The City Manager, or their designee, will be the administrative representative from the City. Vacancies shall be filled by appointment with recommendation from the mayor to the City Council. The duties of the committee shall be to review and provide input and recommendations to the City Council on updates to the 2024-2029 Parks and Recreation Plan. The committee shall represent the City of Douglas at joint Parks and Recreation Plan committee meetings and public meetings and events to gather resident feedback. The committee shall have no obligation to dedicate or expend municipal funds.

As the draft document is developed and available for public hearings, the Douglas community will have the opportunity to provide input on the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. In addition, the committee may select public events to seek input from the community.

Incidentally, City Council will have to plan for a budget expense in the next fiscal year for professional services to develop the plan. The estimated expense as of this writing is approximately \$7,500.

I recommend City Council consider establishing an ad hoc Parks and Recreation Committee to represent the City of Douglas with the development of the 2024-2029 Parks and Recreation Plan.