

Members Present: President Joe Krapohl, Secretary Bill Lucas, Commissioners Cloyce Dickerson, Ted Henry, Mike Keeler, Gayle Reed, and Archie Bailey

Members Absent: Commissioner Patrick Gleason, Jeff Wright, Vice President Jim Washington

Staff Present: Amy McMillan, Director; Ron Walker, Deputy Director; Leisa Gagne, Finance Officer; Nancy Edwards, Program Specialist, Deborah Wilkes, Secretary; Teneisha Calhoun, Seasonal Marketing Assistant; Vanessa Springer, Intern

Others Present: Brian Barkey, Legal Counsel

1) Call to Order. President Krapohl presided over the meeting and called meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

2) Opportunity for the public to address the commission. President Krapohl asked if there is anyone wishing to address the Commission. Commission rules state there is a three minute time limit for anyone wishing to address the commission. No one addressed the Commission.

3) Consent Agenda. Discussion: President Krapohl asked if any commissioners wished to remove any items from the consent agenda. No items were removed from the consent agenda.

Action Taken:

Motion by Commissioner Bailey
Supported by Commissioner Lucas

Motion and support for approval of consent agenda items.

Roll Call

Yea: Reed, Lucas, Krapohl, Keeler, Henry, Dickerson, Bailey

Nay: None

Absent: Commissioners Washington, Wright and Gleason

MOTION CARRIED 7-0

4) Report from Legal Counsel. Legal Counsel has no report this week.

5) Director's Report.

A. Addy Award. Ms. McMillan asked Teneisha Calhoun to show the Commissioners the accomplishments and recognition the marketing department received. Ms. Calhoun showed the statue received for the 2011 Gold Addy Award from the American Advertising Federation and a plaque for the Silver Addy award for a radio commercial. The gold-winning award was for billboards in Genesee County and it will advance to national competition. Part of the creative team is Kent Miller who was featured as a photographer in the Pure Michigan campaign. Hilda McShane, Teneisha Calhoun, Deb Gray, Olmsted & Associates and Mark Lantz Projects make up

the marketing team. Our radio commercial campaign features the voice of our very own Facilities Director, Barry June.

B. Warrior Dash Update. Ms. Edwards reported that Red Frog Events now has room to add more participants. Because registration has been going so well, they have added waves on each day and increased the number of spots available in those waves. There is now the capacity to have 13,200 each day. There are currently 13,458 participants registered and the event isn't until July 30 and 31st. They have also asked us about overflow parking and for recommendations for local contractors to help build the obstacles. Things are going quite well. Ms. McMillan said that our chief ranger contacted the local policing agency where other Red Frog Warrior Dash events have been held and received assurance that the event ran extremely smooth and Red Frog does an extraordinary job in running the event. Everyone is feeling good about the working relationship with Red Frog and certainly the attention this event brings to Genesee County Parks and Genesee County as a whole, as well as the local business opportunities.

President Krapohl asked if, based on their history, Red Frog believes they will sell out the event. Ms. Edwards said they haven't done much promotion in this area yet and she doesn't know what their plan is, but spreading the word will help fill the rest of the spots. Last week, after the television spot on Channel 12, the registrations for the Give-away promotion we are running increased. Ms. McMillan said Red Frog promotes about 3 hours away, so it should reach from Grand Rapids to the west and to the borders on the east side of Michigan.

Commissioner Henry asked for a contact number for contractors interested in working with Red Frog to build the obstacles. Ms. McMillan said they should call Ron Walker and he will put them in contact with Red Frog.

C. Fiscal Year Updates The County has settled a number of cases in front of the Michigan Tax Tribunal regarding General Motors. The Parks Commission share of that settlement is around 20,400 this year and around 9,000 in subsequent years. This is less than expected and we are pleased with that. There are four cases pending.

The Office of Equalization will have the taxable value report available on April 12. That is when we will begin our budget process for 2011-12. We will also begin the grant renewal process at this time.

6) New Business.

A. Goose Round Up Resolution As in the past we are asking the commission to permit the Parks to seek a permit for goose round up. We have participated in this program since 2003. The goal is to continue to reduce the population of Canada geese on the lake to improve and maintain the water quality. Last year was the first year that Bluebell Beach did not have to be closed due to high e-coli counts. This certainly has a tremendous positive impact on Mott Lake and the watershed. Ms. McMillan asks that the commission approve Resolution #003-11.

Commissioner Henry asked if this is the same program as in the past. Are there rules the contractor must follow? What is the liability if the service is not performed properly? Does staff observe? Ms. McMillan confirmed that it is and we are now permitted to shake eggs and nests. There are very strict rules that must be followed; yes, we are liable for the work being performed correctly, but we have used the same contractor for several years without incident and Matt Armentrout, Parks Supervisor, observes the procedures, so there is a check and balance.

Commissioner Keeler asked: Do we know what the determination is from the MDNRE for which animals live and die and where it birds go? Ms. McMillan said in the first four years almost 100% of the geese went to another state. At this point, most are now dinner. The round-up takes place during molting season. Ms. McMillan said the MDNRE wildlife division has considerable experience with hunters and hunter programs that donate food to shelters and food banks.

Action Taken:

Motion by Commissioner Bailey
Supported by Commissioner Lucas

Motion and support for adoption of Resolution 003-11 pertaining to the Goose Round Up program.

Yea: All yeas

Nay: None

Absent: Commissioners Washington, Wright and Gleason

MOTION CARRIED 7-0

7) Opportunity for Commissioners to address the Commission. Commissioner Henry asked about the recent deer survey. Ms. McMillan said the report is in and there will be a wildlife committee meeting convened.

Commissioner Henry asked about the Ranger report and whether any of those arrests are made outside of the parks? Ms. McMillan we are occasionally requested to assist other police agencies off park property in Davison and Genesee Township area. He asked specifically about the felony arrests. Ms. McMillan said yes, but one incident was on the corner of Bray and Carpenter and either they were on the path or road.

Commissioner Keeler said he skied in For-Mar recently and saw approximately 20-30 deer in 2.5 hours. He believes some people are feeding them around there. Ms. McMillan said there is a challenge in dealing with the wildlife issue is: what is the appropriate interaction between human and wild animals. Some residents comply, some do not. President Krapohl confirmed that the MDNRE has issued a ban on feeding deer in the Lower Peninsula. Commissioner Keeler said the deer, although they may be transient to the parks, once they find a feeding source in the winter they bed down near the source. Commissioner Keeler said with the combination of the new bridge and signage, you can ski every inch of the park and it made for about a 12 mile ski in the park and it was a nice little place to ski.

Commissioner Bailey asked about Ms. McMillan's impression of the kiosk meeting held on Tuesday. Ms. McMillan said she was impressed and passed the information along to our IT person. We have been doing online applications for years in our department. Although it may not work with our current reservation system she sees opportunities to add certain functions for some events, like Village admission tickets, boat launch stickers. Our IT person will explore the possibilities with staff. She has notified Jon Care that we would like to be kept in the loop and informed of future meetings. Commissioner asked if we currently have ATM machines in the parks. Ms. McMillan said we have explored the issue but do not have the volume for a bank to do that.

Commissioner Bailey said he heard an allegation that a park ranger was driving from one park to another and saw a car on the side of the road and stopped to offer assistance and found that the driver of the car did not have an operator's license and had a warrant for a misdemeanor. The ranger handcuffed the person and took him down to the County jail. The suspect was booked and is apparently still in jail. Commissioner Bailey met with the undersheriff and Capt. Swanson about just what the responsibility of park rangers are. One of Mr. Bailey's questions was: Are they (the rangers) deputized. They are not. They are licensed, though, as certified police officers.

Ms. McMillan: No, they are not deputized and they are not required to be deputized. We worked through this issue with the Sheriff's Department probably 10 years ago. And, they (rangers) are also sworn by the Parks Commission. We have very specific authority, and she can ask Legal Counsel to discuss this in further detail in a future meeting; but the Parks Commission has very specific authority under Act 261 of the State of Michigan. They have all of the rights and responsibilities that all sworn law enforcement officers do.

Commissioner Bailey: In the series of questions I asked the Under Sheriff and Capt. Swanson, they are certified police officers, but they do not have the authority to enforce traffic laws between parks or arrest anyone for non-felony cases outside of the Genesee County Park jurisdiction, secondly, or finally, the only instance they can arrest for misdemeanors, outside of the parks, is by the request of another police agency that is on scene. And, at this point my simple request would be to give this to you to come back to us at the next meeting with an answer as to what of these guidelines we are meeting and what we are not meeting.

Ms. McMillan: Not knowing the specific incident to which you are referring, it's hard for me to say whether we met or did not meet particular guidelines. If you can, at a separate time, provide me with information relative to that incident I can tell you that. I'm answering your question, but to be clear that my comments are directed to the commission as a whole, and the public as a whole, is that, while it is certainly in the realm of possibility that our employees make mistakes on occasion, as do every other department including the Sheriff's and Prosecutor's Office, that our rangers are incredibly well trained, they are very well qualified, they know their jobs extensively. I would put our park ranger department up against any police department in the entire county in terms of the expertise and professionalism which they bring to their jobs. We have hundreds of years of experience in our park ranger division. There may be differences of opinion between police agencies, but I do want to say that very clearly for the record that our park rangers, like all police officers, are put in very difficult positions and I know that it is no one's intent, to in any way, diminish their status as law enforcement professionals and I think we all would agree that should be stated for the record today. We will bring this issue back at the next parks commission meeting and be prepared to address it in full for you.

Commissioner Bailey: My concern is with liability at this point in time and I'd like to turn this over to legal counsel for a look through and come back to us at the next meeting with some sort of report. It's not a criticism of the park rangers, they are the best, but if a park ranger did indeed do that, there is some in-service training that needs to go on to identify issues that might come up like this. I will give what I have to legal counsel and let him take it from there if you have no objections.

Ms. McMillan: I have no objections; I will coordinate that with legal counsel.

(Mr. Dickerson and Mr. Lucas have left the meeting at 10:30 and 10:35 respectively)

8) Opportunity for the public to address the commission. No one addressed the commission.

9) Adjournment. President Krapohl stated that we have lost our quorum and cannot conduct any business or voting, only informal discussions, but with no objections, the meeting was adjourned at 10:39 a.m.

Recorded by Debra Gray
Transcribed by Deborah Wilkes