

Regular Meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission

Approved Minutes

Date: December 2, 2009

Time: 4:00 p.m.

Place: Fillmore Complex, Conference Room E

Present: Bobbi Jones Sabine, Jim Miedema, David Van Ginhoven, Ray Statema, Roger Jonas, Phil Kuyers, David Vander Kooi, and Paul Geerlings

Absent: Ted Bosgraaf and Joyce Kortman

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 09-76 Motion: To approve the minutes of the Commission's October 7, 2009 regular meeting.
Moved by: Van Ginhoven Supported by: Kuyers Unanimous

Subject: Low Income Fee Waiver Policy

PR 09-77 Motion: To approve and send to the Board of Commissioners the Low Income Fee Waiver Policy as received to require an applicant to show or mail a copy of the Department of Human Services Bridge Card to qualify.
Moved by: Kuyers Supported by: Statema Unanimous

Subject: Memorial Bench Policy

PR 09-78 Motion: To receive and approve the Memorial Bench Policy revisions as proposed.
Moved by: Geerlings Supported by: Van Ginhoven Unanimous

Subject: Rosy Mound Stair Improvements

PR 09-79 Motion: To receive bids and approve VP Construction, LLC to construct on-grade timber stairs and railings at Rosy Mound Natural Area at a cost of \$11,248, plus authorize a 5% contingency for the project.
Moved by: Kuyers Supported by: Geerlings Unanimous

Subject: Mt. Pisgah Dune Protection Project

PR 09-80 Motion: To approve the Development Project Agreement Amendment with the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund as proposed for the Mt. Pisgah Dune Protection Project grant agreement.
Moved by: Van Ginhoven Supported by: Jonas Unanimous

Subject: Connor Bayou Improvements

PR 09-81 Motion: To receive proposals and approve RJM Design for professional design services for Connor Bayou including master planning, construction drawings and construction administration at a cost of \$19,176.
Moved by: Statema Supported by: Kuyers Unanimous

Subject: Go Into Closed Session

PR 09-82 Motion: To go into Closed Session to discuss property matters.
Moved by: Kuyers Supported by: Vander Kooi
Yeas: Sabine, Kuyers, Jonas, Van Ginhoven, Statema, Geerlings, Vander Kooi, and Miedema.
Nays: None Motion passed 8 to 0.

Subject: To Rise From Closed Session

PR 09-83 Motion: To rise from Closed Session.
Moved by: Vander Kooi Supported by: Kuyers Unanimous

Other Items Discussed:

Vice President Sabine called the meeting to order and asked for additions or deletions to the agenda. Scholtz requested the addition of two items to the agenda including the Mt. Pisgah grant amendment and proposals for Connor Bayou planning services.

Commission members received the November 16, 2009 letter from Herb Pollock regarding landscaping in front of his home. Scholtz recommended that the request be

forwarded to the Park 12 Advisory Committee and then the Parks Planning Committee for review and recommendation. Consensus was reached to refer the request to the appropriate committees.

Commission members received and reviewed comment cards and emails received since the previous meeting. Mazurek reported that he had left three messages in follow-up with a park user's comment but had not received a return call.

Sabine moved on to Public Comment and there was none.

Commission members reviewed the report of the Parks and Recreation Commission expenditures through October 31, 2009. Scholtz reported that after the first of the year staff will switch to quarterly reporting.

Sabine moved on to the Director's Report and Scholtz reported that the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund recommended awarding a \$720,000 grant for the Grand River Ravines Project.

Scholtz then informed Commission members that he was not yet ready to make a recommendation regarding the alcohol policy and would like to meet with Mazurek in order to compile additional information from other units of government before bringing it to the Commission in January. Consensus was reached to proceed with the alcohol policy research and receive a recommendation at the January meeting.

Scholtz updated Commission members regarding the creation of an informal work group for deer management. Scholtz has a few more contacts to make before recommending a list of names. Kuyers suggested representation from the United States Department of Agriculture.

Sabine called for the Parks Operations Report and Mazurek reported on the red pine activity at Pigeon Creek Park. A mid to late December date has been given for completion of the work. Geerlings expressed his concern regarding the amount of mud that the logging contractors were tracking onto the roadway from Pigeon Creek Park. Mazurek reported that the contractors have previously been required to put down gravel to assist with lessening the tracking of mud onto the roadway. He will investigate and follow-up at the next meeting.

Statema commented on the volunteer activity and expressed his pleasure in the individual that is going to establish an American Chestnut grove at Pigeon Creek Park. Mazurek reported that the gentleman is very enthusiastic and will be planting 25 trees the first year and another 25 the year after. Miedema reported that there is a grove in Jamestown Township.

Commission members received the Coordinator of Interpretive and Information Services Report as written.

Commission members received the report from the Finance and Personnel Committee. Kuyers reported that members discussed setting aside dollars for operations in 2018 in the event of an unsuccessful millage vote, and a consensus was reached by the Committee to discuss this topic at the strategic planning retreat in February. He moved

on to the 2010 facility reservation and entrance fees and the Committee recommended leaving all fees the same for the 2010 season.

Kuyers then reported that there was discussion of the possibility of renting the Nature Education Center for weddings, and it was agreed to have staff do research with plans to discuss the topic in more detail at the strategic planning retreat in February. Kuyers then reported a low income fee policy was discussed and Scholtz distributed a draft policy for Commission members to review. Scholtz discussed the key points of the policy. Van Ginhoven expressed his fear that the policy may be a little too easy for someone to receive a free annual pass. Sabine questioned offering the free passes to non-residents. Scholtz noted that many park visitors are from outside of the County and eliminating the non-residents would disqualify the parks from any additional grant points. Geerlings discussed the mail-in process and agreed that requiring a resident to “walk-in” to receive a pass would be more desirable. He also questioned how the verification process would work. Kuyers suggested having the participant present the Department of Human Services Bridge Card for qualification and felt that this would assist in limiting the amount of verification staff would be required to do. Van Ginhoven expressed his approval of the Bridge Card qualification and then suggested that a participant be allowed to mail in a copy of the card along with the application for a permit. A motion was passed to accept the low-income fee policy with the revisions for qualification. The policy will be forwarded to the Board of Commissioners for approval. Kuyers then summarized a new reporting process for the financial reports. They will be included in the Board Agenda packets quarterly, with email notification to commission members if a large adjustment is needed.

Commission members received the report from the Public Relations Committee. Scholtz updated members on the Eastmanville Farm Cemetery progress and then discussed the Memorial Bench/Picnic Table Policy revisions. He summarized the revisions to include a bench that is constructed with recycled plastic. The required donation would be \$1,000 for the recycled plastic bench while the wood benches constructed by park staff would remain at \$500. A motion was made and carried to approve the revision as proposed.

Scholtz announced the grand opening of the Nature Education Center to be April 24, 2010. He then reviewed the role of the Friends of Ottawa County Parks as refined by the Public Relations Committee and will notify the Friends group. Kuyers then asked if there had been any more updates regarding adding a Facebook account for the Parks. Scholtz stated that he had not received further communication from Dave Hulst and would inquire to see if there had been any new developments.

Scholtz informed Commission members that it would not be possible to add logos to the park highway signs, and consensus was reached to continue to use the current brown highway signs.

Sabine suggested a press release to announce that the 2010 fees would not be changing. Scholtz will follow up with staff.

Commission members received the report from the Planning Committee. Scholtz stated that the Pumphouse Committee would be meeting in the next few days. TerHaar reported on the Park 12 Marina planning and the possibility of applying for a grant to fund planning later in 2010.

Scholtz then discussed the drain in Park Township and Geerlings reported that final alignment had not yet been determined but information would be available within the next 60 days.

Sabine called for discussion of Old Business and Commission members received the Eastmanville Bayou Master Planning minutes of November 19. Scholtz reported that there were quite a few interested residents that had attended the meeting.

Scholtz updated Commission members on the progress of the Nature Education Center. He reported that the furniture would be moved into the center this week and that the security system had been installed and armed.

Sabine moved to New Business and Commission members received the bids for the Rosy Mound Stair Improvements. TerHaar explained that when the trail was initially built, stairs were avoided to try to keep the trail wheelchair accessible, even though this portion of the trail was steep. He explained that it gets very slippery and dangerous in the winter, and a park user fell and broke her wrist last year. Scholtz expressed his concern with this portion of the trail and felt this is a safety issue that should be addressed. He explained that the steep grade would be replaced with stairs with crushed stone. The project was approved by motion to hire VP Construction to complete the project at a cost of \$11,248.

Commission members received the grant amendment from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund relative to the Mt. Pisgah Dune Protection Project. Scholtz explained that in closing out the project it was discovered that a couple of project scope items had not been listed. The amendment will add the scope items to the grant so that reimbursement can be made. Commission members approved the grant amendment by motion.

Commission members received the bids for the Connor Bayou Planning and Construction Documents. Scholtz reviewed the phases of the project and noted that the project budget had been carried over from 2008. TerHaar reported that the plan will be evaluated for a day use area and rental of the house on the property. Kuyers felt that the rental for the site would be popular. Statema confirmed that a sign would be placed at the entrance of the property as part of the project. Scholtz recommended RJM Design for the project. A motion was passed to award the project to RJM Design at a cost of \$19,176.

Sabine asked for Public Comment and Ms. Smith wished everyone season's greetings.

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

Meeting adjourned at 5:29 p.m.