
GENESEE COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES

The semi-monthly meeting of the Genesee County Parks & Recreation Commission was held on Thursday, February 28, 2008 in the Harris Auditorium, Genesee County Administration Building, 1101 Beach Street, Flint, Michigan.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

APPOINTED MEMBERS

Joe Krapohl, President
James Washington, Vice President
William Lucas, Secretary
Raynetta Speed
Ted Henry
Rose Bogardus
Mike Keeler
Bob Ranger

EX-OFFICIOS PRESENT:

Jeff Wright, Ex-Officio
David Miller, Ex-Officio

STAFF PRESENT

Amy M. McMillan, Director
Ron Walker, Deputy Director
Matt Armentrout, Maintenance Supervisor
Deborah Wilkes, Secretary
Leisa Gagne, Finance Officer
Hilda McShane, Marketing Specialist

OTHERS PRESENT:

Brian Barkey, Commission Legal Counsel
Larry Stricker, Public
Elizabeth Shaw, The Flint Journal
Jonathan Jarose, C.A.E.R.
Leyla Sanker, C.A.E.R.
Michael Goad, Public
Rich Richardson, Public
Lynn Roberts, Public

(1) CALL TO ORDER

President Krapohl called the meeting to order at 10:12 a.m.

(2) PRESENTATION OF CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT STUDY

Mr. Jarose and Ms. Sanker reported the findings of the Capital Improvement Study conducted in the summer of 2007. The entire 80-page document and CD is available at the main office of Genesee County Parks & Recreation Commission. At the end of the presentation Ms. Sanker congratulated the Commission. One of the questions asked to the focus groups was how they perceive the GCPRC overall. Across the board it is perceived as being good and doing a good job and the parks are very well maintained.

(3) OPPORTUNITY FOR THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION

Larry Stricker of 3547 N Gale Rd., Davison thanked the Parks for snow plowing the Timberwolf parking area where people are ice fishing. He also wondered why things such as kayaks or canoes are no longer available for rent in the Parks.

Michael Goad, 5446 Millington Rd., requested that bow fishing from a boat be allowed on Mott Lake. He thought the problem may lie with an issue of weapons in the park. He presented the Commission with information about the affects of carp in a lake and how the lakes would benefit from the removal of the fish. His report explains how the equipment is used and the safety factors of bow fishing. Holloway is being fished but excessive boat traffic, and poor water clarity causes problems. Mott Lake would be ideal because it is a no wake lake and there are not many homes on the lake and there are two ramps available.

If there are any questions about anything he would be happy to answer. He also showed another report that shows how carp removal can clean a lake. Bow fishing is legal in any other public water whether hunting is allowed or not.

President Krapohl requested that the information be left and it will be distributed to the Commissioners and become part of the public record.

Commissioner Lucas asked for clarification of what Mr. Goad was asking. Mr. Goad stated it is a request to bow fish on Mott Lake. President Krapohl stated that the Commission will do a very thorough investigation and research of the issue and try to do what is best. If the Commissioners have any questions, we will be in contact.

(4) CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Discussion: Commissioner Henry requested that the bills be removed from the consent agenda. President Krapohl will put the bills in Other Business.

Motion to approve the items on the consent agenda minus the ratification of the bills.

Action Taken: Motion by Commission Lucas
Supported by Commissioner Ranger

Roll Call: Yeas: Bogardus, Henry, Keeler, Krapohl, Lucas, Miller, Ranger, Speed,
Washington, Wright
Nays: None

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 10-0

(5) REPORT FROM LEGAL COUNSEL

Legal Counsel has no report.

(6) DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. Capital Improvement Study

Discussion: First action item is to accept the Capital Improvement Study as presented today. Ms. McMillan addressed the question by Mr. Stricker regarding equipment rental because equipment rental did come up often during the survey. The reason we do not rent equipment is because it was not economically feasible to do that any longer. We used to rent boats and smaller equipment. We plan to issue and RFP for equipment rental to see if the private sector has interest in providing that amenity in the park as a business opportunity that might include canoe liveries, bicycles, etc. Our past experience has shown that the cost exceeded the revenue generated. Commissioner Bogardus said that at one time the parks were on the path to consider developing a marina. She thought it may have been township opposition. She asked if it was under long range planning. Ms McMillan said that the issue hasn't come up as a need and people haven't been asking for a marina. She suggested that if the Commission were considering that, she would suggest that it would require a feasibility study to determine what the cost, revenues, and permit procedure would entail. Mr. Lucas said that the Commission eventually came to a conclusion that it was not economically feasible to do it. He said that even opposition to the project faded away and it became an economic issue. Ms McMillan said that any feasibility studies that were done several years ago are very outdated.

Ms. McMillan thanked the staff of C.A.E.R. and the Parks staff for all the work they put into the project. We look forward to putting the information to good use.

Motion to accept the Capital Improvement Survey Study.

Action Taken: No roll call necessary- All ayes

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 10-0

b. 2008 Capital Improvements Staff Recommendations

Discussion: The Parks Commission set aside about \$175,000.00 in the 07-08 budgets and the ability to spend that was contingent upon meeting revenue projections in the first quarter of the year. We did a great job in bringing in the dollars that were budgeted. This money is now available for improvements or special projects over the course of the rest of this calendar year. The staff has put together a list of improvements. The Commission will be given a general overview and asked to have a separate discussion on each project.

Ms McMillan stated that according to the study presented today, that playground equipment is a highly desired feature in the Parks. Some areas are still lagging behind. Davison Roadside Park currently has no equipment and we are recommending equipment such as the examples in your packets. These are only examples, and these are only estimates. Because playground equipment will cost over \$20,000 it will have to go through a formal bid process. Final features, manufacturers and details will be determined by the bid process and final numbers will come back to be voted on. Davison Roadside Park is a relatively small area so we have recommended a relatively small piece of equipment, similar to what we have at Buell Lake County Park.

We do the installation ourselves and you will notice that safety surfacing is a huge expense but it is a required expense under both the CPSC guidelines and ADA.

Wolverine is also recommended for playground equipment. There is a huge need at the campground from Memorial Day to Labor Day. There are a tremendous number of children and families that would benefit from using this playground.

Bluebell Beach had to have equipment removed from the front of the park near the picnic area. It is a very popular picnic area and an area of the park that is more shaded and cool.

It is being recommended to install vault toilets at Flushing County Park. Buell, Linden and Richfield County Parks have these types of toilets and they are easily maintained and work very well in these parks. This feature must also go through a RFP process because they are not inexpensive.

Motion of support to accept staff recommendations for the Capital Improvement Project at Bluebell Beach, swing set and safety surfacing.

Action Taken: Motion by Commission Lucas
Support by Commissioner Henry

Roll Call: Yeas: Lucas, Miller, Ranger, Speed, Washington, Wright, Bogardus, Henry, Keeler
Nays: None
Absent: Commissioner Wright left meeting and is unavailable for roll call.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9-0

Davison Roadside Park, Flushing County Park and Wolverine Campground: President Krapohl asked if there is a consensus to save going through roll calls we could combine approval of the equipment purchases for these parks. Commissioner Bogardus asked about the location of the equipment in Wolverine Campground. Ms McMillan stated that the locations are being worked out, but we want it to be accessible to the most possible amount people

Commissioner Miller moved to concur with staff's recommendation to combine the other three items.

Motion of support to accept staff recommendations for capital improvements in Davison Roadside Park, Flushing County Park and Wolverine Campground.

Action Taken: Motion by Commission Miller

Support by Commissioner Lucas

Roll Call: Yeas: Henry, Keeler, Washington, Bogardus, Krapohl, Ranger, Lucas, Speed, Miller
Nays: None
Absent: Commissioner Wright

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9-0

Community Marketing Initiative: Ms McMillan requested that some of the special project dollars be spent for community marketing initiatives. One of the things in the study is that no matter how much people know about the County Parks, no matter how often they use the web site, no matter how many pieces of paper we get into their hands, they always want to know more. We would like to utilize some of the special project on expanding our community marketing initiatives. There is a request to use \$30,000.00 for that purpose.

Commissioner Bogardus requested to talk about a Bluebell Beach shade area at this time. Ms McMillan told Commissioner Bogardus that she had just finished up a grant application to the American Academy of Dermatologist for \$8,000 to be spent on shade structures.

Commissioner Henry asked if we ever team up with the library. Ms. McMillan stated that we do link up with them through web links, distribution of all of our materials through the Genesee District Library, the Flint Library, Genesee Intermediate School District, local municipal government offices, we put tons of information out there and we are in the process of overhauling our website to build more links to places like credit unions. Hilda (McShane) and Teneisha (Calhoun) do a tremendous job, but the more we put out there, the more people want to know. Commissioner Henry noted that there are about 75% of the senior centers that are using the same publication that have common pages. Is it possible that we utilize them for some advertising? He offered to provide copies of the publications that probably have contact names on them.

Motion of support for staff recommendations for community marketing, branding initiative in the amount of \$30,000.00

Action Taken: Motion by Commission Henry
Support by Commissioner Ranger

Roll Call: Yeas: Miller, Keeler, Speed, Bogardus, Lucas, Washington, Krapohl, Henry, Ranger
Nays: None
Absent: Commissioner Wright

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9-0

Goldenrod Disc Course: One of the items frequently asked for at the Disc Golf Course is concrete tees. Ms McMillan stated that because there have been a few questions about this from Commissioners, she would like to bring a representative from Disc Craft Golf, the people who developed the specifications and helped build our course, to bring some information back so the Commission can make an informed decision on this item. She is asking that the Commission hold this item in consideration until that time. We will secure three estimates for the Commission and we will break it down into 9 holes and 18 holes.

Motion to postpone approval of concrete tees at Goldenrod Disc Golf Course until the first meeting in March.

Action Taken: Motion by Commission Washington
Support by Commissioner Ranger

No Roll Call: All Ayes

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9-0

Max Brandon Park: Ms McMillan welcomed Bob Cook, the Director of the City of Flint Parks & Recreation department. He is here to answer questions about entering into a partnership or Adopt A Park agreement with the City of Flint to maintain Max Brandon Park. The Parks Commission provided summer maintenance in that park during 2003-2004. Mr. Cook and Ms. McMillan will answer questions about this proposal. If, after questions, the Board would like to postpone a vote on this issue, we can postpone it until we can come back with more answers.

Commissioner Bogardus asked why the City has decided not to maintain the park.

Mr. Cook said that last year the walkway, consisting of 1 and 3/10 was completely resurfaced with asphalt, the parking lots, on three sides of the park, were resurfaced, the toys, pavilions, swings were painted and decorated with bright colors, there has been some pilferage of picnic tables, which no matter how much you try to secure them, it still happens. Last year, with it being a very wet season and heavy grass cutting, there are wet lands in there and there were a lot of areas that were unable to be cut in a timely matter.

President Krapohl asked Mr. Cook to confirm if the mowing was contracted to an outside source. Mr. Cook stated that the park is 68 acres and 10 acres are around the outside perimeter by Dupont, ML King and Pasadena. The outside contractor mows the outside 18 feet, and the City does the other acres. The City was so far behind that the IMA came in and gave them a boost to help. It was a heavy grass cutting season last year. The mowing cost was from \$250 to just under \$500 for each mowing.

Commissioner Bogardus stated that information she has been provided shows that what the City claims is wetlands is not accurate. Although the path had a new surface it was just a path through high grass and high weeds. The general maintenance has not been acceptable to allow community use. It's not just a park for walking through; it's the whole park that is not available. Mr. Cook again stated that because of heavy rains it was difficult to get in there and mow the grass, because of the fast growth and warm weather.

President Krapohl stated that when the County Parks maintained this park there was a very favorable community response. That was one of the ideas we have for our capital projects and there are a lot of concerns by our commissioners. He asked if Mr. Cook would be willing to meet with staff to look at a possible long-term arrangement to bring that park to something the community could be extremely proud of; the potential is there to make a lot of great things happen. Mr. Cook said Max Brandon Park is in a highly populated area and is highly used and it is not unusual to see 45-60 cars in the parking lot in the early morning.

Mr. Krapohl told Mr. Cook that Amy McMillan would be in touch with him in the very near future to talk about how the Genesee County Parks and City of Flint can work together on maintaining that park.

Commissioner Henry asked if there are any plans in the future for forest management. Mr. Cook said the City of Flint is responsible for the trees from the sidewalk to the curb and also in the parks. There are a lot of diseased trees and old trees and there have been many years that no attention was paid to the trees, they were only removed when they fell down. The City is playing catch-up on emergency tree removal. The plans are to step up the program this summer. The storms we have had this summer, wind and ice have caused a lot of problems and put them behind schedule. Ms. McMillan added that the Keep Genesee County Beautiful organization was awarded a grant by the Ruth Mott Foundation to conduct a forestry study at Max Brandon Park which will result in a forestry management plan for the largest urban forest in the city, which is Max Brandon Park. After the study is complete there will be recommendations about how to appropriately address the issues in the future, not just tree removal and trimming, but also replanting.

Commissioner Speed thanked Mr. Cook for attending our meeting and she is very familiar with that park and was saddened by recent lack of maintenance. She commented about using the park and there are many walkers all day long, and how well it was maintained when the parks maintained it and she is looking forward to working with the City...inaudible.

Mr. Cook was asked about the budget. Mr. Cook said new mowers were purchased last year and a lot goes to maintaining the trees and mowing and mowing was lacking last year because of the rain and rate of growth of the grass. President Krapohl said that he is confident that within the next month Amy will come back with some good news that we are going to work with the City to bring that park up to what the community expects.

Commissioner Ranger asked if this undertaking will be yearly or enter into a 3 year or long-term contract with the City. He also commented that it rained everywhere in Genesee County, not just Max Brandon Park. President Krapohl stated that we would be looking at different options, including a multi-year option. Mr. Cook and Amy will discuss the details. Ms. McMillan stated she will bring back both a short and long term arrangement that is agreeable to both the City and County. It is easier to keep things going if it is long term, rather than to stop and start.

Commissioner Bogardus lives immediately adjacent to a park in Davison and the municipality of Davison is also facing the same financial constraints as any other municipality in this community from the lack of tax dollars. She has a concern about taking over or putting this money into what is a municipal facility. She can see other municipalities coming to us and saying, "We need help too". We need to be very careful proceeding with this and we need very strong assurances of what kind of project this is, who is doing this project, why they are doing it and signage, etc. She has real concerns about other municipalities coming forward saying they are in line for our help.

Commissioner Keeler asked Mr. Cook if the park millage city residents pay is mostly going for mowing the parks. Mr. Cook stated that no, it is for putting equipment into the parks, general upkeep, renewing; many things, not just mowing. It is an overwhelming undertaking with 68 parks. Mr. Keeler asked if this money did not come to the City for Max Brandon Park would there be money in the City park millage to mow at Max Brandon Park. Mr. Cook said, definitely there would be, this would just be a benefit to the City to have the County take over again an area that the County Parks took good care of and it would be a highlight for the city.

Motion of support to postpone until the next regularly schedule Park meeting the capital improvement plan for Max Brandon Park.

Action Taken: Motion by Commission Washington
Support by Commissioner Henry

No Roll Call: All Ayes

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 9-0

c. Bluebell Beach Goose Reduction: Ms. McMillan stated that in an ongoing effort to improve water quality in Mott Lake we have done a goose reduction program each year. This allows for the rounds up of geese to relocate or use as game birds. The recommendation is to allow the staff to apply for a permit to the DNR and to hire a company to get the geese out of there. Commissioners asked if gathering eggs was allowed earlier in the year. Ms. McMillan stated that some of those things are not allowed and some states have programs that paint the shells to make them thinner and they will not hatch. It hasn't been that long that the Canadian Geese have come off the endangered species list.

Motion of support for staff recommendation on resolution for the Goose Roundup.

Action Taken: Motion by Commission Lucas
Support by Commissioner Washington

Roll Call: Yeas: Miller, Lucas, Henry, Keeler, Ranger, Bogardus, Washington, Krapohl
Nays: None
Absent: Commissioner Speed left meeting at 11:25
Commissioner Wright

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 8-0

d. Summer Entertainment - Strolling Musician, Neil Woodward

Discussion: Staff request Commission award a contract for services to Neil Woodward for strolling musician services at Crossroads Village and Huckleberry Railroad for summer 2008. This request comes as a result of a Request For Proposals that was submitted through the County Purchasing Department and Mr. Woodward was the sole response. He has worked with us for many, many years and we are happy to recommend we continue that relationship for summer and School Days. Ms. McMillan requests that the Commission authorize her to sign a contract with Neil Woodward upon review by legal counsel.

Motion of support for staff recommendation for Summer Musical Entertainment at Crossroads Village (Neil Woodward).

Action Taken: Motion by Commission Henry
Support by Commissioner Ranger

Roll Call: Yeas: Lucas, Ranger, Krapohl, Bogardus, Washington, Miller, Keeler, Henry
Nays: None
Absent: Commissioner Speed
Commissioner Wright

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 8-0

e. Ratification of Bills

Discussion: Commissioner Henry asked for details regarding various checks. Ms. McMillan's staff clarified what the expenses were for, particularly heating and cooling. Repairs to heating system were made to make sure the Mill Street Warehouse was ready for the off-site Board of Commissioners meeting that took place there. A bill for large stones was questioned by Commissioner Henry; per Ron Walker - the stone was used to shore up roads in Crossroads as well. Trim Pine Farms was for plantings at Flushing County Park with some of it underwritten by a donation by Board Commissioner Archie Bailey.

The security firm contract is expired and we are preparing to put that contract up for bids this year. Staff will be bringing information to future meetings about a security contract.

Motion of support for ratification of Commission bills.

Action Taken: Motion by Commission Bogardus
Support by Commissioner Ranger

Roll Call: Yeas: Washington, Lucas, Keeler, Krapohl, Ranger, Bogardus, Henry, Miller
Nays: None
Absent: Commissioner Speed
Commissioner Wright

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 8-0

f. Branding Strategy & Logos

Discussion: Amy McMillan presented the tag line and logos and branding strategy presented to the staff by McCann Erickson. The full presentation was made at the retreat in February. She showed the updated logo. The tag line is "Get Away, Right Away"

Motion of support to accept staff recommendation for new branding strategy and logos: Get Away, Right Away.

Action Taken: Motion by Commission Lucas
Support by Commissioner Washington

No Roll Call: All Ayes

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY 8-0

(7) **OTHER BUSINESS**

There is no other business

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

President Krapohl welcomed Dave Miller back to our Commission.

Nancy Edwards will be looking for worm counters at the annual Fishing Derby.

Commissioner Ranger asked if Mr. Goad belonged to any bow fishing group or society. How many fish are expected to be taken? What is done with the harvested fish? Mr. Goad said there are associations and organizations for bow fishers. There is no legal limit for carp, pike, and suckers. No game fish may be taken with bows. Most people bury the fish for fertilizer, they are not safe to eat and he uses them for bait in traps. Commissioner Ranger was concerned about the fish being tossed on banks or beach to rot or thrown in dumpsters. He asked Mr. Goad to please be patient with the Commission. It takes a while to do studies and research and this is one of the busiest times of the year for us.

Commissioner Henry asked if they hunt day or night. Mr. Goad replied "Both" Most prefer daytime unless there is high daytime boat traffic. Commissioner Henry asked about lakefront residences and Ms. McMillan stated there were none, the County Parks owns the lakefront.

Commissioner Keeler asked if there is a season. Mr. Goad replied: April - August and Great Lakes are year around. It is state law that fish cannot be left on the shore. A ticket can be issued if someone is caught leaving fish on park property.

Commissioner Bogardus asked about distance from other fisherman. Ms McMillan said those types of issues will be discussed after researching the issue and staff will review the information Mr. Goad brought.

Commissioner Bogardus also asked if we would be having dulcimer music at Crossroads Village. Ms McMillan stated we have various musical weekends that may include dulcimer music because that is a very common instrument that comes to these weekends.

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

Mr. Rich Richardson, 2226 Ridgemoor Ct, Burton. The local news showed that the deer they tested for bovine TB in Shiawassee County was positive. He wants everybody to know that we could be in danger for it spreading to our area. He would like to see herd management become a recreational activity for the long term. There are an unbelievable amount of tracks near and around For-mar property. It is evident there is not enough food in there for the animals to survive. They have trapped animals successfully in Grand Blanc for relocation but you still have to look for another place for them and in southern Michigan deer herd is a problem anyway. Maybe deer ranchers would take them. The public has not been in an uproar about the issue judging by the newspaper. You, (the staff) get paid to make the tough decisions and he is sure they will.

(10) President Krapohl adjourned the meeting at 12:12 P.M.