

GENESEE COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
THURSDAY, JUNE 14, 2007  
MINUTES

**(1) CALL TO ORDER**

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

**(2) OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION**

Larry Stricker commented on the status of the Timberwolf fishing ponds. He suggested the gates be moved further down the road to access another parking area and boat launch.

**(3) CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

**Discussion:** No items were removed or discussed.

**Motion to approve items on the consent agenda.**

**Action Taken:** Motion by Commissioner Ranger  
Support by Commissioner Henry

**Roll Call:** Yeas: Bogardus, Krapohl, Lucas, Wright, Ranger, Henry, Bradshaw, Prater, Speed  
Nays: None  
Absent: Washington

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9-0**

**(4) REPORT FROM LEGAL COUNSEL**

A. Piotrowski case update. Ms Piotrowski hired an attorney but has since fired her lawyer. No amended complaint has been filed by the June 12 deadline. A meeting between the lawyers for the three defendants named in the case will be held June 14 to discuss the case further. Commissioner Bogardus asked if a letter could be mailed to her, on behalf of the Parks, explaining to Ms Piotrowski the expenses involved in a case such as this. Mr. Barkey explained that Judge Hayman has fully explained to Ms Piotrowski that lawyers who do not follow the rules and requirements set forth when presenting a case to the courts could be sanctioned and she would be held to the same standards.

**B. Resolution 07-07 - Correction Of Legal Description On Consumers Energy Easement In the Mounds ORV Park.**

**Discussion:** Consumers Energy and the Parks staff located the path of a proposed easement line in the Mounds. We received a written easement with a legal description in it that was later found to be incorrect. The Park Board approved it as well as the Board of Commissioners. This resolution before the Parks Commission today is a proposed resolution to ask the Board of Commissioners to allow an amended easement to be executed to correct the legal description. All other elements previously approved in March are the same.

**Motion to support to adopt Resolution 07-07.**

**Action Taken:** Motion by Commissioner Wright  
Support by Commissioner Prater

**No Roll Call Vote Necessary - all yeas**

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9-0**

C. Fire Run Fee in Oregon Township was argued in front of Judge Holowka in Lapeer County Circuit Court and we lost. Mr. Barkey would like to ask the Commission to consider discussion of our reaction to the Oregon Township fire run fee case in closed session.

(5) **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- A. **Master Gardener Agreement** The Master Gardener's have maintained the flowerbeds at Crossroads Village. This year they have doubled their commitment and volunteers in the Village. A copy of their partnership agreement is in your commission packet.
- B. **3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Fishing Derby** was held June 9, 2007 Ms. Edwards shared a video presentation of the event. Nearly 600 adults and children attended the event. Registration showed that people came from all over the county and even outside the county to participate. Rods and reels and bait were supplied to those who did not have them and 500 hot dog lunches were served. We had over 30 volunteers as well as Maintenance, Genesee Belle, Toll Booth, Park Ranger staff, even the Director helped to make the event a huge success this year.
- C. **Tracks Ahead** has been at Crossroads Village and Huckleberry Railroad for the taping of an episode that will be broadcast on PBS stations across the United States and Japan. They have been shooting footage yesterday (Wednesday) and today. We will get a copy of the finished program for viewing.
- D. **Day Out With Thomas** tickets are over the halfway point in the number of tickets sold. Seventeen trains are sold out.
- E. **Attendance** is over last year's numbers at this same time by 800 people at Crossroads Village.
- F. **Beach Water Quality**- A call from the Health Department this morning indicates that all beaches are in compliance. Our e-coli levels continue to be very low this year.
- G. **Cultivating Our Community**- The COC gardens are all planted and looking great. Flushing Rotary, Dutchman's Deli, Friends of the Flint River Trail are among the sponsors in this program.

(6) **OTHER BUSINESS**

**A. Budget Committee:** Commissioner Krapohl appointed Commissioner Ranger, Commissioner Washington, Commissioner Bradshaw and Commissioner Speed. Commissioner Krapohl will fill in as his schedule allows him to during the summer. The director will contact you when she has information for you to review.

**B. July 12, 2007 Commission Meeting Cancellation**

**Discussion:** Commissioner Krapohl reported that there would not be a quorum present at this meeting so the Commission needs to consider cancelling the meeting.

**Motion to support the cancellation of July 12, 2007 Commission Meeting.**

**Action Taken:** Motion by Commissioner Ranger  
Support by Commissioner Wright

No Roll Call Vote Necessary - all yeas (Commissioner Speed left meeting at 10:30 a.m.)

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 8-0**

C. **Recognition** - Liz Shaw, the reporter who covers the Parks Commission meetings and activities was recently honored with a couple of awards for her writing. We appreciate the articles that she does for the Parks and congratulate her on behalf of the Commission.

**D. OREGON TOWNSHIP FIRE RUN FEES**

**Discussion:** Legal counsel has requested that we enter a closed session meeting to discuss the Commission's reaction to the recent court ruling. As stated earlier in the meeting, the Judge ruled against the Parks Commission. Discussion of this issue in public meeting may have a detrimental financial effect on litigation or settlement position of the Commission.

**Motion to support the Commissioners entering into closed session meeting to discuss trial and settlement strategy.**

**Action Taken:** Motion by Commissioner Ranger  
Support by Commissioner Wright

**Roll Call Vote:** Yeas: Bogardus, Bradshaw, Henry, Krapohl, Wright, Ranger, Prater,  
Nays: None  
Absent: Washington, Commissioner Lucas stepped out of the room and did not vote.

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 7-0**

*Commissioners entered into closed session at 10:38 a.m.  
Regular Commission Meeting Reconvened at 11:05 a.m.*

*Minutes of this closed session are available for inspection by the Commissioners at the office of legal counsel in accordance with Section 6 of the Open Meetings Act, being MCLA 15.267.*

**Further Discussion:** Upon return from closed session Commissioners decided to move forward with an appeal of the judge's decision to uphold the fire run fee charged by Oregon Township.

**Motion to appeal Case # 07-3854-AH**

**Action Taken:** Motion by Commissioner Lucas  
Support by Commissioner Wright

**Roll Call Vote:** Yeas: Wright, Ranger, Prater, Lucas, Krapohl, Henry, Bradshaw, Bogardus  
Nays: None  
Absent: Washington,

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 8-0**

**(7) OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMISSIONERS TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION**

Commissioner Lucas - A UAW Local held their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary last week and while the delegates were in session their wives were sent to the Genesee Belle for lunch and there was nothing but praise from the group. There were people from 8-10 states represented.

Commissioner Henry asked about the progress on the poison ivy spraying. Ms McMillan said this is the time of year that treatment begins in high traffic areas. Spraying has begun.

Commissioner Wright said the American Bullfrog, more common in Alabama, Arkansas, Texas, and southern states around the Gulf is the species of tadpoles that has been found at the Timberwolf ponds. Lots of turtles have been seen at the ponds as well. Wildlife in that area is really doing well.

Commissioner Bradshaw, Lucas and Bogardus discussed the public comments made today. Commissioner Bradshaw asked if we had an in-house safety person. Ms McMillan said our staff regularly evaluates safety issues. In the natural environment there are things that are safer than others. As she understands Mr. Stricker, he wants us to develop formal boat launching areas in the ponds off of Irish Rd. We have recently spent approximately \$25,000 to improve parking lots, gates and driveway.

Commissioner Bogardus commented that those ponds are not natural ponds (they were gravel pits) so they would naturally have steeper banks. Ms McMillan stated that the vast majority of the people who use the area are walkers and people who shore fish. Commissioner Wright commented that the size of the area is not conducive to boat usage and from his perspective it is not a very good idea to create a boat launching area. We certainly do not want to encourage boats with motors. Commissioner Wright further stated that one area that Mr. Stricker has pointed out by the peninsula is a spawning bed right now for pan fish and if people begin to put boats in there it will disrupt that activity.

Ms McMillan commented that there is canoe launching available at Richfield Park. We will be

conducting our Park User survey over the course of the summertime and from that we will glean very good data about what the majority of the park users countywide want to see improved in the parks so the Commissioners can base their decisions for capital improvements on this survey data.

Commissioner Ranger commented that we have really stepped up to the plate by spending nearly \$25,000 on the area. The public is using the area, which is great, but does not believe we should continue at this time.

Commissioner Bogardus asked if a marina on Holloway Reservoir has ever been discussed. Should we be looking at revenue generating options? Ms. McMillan stated that in the original master plan for the Holloway Reservoir there were plans for a marina. Ms McMillan said that she suggests that if the Commission wants to consider that idea we should look at costs associated with a feasibility study. Commissioner Lucas stated the idea was dropped because of the issue of who would operate it and it was determined that the area could not support the marina. Commissioner Krapohl stated that there has been resistance when there was talk of developing that area in Columbiaville.

Commissioner Speed left at 10:30 but wanted her comments included: She complimented the staff on the way Bluebell Beach looks. The flowers and pots impressed her. She has also heard that Flushing County Parks looks very nice as well and she plans to visit that park.

#### **H) (8) OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION**

Mr. Stricker spoke again about moving the gates further back for a safer launch site and parking area. He asked if the rumor was true that Timberwolf Campground is being sold to Michigan Adventure. He was told it was untrue.

#### **(9) ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.