

**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 28, 2005, at 10:00 a.m. in the Conference Room of the Genesee County Parks & Recreation Commission Administrative Offices, 5045 Stanley Road, Flint, Michigan.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

APPOINTED MEMBERS

Joe Krapohl, President
William Lucas, Secretary
Archie Bailey
Rose Bogardus
Shirley Prater
Raynetta Speed

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Dave Miller, Genesee County Road Commissioner
Bob Ranger, Jr., Designee
Genesee County Metropolitan Planning Commission

MEMBERS ABSENT:

APPOINTED MEMBERS

James Washington, Vice President

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Jeff Wright, Genesee County Drain Commissioner

STAFF PRESENT

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

OTHERS PRESENT:

Brian Barkey, Commission Legal Counsel
Ron Fonger, *The Flint Journal*
Eric Hopson, Genesee County Purchasing
Mark Thompson, Citizen
Cathy Thompson, Citizen
Mark Corba, Citizen
Becky Youngblood, Citizen
Mildred Burgess, Citizen

CALL TO ORDER

President Krapohl called the meeting to order at 10:09 a.m.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

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

Action Taken – Motion by Commissioner Bailey, supported by Commissioner Speed, to approve the minutes of the July 7, 2005 regular meeting as submitted.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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.

Becky Youngblood of 6136 W. Frances Rd., Vienna Township stated the following:

She was here to request permission to walk llamas on County land. She has owned llamas since 1993 and fell in love with llamas after years of observing them and realizing that they were gentle animals. Ms. Youngblood stated that she is a teacher and takes her llamas to Carter Middle School and also invites her fifth graders out to the pasture every year. She stated that young elementary students could easily lead them. She further stated when she took them to Montrose Meadow Lodge and saw how they interacted with the residents close and personal. It is not like taking a wild animal out in the parks. They are beautiful, gentle, intelligent, docile animals. Ms. Youngblood stated that when the llamas are in the parks people acted like it was a little touch of class. She walks dogs on the paths too and stated there is absolutely no difference.

Mark Thompson of 5229 W. Dodge Rd., Vienna Township stated the following:

He stated that he spoke with a few members of the Commission and stated that his llamas are truly gentle animals. He has taken them to his church events and the schools as well. In public, people really take to them and have a great time when they are out. He stated that he doesn't want people to think that he feels that his llamas are exceptional animals just because they are his. He stated that he would invite any of the Parks Commission to get a hold of any one of us at your leisure and come out to the farm to see for yourself that it isn't just our llamas. This is the nature of the animal. He handed out to the Commissioners a folder of information about llamas. There are pictures of students, people at the nursing home, and some interesting facts that are

GENESEE COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

July 28, 2005

Page 3

included that might help you understand a little bit more. He stated that he is aware that this might seem as an unusual request, but just like someone who would have a vintage car, we enjoy showing the llamas to people and people enjoy seeing them. We just have a great time with our animals and the public takes to them real well.

Cathy Thompson of 5229 W. Dodge Rd., Vienna Township stated the following:

Ms. Thompson read the letter in the folder that was handed out to the Parks Commissioners by Mark Thompson (see green folder with llama information), a copy of which is on file with the official minutes.

Mark Corba of Vienna Township stated the following:

He wanted to add that because his son was part of what Becky Youngblood was talking about. He was granted an opportunity to go to her place and to feed the llamas. After she trained them on the llamas, they got to know the llamas even by their first names and got close to them. Never once were they aggressive to the point of trying to knock them over, except when it got time for food. Even then, they weren't aggressive. You would not believe the joy it brought to his son. From experience, he never saw a chance for a young person that has never seen a llama to be able to reach out like that and how much they loved doing it. He stated that he thinks the Parks Commission should really consider allowing them to continue with what they are doing. He doesn't think it will hurt the parks. If it becomes an issue, then deal with it. He thanked everyone for their time.

Mildred Burgess, Richfield Township, asked about the pavilions in the parks. She stated the rate went up 50% this year. She was wondering why the Parks Commission raised it 50%. She thinks that is a lot from one year to the next. She also asked if the pumps worked. She also stated that the road was better than last year.

Ms. McMillan stated she would speak with Mildred after the meeting and answer her questions about the raising of fees and where running water is available in the park.

COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. McMillan stated that we have a number of communications. A couple that she would like to share with the Parks Commission in particular are from the Cruisin' Band who has compliments for one of our staff members, Stacy Hiller, who is Nancy's assistant. Stacy helps with events all summer long and we wanted to take this opportunity to acknowledge her.

Ms. McMillan stated there is also a letter from Brian Barkey regarding the duck pond that was discussed at the last Commission meeting and the proposed mediation of closing that duck pond.

GENESEE COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
July 28, 2005
Page 4

Ms. McMillan stated that she would also like to draw attention to the letter to the editor about For-Mar and how much folks enjoy using the parks.

Ms. McMillan also wanted to draw attention to the *Flint Journal* article "Parks make strides in accessibility". The County Parks over the course of the last six to eight years has worked very hard to improve the accessibility to people with disabilities and are proud to be featured in the article. She stated also in the *Flint Journal* was a nice story about the Crossroads Country Fair.

Ms. McMillan stated in the packet is the Martha Merkley Charitable Trust statement and a minority employee report that is submitted on a quarterly basis to the Office of Affirmative Action. She stated that once again the Parks continues to be within goal in all areas, except women in positions we employ. Figures are skewed by the Parks full-time maintenance department.

Ms. McMillan asked if there were any questions.

President Krapohl stated that he had a comment regarding the Cruisin' letter. He stated that when we had the PROS consultant in they talked quite heavily about customer service and satisfying the people that use the parks. He stated that the comments that were in the letter about Stacy and Nancy show that we are headed in the right direction and hopefully that will be a catalyst to the other employees to see that this is what we want to satisfy our customers at all of our facilities. He stated it was good to see a positive comment come back that we are on the right track.

REPORT FROM LEGAL COUNSEL

Attorney Barkey stated that he has two items today—one is informational and one is an action item.

Attorney Barkey stated that the Parks Commission sold the property called the Ingram property on Stanley Road. The sale was authorized and the purchase agreement executed two weeks ago. While that was being done, a discussion about what the use of the proceeds would be was contemplated. All County money generated goes into a general fund. The Parks Commission has asked that this money be used for certain projects specified in a general way. This is now becoming a matter of debate because when this came up for approval of the sale there was discussion about the fact that the proceeds were placed in the County general fund to open them up to be used anywhere. Attorney Barkey stated he drafted a memo and tracked out the approval process for the sale of this property, which clearly identifies the use of the proceeds. Unfortunately, while this was being considered, the Parks Commission has had two environmental expenses presented to the County Board as well. One involving a fuel oil spill in 1996 at Crossroads Village and the other one having to do with continuing

GENESEE COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

July 28, 2005

Page 5

monitor of ground water contamination at the parcel adjacent to Bluebell Beach called the Bray Road Dump. Attorney Barkey stated that those are now coming before the County Board at the very same time this debate is swirling over the use of the proceeds of the Ingram property. He stated that this would come up before the County Board next week at the Joint/Public Works Finance Committee meeting for discussion. He further stated that the Parks has tried to track the process of the sale of the Ingram property to remind the County about the use of the proceeds, but they will go into the County general fund.

Attorney Barkey stated that the second item is an action item. He stated that everyone has heard that the Mott Foundation has graciously awarded a grant to implement some of the recommendations by our consultant, PROS Consulting, at Crossroads Village. It has its good parts and bad parts. These things have to take a natural progression. One of the items in the natural progression is all procurement decisions such as implementing the things that the Mott Foundation grant is funding have to go through the County procurement process, which Mr. Hopson supervises. We are all under time constraints. Mr. Hopson is very busy and all procurement in the County has to go through his office. For want of a better way to put it, we take our place in line. We were hoping that we would be able to secure a grant for funding in time to implement what PROS Consulting had suggested that we do in time for the summer season. We were unable to do that because the award was just granted two weeks ago. We still have the budgetary process, which has to be completed by the end of September so it has to be in process now. There is plenty of work to do to implement their recommendations in order to get us to a point where we can make a rational budget for next year. Plus, right on the heels of that is planning the Halloween and Christmas events. We are doing our best to try and expedite this process that naturally takes four to six weeks to get accomplished. We will be asking that the County Board consider allowing us to supplement the agreement between the Parks Commission and PROS Consulting, which the original agreement went through the bid process. The original agreement resulted in recommendations, but what we would like to do now is implement those recommendations with PROS Consultants without having to go through the procurement process. This will come up before the Joint/Public Works Finance Committee this coming week to approve the supplemental agreement. We would like to propose that the Parks Commission approve requesting a supplemental agreement with PROS Consulting to provide services to implement to scope items identified in the memo that the Parks Commissioners have already received in the mail in the last couple days. Attorney Barkey stated he hoped the Commissioners had time to review it. The action requested is approval of a recommendation to the Committee to approve a supplemental agreement of the contract between Parks Commission and PROS Consulting to provide the services described in the memo to the Parks Commission.

President Krapohl asked if there were any questions or comments.

GENESEE COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

July 28, 2005

Page 6

Commissioner Bailey stated that under normal circumstances he would prefer it to go back through the purchasing process. However, in this case, although it is not our money until we get it, it is a grant that we need and can use immediately. Secondly, timeliness is a factor. He stated that he respects everything that the purchasing director does and requires, but he is willing to recommend to the colleagues on the Board of Commissioners that they approve this move based on those two circumstances of the time limits that this is a strict timeline. Secondly, it is money that we are receiving as taxpayers from this foundation and thinks the Parks Commission needs to take advantage of it.

Commissioner Bogardus stated that this is a result of County budget constraints. The Purchasing Department consists of two people basically. One of the results is it is much harder and much slower getting work done because you have two people very much overworked. This is just an example of what happens when County revenue goes down. It isn't the fault of anybody. Commissioner Bogardus stated she would agree with Commissioner Bailey. Normally, she would not go around our purchasing director because she very much respects the work of that department. She stated that the Parks has \$400,000 available for use and we need to use it. So she would support following the recommendation. Ms. McMillan stated that just to clarify this is \$129,000 of that \$400,000 not the entire amount. President Krapohl stated that the \$129,000 would be for the PROS consultant work.

President Krapohl stated that he thinks the Parks Commission is fortunate that the Mott Foundation is confident enough in what the Parks Commission direction is and what the staff is doing that they are going to grant the Parks Commission this money and he would hate to have the opportunity to say that the money is there, but we couldn't get it because of a technicality. He further stated that this is not taxpayer money—this is, basically, money that is coming to us to make some improvements that are vastly needed in our system.

Commissioner Bailey stated he would like also in the message to the Board to let them know that we are not going around the purchasing director, but the special circumstances of this grant require us to move ahead. The purchasing director is a professional administrator who operates by the book and the book in this case says exactly what he has stated. Our circumstances are a little different in this case and he would want to carry this message to the Board when discussed.

Commissioner Speed stated that President Krapohl made mention of the confidence that Mott has in our staff. She stated also take note of Paragraph 3 in regard to Amy's words that Mott wants us to continue to work with PROS. Evidently, Mott was very impressed with what PROS had to offer.

President Krapohl stated that he will do everything in his power to be at the Board meeting to communicate Commissioner Bailey's words and the feelings of the Parks

GENESEE COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
July 28, 2005
Page 7

Commission so they understand that Mr. Hopson does have a job to do and he does work for the Board of Commissioners, just so they understand that we are not trying to bypass him or his guidelines in any way.

Action Taken – Motion by Commissioner Lucas, supported by Commissioner Prater, to concur with the director's recommendation to:

1. Request approval (by roll call vote) by the Board of Commissioners Joint Public Works/Finance Committee to approve a supplemental agreement to the contract between the Genesee County parks and Recreation Commission and PROS Consulting, LLC to provide services to implement the following scope items from the Crossroads Village and Huckleberry Railroad Operational Assessment and Improvements Final Report:

Action Plan Support, Cost of Service Analysis, Best Practices Consultant/Operating Standards, Point of Sale Systems Requirements Definition, Economic Impact Analysis, Marketing Plan, Pricing, Policy, Sponsorship Policy, Partnership Policy, Food Service Contracting Strategy, Staff Training Workshops, Artifact and Collection Management.

2. Request approval by the Genesee County Board of Commissioners to approve a supplemental agreement to the contract between the Genesee County Parks and Recreation Commission and PROS Consulting, LLC to provide the above-described services.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

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

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Commissioner Bailey stated that he would like to raise a question of procedure. He stated that they received from Ms. McMillan on the 26th an additional agenda item and as a part of agenda item no. 2, she has written to us that she told Mr. Thompson that she would support his request to add this item to the agenda at today's meeting and further would recommend that the Commission consider the request in a manner similar to a recent request to permit exercising a dog off leash in Flushing County Park, which is direct the administration to research the issue and return a recommendation at a future Commission meeting. Commissioner Bailey stated he would like to make a motion to add that as item 5a on the agenda so that the Parks Commission can direct

GENESEE COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

July 28, 2005

Page 8

the administration to do what Ms. McMillan has suggested. Commissioner Lucas supported the motion.

Action Taken – Motion by Commissioner Bailey, supported by Commissioner Lucas, to add to agenda item 5a, a request from Mr. Mark Thompson to be permitted to walk his llamas in county parks.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Commissioner Bailey stated he would like to move that the Parks Commission direct the administration as Ms. McMillan has requested here to do everything in the memo that she said she would do.

Commissioner Bogardus stated that she understands people's love of their pets, but she also understands that the Parks Commission could do this type of research on any animal. She stated she grew up on a farm and she had a pet pig. She further stated the pet pig would never hurt anybody and the only time it ever chased anybody was the time it ended up in the house and that was the time a neighbor kid had an apple in his hand and didn't realize the pig didn't care about the kid—he wanted the apple because she fed him apples. She stated that she is sure that there are people who have pet lions, pet tigers, and pet elephants. People love their pets and could make almost the same argument (except lions and tigers) that that animal is very loving. She stated people respond to any animal. You could walk an elephant into Richfield Park and it would be surrounded by people immediately because people respond to animals. Commissioner Bogardus stated that she does not personally intend to start adding animals. She stated the parks are for people and she is very close to saying that maybe we wouldn't even allow dogs in the parks if this is the route that we are going to take because we would eventually have not a park, but a zoo. She stated that there are areas, like the Cummings Center, where the llama can go. It is considered the same as a horse. She stated that it is not her intention to change the policy and she wants to be honest with everyone upfront. She stated that almost any animal at some point has been somebody's pet. She stated that a line needs to be drawn somewhere especially if you consider pet droppings and that she is not even happy about dog droppings in the parks. She stated that she is not going to vote in support of the motion.

Commissioner Bailey stated that he loves llamas. He stated that when he was in Clare a couple weeks ago and pulled into a gas station a guy had a llama in a trailer. He further stated that this llama was unbelievable, but he knows what everyone is thinking—we have a llama next week, the following week somebody will be here with an elephant. He thinks the Parks Commission has to deal with each issue as it comes up. He stated that the people attending the meeting deserve a fair hearing and review. He stated whether the review comes back favorable or unfavorable he thinks the Parks Commission should follow the recommendation of the executive director and look into it.

GENESEE COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
July 28, 2005
Page 9

Action Taken – Motion by Commissioner Bailey, supported by Commissioner Lucas, to direct the administration to research the llama issue.

MOTION CARRIED 6-2.

DIRECTOR'S STAFF REPORT

Parks Status Report

Ms. McMillan asked Mr. Walker for his report.

Mr. Walker stated:

Mounds ORV Grant – As part of the 2005 Mounds ORV grant, paving part of the parking lot at the Mounds has been completed. For 2006, we have just sent in the application for the grant and have requested to complete the paving. We have had three sections of paving—two years ago, this year, and next year if we receive the grant, which will complete paving of the parking lot along with a number of other items for next year. It looks great and he thinks it's improving the parking area immensely.

Northeast Sewer Relief Easement – We met with James Wood, Chief of Grants and Contracts for the Michigan Department of Resource Trust Fund, on the northeast sewer relief for an easement for the Drain Commissioner. They have all the information at their office and should be making a decision on that soon.

Crossroads Village - With August comes the Crossroads Village Trains, Planes, and Automobiles, staff and the jail crew is working on cleaning up, sprucing up and getting things ready for that program coming next Wednesday. They are busy right now getting ready for that.

Crossroads Village Painting -- Painting at Crossroads Village is probably 85% completed. Right now, they are working on the Depot, the Eldridge House, and they have the biggest item, the Calkins Barn, to complete. Everything is looking very well.

Railroad Restoration – Railroad Restoration has completed the work on Car No. 20 and it is back in service. Car No. 20 has also had its annual inspection so it is ready to go and back on line.

Ms. McMillan stated that Roxy Moreno had to leave early because she is attending the UAW Labor Day Picnic committee meeting on the Parks' behalf. Nancy Edwards will give us an update.

Ms. Edwards stated:

GENESEE COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

July 28, 2005

Page 10

Bluebell Beach – Last week, Big Wave Dave was at Bluebell Beach teaching people how to build sandcastles. There was also a group from F Esquires who do step performance. It was wonderful. There were about 15 young men performing. It was very well received and people had a really good time.

Flushing County Park – There were about 35 people learning how to swing dance at Flushing County Park on Tuesday.

Richfield County Park – Tonight Leo Days is at Richfield County Park. Last year when he was out there, there were about 150 people attending his concert. Leo Days is the local Elvis tribute artist from Burton.

Genesee Belle – The Genesee Belle is selling out the Sunday evening cruises. The dinner cruises are going very well.

Wolverine Campground – The campground has been packed every weekend.

Things are going really well in all aspects of our programs.

Ms. McMillan stated that we are generally having about \$6,000 weekends on average at boat launches so we have been very busy there as well. She further stated that we are on target with our revenue projections for each of those facilities so we are very happy to do that.

Ms. McMillan stated that she would now answer Mildred from Richfield Township's questions about fees at the pavilions. She stated that the Parks Commission did raise fees across the board last fiscal year. In doing so, the amount of increase was partially because the fees had not been raised in a considerable period of time. Nancy did a considerable amount of research for the Parks Commission to compare the facilities to other facilities in other county park systems and city park systems to determine what their rental rates were so that rates were comparable. She further stated that all of the fees increases, whether they were pavilion rentals or boat launches fees or campground fees, were all directly related to budget shortfalls. She stated that there is running water in various places in the park and Ron Walker would be happy to meet with Mildred and tell her where to find them.

Commissioner Speed asked if Nancy Edwards was responsible for programming on the Genesee Belle. Ms. McMillan stated yes. Commissioner Speed stated that she had a friend attend an event Tuesday night on the Genesee Belle and was very impressed with the entertainment. She was also impressed with the food and the service on the Genesee Belle.

Crossroads Village Advisory Committee Donations - Ms. McMillan stated that the donations are in the form of monetary donations and requested acceptance of the donations.

Action Taken – Motion by Commissioner Lucas, supported by Commissioner Miller, to accept the donations recommendation from the Crossroads Village Advisory Committee.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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

Action Taken – Motion by Commissioner Lucas, supported by Commissioner Prater, to ratify payment of bills for the time period of July 1, 2005 through July 19, 2005.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

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

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Ratification of Commissioner Investments – Ms. McMillan recommended approval. She noted that the investments are hovering dangerously close to 4%.

Action Taken – Motion by Commissioner Speed, supported by Commissioner Prater, to ratify wired payments of investments for the time period of June 29 2005 through July 19, 2005.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. McMillan stated she wanted to remind the members of the Budget Subcommittee that there is a meeting directly after this meeting.

OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMISSIONERS TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Lucas stated that they had over 400 retirees out to Crossroads Village yesterday. He stated that the painting is looking good and that the food was very good. He had many compliments on the food. He stated that the staff treated them well and everybody had a good time.

GENESEE COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

July 28, 2005

Page 12

Commissioner Bogardus stated that she had to go to Crossroads twice in July because they went once just to see the fireworks on a Saturday night for the older grandson and we had to go back on Sunday to see the lady do her high-wire act. She stated they went back to see her, but it was windy and she didn't do the handstand. She further stated that they enjoyed the act and the fair. Commissioner Bogardus stated that we should look into getting a bounce house because they had to physically remove the two-year-old from it. He loved it.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION

President Krapohl asked if any other members of the public wished for comment.

Mark Thompson of 5229 W. Dodge Road, Vienna Township, stated:

He appreciates the time he spent with the Parks Commission this morning to plead his case. He said that the packet that he passed out should answer everyone's questions about the llamas. He read Chapter III, Section VII(e), Protection of Wildlife – Animals and Birds, of the Genesee County Parks and Recreation Commission Park Rules. Mr. Thompson asked what "other animal" is. It doesn't mean elephant or tiger he realizes. An elephant walking across the grounds are going to leave huge marks, huge piles. Mr. Thompson then showed the Parks Commission a jar of llama feces. He stated that they are just pellets about the size of peanut M & M's. The llamas are low-impact animals and you would never know they even walked across the grounds. He stated that he pays taxes on the parks just like everyone else and that he enjoys the parks. There is a lot of room for everyone there. Mr. Thompson showed the Parks Commission the leash that the llamas are walked on. It is not a chain or shock collar. He invited the Parks Commission out to visit with the animals.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no objections, President Krapohl adjourned the meeting at 10:59 a.m.

Recorded and transcribed by:
Kimberly L. Cunningham, Secretary

Parks\M072805