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## GENESEE COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES

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The semi-monthly meeting of the Genesee County Parks & Recreation Commission was held on Thursday, January 28, 2010 in the Harris Auditorium at the Genesee County Administration Building, 1101 Beach Street, Flint, 48502.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Joe Krapohl, Patrick Gleason, Mike Keeler, David Miller, Bob Ranger, Bill Lucas, Ted Henry, Jim Washington, Jeff Wright

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Archie Bailey

**STAFF PRESENT:** Amy McMillan, Director; Ron Walker, Deputy Director; Deborah Wilkes, Secretary; Leisa Gagne, Finance Officer, Nancy Edwards, Recreation Programmer, Kathi Whitcomb, Program Coordinator, Jenny Blume, Seasonal Office Aide.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Cindy Carnes, Purchasing Department, Joe Madore, Richfield Twp. Supervisor

(1) **Call To Order**

President Krapohl called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

(2) **Opportunity for the Public to Address the Commission**

President Krapohl asked if there was anyone who wished to address the Commission. According to Commission rules, there is a three minute time limit for anyone wishing to address the commission. No one from the public addressed the commission.

(3) **Consent Agenda**

**Discussion:** President Krapohl asked if any of the commissioners wished to remove any items from the consent agenda for further discussion. No items were removed from the consent agenda.

**Action Taken:**

Motion by Commissioner Lucas  
Supported by Commissioner Miller

**Motion and support for approval of the consent agenda items.**

**Roll Call:**

Yeas: Wright, Washington, Ranger, Lucas, Krapohl, Keeler, Henry, Gleason, Miller  
Nays: None  
Absent: Commissioner Bailey

**MOTION CARRIED 9-0**

(4) **REPORT FROM LEGAL COUNSEL**

Mr. Barkey gave the Commission an update on the Spencer case involving a property dispute at the Mounds ORV Park. We had filed a motion asking the judge to review the facts, prior to the trial, that were non-disputable and asked that they rule in favor of the Parks and the judge did just that last week. We got an opinion from the court that declares that the parks commission is the owner of the property in dispute and the Spencer's are not. There are a few details that have to be taken care of, but the lawsuit was successful.

Commissioner Henry asked if we were going to define the property line. Ms. McMillan said there are a few details to be addressed and when that is completed we will bring a full report to the commission.

(5) **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

A. Ms. McMillan has been waiting since last week to present this report. Confronted with the grim millage statistics and budgets, we called employees together to generate \$10 ideas to save ten dollars here and there out of the budget. Her goal was to save 25 – 40 thousand dollars. She is very happy to say that she was *wrong*. After comparing expenditures from last year we determined that we saved \$167,832. That is a tremendous amount of money. Ms. McMillan introduced Jenny Blume and Kathi Whitcomb. Jenny single handedly saved \$36,623 office supplies (half of our budget). She scrutinized all supply requests before even submitting it to the director. She really owned this idea and took it seriously. She was given a budget and kept to the budget. Kathi Whitcomb brought the idea to us early last year to power down our computers every night. This idea led to everybody making a commitment to save energy. We asked for 50 ideas and our employees came up with 82 ideas to save money. This figure is just the result of the \$10 ideas, and does not include everything else that staff did to reduce their budgets, like sending staff home on bad weather days and making sure we were not overstaffed. We will share this information with other county departments and with the Board of Commissioners. Every penny saved means jobs, and that means better services to our customers.

Vice President Washington said he was glad it would be shared with other departments, and he was ecstatic about it and he wouldn't have considered the parks doing anything second to this. If we go through this again (budget cuts), keep this on file so people will be reminded that if parks can do it anybody can do it without great consternation. Parks have done a fantastic job and he would have expected nothing less than this from the parks.

President Krapohl said that when the Parks presents this to the Board he will let everybody know so if they wish to attend, they may be there. He said that he liked the idea that the entire employee group was included and the employees should be commended because some things may have been a hardship, but everybody, seeing the overall picture of our budget situation, pulled together and the Board is very appreciative.

B. Huckleberry Railroad Monitoring. There was a spill at the railroad many years ago and we have had to monitor the wells there for nearly a decade and it has cost a considerable amount of money to do that each year. The sampling results indicate that there is nothing to sample any longer. We will meet with all the parties involved to make certain we all understand the requirements that we are responsible for and close out this project.

(6) **OTHER BUSINESS**

A. Holloway Reservoir Easement (Perkins Drain).

**Discussion:** Ms. McMillan asked Drain Commissioner Jeff Wright to explain the reason for the easement. Mr. Wright said that the red clay tile drain installed about 100 years ago is failing and well beyond its life expectancy. This is in an area that equestrians use and it is dangerous for the animals and riders. It is also near Stanley Road and there have been instances where the road has had standing water over the road which is also a public safety hazard. The original easement, located on private property, stated that it could only be replaced with a tile drain and that is very expensive. The property has since been turned over to the Parks. Therefore, the drain commission is requesting an easement to park property to convert an existing county underground drain to open swale, or channel. This board would need to make a resolution and then it would be sent to the Board of Commissioners for approval as well.

Commissioner Wright confirmed for Commissioner Henry that these easements were worded in such a way (about drainage only) to protect the property owner from some other government entity couldn't come in and install a gas line or road. This easement will be specifically worded for an open swale and nothing else. Commissioner Wright told Mr. Henry that the property's elevation will work and the swale will follow the contour of the land and follow where the old drain tile is placed.

Commissioner Keeler asked about the damage to the surrounding vegetation. Commissioner Wright said that other than what needs to be removed for installation, the other vegetation should not be adversely affected. There is a mixture of scrub woods and shrubbery and meadowland. There is plenty of cattails and natural vegetation. When the drain commission constructs these swales they try to leave as much vegetation to reduce erosion and leave a canopy to inhibit the growth of undesirable plants like cattails and purple loosestrife.

President Krapohl asked if the DEQ had to approve it and asked if erosion, run-off and septic leaches from the private properties could be factors. Mr. Wright said that the DEQ does need to approve it and if not treated properly all of those could be problems but the DEQ and the drain commission uses the best management practices to monitor and control these factors. The state will be watching the discharge point into the Holloway Reservoir. The septic systems are monitored by the Genesee County Health Department and they would address any problems from septic that might arise. Septic problems would definitely be more evident with an open swale. The closest home has an engineered septic system and should not leak.

**Action Taken:**

Motion by Commissioner Lucas  
Supported by Commissioner Ranger

**Motion and support for Resolution # 001-10.**

Vote by acclamation:

All Ayes

Nays: None

Absent: Commissioner Bailey

Abstentions: Commissioner Jeff Wright abstained from the vote.

**MOTION CARRIED 8-0**

- B. President Krapohl stated that Commissioner Gleason agreed to remain on the Parks executive board as a representative from the Board of Commissioners.
- C. Off-site Meetings. President Krapohl has asked Ms. McMillan to schedule a parks commission meeting to be held at For-Mar, preferably when the trees and flowers are in bloom. Commissioner Bailey asked for this at the last meeting. If anybody else would like a meeting rescheduled to a location within the parks, please let Ms. McMillan know.
- D. Immediately following our next meeting is the Parks annual retreat, which will be held in Room 301 next door to the Harris Auditorium. Come prepared with ideas and solutions. Lunch will be served.

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

Commissioner Wright thanked the board for approving a resolution for the easement. He also thanked the staff saving all the money through their \$10 saving ideas. He noted that the fuel prices could have been affected by the drop in fuel prices, but it is still a phenomenal savings and should be emulated by the other county departments. Ms. McMillan said that the fuel saving was also in part to the Parks "piggy-backing" on Mr. Wright's contract to ensure we were getting the lowest possible price as they dropped. Insulating some buildings also created a huge savings.

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

Joe Madore stated that he remembers noticing the numbers written on a bulletin board in the parks' administration building about turning off computers and the savings and he wrote those numbers down and took them back to his township office and they have done the same. He also said they turn their Bunn coffee pots off. Ms. McMillan said the Parks don't make coffee anymore and everybody brings their own. He thanked the parks for the tip.

**(9) ADJOURNMENT**

With no objections made, President Krapohl adjourned the meeting at 10:30 a.m.