

**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, July 27, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. in Pavilion 1 at Buell Lake County Park, 14098 N. Genesee Road, Clio, 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
Leisa Gagne, Financial Affairs Officer
Nancy Edwards, Recreation Program Specialist
Hilda McShane, Marketing Specialist
Deborah Wilkes, Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT:

Brian Barkey, Commission Legal Counsel
Elizabeth Shaw, *The Flint Journal*
John Kreutzfeldt, Citizen
Kaye Kreutzfeldt, Citizen

CALL TO ORDER

President Krapohl called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 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 July 13, 2006 regular meeting as submitted.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9-0.

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. There were none.

COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. McMillan stated that she wanted to draw the Commission's attention to a letter from a lady whose name is Marie McClimans, who lives in the Byram Lake area. When the Parks Commission first started making improvements at Clover Beach, Ms. McClimans wasn't the parks' biggest supporter. She wasn't sure staff could do it right and she was also entirely convinced that more people in the park was a really bad idea. Ms. McMillan stated that from her letter you would see that she has become a great supporter and now really considers Linden County Park and Clover Beach to be a great asset to the community. Ms. McClimans is also a member of the Byram Lake Association. The Byram Lake Association has endorsed the County Parks millage renewal and has put their endorsement on their website and is reminding folks in their area to vote on August 8th. The Parks Commission certainly appreciates their involvement and support.

Ms. McMillan further stated that included in the packet is a copy of *The Flint Journal's* endorsement of the County Parks millage renewal, which staff was very delighted to receive. It is Ms. McMillan's understanding that in this week's edition of *The CPSA Courier* the County Parks millage renewal will also be endorsed and readers will be encouraged to vote yes on the County Parks millage renewal.

Ms. McMillan further stated that the most recent quarterly statement from the Martha K. Merkley Charitable Trust is also included in the packet. The Merkley Trust helps offset some of the costs of operating For-Mar Nature Preserve and Arboretum.

REPORT FROM LEGAL COUNSEL

Oregon Township Fire Runs - Attorney Barkey stated that there is a communication in the packet that confirms what he reported to the Parks Commission at the last meeting. Administration received another fire run invoice from Oregon Township and learned when this was received that Oregon Township has raised their fees again. Last year, it was \$1,900 in the beginning of the year; \$2,000 by the summer, and now \$2,500 for fire runs. The two prior invoices that were received last year are being contested. The contest is pending in Lapeer District Court and Attorney Barkey told Oregon Township that they are free to consolidate this invoice with those or they can simply wait on collection of this invoice until Judge Barnard rules in Lapeer County.

Commissioner Bradshaw asked if Oregon Township has responded to the suggestion of lumping the cases together. Attorney Barkey stated that they have not.

Village of Otisville DDA Boundaries – Attorney Barkey stated that Administration received notice of a meeting that was to have taken place at the beginning of July concerning the reformation of the boundaries of the DDA in the Village of Otisville. Staff is keeping a close watch on this because under state law the Parks Commission, which owns property affected within those boundaries, has the ability to opt out within 60 days after the boundaries are changed. Attorney Barkey does not know the action taken by the Village of Otisville to change the boundaries or if they took formal action to change the boundaries or not. He is investigating that and at an upcoming meeting, should have a formal recommendation as to whether Administration recommends that the Parks Commission opts out of those boundary changes or not. We have 60 days to do that. The meeting was held the second week of July.

DIRECTOR'S STAFF REPORT

Parks Status Report

Ms. McMillan welcomed everyone to beautiful Buell Lake County Park. Buell Lake County Park is the northernmost park in the Genesee County Parks and Recreation Commission system. Buell Lake County Park is home to all sorts of wild life, including the swans in the background. They are featured prominently in some of the print materials. This area of the park has recently been upgraded using Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund grants. The walkways, the boardwalk, the boat launch, the play equipment, and the vault toilets were all part of a grant three years ago to upgrade this park. Staff has seen Buell Lake County Park go from a place that very few people knew about, and even fewer people used, to a place that is very busy every weekend. There's a lot of great fishing at Buell Lake. People rent all of the pavilions and really enjoy themselves and have a good time. Nancy Edwards even does some very creative programming here. She does some star watching parties because Buell Lake County Park is one of the few places in Genesee County where light pollution does not affect the ability to see the stars in the sky. She is glad that everyone is here today and thanked everyone for coming.

Ms. McMillan asked Mr. Walker for his report.

Mr. Walker stated:

Stepping Stone Falls Multi-Use Trailway – They are working on the approaches to the bridge and have the concrete foundations in. There will be approximately 250 feet

of boardwalk to get to the existing path.

Crossroads Village- The platform at The Depot has been completed and looks great. At the church, staff has replaced the boardwalk that is in front of the church. Now it is a six-foot boardwalk and is much better than what it was.

Flushing County Park- The safety surfacing under the swings is in. Staff is still waiting on some special brackets for the swing seats themselves. It is an unusual size swing because it is old. The size of the pipe is different than what everybody has so it has been special ordered. They should be in soon.

Mounds ORV- Staff has applied for a grant for 2007.

Linden County Park – There is a new roof on the Clover Beach Pavilion. The insurance company paid for most of the work because of vandalism. There was some writing on the top of the roof.

Ms. McMillan stated that as a follow-up to Mr. Walker's report on the new trailway that the Parks Commission in cooperation with the Crim Festival of Races, the Crim Foundation hosted the kick-off press conference for the Crim at that site a week ago Tuesday. It was very, well attended by the media. Elected officials also attended it from the City of Flint because it was a nice way of demonstrating how the City connects with the County. Staff was very pleased by the turnout and everyone who was there was very pleased with the project that is underway. The Friends of the Flint River Trail go there regularly and look to see how it is coming along and can't wait to ride over the bridge when the approaches are done.

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

Ms. Moreno stated:

Music in the Parks – Music in the Parks is now over. The concert held at Linden County Park was moved to Lake Fenton Middle School because of rain. The For-Mar concert, which was last Thursday, was moved because of rain. The Crossroads Village concert was a gorgeous night.

UAW Local 599 Retirees Picnic at Crossroads Village – Yesterday was the UAW Local 599 Retirees picnic at Crossroads Village. There were 325 people there.

Crossroads Village Survey Comments – We get survey comments regarding Crossroads Village on-line and through the mail.

From Judy Hurry of Wayne, Michigan: "We find it to be very interesting and a pleasant place to visit. It is easy to get around and the staff is very helpful. We had visited a number of years ago when our own children enjoyed it. We also visited a couple years ago by ourselves."

From Cynthia Barcum of Waterford, Michigan: "I think that the Village is a more authentic experience than the Henry Ford. It's like you really travel back in time. I love the dirt roads and the boardwalks. It's real—not a museum experience. I think you have wonderful programs too."

From Rochester Hills, Michigan: "My mom told me about the Christmas train and I

looked it up on the Internet. We ended up buying a family-pass because we enjoyed our day so much. In addition, I sent an e-mail out to my home schooling group describing the joy of our visit. There is no place in the survey for me to explain how much fun we had today. The passport idea is outstanding. Our daughter had so much fun with that and it wasn't yeah, yeah another old building. She got excited about visiting the various locations and she also had a question to ask thanks to the passport. We cannot say enough positive about the staff. Everyone we encountered throughout the day was friendly, helpful, and knowledgeable. We cannot say enough good things about the staff at Crossroads Village. We bought a family pass and will definitely be returning."

Crossroads Village - In the last month, from June 14 to July 14, they have sold 173 family passes. This is just in one month. It is just incredible this year.

There are a lot of events coming up. This weekend is the Pickled Brothers Sideshow. There will be sword swallowing, glass eating, fire swallowing, and a straightjacket escape.

In the month of August, there will be over 36,000 people through the gates. Not just with Day Out With Thomas, which we expect 21,600 people, but there is the antique auction, the Genesee District Library reading program (which will bring in alone on Sunday, August 13 over 3,000 people), and then there is Railfans, which is also that same weekend. As of today, 19,159 tickets have been sold. There are 100 tickets available on one day only, Friday, August 25. The other tickets available are walkup only. The 3rd Annual Huckleberry Hustle is September 9. The Labor Day Picnic is September 4, which always brings in over 6,000 people. We have a lot of people coming through our gates in the next six weeks.

The Flint Area Convention and Visitors Bureau put a nice article in their hospitality newsletter that went out to all of their members. They are also bringing out the Buick Open Fam Tour on Friday, August 4; we are expecting about 55 people. We are going to do a progressive breakfast this year. They will stop at the Crossroads Café and Ice Cream Parlor and get coffee and muffins; then they will go on to the Print Shop; then they will go on to the Toy Barn; then to the Eldridge House and get Lemon Tea Cake, and eventually make it back to the back of the park, which a breakfast of omelets will be served this year. They will also take a ride on the Carousel and the bus will pick them up at the back gate and off they go to their next stop.

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

Ms. Edwards stated:

Wolverine Campground – There are 54 reservations for Labor Day weekend already, which is a third of what is available. The lakefront sites between now and the end of the season are all rented every weekend. Staff re-measured the sites to know exactly what size units fit on each site and also updated the Internet.

Park Attendants – The park attendants went through CPR, first aid and AED training on Monday. They are all certified now. In addition to the maintenance staff, the tollbooth staff, and the campground staff, these people are now all certified also. The attendants have been dealing with a few lost children, dog situations (people really want to take their dogs to the beaches), passing out park information and PR work.

Genesee Belle – Last Sunday, tickets were sold out by 6:30 p.m. Tickets went on sale at 6:00 p.m. Staff informed her that they had turned away about 30 people. An 8:00 p.m. cruise was added and 115 tickets were sold for the 8:00 p.m. cruise. Stepping Stones Falls is busy all the time. If the need is there, an 8:00 p.m. cruise will be added. The decision will be made each week.

The Brown Bag Lunch cruises have become popular. There is a lot of walk-on traffic of about 50 people every Thursday.

President Krapohl asked Ms. Edwards if the campground is getting more local people because of the gas prices. Ms. Edwards didn't know the answer to that question, but she could find out for him. She further stated that there have been a lot of first time visitors to the campground, but from out of the county, the Detroit area. There are also a lot of regulars at the campground.

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

Ms. McShane played the Information and Education commercials for the Parks Commission.

Ms. McShane stated:

In addition to the television ads, she continues with help from the staff to coordinate the parks education and information media campaign through the newspaper ads, through the TV. ads, through postcards that will be mailed out next Wednesday, and the bulk of the post cards should hit by next Monday. In addition to post cards, she is also doing mass e-mails using the Parks database. The commercials that were just shown are going to be on the Parks website so when the mass e-mails are done they will be linked to the commercials. Volunteers have been stuffing thousands of litterbags with Parks information. If you need any information, give her a call and she can have it delivered to you.

The Crossroads Village ads are still running a week in advance. This year is the first year that she has promoted the family passes in the ads.

Last weekend, *Midwest Living* magazine came to Crossroads Village. The photographer and his assistant who came out were in their early-twenties. They had no reason to make any comment, but he said to her "that Crossroads Village is a class act".

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 July 10, 2006 through July 18, 2006.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

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

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9-0.

Ratification of Commissioner Investments – Ms. McMillan recommended approval.

Action Taken – Motion by Commissioner Wright, supported by Commissioner Washington to ratify wired payments of investments for the time period of June 30, 2006 through July 17, 2006.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

President Krapohl stated that the Friends of the Genesee County Parks have postcards to mail out that say “vote yes”. They have supplied him with a few of them. If anyone wants any, please get a hold of him or any committee member. The postcards will be mailed out starting Saturday, July 29th to about 42,000 households. There were enough contributions that came through to do a mailing plus some other advertising and are waiting for the final dollar amounts to see whether some other contributions that were pledged come through. The biggest thing the millage committee is pushing is to make sure everybody gets out and votes.

OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMISSIONERS TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Bogardus stated that she grew up about ten miles north of Buell Lake and that the park was a dump. She wanted to congratulate Amy and Ron and everyone who worked on the grants. This is a beautiful park.

Commissioner Speed asked about volunteers for Day Out With Thomas. Ms. Moreno stated that she needs a lot of volunteers. She has advertised on Comcast Channel 17 and Channel 19 in the Davison area. She will also be contacting groups to talk to them about volunteering. If you have anyone who would like to volunteer, please give her a call.

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 10:32 a.m.

Recorded and transcribed by:
Kimberly L. Cunningham, Secretary
Parks\M072706