

**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, August 24, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. in Administrative Offices of the Genesee County Parks and Recreation Commission, 5045 E. Stanley Rd., Flint, 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
Jeff Wright, Genesee County Drain Commissioner
Bob Ranger, Jr., Designee Genesee County
Metropolitan Planning Commission

MEMBERS ABSENT:

APPOINTED MEMBERS

William Lucas

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

STAFF PRESENT

Amy M. McMillan, Director
Ronald Walker, Facilities Management Director
Roxy Moreno, Planning and Development Director
Leisa Gagne, Financial Affairs Officer
Nancy Edwards, Recreation Program Specialist
Hilda McShane, Marketing Specialist
Kimberly L. Cunningham, Secretary
Stacy Hiller, Seasonal Employee

OTHERS PRESENT:

Brian Barkey, Commission Legal Counsel
Elizabeth Shaw, *The Flint Journal*
Kaye Kreutzfeldt, Citizen
Larry Stricker, Citizen
John Walker, Citizen
Lee Weston, Citizen

CALL TO ORDER

President Krapohl called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 10, 2006 REGULAR MEETING

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

were none.

Action Taken – Motion by Commissioner Bradshaw, supported by Commissioner Prater, to approve the minutes of the August 10, 2006 regular meeting as submitted.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7-0.

Commissioners Wright and Washington entered the meeting.

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.

Larry Stricker of Richfield Township stated the following:

Yesterday he walked the entrance road area to Timber Wolf Campground to prepare himself for today's meeting. He was a bit startled about what he found. Right near the roadway, the area is broken into and trucks are coming through. While he was walking this, a red Jeep came through. He took the license plate down and the Jeep left shortly. Mr. Sticker's opinion, more than ever, is that the Parks needs a gate on the road because he saw truck tracks heading toward the campground. Second, it almost seems like the lawbreakers are coming in at the expense of family members. If family members were fishing along this area, it would stop the ATV's, the dune buggies, etc. His very strong suggestion is to put up a simple gate.

He further stated that there are parking spaces. He also stated that the water is unusually high for this time of year and there is about a 150' – 200' stretch that is vulnerable. The rest of it is nice, solid, and on high ground. He would definitely recommend a simple fence now because there are people coming in.

John Walker of 9012 N. Vassar Rd., Mt. Morris, Michigan stated the following:

First, he congratulated the staff and the Parks Commission. He thinks they have done a terrific job and the parks are the high point of tourism for Genesee County. He further stated that all the following information the Parks Commission already has. Almost five years ago, three people got together to get _____ the dentist office at Crossroads Village. They were himself, Dr. Howard Weaver (former curator and archivist), and Dr. Milton Panzer (former president of Genesee Dental Association and Michigan Dental Society and is on the Board of Directors of the Sloan Museum). The three of them got funds for the office with the assistance of Barbara Spaulding-Westcott and Dennis Zawol. The funds came primarily from the dental societies and the U of M dental program. Last spring, Mr. Walker contacted Steve Stratton (who is now affiliated with Delta Dental of Michigan). The increase of _____ funds for updating the dental office with an unspecified amount. The disbursement of the funds was to be handled by Dr. Weaver, Dr. Panzer, and Mr. Walker, and a representative from Delta. Mr. Walker later recused himself and Barb Spaulding-Westcott was to be added. In a phone conversation with a staff member at the administration building, he was told that this was not the way things like this were done and it was inappropriate. After a moment of silence, he said "ok, thank you", and hung up. He contacted Steve Stratton and they put the funding in abeyance. The others are still interested even though the

staff with its philosophic department has changed. The time period will soon lapse. After some searching with an old friend of his (who is retired from the Central Intelligence staff), he received information regarding an offer made eight years ago to Jim Bassett and staff from a private foundation based in Zurich, Switzerland for \$1,000,000 for the Village. The intermediary is not forthcoming with the information because of banking secrecy laws. He further stated that the disbursement of the funds was limited to seven individuals who headed up 501(c)(3) organizations within the Village with only one park employee involved. There is a pattern evolving here that he does not understand.

COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. McMillan stated that there are a number of communications today. She is very happy to share with the Parks Commission the unofficial results from the August 8, 2006 primary election. You will notice that in 239 out of 240 precincts countywide 239 out of 240 precincts the County Parks millage renewal was overwhelmingly supported. The County Parks has never carried the out-county. In the recent request for an increase, the parks lost in every out-county precinct with the exception of Mount Morris Township. Staff really takes this as a mandate to continue to provide more diverse services and continue to make the County Parks an even better place to be for all people who live in and visit Genesee County.

Ms. McMillan asked if there were any questions regarding the communications. There were none.

REPORT FROM LEGAL COUNSEL

Attorney Barkey stated he had nothing to report this week.

DIRECTOR'S STAFF REPORT

Parks Status Report

Ms. McMillan asked Mr. Walker for his report.

Mr. Walker stated:

Day Out With Thomas – Thomas has been the top priority at the parks.

Mounds ORV Park – Staff is working on pricing for asphalt paving for part of the grant that they have for the Mounds.

Stepping Stone Falls Trailway – The contractor has pretty much completed the wood decking on the approaches to the bridge. Staff received a curb-cut permit for the bike path at the Carpenter Road and Bray Road corner. The bike path needs to be extended a little bit because on the opposite side because where it is right now ends there is a guardrail. The Road Commission does not allow trails to end at a guardrail.

Carpenter Road Pump Station – There are walls up at the pump station and completion should be soon. They have had quite a time with the weather.

Commissioner Wright stated that even though the pump station is above ground there is still a lot of work left to be done internally. It is still about three to four months from

completion.

Ms. McMillan then asked Ms. Moreno for her report.

Ms. Moreno stated:

Railfans Weekend – We had a great weekend with railfans on August 12 and 13.

Genesee District Library Reading Program – Also on August 13 was the Genesee District Library outing, which was very successful. Many children won entrance into the Village and lunch for reading books all summer. There were about 2,500 children and their families at the event.

Day Out With Thomas – Staff has been working very hard on Day Out With Thomas. There are about 150 volunteers over all three days, with another 150 staff members. There have been wonderful comments from people in the Village. She passed around pictures of the first weekend. One of the things that surprised staff was the sale of balloons. They sold a lot of balloons. Sir Topham Hatt was also very popular. The lines were very long for Sir Topham Hatt. The kids couldn't wait to meet him. The Imagination Station was also very popular. Overall the event was a lot of fun. Everyone enjoyed it even though it was a lot of work.

Commissioner Bailey asked how the Parks Commission planned to thank the volunteers. Ms. Moreno stated that every year there is an appreciation dinner, but she will also be sending them a thank you. Commissioner Bailey stated that the volunteers really made it work. Ms. Moreno stated that the event couldn't have happened without the volunteers' help.

Commissioner Bradshaw asked who took the pictures that Ms. Moreno passed around. Ms. Moreno stated that she did. Commissioner Bradshaw stated that she was good at it.

President Krapohl asked if the 10% of tickets were sold out all three days. Ms. Moreno stated that all 10% were sold out. On Friday, August 18, there were 611 who bought Village only tickets. With Village only tickets, you could do all the Thomas activities, but ride the train.

Ms. Moreno stated that the other area that was busy was the retail merchandising area. It is amazing the merchandise that HIT Entertainment provides for Thomas from hats, sunglasses, flashlights, clothing, cups, placemats, etc.

Ms. Moreno stated that she got a call from Hurley Hospital Pediatric Center a few weeks ago. There was a very sick little boy there who wanted to see Thomas. His parents actually had tickets. The doctor didn't feel that the boy should be around other children. With a lot of juggling with Ron and Marty and the staff at the Village and the doctor, we finally got him a ride on Sunday evening around 6:30 p.m. The staff gave him a whole bag of Day Out With Thomas goodies. The one thing that he pulled out of the bag (and there were a lot of nice little things) was a little train car that he held on to.

Ms. McMillan then asked Ms. Edwards for her report.

Ms. Edwards stated:

Contrary to what everyone heard, there are other things going on besides Thomas.

Genesee Belle – There were a little over 1,000 people that road the Genesee Belle over those three Thomas days.

Wolverine Campground – So far this year, there are a little over 3,000 reservations at the campground. Of the 3,000, about 2,700 are Genesee County residents. Last year, the season ended with 2,850 reservations so we are up this year. For Labor Day weekend right now, there are 187 reservations out of 194 sites.

Elba – Last year the total for 2005 was 136 reservations for horse camping. This year to date, there are 159 reservations. We are way up at Elba also.

Cummings Center – Once the county fair is cleared out, there will be three days worth of German Shepard dog shows scheduled over the Labor Day weekend.

For-Mar On the Road Program – This grant program has been completed. It allowed the parks to do in-school nature programs during the later part of the school year for free and also during the summer at various Genesee County parks.

For-Mar Fall and Winter Program – Staff is working on fall and winter programming and a programming brochure advertising the programs. This is the last weekend of programming in the Family Fun Guide.

Ms. McMillan then asked Ms. McShane for her report.

Ms. McShane stated:

Day Out With Thomas – She has been talking to the visitors and taking testimonials. Most out of town visitors are staying at the Courtyard Marriott. When asked how they learned about the Courtyard Marriott, they stated they learned about it on Expedia.com. One comment made by a mother at the event was that CRV was a family friendly vacation.

Radio Controlled Floatplane Use of Mott Lake – Ms. McMillan recommended approval.

Action Taken – Motion by Commissioner Wright, supported by Commissioner Washington, to accept staff recommendations for the radio-controlled floatplane for Mott Lake access.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9-0.

Partnership Policy – Ms. McMillan stated that staff is asking that the Parks Commission adopt the Partnership Policy. This policy has been presented to each of the volunteer groups at Crossroads Village and Huckleberry Railroad to do an overview of the policy and to answer any questions or concerns regarding the policy. The policy was used in a very loose format with some of the Parks' partners this past summer. Upon the Commission's adoption, staff will begin to seek formal partnership agreements with the various Friends groups and any of the other folks who utilize Crossroads Village and Huckleberry Railroad and use this as a format for other projects in other parks as staff moves ahead.

President Krapohl stated that the language would be cleaned up to state the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Genesee County Board of Commissioners.

Action Taken – Motion by Commissioner Washington, supported by Commissioner Prater, to adopt the Partnership Policy.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9-0.

Sponsorship Policy – Ms. McMillan stated that staff is asking that the Parks Commission adopt the Sponsorship Policy. This policy has been presented to each of the volunteer groups at Crossroads Village and Huckleberry Railroad to do an overview of the policy and to answer any questions or concerns regarding the policy.

Action Taken – Motion by Commissioner Washington, supported by Commissioner Prater, to adopt the Sponsorship Policy.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9-0.

Commissioner Bogardus left the meeting at 10:45 a.m.

Pricing Policy – Ms. McMillan stated that staff is asking that the Parks Commission adopt the Pricing Policy. The Pricing Policy is a little bit more fluid document as it is greatly influenced by each fiscal year. If Crossroads is right on target with certain things or others need to be adjusted, any adjustments that need to be made will be tied to the budgeting process. Staff would like the Parks Commission to adopt this policy as a very strong guideline for staff to follow at Crossroads Village and the Huckleberry Railroad as they price the admission fees and the activities and the various goods and services.

Action Taken – Motion by Commissioner Washington, supported by Commissioner Prater, to adopt the Partnership Policy.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 8-0.

Timber Wolf Fishing Pond Area – Ms. McMillan stated that information regarding the recommendation was distributed this morning regarding the Timber Wolf area where the fishing ponds are located. She further stated that Ron Walker and herself went out to the Timber Wolf area last week to review the conditions of the access road from Irish Road leading back to Timber Wolf Campground to be able to answer the questions that were posed at the last Parks Commission meeting. The questions are: 1) Is there room for turn around and 2) Is there parking. After three years of being closed, the road is even worse condition than staff left it. Of course, nature is taking its path and returning the road to a more a natural condition. One of the things that staff was particularly concerned about is that in the current condition of the road there is not adequate width for two-way traffic. There is not room for two cars to travel in the opposite directions at one time. Particularly in the area that Mr. Stricker noted where the ponds with the high water levels are consistently washing over the road there. As with all requests that come to the Parks Commission, the staff looks to determine whom they can provide an opportunity for the activity requested even if it is not in the original form requested. For example, the original request regarding radio controlled float planes was to be on the other side of Mott Lake, but after staff met with folks, they determined that this would be a better spot. Staff's opinion is that there are significant fishing opportunities already in that area that you can take your vehicle to. One is just

south of the entrance drive to Goldenrod where the Flint River runs through. The other is north of the road where the former beach was. Parking is very adequate in each of those places. Then there is a third place if you want to walk back into the disc golf area where there is a large pond with all kinds of wildlife and is generally thought to be near the bald eagle nest, where fishing is available to people with vehicular access. Staff believes that they should not prohibit people from utilizing the ponds for fishing if they travel there on foot. Staff recommends that they place a sign at the Irish Road entrance that says "pedestrian access only" that points folks to Goldenrod; once they get to Goldenrod, shows them where they can park, and then directs them to the little trail between the two areas so that it is well-signed and the public is well-aware that they are permitted in the Timber Wolf fishing area.

Commissioner Wright stated that he is in favor of what is being recommended as far as better signage to allow people to park in existing parking facilities and walk in, but he believes that there needs to be other things accomplished. He spent three hours out there a week ago. During that period of time, there were 17 vehicles that utilized that road. There were two quad runners and there was actually a motorized boat on one of the ponds that was hauled in on a trailer. He talked to some of the people who said they came in through an open gate west of the site and that the DEQ had given them permission to do that. There were about 25 people fishing. What did surprise him were the motorized boat and the trucks and trailers that were in there. Although he agrees that the road is not adequate and the parking is not adequate, the Parks Commission needs to do additional things to keep vehicular traffic out of there.

Action Taken – Motion by Commissioner Wright, supported by Commissioner Washington, to accept staff recommendation on the request to reopen the access road to Timber Wolf Campground.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 8-0.

2006 Waterfowl Hunting – Ms. McMillan stated that the next item is the 2006 waterfowl hunting on Mott Lake and Holloway Reservoir. These are the same rules and regulations and the same user fees that the Parks Commission has had in the past. There have not been any problems associated with the hunting or any complaints regarding the hunters' use of those areas in terms of safety concerns. The hunters have been very responsible and have communicated well to staff. Staff asks that the Parks Commission take action today on this request.

Action Taken – Motion by Commissioner Washington, supported by Commissioner Prater, to accept staff recommendation on the waterfowl hunting rules and regulations for both Mott Lake and Holloway Reservoir.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 8-0.

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

Action Taken – Motion by Commissioner Wright, supported by Commissioner Washington to ratify payment of bills for the time period of August 7, 2006 through August 15, 2006.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Yeas: Krapohl, Prater, Speed, Washington, Ranger, Bradshaw, Wright, Bailey

Nays: None
Absent: Lucas, Bogardus

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 8-0.

Ratification of Commissioner Investments – Ms. McMillan recommended approval.

Action Taken – Motion by Commissioner Wright, supported by Commissioner Bradshaw to ratify wired payments of investments for the time period of August 2, 2006 through August 16, 2006.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 8-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. McMillan reminded the budget subcommittee that they will be meeting directly after the Parks Commission meeting adjourns today.

President Krapohl thanked Stacy Hiller for outstanding performance at the County Parks. Ms. Hiller stated she enjoyed the opportunity to work at the Parks for the last four years.

OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMISSIONERS TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Bailey asked when the Genesee Belle goes into dry dock for the winter. Ms. McMillan stated that the Genesee Belle is open for the Halloween season. The Genesee Belle remains in the water, however, it will have to be lifted from the water for inspection in the spring.

Commissioner Bailey stated that he wanted to pass on today information for Attorney Barkey regarding the organization of the Friends of the Flushing County Park. He further stated that since he can't encumber the attorney with expense he is making a motion that the attorney review (briefly) and give an opinion on what can and can't be done, etc. Attorney Barkey stated that it is a reasonable expenditure to review this on behalf of the Parks Commission. Attorney Barkey stated that he is from Flushing and would be happy to do it and they will not spend any money on it. Commissioner Bailey stated that his motion would be to authorize him to give the information to Attorney Barkey. Commissioner Wright seconded the motion.

Action Taken – Motion by Commissioner Bailey, supported by Commissioner Wright, to have Attorney Barkey review the paperwork on the Parks Commission's behalf under the Partnership Policy for the Friends of the Flushing County.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 8-0.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION

President Krapohl asked if there was anyone from the public wishing to address the Commission.

Mr. Weston from Flint, Michigan stated that on behalf of his small contingent of radio control flyers he wanted to express his appreciation to the Parks Commission for providing the radio controlled floatplane people a fishing place to fly.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no objections, President Krapohl adjourned the meeting at 11:09 a.m.

Recorded and transcribed by:
Kimberly L. Cunningham, Secretary
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