

Members Present: Vice President James Washington, Secretary Bill Lucas, Commissioners Cloyce Dickerson, Ron Winters, Mike Keeler, Patrick Gleason, Archie Bailey, Jeff Wright, Commissioner Henry. Commissioner Winters

Members Absent: President Joe Krapohl

Staff Present: Amy McMillan, Director; Ron Walker, Deputy Director, Leisa Gagne, Finance Officer; Nancy Edwards, Program Specialist; Hilda McShane, Marketing Specialist; Deborah Wilkes, Secretary

Others Present: Brian Barkey, Legal Counsel

Call to Order. Vice-President Washington presided over the meeting and called meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

1) Opportunity for the public to address the commission. Vice President Washington asked if there is anyone wishing to address the Commission. Per commission rules each person shall have three minutes in which to address the commissioners. No one addressed the commission.

2) Consent Agenda. Vice President Washington asked if any commissioners wished to remove any items from the consent agenda. No items were removed.

Action Taken:

Motion by Commissioner Wright
Supported by Commissioner Dickerson

Motion and support for approval of consent agenda items A-E as listed.

Roll Call

Yeas: Bailey, Dickerson, Gleason, Henry, Keeler, Lucas, Washington, Wright

Nays: None

Absent: President Krapohl, Commissioner Winters are absent (Commissioner Winters arrived at 10:03 a.m.)

MOTION CARRIED 8-0

3) Report from Legal Counsel – Mr. Barkey has no legal report this week.

4) Director's Report.

A. Warrior Dash 2012 Venue Agreement. Staff would like to recommend that the commission approve the agreement between the Parks Commission and Red Frog Events for the 2012 Warrior Dash to be held at the Cummings Center. As you know this year's event was an astounding success. It was a success in terms of the management of the overall site, Red Frog is a very impressive company, and the turnout was astounding. We had 25,000 racers that came from all over the United States, bringing with them a little under 5 million dollars. One thing that is just the most impressive is that it was a large group of people having a good time together. There were no fights, no name calling, nothing. The atmosphere was great. She'd

like to see 12,000 people in the parks every day behaving exactly that same way. There were, as there are in any major sporting event, there were some injuries, they are unfortunate, but they are to be expected. All of the insurances are in place to address those issues and the Red Cross did a very good job managing the medical care onsite.

We are asking you to take action today pending review and approval of our legal counsel. Staff did give preliminary approval to Red Frog pending the commission's actions today. They understand the commission must approve the contract. They do have pre-registration up on their site. In the nine days since it has been online, 7,000 people have registered for a 2012 event to take place in July. She doesn't know if hotels have begun to book, but as soon as the commission takes action we can release the dates of the Warrior Dash at the Wolverine Campground for 2012. The compensation for the 2012 event is the same as 2011.

Commissioner Henry asked if the campground was full. Can we recognize how many were from the event?

Ms. McMillan. Yes it was full that weekend. Particularly on Saturday night there was probably over half, more like 60% from the event, she can check the zip code data that we track. We can only check the person that registered for the site and in many cases the site was registered to someone who brought 3 buddies with them. Staff was expecting a wild night on Saturday but they campers were exhausted, came back from the event and went to sleep. We had no problems; every Saturday night should be like that. Sixty percent of the campground (200 sites total) would be about 120 sites with an average of 4 people per site totaling close to 500 people.

Action Taken:

Motion by Commissioner Wright
Supported by Commissioner Lucas

Motion and support to authorize staff to enter into contract with Red Frog Events for the 2012 Warrior Dash at E. A. Cummings Center subject to final review of legal counsel.

Roll Call

Yeas: Wright, Winters, Dickerson, Henry, Keeler, Washington, Lucas, Gleason, Bailey

Nays: None

Absent: President Krapohl is absent

MOTION CARRIED 9-0

B. Warrior Dash You've been emailed the information and we will share this with everybody now. As you know we do economic impact analysis reports on Crossroads Village, and special events at Crossroads like the Day Out With Thomas and Movie Productions and the general parks as a whole. These demonstrate we an amazing asset to the quality of life and place in Genesee County, we are also a very important part of the economic engine of Genesee County.

The report uses a federal formula that is an industry standard throughout the United States specific to the recreation industry. Just from the participants alone, the economic impact value of this event will be \$4,875,000.00. If you talk to the local folks, particularly the hotel owners, they think it is the best thing since sliced bread. When people talk about the cost of parks and opportunities it is very important thing to remember about the Warrior Dash is that it is a positive revenue event. Red Frog paid us to use the Cummings Center, the largest user fee for a

single day event, plus they reimbursed us for any costs we invested in the program – plus 20% on top of those costs. So while you read about some events in communities that are great events and bring in millions of people, millions of dollars; but, they cost those communities monies out of their funds. The Warrior Dash doesn't cost the parks any money; it actually brings in money to us.

Vice President Washington noted that 169 people came from over 1,000 miles to participate; that is quite impressive.

Commissioner Henry asked which charities were involved in the refreshment tent.

Ms. McMillan doesn't remember who they chose, but Fabiano Bros. supplied the beer. There were 800 volunteers that earned \$1200 for their groups. There were several charities involved.

Commissioner Bailey said that two people were killed during the Dash in another state on the same weekend as ours, and he is concerned for the safety of the participants and be reassured that we are fully covered insurance-wise and health wise with assistance on the scene. Do they cover all the insurances? (Commissioner Washington said it happened in Kansas City and Commissioner Wright commented that there were two deaths on the east coast during a marathon and Mr. Lucas commented that there were a few football players that died as well due to the heat)

Ms. McMillan said they were all delighted with the way Red Cross ran the site. There is no good way to say this, but there are certain risks associated with every event. Some people train better, some are healthier, some are not, some assume more risk than they should have. Red Frog is open and notorious in their training initiatives. If you read it (the waiver) line by line, and are signing it, there is nothing in their waiver to indicate this is a walk in the park.

They do cover all the insurances and like all other special events they have to list us as additionally insured. Anybody can sue anybody, it's not that someone can't sue, but we are protected by the coverage.

Commissioner Henry said there is probably as much risk at the Mounds.

Ms. McMillan agreed that even as a horse rider there is risks and there are equine laws posted in the barn that say you can die doing this.

Commissioner Keeler asked about the cost to enter the event.

Ms. McMillan said it averages \$50.

Commissioner Gleason said he attended the Genesee Township board meeting this past week and, as always, to convey that we want to be good neighbors, he asked the board if they had any problems or concerns if this board makes this decision today (to approve the 2012 event) and they stated they had no problems, no concerns, which is pretty remarkable.

He also emphasized what the director brought up; there are no other events that he knows of, anywhere, that there aren't costs to the municipalities who are providing security and things of that nature. When you take into consideration that there wasn't a penny of extra costs by the parks that wasn't compensated by Red Frog, that's really unusual. That profit was all profit; no money came out of it. We have a wonderful opportunity through the Cummings Center for

several events, maybe not this magnitude, but in theory all kinds of activities, year 'round, weekend after weekend, at this facility. This could be a standout facility if we take the money and invest it to make capital improvements at this facility. Numbers are one thing, but to take into account that this event cost Genesee Township and Genesee County Parks nothing.

Commissioner Wright was out there on Saturday and it was very exciting to watch. To get that many young people there, that upbeat, that joyful, so happy; it was thrilling to him to see the attitude of everyone there.

C. Budget 2011-12. You have a draft of the budget to review or ask questions and we will bring it back to you on August 25 to approve. After you approve the budget it goes to the Board of Commissioners to be adopted by September 30.

For the last two years the C. S. Mott Foundation has underwritten our operating budget. This year we are requesting \$1,559,000.00. Typically we don't hear until the end of September if we will be funded, so we have to bring a budget to you for approval without any grant funds included.

There is a list of things to be eliminated if we are not funded or if we are funded in a lesser amount. They are broken down into categories. There is nothing that says we can't change the order of things if we are not funded. Grants have their own fund numbers so they do not appear in the draft budget. The list of cuts is brutal. Full time staff positions, several week layoffs during the year, elimination of the entire recreation program, eliminate several major programs and it would gut our park maintenance issues. If we are fully funded we will do exactly what we have done this year. We continue to pursue other grants, such as Nancy's playground program grants, theatre grants, Ruth Mott, Mounds grants we layer on top of the Mott grant. However, we do not plan anything new out of the operating budget because when the Mott Foundation is this generous we only ask for what we absolutely need to do what we have done.

We will ask you to approve it at the next meeting, fund by fund.

Commissioner Henry asked if the \$20,000 from Red Frog is in this budget. The accommodation's tax? Is that money delegated for anything specific?

Ms. McMillan confirmed that it has been included in revenue.

The Parks has two years left on the accommodation's tax contract with the Board. The accommodation tax revenue is based on what we received this year; we are always conservative with the amount we use for the budget. There are no guaranteed funds in our budget.

Yes, as outlined with our contract with the Board of Commissioners and using the enabling legislation for the accommodation tax fund, we utilize it for maintenance at Crossroads Village.

D. We'd like to talk for about five minutes to the wildlife subcommittee meeting. There is just one question for the group if they can stay after this meeting.

5) New Business. There is no new business.

6) Opportunity for Commissioners to address the Commission. Commissioner Lucas congratulated the staff for the terrific job on the Warrior Dash. Good job to the staff involved. There are other people saying good job too!

Ms. McMillan said it is a team effort. When people say "it's great that you get these grants", or that you "brought in this event" - everybody who works for the parks commission is part of making that happen. Funders don't invest in you if you don't do a good job with your program facilities, events don't come to the area if you don't have good customer service, good infrastructure, or facilities they are looking for, if you don't have policy makers who are supportive of bringing in new events and businesses you can't do that either, it really is a team effort.

Commissioner Wright commented that there were several park employees competing. Who had the best time? Not only do we have good employees that do great things for the park, they actually participate in events too. Good job to all of you.

Commissioner Henry said when you see those numbers of people coming in, how do we capitalize off that?

Ms. McMillan said the campground did make money from the event and the more that we learn to communicate with these types of event promoters, when we learn the demographics of the participants and we can do some joint marketing. The Warrior Dash demographics tend to be married, one child, one car, college degree. If that child is 3-5 yrs. old we should be getting them to Day Out With Thomas. The more people who become familiar with this area the more likely they are to come back.

Commissioner Wright said when he at the start line he was talking to a gentleman from Midland. He has horses and didn't know this facility was here and that he would bring his horses down to this beautiful facility, so the director is exactly right, the more people find out about the area the more likely to come back for different purposes.

Vice-President Washington said he is proud to be associated with the Parks. He's reading a book based on an individual that demonstrates good customer service and the people he meets along the way that demonstrate customer service. If he had an opportunity to present "Fred's" to this organization he would. You have a tremendous staff here, a tremendous commission.

Commissioner Dickerson has heard a lot of positive feedback. Great job, great event, with a lot of people. He didn't realize it was so competitive, even to the point of maybe he should participate! He's had knee operations but next year he will go out and watch!

7) Opportunity for the public to address the commission.

8) Adjournment. Hearing no objections, Vice President Washington adjourned the meeting at 10:35 a.m.