

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
GENESEE COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION**

The regular semi-monthly meeting of the Genesee County Parks & Recreation Commission was held on Thursday, April 27, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. in the For-Mar Nature Preserve and Arboretum Visitor Center, 2142 N. Genesee Road, Burton, Michigan.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

APPOINTED MEMBERS

Joe Krapohl, President
James Washington, Vice President
Archie Bailey
Rose Bogardus
Shirley Prater
Raynetta Speed

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Billy Bradshaw, Genesee County Road Commission
Bob Ranger, Jr., Designee Genesee County
Metropolitan Planning Commission
Jeff Wright, Genesee County Drain Commissioner

MEMBERS ABSENT:

APPOINTED MEMBERS

William Lucas, Secretary

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

STAFF PRESENT

Amy M. McMillan, Director
Ronald Walker, Facilities Manager
Roxy Moreno, Planning and Development Director
Leisa Gagne, Financial Affairs Officer
Nancy Edwards, Recreation Program Specialist
Hilda McShane, Marketing Specialist
Tina Grant, Recreation Program Coordinator
Katie McGlashen, Recreation Program Coordinator
Kimberly L. Cunningham, Secretary
Diantha Martin, Naturalist
Brian Van Patten, Horticulturist
Cindy Roy, Seasonal Horticulturist

OTHERS PRESENT:

Olof Karlstrom, Commission Legal Counsel
Liz Shaw, *The Flint Journal*
Dennis Ybarra, Citizen

CALL TO ORDER

President Krapohl called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 13, 2006 REGULAR MEETING

President Krapohl requested any corrections and/or additions to the minutes. There

were none.

Action Taken – Motion by Commissioner Washington, supported by Commissioner Prater, to approve the minutes of the April 13, 2006 regular meeting as submitted.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9-0.

President Krapohl stated that if there were no objection the BMX Agreement would be moved up to Item 3.5. There was no objection.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION

President Krapohl asked if there was anyone from the public wishing to address the Commission. President Krapohl stated that per Commission rules speakers have three minutes to make their comments and should state their name and address for the record.

Dennis Ybarra of 6399 OxBow Lane, Flint, Michigan stated the following:

He thanked the Parks Commission for meeting with him again. There is one issue with regard to the work that was done at the site a couple years ago that has been on-hold for a long time. He didn't know if the BMX Association president had contacted the Drain Commission yet, but he would like the Drain Commission to take a look at it.

BMX AGREEMENT EXTENSION

Ms. McMillan stated that the Parks Commissioners were given a copy of the proposed Agreement Extension with the Greater Genesee County Area BMX Parents Association. It is a different name, but essentially the same group of folks with the same goal to provide recreational opportunities for children at the BMX track. This agreement will extend the relationship with the Association through December 31, 2008. Staff recommends approval.

Action Taken – Motion by Commissioner Bogardus, supported by Commissioner Washington, to accept the agreement extension with the Greater Genesee County Area BMX Parents Association.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9-0.

President Krapohl stated that the request for the protection of the site in the wintertime is still on the table. This is something that the Association probably should work with staff on in developing an idea of a plan. Mr. Ybarra stated that the association has received 501(c)(3) status and is now a non-profit corporation.

Commissioner Wright asked Mr. Ybarra if he was requesting an inspection on the drainage system or soil erosion. Mr. Ybarra stated the soil erosion.

COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. McMillan stated that she would like to draw your attention to correspondence from

her office to Mr. Jeffrey Mansour at the Ruth Mott Foundation. Administration has asked the Ruth Mott Foundation for funds to assist the Parks with a public information education program about the county parks. They requested some additional information from us and we are providing that letter to the Parks Commission. One of the main reasons that staff is providing this to the Commission is that they want the Commission to have an opportunity to again see some of the user information that staff has for the county parks in terms of the huge number of people that used the county parks in 2005. Over 5,000 people rode the Genesee Belle, several thousand people came to the boat launches and the campgrounds, and thousands of people come here to For-Mar Nature Preserve and Arboretum.

Ms. McMillan stated that also included in the packet is a copy of the Holloway Lake Association *Holloway News*. The Holloway Lake Association has been a really great partner with the Genesee County Parks over the course of many years. They are just the nicest people to work with.

Ms. McMillan asked the Parks Commission if they had any questions regarding the remainder of the communications. There were none.

REPORT FROM LEGAL COUNSEL

Attorney Karlstrom stated that the papers have been filed with regard to the legal fees and costs in the Oregon Township. President Krapohl asked what the timeline was. Attorney Karlstrom stated he didn't know what it was. President Krapohl asked if it would go back to the same judge that heard the case. Attorney Karlstrom stated yes.

DIRECTOR'S STAFF REPORT

Parks Status Report

Ms. McMillan stated that Nancy Edwards, recreation program specialist, is here to do a couple of things. One to reintroduce the Parks Commission to some of the staff people at For-Mar Nature Preserve and Arboretum, and two, to share with the Parks Commission a brief report on the special events permit program. Ms. Edwards is responsible for processing all of the special events applications that the Parks provides to various organizations and individuals that hold all kinds of events in the county parks.

Ms. Edwards introduced the For-Mar staff. Diantha Martin is the head naturalist at For-Mar overseeing a staff of eight seasonal employees. Commissioner Bogardus stated that Ms. Martin is with the Flint Bango Club and is a multi-faceted musician. She also sings with the Flint Symphony and the Flint Festival Chorus. Ms. Edwards further stated that Brian Van Patten is the head horticulturist at For-Mar and Cindy Roy is Mr. Van Patten's very-abled assistant, who you met a couple weeks ago at a Parks Commission meeting. Mr. Van Patten and Ms. Roy are the gurus of every plant and flower at For-Mar and at other places in the county park system too.

Ms. Edwards stated that she put together a brief summary of the May, 2006 special events just so the Park Commissioners could get an idea of the number of different park users that are requesting use of the facilities that we have. This is a policy that the Parks Commission adopted in 2001. Looking at the number of events that are scheduled in May, the use of the parks by folks who want to do their own programming has gone through the roof. She stated that there is about five more applications on her desk right now that she is processing for next month in addition to some other things

that are already done. This is typical of what's going on.

Ms. McMillan stated that when the Parks Commission adopted the special events permit process a few years ago there was a great hue and cry and a lot of folks predicted that no one would use the county parks again and that the Parks Commission was not user friendly. The county parks have certainly worked their way through that. Not only do we have the groups who were concerned at that time, but also there are dozens of new groups all the time. The Hummer people not only use the Mounds, but also book the Genesee Belle for a private luncheon. It is a great source of revenue for the parks. Polaris is also coming out with the ATVs at the Mounds. All different kinds of folks use the parks for all kinds of reasons. There are also lots of fundraisers and walks.

President Krapohl asked if a lot of people apply and then choose not to use the county parks for their event. Ms. Edwards stated no. Generally, the process is that they will call and she will talk with them first so that they know up front what the fees are. Once she sends them the application and gets their \$30.00, it is always a go.

Commissioner Ranger asked if someone wanted to apply what is a good timeline. Ms. Edwards stated that the directions say that they should give her a 60-day leeway, but she's lucky if she gets two weeks sometimes.

Ms. McMillan asked Ms. Moreno for her report.

Ms. Moreno stated:

Volunteer Recognition Reception

The volunteer recognition reception was on Sunday, April 23. The county parks recognized over 130 volunteers. Commissioners Bogardus and Washington were there to hand out the plaques and pins for years of service as volunteers. The food was fabulous and the food service staff really outdid themselves. Staff has gotten a lot of positive feedback from that event, not only from the people who were there, but also from the volunteers that have been working in the administrative office this past week.

Day Out With Thomas

Plans are moving ahead with Day Out With Thomas. Yesterday, Hilda McShane, herself, and Kay Jobin from the Village took a field trip down to Greenfield Village to observe their Day Out With Thomas event. There are some things that they are doing that she probably will borrow because it just makes sense. One of the areas that they wanted to observe was how Greenfield Village did their photography and how they marshaled the guests through that area. The setup that they have after the pictures are taken was amazing. It is quite technical with rows of pictures and computers. Guests could choose their pictures there that day or they could fill out a form and order them online through the photographer. There were a lot of little children there. She didn't think she saw any children there over the age of five. The retail area was very well contained. She thinks Crossroads' retail area is the perfect location. Staff is going to take the information they learned and work it to Crossroads' advantage

There have been 6,802 tickets sold for Day Out With Thomas, which is 31.4%. The marketing for Day Out With Thomas starts on May 26, 2006.

CVB Sales Managers Meeting

Ms. Moreno attended the CVB sales managers meeting last week. She talked to the hoteliers about making sure that they put the county parks' information about Day Out With Thomas in their hotels. She has verified that this has happened because Kay Jobin has gone to a couple of the hotels in the past week and saw the information sitting on the counter. This is good to know that this is happening.

Wolverine Campground

There are 124 reservations for Memorial Day weekend. At the last Parks Commission meeting, there were 97. Ms. Moreno is pretty sure that the campground will be filled by Memorial Day weekend.

For-Mar Nature Preserve and Arboretum - Keep Genesee County Beautiful

Brian Van Patten and Cindy Roy wrote a grant to Keep Genesee County Beautiful and was funded \$500. This will make the facility look wonderful. Brian takes pictures of every shrub and tree that flowers and blooms and catalogs all of that.

The in-school programs are completely booked and going very well.

Toll Booths and Fishing Derby

The toll booths open on Saturday, April 29, 2006. The Kids Fishing Derby is June 10 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. There were over 500 kids last year and more are expected this year.

Commissioner Bogardus stated that staff did a very good job on the volunteer event. She stated that she would like to go back to a dinner at the volunteer reception next year rather than just a reception. She thinks that if people put in that kind of time that it's worth a dinner. Roxy works really hard on the new warm-up event to get people moving around and meet people. It went very well.

Commissioner Washington wanted to echo what Commissioner Bogardus said, "excellent job again". He further stated that he is in agreement with Commissioner Bogardus that for such a function like that a dinner would be more appropriate. It was very nice.

Ms. Moreno stated that one of the things that they also do that the volunteers enjoy is that Nancy and she take pictures of every volunteer. This year the theme was "Above and Beyond". The volunteers go above and beyond the call of duty.

Commissioner Bogardus stated that the table decorations are from Walker Farms and are given to the volunteers to take home.

Ms. McMillan then asked Mr. Walker for his report.

Mr. Walker stated:

Toro Mowers

The Toro mowers were delivered last week and are currently being used to mow the

grass. The seasonal staff is also back on board this week to operate the mowers.

Wolverine Campground

Newkirk Electric and parks staff is working on replacing some of the RV panels. There are some concrete and pvc pipes out of the grounds so staff is having to reset those pipes.

Pre-Construction Meeting for Stepping Stone Falls Multi-Use Trailway

Yesterday, there was a pre-construction meeting for Angelo lafrate Company out of Warren, Michigan. They will be working on the Stepping Stone Falls Multi-Use Trailway. The contract with MDOT should be approved by May 2. It is an administrative possibility that they could adopt that earlier. Right after that, about the 8th, we are going to start on getting the actual drawings and everything ready to go so we could be under construction about May 8.

Painting at Crossroads Village

Valley Painting has been working on the ferris wheel at Crossroads Village. They are Sandblasting and repainting the frames for the ferris wheel. They are currently finishing the top coat on the frames.

Genesee County Auction

There was great weather for the county auction. It was one of the better auctions that the County has had. The prize purchase for the county parks was a forklift from the Road Commission. It will be very beneficial for Thomas the Tank Engine to offload all of the materials and the maintenance department also seems to be getting a lot of materials that need a forklift. It will be very helpful to have that available to the county parks.

Walleye Pike Boat Launch

The summer water level at Walleye Pike Boat Launch is due to be back on May 1. The winter water level is 752 elevation and the summer water level is 755, which is supposed to be there May 1. Staff gets questions every year about the water level. The public thinks that the county parks pulls the docks out and won't put them back in when, in fact, the water is three feet lower.

Ms. McMillan stated that as long as MDOT awards the contract on schedule no later than Tuesday, May 2 staff should have a major groundbreaking on May 22. Once staff has word that MDOT has actually awarded the contract on its schedule, staff will be scheduling a groundbreaking ceremony at Stepping Stone Falls to celebrate the beginning of that project and also to recognize the funders, primarily the Ruth Mott Foundation, who are really responsible for supplying the matching funds that are required for that project. Ms. McMillan further stated that once the contracts are awarded and scheduled the bridge should arrive the first week of July.

Ratification of Payment of Bills – Ms. McMillan recommended approval.

Action Taken – Motion by Commissioner Washington, supported by Commissioner Ranger to ratify payment of bills for the time period of April 5, 2006 through April 10,

2006.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Yeas: Bailey, Bogardus, Krapohl, Prater, Speed, Washington, Ranger, Bradshaw,
Wright
Nays: None
Absent: Lucas

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9-0.

Ratification of Commissioner Investments – Ms. McMillan recommended approval. She stated that the county parks are getting a very high rate of return on the current investments. Administration is hoping that the interest income will be up a little bit from the budgeted amount, but will be paying that out in the increase in gas prices.

Action Taken – Motion by Commissioner Wright, supported by Commissioner Washington to ratify wired payments of investments for the time period of April 6, 2006.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. McMillan stated that a couple of staff members are absent from the meeting today. Leisa Gagne and another employee are participating in “Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day”, which is sponsored by the County each year. They are probably in court and on their way to jail

Ms. McMillan stated on a sad note she asks that everyone keep Garry Pringle and his family in their thoughts and prayers as his sister passed away earlier this week.

OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMISSIONERS TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION

President Krapohl asked if any of the Parks Commissioners wanted to speak. There was none.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION

President Krapohl asked if there was anyone from the public wishing to address the Commission. There was none.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no objections, President Krapohl adjourned the meeting at 10:38 a.m.

Recorded and transcribed by:
Kimberly L. Cunningham, Secretary
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