

Regular Meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission

Approved Minutes

Date: November 4, 2009

Time: 4:00 p.m.

Place: Fillmore Complex, Conference Room E

Present: Ted Bosgraaf, Bobbi Jones Sabine, Joyce Kortman, Jim Miedema, David Van Ginhoven, Ray Statema, Roger Jonas, and Phil Kuyers

Absent: David Vander Kooi and Paul Geerlings

Staff: John Scholtz, Director; Sherry Costello, Administrative Clerk; Dave Mazurek, Park Operations Superintendent; and Curt TerHaar, Coordinator of Park Planning and Development

Guests: Fred Vaas and Joyce Smith

Subject: Approval of Minutes

PR 09-70 Motion: To approve the minutes of the Commission's October 7, 2009 regular meeting.
Moved by: Statema Supported by: Kuyers Unanimous

Subject: Fred Meijer Kenowa Trail

PR 09-71 Motion: To make a commitment to fund the Fred Meijer Kenowa Trail in front of Spring Grove Park at a cost of \$91,320 plus 10% for engineering for a total cost of \$100,452.
Moved by: Kuyers Supported by: Statema Unanimous

Subject: Tunnel Park Dune Stairs

PR 09-72 Motion: To receive bids and approve Plaggemars Construction for the Tunnel Park Dune Stair improvement project at a cost of \$62,900, with the total project budget not to exceed \$66,000.
Moved by: Van Ginhoven Supported by: Statema Unanimous

Subject: Spring Grove Park Site Improvements & Bur Oak Kiosk Construction

PR 09-73 Motion: To receive bids and approve VP Construction, LLC to construct a picnic pad at Spring Grove Park and kiosk at Bur Oak Landing at a cost of \$13,526 and \$1,536 respectively, plus authorize a 5% contingency for the projects.
Moved by: Jonas Supported by: Kuyers Unanimous

Subject: Go Into Closed Session

PR 09-74 Motion: To go into Closed Session to discuss property matters.
Moved by: Kuyers Supported by: Kortman
Yeas: Bosgraaf, Sabine, Kuyers, Jonas, Kortman, Van Ginhoven, Statema, and Miedema.
Nays: None Motion passed 8 to 0.

Subject: To Rise From Closed Session

PR 09-75 Motion: To rise from Closed Session.
Moved by: Kuyers Supported by: Kortman Unanimous

Other Items Discussed:

President Bosgraaf called the meeting to order and asked for additions or deletions to the agenda. Scholtz requested the addition of two items to the agenda and Statema requested one addition.

Commission members received and reviewed comment cards and emails received since the previous meeting.

Bosgraaf moved on to Public Comment. Ms. Joyce Smith, a resident from 2291 Black Lake Walk in Park Township, indicated that the West Michigan Parks Association (WMPA) had committed to plant dune grass on the dunes in the Park 12 area and she had not yet seen any planted. She requested that staff possibly send a letter of inquiry about the commitment. Ms. Smith also reported on a story she heard on National Public Radio (NPR) news highlighting Andy DeVries, a former Parks Commission member, and encouraged members to listen to the program at the NPR website.

Commission members reviewed the report of the Parks and Recreation Commission expenditures through September 30, 2009. Bosgraaf asked if Commission members would like to see the financial reporting in a different format. Jonas commented that the letter submitted by Van Ginhoven regarding reporting was very good. Scholtz recommended having the Finance & Personnel Committee review the matter and make a recommendation. Bosgraaf inquired as to what happens to dollars budgeted for a project that is not used. Scholtz reported that these go back into the Parks fund balance.

Scholtz then updated Commissioners on the Long-Range Budget; he noted the budget reflected the projection for the wage study changes and the decrease in property tax revenues that would be occurring over the next 3 years, along with the loss of the General Fund allocated dollars. TerHaar then distributed an updated Acquisition and Development Project Planning List for review. He indicated that the shaded items on the list could be potential items to be trimmed back if needed. Jonas expressed his desire not to cut in the Maintenance & Operations area. Van Ginhoven complimented staff on the report and it's capabilities of looking ahead for good planning. Kortman reported that there is a new emphasis on the relationship of Public Health to recreation and thought that there could be some grant funding possibilities in that area. Scholtz reported that decisions will be needed regarding areas to target for cuts in order to get projections in line. If a specific area would be eliminated or put on hold, partners will need to be notified. Bosgraaf then asked Commission members how they would like to proceed. Consensus was reached to send information to the Finance and Personnel Committee for review and recommendation.

Bosgraaf moved on to the Director's report and Scholtz reported on the key points including funding assistance for the Fred Meijer Kenowa Trail, as recommended by the Planning Committee. He stated that a precedent had been established of paying for trail construction in front of County Parks according to the amount of road frontage, based on previous participation in the development of the pathways and widened road shoulder along Lakeshore Drive. Scholtz felt that, based on the precedent, there would be justification for Parks to pay for the cost of the trail in front of Spring Grove Park and the Upper Macatawa frontage along Byron Road, but not to fund the trail in general. Bosgraaf confirmed pricing of the frontage in front of Spring Grove Park to be \$91,320, plus engineering costs of 10%. Scholtz confirmed the cost estimates and added that engineering costs were not included in the Lakeshore Drive project. TerHaar reported that he had attended a meeting with the partners of the Fred Meijer Kenowa Trail project and they were also pursuing other funding sources. They had hoped that the confirmation of the Parks funding would spur additional interest in other contributions. Meidema also reported that his township was looking at alternate routes in order to cut costs. Kortman expressed her support of the commitment to the portion of the trail, if it is located in front of a County Park. Scholtz inquired about the Upper Macatawa Natural Area portion of the trail. Kuyers felt that a request for that portion of the trail had not yet been received, so it should not be considered until that occurs. A motion was made and passed to fund the portion of the Fred Meijer Kenowa Trail that will be located in front of Spring Grove Park.

Scholtz then discussed a request for permission from Dave Lind of the WMPA to pave areas within the Auburn lot and to add lighting along the walkways. Kortman supported the lighting request as long as the lights were not intrusive. Bosgraaf suggested that any improvements and changes they want should be brought to the Parks Commission for approval first. Consensus was reached to agree in concept to pavement in the parking area and lighting pending receipt of detailed plans.

Scholtz then asked the Commission for direction in regards to the issue of deer management. Bosgraaf asked for a report of how Lake County handled the issue there. Scholtz reviewed Lake County's plan as it was presented at the 2009 Park's District Forum. Kuyers inquired which parks would be top priority, and a consensus was reached that it would be the region from Rosy Mound through North Ottawa Dunes. Scholtz

thought that this would be a good place to start and see what could be learned from this area. Bosgraaf asked if Scholtz had any suggestions for an advisory group. Scholtz will research some possibilities and make a recommendation at the next meeting.

Scholtz then reported that in a recent construction project at Park 12, a resident's water line had been broken. He requested that the water bill of the resident be paid, less the average cost of his monthly service. Staff would then seek reimbursement from the contractor. Consensus was reached to pay the bill and seek reimbursement from the contractor.

Bosgraaf called for the Parks Operations Report, and Mazurek submitted his report as written.

Commission members received the report from the Planning Committee. Bosgraaf reviewed the topic of the allowance of alcohol at park facilities. Scholtz stated that due to the sensitivity of the issue, he would prefer that the request not be rushed and suggested developing a policy to have select sites approved. Jonas felt that limiting alcohol to specific County sponsored events could be an option without setting any precedents for public use. Kortman suggested limiting the type of alcohol allowed. Van Ginhoven felt that it would be good to look at and bring back possible options and steps to proceed with the approval process. Kuyers stated that no alcohol could be purchased with Parks & Recreation funds. There was consensus to have Scholtz research and create a recommendation for discussion at the December meeting.

President Bosgraaf announced the next Public Relations Meeting to be on November 17th at 2:00 p.m.

Commission members then received the November 4, 2009 report of the Friends of Ottawa County Parks. Bosgraaf thanked Statema for his continued commitment to the Friends group.

Bosgraaf called for discussion of Old Business. TerHaar distributed an updated budget for the project costs for the Nature Education Center. He reported that the project has exceeded the projected cost by \$21,771.41. Scholtz explained that the additional expenses were primarily a result of a stringent plan review required by Port Sheldon Township. The additional costs resulting from the plan review totaled approximately \$52,000. Scholtz reported that if construction was to proceed, the additional funds would need to come from Fund Balance. Consensus was reached to continue with the project as scheduled and take additional funds from Fund Balance.

Bosgraaf moved to New Business and Commission members received the bids for the Tunnel Park dune stairs replacement project. TerHaar recommended Plaggemars Construction as the low bidder and stated that they had performed well in past projects. Bosgraaf asked if the project had a contingency, and Jonas supported having the flexibility to make decisions for possible changes in the field if it was within the budgeted amount. A motion was made to approve Plaggemars Construction for the project at a cost of \$62,900, not to exceed the budgeted amount of the project, which is \$66,000.

Commission members received the bids for the Spring Grove Park Site Improvements and Bur Oak Kiosk Construction. A motion was made to approve VP Construction for the project at a cost of \$13,526, with a 5 % contingency authorized.

Bosgraaf asked for Public Comment and Ms. Smith commented on the deer problem in her neighborhood. She also reminded Commission members that the Master Plan for Park 12 indicated that there would be “minimal lighting” and consistency throughout the area. Ms. Smith stated that she would like to know what is being considered and advocate for any lighting to be kept at minimal levels.

Bosgraaf called for Commissioners to be heard. Sabine requested a report on the water trail workshop that Mazurek, TerHaar, and Stinebower attended. Mazurek and TerHaar reported that the workshop was very informative, and they were able to network with a variety of different groups that have developed trails.

The Parks Commission went into Closed Session to discuss property matters.

Meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.