



**Ottawa County Parks &  
Recreation Commission**

January 19, 2024

**NOTICE OF MEETING**

Dear Commission Member:

The annual meeting of the Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission is scheduled for **Wednesday, January 24, 2024**, at **3:00 pm** at the Ottawa County Fillmore Street Complex, 12220 Fillmore St., West Olive, MI in the Board Room.

Additional public viewing will be offered via YouTube by visiting <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYn7ADXm8WA>. Public comment will be received in-person only.

The agenda for the meeting is attached for your review.

Please contact the Parks and Recreation Commission Office at (616) 738-4810 if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. D. Shamblin". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jason D. Shamblin  
Parks and Recreation Director

JDS/jls

Enclosures

Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission  
January 24, 2024 3:00 p.m.  
Annual Meeting Agenda  
Public Viewing is provided via YouTube at:  
<https://youtube.com/live/iYn7ADXm8WA?feature=share>

**Mission Statement:**  
*The Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission enhances quality of life for residents and visitors, by preserving parks and open spaces and providing natural resource-based recreation and education opportunities.*

1. Call to Order by Parks Director
2. Roll Call: Rice  
Longstreet  
McAffrey  
Belknap  
Bush  
Greenlee  
Hill  
A. Miedema  
J. Miedema  
Sachs
3. Absences (excused/unexcused)
4. Nominating Committee Report
  - a) Election of 2023 Officers
    - President:
    - Vice President:
    - Secretary:
  - b) 2024 Committee organization and appointments: The President appoints members to each committee and shall appoint all committee chairpersons.
    - Foundation representative: one (1) appointee
    - Friends representative: one (1) appointee
    - Planning Committee: four (4) members and the president as an ex-officio member
    - Community Engagement: four (4) members and the president as an ex-officio member
    - Finance and Policy: four (4) members and the president as an ex-officio member
5. Additions/Deletions to Agenda
  - a) 12E: To approve the memorandum of understanding with the Lower Grand River Organization of Watersheds (LGROW) and Ottawa County Parks & Recreation contingent upon approval by Corporation Counsel.
6. [Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting](#)
  - a) Approve the minutes of the Commission's December 20, 2023 regular meeting.
7. Communications: None
8. Public Comment (Public comments limited to 3 minutes)
9. [Staff Reports](#)
  - a) Director's Report
  - b) Park Operations Report

- c) Planning and Development Report
- d) Community Engagement Report
- e) Natural Resources Management Report
- f) Development Report
- g) Strategic Plan Progress Report
- h) Financial Status Summary

10. [Committee Reports](#)

- a) Ottawa County Parks Foundation Update (*verbal*)

11. Old Business

- a) [Community Engagement Policies](#)

Suggested Motion: *To approve three Community Engagement policies: 5.03-Cancellation & Refund Policy - Participant Cancellation; 5.04-Severe Weather, Public Programs; and, 5.05-Cancellation Policy - Low Attendance*

12. New Business

- a) [Ottawa County Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting Dates](#)

Suggested Motion: *To establish the 2024 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting dates.*

- b) [Seasonal Wage Adjustment](#)

Suggested Motion: *To approve the adjustments to the 2024 seasonal and part-time Parks staff wage scale and policies effective April 1, 2024 as approved by the County's Human Resources department and presented by Parks staff, and forward to the Board of Commissioners for approval.*

- c) [Reservation Facility Conditions of Use Document](#)

Suggested Motion: *To approve the Conditions of Use document that will be agreed to by all future facility renters once the new recreation software is in use.*

- d) [Contract for MDNR Support of Bass River Trail Segment](#)

Suggested Motion: *To approve the Cooperative Agreement with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for funding assistance in the amount of \$715,000 for the development of the Idema Explorers Trail Bass River Segment Phase 1 and forward to the Board of Commissioners for final approval.*

13. Agenda Items for Next Meeting

14. Public Comment (Public comments limited to 3 minutes)

15. Commissioners Prerogative

16. Closed Session to discuss property acquisition Pursuant to the OMA Section 8d (not enclosed).

17. Upcoming meeting date(s): To be determined.

18. Adjournment



# 2024 PARKS COMMISSION COMMITTEES

There are four (4) Standing Advisory Committees. Annually, the President of the OCPRC appoints the members of each committee and appoints the Committee Chairpersons. The Chairperson shall preside over all Committee meetings and the Vice-Chairperson shall perform the duties of the Chairperson in his or her absence. The President serves on all Committees as an ex-officio member. Appointments shall be for a one-year term.

## **Community Engagement**

- Review and receive reports regarding plans and methodologies to improve relations with the public and educate and inform the press and public about OCPRC programs and operations.
- Receive reports from staff, review the programming and community engagement strategies, and make recommendations to the OCPRC.
- Other similar matters as may be assigned to their Committee by the President.
  1. Chair
  2. Vice-Chair
  3. Member
  4. Member
  5. President

## **Executive**

- Meet monthly with the Director and review the monthly agenda and any other pressing items.
  1. President
  2. Vice President
  3. Secretary

## **Finance and Policy**

- Review the annual budget as proposed by staff, recommend allocations of funds including personnel costs as recommended by the Director, and recommend to the OCPRC use of all funds allocated.
- Review all bonding proposals.
- Review and receive reports regarding contracts and make recommendations to the OCPRC concerning relevant proposals and contracts.
- Review and receive reports regarding policies for consideration by the OCPRC.
- Review and receive reports regarding OCPRC Rules and Regulations and make recommendations to the OCPRC.
- Other similar matters as may be assigned to their Committee by the President.
  1. Chair
  2. Vice-Chair
  3. Member
  4. Member
  5. President

## **Planning and Development**

- Receive reports from staff and review the acquisition, development, and operations of the County Park and open space land system.
- Oversee and provide input to staff regarding strategic planning and goal setting for OCPRC properties and make recommendations to the OCPRC.
- Other similar matters as may be assigned to their Committee by the President.
  1. Chair
  2. Vice-Chair
  3. Member
  4. Member
  5. President

## **Parks Commission Representative to Friends of Ottawa County Parks**

1. Member

## **Parks Commission Representative to Ottawa County Parks Foundation**

1. Member



**Amended Rosy Mound Funding Request**

PR 23-88      Motion:      To approve the amended request to the Ottawa County Parks Foundation for the Rosy Mound Expansion - Phase I - Funding initiative in the amount of \$913,550.  
Moved by: Longstreet      Supported by: McAffrey      Unanimous

**Ottawa Sands Day Use Restroom Construction**

PR 23-89      Motion:      To approve the bid from Denny's Excavating in the amount of \$510,000 for construction of the day use restroom at Ottawa Sands and forward to the Board of Commissioners for final approval. Furthermore, the Parks Commission requests that the Fiscal Services Department transfers \$100,000 from CP2208 Ottawa Sands Development Phase 1 (Parks contribution) to CP2301 Ottawa Sands Restroom, to fully fund this project with contingency for a total project amount of \$585,000.  
Moved by: Hill      Supported by: A. Miedema      Unanimous

**Ottawa Sands Lake Loop Construction**

PR 23-90      Motion:      To accept the bid from McCormick Sand, Inc, in the amount of \$788,314.25 for construction of the Lake Loop project at Ottawa Sands and forward to the Board of Commissioners for final approval. Furthermore, the Parks Commission requests that the Fiscal Services Department transfers \$150,000 from CP2208 Ottawa Sands Development Phase 1 (Parks contribution) to CP2302 Ottawa Sands Lake Loop, to fully fund this project with contingency for a total project amount of \$891,844.  
Moved by: Hill      Supported by: Longstreet      Unanimous

**Ottawa County Parks Foundation Reimbursement Request**

PR 23-91      Motion:      To request reimbursement for funds designated by the Ottawa County Parks Foundation for projects completed in 2023 totaling \$482,463.00.  
Moved by: McAffrey      Supported by: Longstreet      Unanimous

**To Go Into Closed Session**

PR 23-92      Motion:      To go into Closed Session.  
Moved by: McAffrey      Supported by: Bush      Unanimous

**To Rise from Close Session and Adjourn**

PR 23-93      Motion:      To rise from Closed Session and adjourn.  
Moved by: Longstreet      Supported by: Hill      Unanimous

**Other Items Discussed**

5. Approval of Minutes

The minutes for the Commission's Regular meeting of October 18, 2023 were approved.

6. Communications

None.

7. Public Heard

None

8. Staff Reports

a) Director

The Commission accepted the Director's Report as written.

b) Park Operations

The Commission accepted the Operations Report as written.

c) Planning and Development Report

The Commission accepted the Planning and Development Report as written.

d) Community Engagement Report

The Commission accepted the Community Engagement Report as written.

e) Natural Resources Management Report

The Commission accepted the Natural Resources Management Report as written.

f) Development Report

The Commission accepted the Development Report as written.

g) Strategic Plan Progress Report

The Commission accepted the Strategic Plan Progress Report as written.

h) Financial Status Summary Report

The Commission accepted the Financial Status Report as written.

9. Committee Reports

a) The Commission accepted the Executive Committee verbal report.

b) The Commission accepted the Community Engagement Committee meeting report of December 12, 2023.

c) The Commission accepted the Finance and Policy Committee meeting report of November 14, 2023.

d) Longstreet updated the Commissioners on the Ottawa County Parks Foundation.

10. Old Business:

a) The Parks Commission received the Step it Up 2023 Program report as written.

b) The Parks Commission approved the settlement for the outstanding claim regarding the North Ottawa Dunes Site Access License in the amount of \$180,000, releasing all parties for claims pending review and approval by Ottawa County Corporation Council.

c) The Parks Commission approved the amended request to the Ottawa County Parks Foundation for the Rosy Mound Expansion – Phase 1 funding initiative in the amount of \$913,550.

d) The Parks Commission accepted the December 2023 Grant status report.

11. New Business:

a) The Parks Commission approved the bid from Denny's Excavating in the amount of \$510,000 for the construction of the day use restroom at Ottawa Sands.

b) The Parks Commission approved the bid from McCormick Sand, Inc. in the amount of \$788,314.25 for construction of the Lake Loop project at Ottawa Sands.

c) The Parks Commission approved the reimbursement request for funds designated by the Ottawa County Parks Foundation for projects completed in 2023 totaling \$482,463.

d) The Parks Commission recognized Parks Commissioner Kate Harmon for her three years of service to the Parks Commission.

12. Agenda Items for Next Meeting

None.

13. Public Heard:

None.

14. Commissioners Heard

15. Closed Session

16. Upcoming meeting date(s):

January 24, 2023

Time: 3:00 p.m.

Fillmore Complex, Board Room

17. Meeting adjourned at 5:04 p.m.



## **Grand River Greenway**

### **Harbor Island**

The former JB Sims power plant ceased operations in February 2020 and is now managed by the City of Grand Haven (City) as part of Harbor Island. The City is collecting community input as it moves this process through several avenues including the Harbor Island Community Advisory Group, of which the Ottawa County Parks Director is a member. Harbor Island provides a unique opportunity for nature-based enhancements which complement the work the Parks Commission has performed in the Grand River Greenway with 144 acres of existing wetlands and approximately 10,000 feet of river shoreline. The Grand River and Lake Michigan Coastal Corridor's wetlands and tributaries make up one of the globe's most important and endangered freshwater ecosystems. This habitat has been largely degraded and lost, which can be seen with the loss of 83% wetland habitat in Grand Haven and 97% in Ferrysburg.

Staff are working on refining the scope of work for the \$275,000 Coastal Resilience grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Once the scope of work is finalized a Request for Proposal will be advertised in order to select a consultant for the project. In addition to further work at Ottawa Sands, this grant will fund extensive environmental investigation, planning, engineering, and community outreach related to the Harbor Island reclamation work.

## **Lake Michigan Greenway**

### **Rosy Mound Expansion**

The 127-acre former sand mine to the northeast of the Rosy Mound has been a high priority target for the Parks Commission since the first Parks Plan in 1989. This property features 108 acres of designated critical dune and 55 disturbed acres that are attractive for restoration and recreational development. Parks staff is coordinating with the landowner on a two-phase Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant process. The second \$1.65 million grant was recommended for funding at the Trust Fund Board meeting on December 12, 2023. Work continues on due diligence for the first phase of the acquisition and closing is anticipated in the first quarter of 2024. The second grant agreement is anticipated in the summer of 2024. The Ottawa County Parks Foundation Board approved the Parks Commission's request for funding support for the Rosy Mound Expansion at their meeting January 12, 2024 Board meeting.

## **Pigeon River Greenway**

### **Consumers Energy, J.H. Campbell Decommissioning**

Staff continue to have conversations with stakeholders and Consumers representatives about the Parks Commission's interests. Various stakeholders are trying to coordinate a meeting with Consumers Energy later this month to discuss the future of the JH Campbell site.

## **Macatawa River Greenway**

### **Middle Macatawa Trail System,**

The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant request for funding support for the Middle Macatawa Trail System improvements was recommended for funding at the December 2023 Trust Fund Board meeting. Project Summary: A 2.1-mile natural surface trail between Hawthorn Pond and Upper Macatawa Natural Area, through Poppen Woods, Middle Macatawa, and 96th Avenue properties. Completing this trail system will allow hikers and mountain bikers to travel from Hawthorn Pond to Upper Macatawa Natural Area. This includes a trailhead and modern restroom at Hawthorn Pond as well as a modern restroom facility at the 84th Avenue access at the Upper Macatawa Natural Area. This would include showers and changing rooms for mountain bikers. Staff continue to coordinate with project partners Holland Charter Township and the ODC Network.

## **Miscellaneous**

### **Program and Facility Reservation Software**

The project is still on track for migration. Staff have been working on setting up the software's financial data. The work plan calls for a go live date prior to the expiration of the existing software program in March of 2024.

### **County-wide Broadband Project**

Reliable, high-speed broadband service is not consistently available and reliable in all corners of the County. As a result the County, led by the Department of Strategic Impact with the assistance of stakeholders, endeavor to address the gaps in coverage and improve and expand affordable broadband access for all. The process has included:

- Researching the need, demand and identifying barriers for broadband services in the County.
- Developing strategies that address regulatory cost and equipment that prevent broadband access.
- Through a public-private partnership, building broadband infrastructure to connect areas of the County lacking reliable and affordable high-speed internet.
- Broadband internet plan consisting of two components: 1) fiber infrastructure (to be built by 123Net); and 2) fixed-wireless cell tower network (to be built by Tilson Infrastructure).

The Board of Commissioners approved an agreement with Tilson to expand the work already underway by allowing a detailed analysis of possible sites for new towers that leverage existing public assets, starting with County owned or managed properties to bring forward for consideration. Properties owned by other local jurisdictions and private properties will also be considered.

Before any properties owned by the County, including Parks Commission properties, are formally committed for use, there will be a detailed internal review and approval process to be implemented that will require approval by all appropriate County departments including the Parks Commission. The review process will include the planned site layout, infrastructure, access, and logistics surrounding the proposed use. A site project will be required to meet all the necessary zoning and permitting procedures, as well as the appropriate due diligence required by the tower developer.

All ongoing maintenance of the site, once constructed, would be handled by the consultant. Any necessary protocols that need to be established for access during construction and afterwards will be considered during the site review process.

A standing agenda item has been added to the Parks Commission's Planning Committee allowing for regular updates on the County-wide Broadband project by the Director of the Department of Strategic Impact.

### **Agreements and Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) annual review**

Park staff have been reviewing all Commission agreements and MOUs. Annual meetings have been scheduled and conducted accordingly. Annual reports will be provided to the Parks Commission next month regarding the agreements with the Michigan Edge Mountain Bike Association, Shoreline Amateur Astronomical Association and the Pump House Museum and Learning Center at the Historic Ottawa Beach Parks.



## Responsive Maintenance and Repairs

- 19 down or dead trees were removed from 11 park properties. **One of those trees fell on the zipline at Hager Park.**
- 2 vehicles and 11 other pieces of equipment received routine maintenance or repairs.
- Made repairs to the log chinking on the Woodland Cabin at Connor Bayou.



## Scheduled Maintenance and Tasks

- Set-up and clean-up was performed for 55 facility reservations. In comparison, 81 reservations were held during this time last year.
- 10 park signs were printed and mounted.
- Gravel roads and parking areas were graded 7 times at 5 parks.
- **Removed, repainted, and reinstalled sandblasted signs and logos at several parks.**

## Beach Update

- While lake levels have declined 3-4 inches over the past quarter, we experienced some erosion at Kouw Park that is cause for concern. We will continue to monitor the erosion as it relates to the stairs at Kouw Park.
- Staff met with various emergency personnel to develop a plan for first responder access to both the current and future sections of Rosy Mound.

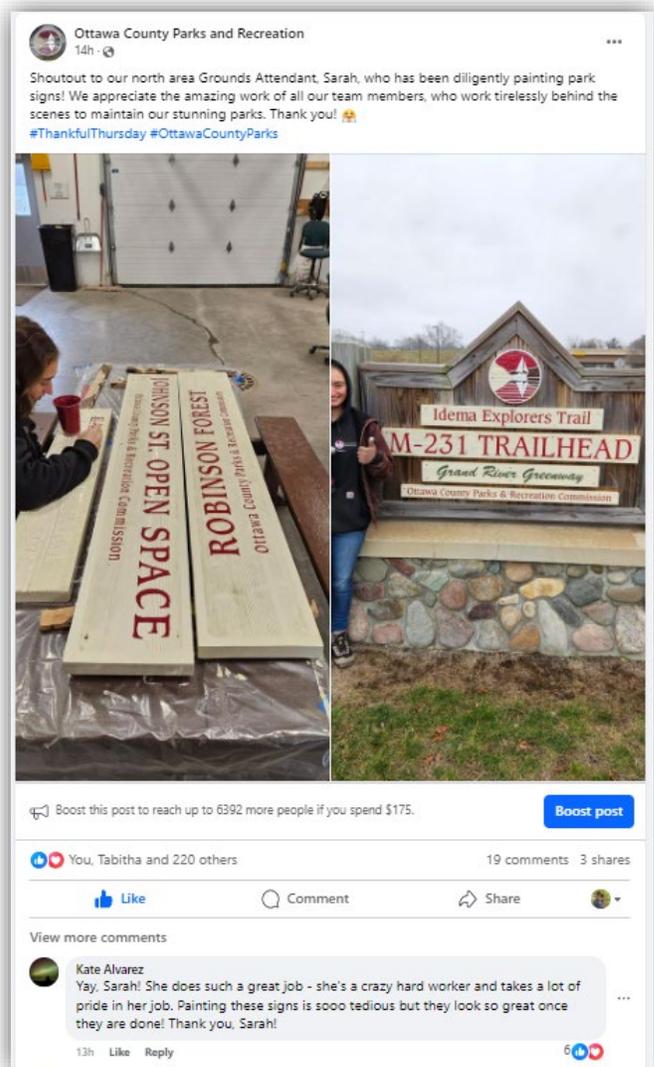
## Project Updates

### Pigeon Creek Forest Management project

Staff continue to clean up the trails following the Red Pine Management logging.

### Pigeon Creek Winter Operations

- Staff met to go over the upcoming grooming operations, update the grooming maps to include the new trails on the North Side, and update the Grooming Operations and Standards Manual.
- Pigeon Lodge Winter Seasonal Employee training was held to train new and returning employees in the proper winter operations procedures.
- The Pigeon Creek Winter Seasonal Supervisor passed the Safeserv food handling certification exam.
- Staff trimmed and marked the snowshoe trail.



- Changed over the summer trail maps to winter maps, added ski difficulty signs, snowshoe trail maps and all safety and winter Lodge operations signage.
- Prepared the Pigeon Lodge and Concessions for winter operations, verified all computers and credit card processing machines were functioning, and set up the concessions kitchen and sales area per Health Department regulations.
- Blew the trails to clear tree debris and leaves from the trails to prepare them for grooming at Pigeon twice during the month.
- Groomed the horse trails to remove and level the hoof prints.

Port Sheldon Lakeshore Parks Partnership

The Township decided to continue with the \$5 discount per permit purchased by a Port Sheldon Township resident for the 2024 season.

Keyless Lock Project

Locks continue to be installed. Programming bugs are being worked out in weekly project meetings with Knight Watch.

New Memorial Benches

Staff mounted one plaque on a bench that will be installed next month.

Fee Machine and Parking Software Upgrades

Park staff met with the Treasurer’s Office staff and developed a new cooperative plan to forward unpaid violations to the courts. The fine money will go to the Treasurer and the Parks will be reimbursed for all costs associated with the Passport Citation Management Program and citation writing process.

Park Rules Committee

No progress to report this month.

Oil Release at Bend Area

State work to permanently plug the wells will resume in the Spring.

**Incident Reports**

- Employee involved equipment damage – 0 incidents.
- **Vandalism/theft/damage** – 5 incidents.
- Graffiti – 0 incidents.
- Visitor health and safety - 0 incidents.
- Employee health and safety – 0 incidents.
- Rules violation/law enforcement call for service – 1 incident.





**GRAND RIVER GREENWAY**

**GR Greenway – Stearns Connector Segment.** No change since the last report. We still do not have an official schedule, but it appears that all of the work will now start in the spring.

Project Budget Summary

<u>Funding</u>	
Parks Budget	\$ 150,000.00
TAP Grant	\$ 3,428,238.00
Easement Budget	\$ 32,458.00
MNRTF Grant	\$ 300,000.00
Parks Foundation Greenway Funds (original allocation)	\$ 1,197,036.00
County ARPA Funds	<u>\$ 2,000,000.00</u>

Funding total \$ 7,107,732.00

Projected Expenditures

Consultant fees	\$ 386,756.50
Additional Environmental Work	\$ 9,950.00
Mussel Relocation work	\$ 35,000.00
Archaeology	\$ 8,779.72
Tree Removal	\$ 29,757.00
Trail Construction (bid)	\$ 5,116,773.69
OCRC fees (est.)	\$ 33,079.00
Easements	<u>\$ 65,000.00</u>

Expenditure’s total \$ 5,685,095.91

Balance remaining \$ 1,422,636.09

**GR Greenway – Bass River Segment.** Design and Engineering work continues on the first phase of trail. An updated set of plans with the final trail layout has been completed. Wetland delineation is in progress which will provide the information needed for permit applications. We are also waiting to hear about requirements for archaeology work.

**GR Greenway – Eastmanville Connector Segment.** No change since the last report. Scheduling of construction of this segment is being evaluated based on available funds, schedule of Bass River segments, and other projects in Allendale Township.

**GR Greenway – Allendale Segment.** No change since the last report. A more detailed analysis of traffic movements at the 60<sup>th</sup> and M-45 intersection that was suggested by MDOT to determine if a traffic signal is appropriate at this intersection has begun. Allendale Township approved moving ahead with this study, which is to be completed by their municipal engineer, Fleis & Vandenberg.

### Project Budget Summary

#### Funding

MDOT TAP Grant (estimated)	\$ 1,768,800.00
Allendale Township (proposed)	\$ 670,000.00
Greenway Campaign Funds	\$ 113,396.00
Other funds (TBD)	<u>\$ 762,004.00</u>

Funding total \$ 3,314,200.00

#### Projected Expenditures (estimated)

Preliminary Consultant fees (current)	\$ 5,000.00
Future Consultant fees (estimated)	\$ 361,200.00
Trail Construction (estimated)	<u>\$ 2,948,000.00</u>

Expenditure's total \$ 3,314,200.00

**Ottawa Sands Development.** Major site construction is winding down. Almost all sitework is complete including landscaping except for areas around the treehouses and camp restroom. Substantial work on the treehouses is also in progress with walls and roof beams in progress on the smallest unit along with work on the support beams for the other two treehouses.

Contracts for the Lake Loop and Day-use Restroom are being finalized with construction scheduled to start in the spring.

### Project Budget Summary

#### Funding

Private Donations	\$ 3,480,000.00
County ARPA Funds	\$ 3,400,000.00
Additional approved parks funding	\$ 700,000.00
MNRTF Grant (Day Use Parking/Lake Loop)	\$ 300,000.00
LWCF Grant (Day Use Restroom)	<u>\$ 242,864.00</u>

Funding total \$ 8,122,864.00

#### Projected Expenditures

Consultant fees	\$ 301,120.00
Phase 1 Contract	\$ 3,539,000.00
Phase 1 –Kayak Launch/Welcome Center	\$ 308,000.00
Fire Protection Additions	\$ 242,503.72
Other Contract Revisions	\$ 24,506.70
Contingency (remaining)	\$ 26,027.58
Yurt Furnishings (est. – owner supplied)	\$ 35,990.00
Treehouse Contract	\$ 1,667,000.00
Treehouse Furnishings (est. – owner supplied)	\$ 67,700.00
Day Use Parking/Lake Loop (bid)	\$ 788,314.25
Day Use Restroom (bid)	<u>\$ 510,000.00</u>

Expenditure's total \$ 7,509,474.25

Balance remaining \$ 613,389.75



**Yurt Village**



**Completed tent sites along access path**



**Treehouse construction in progress**



**Access stairs to overlook area**



**River Overlook**

**Ottawa Sands Wetland Restoration Work.** No change since the last report. Planning and design of the shoreline and wetland restoration have been completed. Our state permit has been secured, but we are still waiting for federal approvals. An extension of our grant agreement is in progress.

**Ottawa Sands and Harbor Island nature-based enhancements.** Approval of this \$275,000 grant agreement is in progress. After approval, a Request for Proposal for this work will be advertised to help select a consultant for the project.

**Kirk Park Improvements.** Masonry work to add height to the existing walls and for the building addition is in progress.



**New concrete block wall in progress**

Project Budget Summary

Funding

Park Budget	\$ 237,000.00
MNRTF Grant	\$ 237,000.00
Additional approved parks funding (2022)	\$ 50,000.00
Additional approved parks funding (2023)	\$ 180,000.00
Additional approved parks funding (CPM004)	\$ 13,811.00
Additional approved parks funding (CPM006)	\$ 5,000.00
Funding total	<u>\$ 722,811.00</u>

Expenditures (estimated)

Building Renovation Contract	\$ 454,422.00
Septic Field Contract (revised)	\$ 83,877.09
Play Area (contract)	\$ 103,807.00
Consultant fees	\$ 38,453.00
Permit and other Expenses	\$ 875.00
Expenditure's total	<u>\$ 681,434.09</u>

Balance remaining (contingency) \$ 41,376.91

**Lake Michigan High Water Damage Replacement/Repairs.** Work on the dog beach stairs at Kirk Park is almost complete.

Project Budget Summary

Funding

Ottawa County Insurance Authority Claim	\$ 170,000.00
Contingency (also through OCIA)	\$ 17,000.00
Funding total	<u>\$ 187,000.00</u>

Expenditures

Kirk Park Dog Beach Stairs Contract - Landtec	\$ 38,130.00
Rosy Mound Additional (est.)	\$ 90,000.00
Kirk Park Additional (est.)	\$ 44,000.00
Expenditure's total	<u>\$ 172,130.00</u>
Balance (contingency) remaining	<u>\$ 14,870.00</u>



**New dog beach stairs nearing completion**

**MACATAWA RIVER GREENWAY**

**Middle Macatawa Trail Connection.** We were successful in our application for the MNRTF grant to assist with this project. A meeting was held with project partners and our design consultant to define the scope of the work and begin more detailed planning and design work.

Project Budget Summary

Funding

County ARPA Funding	\$ 906,000.00
MNRTF Grant (recommended)	\$ 300,000.00
Partner Participation (Holland Township)	<u>\$ 550,000.00</u>
Funding total	<u>\$ 1,756,000.00</u>

**PIGEON RIVER GREENWAY**

**Consumers Energy Trail/Sheldon Landing.** Conversations continue with various interested parties. A document and plan prepared by Parks detailing our interest in portions of the property has been submitted to Consumers Energy.

## OTHER PROJECTS

**Park Entrance Drives and Parking Lot Repaving Projects.** An agreement with the Road Commission to “Chip Seal” resurface the existing parking lot at Grand River Park is in process. This work will occur next summer along with restriping.

### Project Budget Summary

#### Funding in current parks budgets

Spring Grove Park	\$ 20,000.00
Hager Park	\$ 147,000.00
Grand River Park	\$ 110,000.00
Riverside Park	\$ 171,000.00
Paw Paw West	<u>\$ 40,000.00</u>
Funding total	<u>\$ 488,000.00</u>

#### Expenditures to date

Paw Paw West total payment	\$ 43,002.45
Riverside Park total payment	\$ 116,410.20
Hager Park total payment	\$ 157,249.27
Grand River Park total cost (est.)	\$ 53,692.00
Consultant Fees	<u>\$ 10,750.00</u>
Expenditure's total	<u>\$ 381,103.92</u>
Balance remaining	<u>\$ 106,896.08</u>

**Ottawa County Farm Education Committee.** Parks continues to participate in these discussions since use of the Eastmanville Farm Park site has been a topic of discussion as plans for expanded farm education are formulated.



**PROGRAM/VISITOR NUMBERS**

Type	Participants	Programs	Notes
School Programs	0	0	
Private Programs	40	4	Senior, scout, other private programs
Public Programs	145	5	
Events	1,300	1	FOOCP Luminary Event

Type	Count	Notes
Nature Center Attendance	3,153	Above average visits; average month = 2,473*
Trafx Car Count (Nov)	2,521	Below average visits; average month = 3,522*
SAAA Public Observing	1,790	Annual Total as of December 2023

\*Averages visits based on FY23; see table below

Fiscal Year	Trafx Data	NEC Visit Count	Private Program Count	Private Program Attendance	Public Program Count	Public Program Attendance	Total Participants
FY19	no data	17,174	187	7,202	216	4,697	11,899
FY20	no data	8,198	140	3,503	208	2,298	5,801
FY21	no data	11,465	78	937	396	3,048	3,985
FY22	no data	13,691	120	4,447	263	3,832	8,279
FY23	42,260	29,675	131	5,881	252	5,984	11,865
MONTHLY AVG (FY23)	3,522	2,473	10	490	21	498	988

**GOALS/OBJECTIVES – CURRENT AREAS OF FOCUS**

1. **Improve online registration and user-experience** – Community Engagement staff is currently working with vendor to build out activities in the new recreation software; significant progress has been made.
2. **Increase participation in Outdoor Education programs**
  - a. Curriculum and pricing for Service-based Learning is being developed in partnership with the Natural Resources Management Team. Funding and growth strategies will be included in the Outdoor Education Expansion Plan.
  - b. Community Engagement Committee discussed the Outdoor Ed Expansion Plan draft in December; focus for Q1 and Q2 of FY24 was completing the following.
  - c. Marketing material, program request form, and website has been updated.
  - d. Staff is working with vendor to develop a more efficient scheduling, tracking, and invoicing tool for Outdoor Education programs in new recreation software.
3. **Define need for Parks for All campaign in 2024-2025 school year** – With the understanding that a campaign to support Outdoor Education is desired, the Outdoor Education Expansion Plan will focus on resources needed for additional student/school outreach and programming.
4. **Increase visitation to the Nature Education Center to 25,000 in FY24**
  - a. Areas of focus for Q1 and Q2 are partnerships, development of a new rotunda exhibit, and creating a plan for Visitor Engagement.
  - b. February 3, 2024, 10 am- 4pm marks the first Wild Winter Family Fun Day with a number of self-guided activities and a small prize for completion of activities.
  - c. Staff continues to develop relationships with partners to increase awareness of the Nature Center.



- d. Staff recently created an East Region (Grand Ravines, Grand River Park, Hager Park) Scavenger Hunt for families/youth to be distributed at the Georgetown Public Library. Families who complete their scavenger hunt can stop by the Nature Center for a small pin. Scavenger hunts for other regions are under development.

**5. Increase public program/event participation by 25%**

- a. Areas of focus for Q1 and Q2 are on offering broader programming throughout the year, in an effort to cast a wider net to the community as well as partnerships to help reach new audiences.
- b. Coffee with the Birds season kicked off in December. This program serves as an entry level birding program for the community and helps maximize use of the Wildlife Den. With the help of Kestrel Imagery, we'll be livestreaming Jan-Mar. Staff developed a "mug club" to offset bird seed costs – [mugs are close to selling out for the season.](#)

**6. Fully Implement Program Scheduling Tools** – Staff is becoming more familiar and comfortable with scheduling tools (outlines and budgets). Next steps include implementing internal/external evaluation tools, so the goals outlined in planning documents can be revisited. In January NEC staff reviewed the budget template and its purpose.

**7. Implement Marketing and Communications Plan**

- a. The first internal Communications Committee will meet in January to assist with the implementation of ideas department wide.
- b. New email lists are under development for more targeted communications.
- c. Through the rollout of the new recreation software, staff is developing templates for automated emails to customers including pre-program reminders, program and facility reservation surveys, updates about relevant programs/info.

**PRESS**

[Winter Break Activities in West Michigan \(ahealthiermichigan.org\)](http://ahealthiermichigan.org)

<https://www.nwf.org/Magazines/National-Wildlife/2024/Winter/PhotoZone/2023-National-Wildlife-Photo-Contest-Winners>

**GOVDELIVERY BULLETINS / EMAIL MARKETING**

	Date	Recipients	Open Rate	Click Rate
<b>Marketing</b>				
Parks Update: December News	12/1/23	16,210	41%	4%
December Family Programs	12/19/23	5,203	38%	3%
<b>Birding</b>				
Birding Update: QUICK LOOK!	12/07/23	2,451	39%	3%
Birding Update: December Newswire!	12/30/23	2,462	45%	7%



### Ottawa Sands Restoration/Creation

- Staff continue to work with Audubon Great Lakes and GEI Consultants to ensure that the project stays on track. All involved are monitoring and waiting for NHPA and NEPA federal permitting to establish an updated timeline for restoration work.
- Staff are working with Audubon Great Lakes to extend the period of the grant by one year.

### Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Management

- Staff surveyed and tagged hemlock trees at Kouw Park, Van Buren Street Dunes, and Port Sheldon Natural Area.

### Stewardship Activities

- Staff and volunteers participated in two workdays to process native seeds from Hemlock Crossing, Grand Ravines North, and Pigeon Creek parks for use in plantings and restoration areas in other parks.
- Staff cut and processed live stakes for use in restoration and soil stabilization projects in various parks.
- **Staff transplanted native shrubs to a restoration area in Stearn's creek Park.**
- NRM Coordinator presented to Foundation members on invasive species and natural resources management in the parks for the first of the Fireside Chats series.





### Partnerships

- Staff participated in a West Michigan Coastal Corridor partners check-in meeting.
- Staff attended the regional HWA working group's annual meeting and training session hosted by MDNR's Forestry Health Division at Hemlock Crossing's Nature Center.

### Invasive Species Management

- Staff and volunteers removed woody invasive plants from 9 different parks using the cut-stump method.

### Volunteer Updates

- **Park Steward Volunteers** assisted the Friends of Ottawa County Parks prepare for the annual Luminary Event at Hemlock Crossing's Nature Center. The group also **participated in a seed processing workday** and helped remove woody invasives from Upper Macatawa Natural Area.
- Volunteers from GVSU helped process native seeds collected in the parks for various restoration projects.





- **Individual Gift Count:**

- 2021 – December 120; Year to date: 546
- 2022 – December 94; Year to date: 753
- 2023 – December 147; Year to date: 1065

- **Percent Annual Revenue Goal**

- 2021 – December 19.3%; Year to date: 100%
- 2022 – December 4.1%; Year to date: 100%
- 2023 – December 3.5%; Year to date: 101.3%

- **Average Donation**

- 2021 – December \$4,503; Year to date: \$5,140
- 2022 – December \$ 699; Year to date: \$2,147
- 2023 – December \$ 359; Year to date: \$1,983

- **Notable Donor Development Activities:**

- Began meeting with past OCPF Breakfast/Luncheon sponsor to request increase in support. Conversations were well received.
- Hosted 2<sup>nd</sup> Fireside Chat for twelve attendees.
- Sent handwritten holiday cards to all major gift donors and patrons whom I've met in 2023.
- Followed up on preliminary discussions regarding potential sponsorship opportunities for local Rotary Clubs in Ottawa Sands.
- Continued drafting planning documents for Rosy Mound.



Throughout the Parks Strategic Plan process, staff will provide the Parks Commission with updates on the project. The following provides an update for December 2023.

- Strategic Plan Process
  - Weekly project meetings are now being held with staff and Crowe to prepare for the Strategic Plan.
  - **SAVE THE DATE: A kick-off meeting has been tentatively scheduled for 4 p.m. Tuesday, February 6, 2024, at the Nature Education Center at Hemlock Crossing. If you have not received an Outlook Calendar invitation, please let staff know.**
  - On February 7, staff will hold a work session with Crowe to begin formulating key focus areas for the strategic plan.
  - Five stakeholder engagement meetings are being scheduled. The meetings will focus on the following groups:
    - Parks Commission/Board of Commissioners/Advisory Committee
    - Support Organizations (Parks Foundation/Friends of Ottawa County Parks)
    - Parks staff (tentatively scheduled for February 7)
    - Local Units of Government
    - Partner Organizations and Other Stakeholders
  - A series of surveys is being developed to gather input from the public and stakeholders. The survey questions will be reviewed with the Parks Commission. The surveys include the following:
    - Public Survey: Crowe is finalizing a brief survey designed to gather public input. Staff will be reviewing the draft survey questions next week.
    - Stakeholders Survey: This survey will likely include additional questions and will be directed to the Parks Commission's many stakeholders, including local elected officials.
    - Staff Survey: This survey will likely include additional questions targeted at staff.
  - Parks staff are working on the community engagement strategy for the plan process. This will include a press release to announce that the Parks & Recreation Commission is undertaking this process. The press release will include links to the public survey and a web page that is being developed for the plan.
- Advisory Committee
  - Staff will work with Crowe to schedule Advisory Committee meetings during the process.
- Affiliated Projects
  - Proposals for the Scientific Survey have been received and are being reviewed by staff and members of the Parks Commission. Additional questions have been submitted to the vendors and a decision on a vendor is likely to occur next week.
  - We received one response to the Request for Proposals for the Community Benefits/Economic Impact Study. An interview was conducted. Additional questions have been submitted to the vendor and a decision on how to move forward will be finalized next week.
  - Staff are working to purchase a one-year subscription to mobility data vendor Placer.ai, which will provide access visitor data to our parks dating back to 2017. It will provide the number of visits to each park, unique visitors, and resident/non-resident visits. In concert with other visitor data, this information will be used to inform the Strategic Plan.

**County of Ottawa  
Parks & Recreation (208)  
Special Revenue Fund  
Fiscal Year 2024**

This fund is used to account for monies received from Federal, State, and local grants, County appropriations, and property taxes levied to provide parks and recreation services to County residents.

	<b>2023 *Prelim* Actuals</b>	<b>2024 Adopted Budget</b>	<b>2024 Amended Budget</b>	<b>2024 Actuals</b>	<b>Adopted Increase/ (Decrease)</b>
<b>Revenues</b>					
Taxes	4,292,009	4,661,580	4,661,580	263,735	(4,397,845)
Intergovernmental Revenue	278,216	270,713	270,713	-	(270,713)
Charges for Services	1,116,583	994,606	994,606	107,811	(886,795)
Fines & Forfeits	-	-	-	-	-
Interest on Investments	217,173	54,903	54,903	-	(54,903)
Rent	5,800	5,800	5,800	5,800	-
Licenses & Permits	-	-	-	-	-
Other Financing	53,311	-	-	-	-
Other Revenue	132,707	149,925	149,925	7,224	(142,701)
Operating Transfers In	388,165	288,422	288,422	72,106	(216,317)
Total Revenues	<u>6,483,965</u>	<u>6,425,949</u>	<u>6,425,949</u>	<u>456,675</u>	<u>(5,969,274)</u>
<b>Expenditures</b>					
Salaries & Wages	2,074,595	2,704,512	2,704,512	471,737	(2,232,776)
Benefits	925,932	1,050,069	1,050,069	232,725	(817,345)
Supplies	265,851	375,460	375,460	21,418	(354,042)
Contracted Services	218,978	602,843	602,843	45,762	(557,081)
Operating Expenses	231,776	314,002	314,002	60,635	(253,367)
Maintenance & Repair	103,730	108,195	108,195	17,121	(91,074)
Utilities	155,176	177,815	177,815	28,973	(148,842)
Insurance	78,691	87,636	87,636	-	(87,636)
Indirect Expense	355,829	342,683	342,683	85,670	(257,013)
Contribution to Component Units	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Outlay	139,372	-	-	-	-
Debt Service	-	-	-	-	-
Operating Expenditures	<u>4,549,929</u>	<u>5,763,215</u>	<u>5,763,215</u>	<u>964,041</u>	<u>(4,799,175)</u>
<b>Parks Unappropriated Operational Funds (Operating Revenue - Operating Expenses) *a</b>	<b>1,934,035</b>	<b>662,733</b>	<b>662,733</b>	<b>(507,365)</b>	
Operating Transfers Out	2,417,793	255,939	255,939	-	(255,939)
Total Expenditures	<u>6,967,722</u>	<u>6,019,154</u>	<u>6,019,154</u>	<u>964,041</u>	<u>(5,055,114)</u>
Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures	(483,758)	406,794	406,794	(507,365)	
Fund Balance, Beginning of Year	<u>2,769,477</u>	<u>1,197,708</u>	<u>1,197,708</u>	<u>2,285,719</u>	
Projected Fund Balance, End of Year	<u>2,285,719</u>	<u>1,604,502</u>	<u>1,604,502</u>	<u>1,778,354</u>	

\*a = Parks Operations Surplus prior to Capital Contribution

**County of Ottawa**  
**Capital Improvement Parks (408)**  
**Capital Projects**  
**Fiscal Year 2024**

Capital Improvement (4080) - This fund was established to account for financial resources used for the acquisition or construction of capital facilities for the Parks Department. These include land, improvements to land, building and building improvement, equipment, and infrastructure.

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2024</b>		<b>Adopted</b>
	<b>*Prelim*</b>	<b>Adopted</b>	<b>Amended</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>Increase/</b>
	<b>Actuals</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actuals</b>	<b>(Decrease)</b>
<b>Revenues</b>					
Taxes	-	-	-	-	-
Intergovernmental Revenue	341,803	350,000	8,436,857	-	(350,000)
Charges for Services	-	-	-	-	-
Fines & Forfeits	-	-	-	-	-
Interest on Investments	-	-	-	-	-
Rent	-	-	-	-	-
Licenses & Permits	-	-	-	-	-
Other Revenue	1,426,851	605,931	8,805,754	20,000	(585,931)
Operating Transfers In	8,844,766	207,500	363,901	(811,972)	(1,019,472)
Other Financing Sources	72,640	-	187,000	-	-
Total Revenues	<u>10,686,059</u>	<u>1,163,431</u>	<u>17,793,511</u>	<u>(791,972)</u>	<u>(1,955,403)</u>
<b>Expenditures</b>					
Salaries & Wages	-	-	-	-	-
Benefits	-	-	-	-	-
Supplies	-	-	-	-	-
Contracted Services	40,831	-	-	-	-
Operating Expenses	-	-	-	-	-
Maintenance & Repair	89,914	95,500	509,450	-	(95,500)
Utilities	-	-	-	-	-
Insurance	-	-	-	-	-
Indirect Expense	-	-	-	-	-
Contribution to Component Units	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Outlay	4,395,351	1,067,931	22,929,227	-	(1,067,931)
Debt Service	-	-	-	-	-
Total Expenditures	<u>4,526,096</u>	<u>1,163,431</u>	<u>23,438,677</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(1,163,431)</u>
Revenues Over (Under) Expenditures	6,159,963	-	(5,645,166)	(791,972)	
Fund Balance, Beginning of Year	<u>(257,678)</u>	532,786	532,786	5,902,285	
Projected Fund Balance, End of Year	<u>5,902,285</u>	532,786	(5,112,380)	5,110,313	

# Action Request

Electronic Submission – Request # 333



Ottawa County Parks &  
Recreation Commission

**Committee:** Parks Board

**Meeting Date:** 1/24/2024

**Vendor/3<sup>rd</sup> Party:** COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICIES

**Requesting Department:** PARKS AND RECREATION

**Submitted By:** JESSICA VANGINHOVEN

**Agenda Item:** 11A COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICIES

## Suggested Motion:

Approve three Community Engagement policies:

5.03-Cancellation & Refund Policy - Participant Cancellation;

5.04-Severe Weather, Public Programs;

5.05-Cancellation Policy - Low Attendance

## Summary of Request:

The Community Engagement Division has never had formal policies related to cancellations and refunds. These policies were developed by staff and reviewed with the Community Engagement Committee. The intent of the policies is to provide clarity to customers and staff, as well as making the process more efficient and consistent.

## Financial Information:

Total Cost: \$0.00

Parks Fund Cost: \$0.00

Included in Budget:

If not included in Budget, recommended funding source:

## Action is Related to an Activity Which Is: Non-Mandated

### Action is Related to Strategic Plan:

Goal 4: To Continually Improve the County's Organization and Services.

Objective:

## Administration:

Recommended by Parks Director:

**Committee/Governing/Advisory Board Approval Date:** Public Relations: 12/12/2023

## 5.03-Cancellation & Refund Policy – Public Programs

### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to create consistent refund standards for when participants cancel registration due to a variety of reasons and to establish procedures on how to handle refunds and communication with staff who are involved in the organized activity.

### II. STANDARD POLICY FOR PARTICIPANT CANCELLATIONS

#### A. Timing/refunds

1. A 100% account credit, credit card, or cash refund is available until the registration close date and time. No refunds will be issued after registration closes.
  - a. Registration close date and time will be clearly published in the program description.
2. Exceptions for extenuating or unusual circumstances can be made at the discretion of the Coordinator of Community Engagement or Director, if Coordinator is not available.

#### B. Types of Refunds

1. (Beginning in 2024) Customers can cancel their program registration online and receive a full account credit.
2. Credit card or cash refunds are available but must be requested via phone, email, or in-person.
3. Program cancellation may also be made by phone, email, or in-person.

#### C. Participants must agree to the cancellation/refund policy each time they register for a program online:

*In the event you must cancel your registration, please note our cancellation policy: A full refund in the form of account credit or original payment is available until the program registration close date and time. Please email [naturecenter@miottawa.org](mailto:naturecenter@miottawa.org) or call (616) 786-4847 to request a refund to the original payment method. No refunds will be issued after program registration closes.*

#### D. If Ottawa County Parks staff cancels a program due to weather or low participation, participants will be given a full account credit, unless a credit card refund is requested.

### III. SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Provide proper notification and training of Participant Cancellation & Refund Policy to employees.
- B. Ensure employees under their supervision adhere to policy.

### IV. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Follow the Participant Cancellation and Refund Policy procedures.
- B. Contact direct supervisor for additional information if needed.

## 5.04-Severe Weather Policy - Public Programs

### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the severe weather policy is to establish cancellation, postponement, or reschedule procedures during severe weather situations to protect program participants and staff who are involved in department organized activities. If cancellation occurs, [follow cancellation procedures outlined in document 5.02](#), located in Community Engagement Team – Staff Training and Orientation Channel – SOPs Folder.

### II. WEATHER CONDITIONS FOR ALL PROGRAMS

When the following weather conditions exist locally, Ottawa County Parks and Recreation may (at their discretion) cancel, postpone, or reschedule any indoor or outdoor department organized activity.

#### A. Cold/Winter Weather Conditions (storms, snow, ice, sleet)

1. National Weather Service has issued wind chill warning and/or temperatures are below zero.
2. Forecast within 24 hours of the program includes a [Winter Storm, Blizzard, or Ice Storm Warning](#) and/or travel is not recommended.
3. Sheriff's Department or National Weather Service has issued local travel warnings (example: <https://www.weather.gov/ffc/exampleWSWwarning>); look for language as follows: "Only travel in an emergency."
4. Fillmore Complex is closed due to weather.

#### B. Extreme Heat / Humidity - National Weather Service has issued extreme heat/humidity warnings.

#### C. Lightning / Severe Thunderstorms

1. National Weather Service has issued a severe thunderstorm warning
2. If the forecast within 24 hours of the program has a 75% chance or higher of thunderstorms during scheduled program time.
3. If conditions worsen on the day of the program to meet cancellation criteria and sufficient time remains to contact participants.
4. Thunder/lightening occurring during the program.

#### D. Tornados - National Weather Service has issued a tornado watch or warning for our area.

### III. WEATHER CONDITIONS FOR WATER ACTIVITIES

When the following weather conditions exist, Ottawa County Parks and Recreation may (at their discretion) cancel, postpone, or reschedule any water dependent organized activity. Additional conditions, including levels of participant experience, may be considered at the discretion of the instructor. The goal is for participants to have a safe and enjoyable experience.

- A. Precipitation – The forecast within 24 hours of the program has heavy rain, during the program for over an hour.
- B. Wind/Temperature - If wind speeds are 10-15 mph or higher and temperatures are 50 degrees Fahrenheit or less

- C. Irregular Water Level - Flooding or unsafe water levels following heavy rain event.
- D. All other severe conditions outlined in Section II above.

#### IV. SEVERE WEATHER GUIDELINES DURING ACTIVITIES

If severe weather conditions occur unexpectedly or are present during a department organized recreational activity, Parks and Recreation employees shall adhere to the following procedures, as recommended by the National Weather Service.

- A. Lightning / Severe Thunderstorm - [Severe Thunderstorm Safety Rules \(National Weather Service\)](#)
- B. Tornado – [Tornado Safety Rules, During the Storm](#)

#### V. RESOURCES

- A. [National Weather Service Warning Criteria was used to define these conditions.](#)
- B. Current Watches, Warnings or Advisories for Ottawa (MIC139) Michigan: <https://alerts.weather.gov/cap/wwaatmget.php?x=MIC139&y=1>

#### VI. NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

In the event of a severe weather situation, the decision to cancel, postpone, or reschedule an event shall be made by the manager on duty or the Outdoor Educator leading the program. Cancellations should be made 24 hours in advance of the program. If conditions worsen within 24 hours of the scheduled programs, participants should be contacted before the end of business day or first thing in the morning, depending upon program start time.

Once the decision has been made, employees shall adhere to the [follow cancellation procedures outlined in document 5.02](#), located in Community Engagement Team – Staff Training and Orientation Channel – SOPs Folder.

#### VII. SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Provide proper notification and training of “Severe Weather Policy” to all employees.
- B. Ensure employees adhere to policy.

#### VIII. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Advise the public to facility closings and program adjustments due to severe weather conditions.
- B. Follow the severe weather policy procedures.
- C. Contact direct supervisor for additional information if needed.

## 5.05-Cancellation Policy – Low Attendance for Public Programs

### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the cancellation policy for low attendance is to create consistent standards by which we cancel programs due to low attendance and to establish procedures on how to notify participants and staff who are involved in department organized activities.

### II. STANDARD POLICY FOR CANCELLING DUE TO LOW ATTENDANCE

- A. When no registration is required for an organized activity, cancellation shall only be due to factors other than registration and it must be assumed people will attend.
- B. When registration is encouraged for an organized activity, cancellation shall only be due to factors other than registration and it must be assumed people will attend.
- C. When registration is required for an organized activity, cancellation may occur when the established number of participants necessary to meet and/or exceed the budget of the program are not met by the time registration closes.
  - 1. A registration close date/time should be set when submitting the program for approval into the schedule.
    - i. Registration close dates/times for most programs should be 24 hours/1 business day prior to the start time of the program.
    - ii. Registration close date/time will be clearly published in program description.
  - 2. Programs that provide an alternative to childcare may have registration close times 7-14 days in advance of the program to ensure parents have adequate time to find other arrangements.
  - 3. Exceptions can be made with prior approval from Program Supervisor or Coordinator of Public Engagement.

### III. SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Provide proper notification and training of Low Attendance Cancellation Policy”to employees.
- B. Ensure all employees adhere to policy.

### IV. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Follow the Low Attendance Cancellation Policy procedures.
- B. Contact supervisor for additional training if needed.

# Action Request

Electronic Submission – Request # 329



Ottawa County Parks &  
Recreation Commission

**Committee:** Parks Board

**Meeting Date:** 1/24/2024

**Vendor/3<sup>rd</sup> Party:** 2024 MEETING DATES

**Requesting Department:** PARKS AND RECREATION

**Submitted By:** JENNIFER SHARABIDZE

**Agenda Item:** 12A OTTAWA COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING DATES

## Suggested Motion:

To establish the 2024 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting dates.

## Summary of Request:

In order to ensure the organization is working efficiently, regularly scheduled meetings are required. Many items approved by the Parks Commission are required to be reviewed and approved by the Board of Commissioners. With that in mind, the second to last Wednesday of each month is proposed. This will allow material moving on from the Parks Commission to meet the submittal deadlines for the monthly Board meetings. A Calendar and list of proposed Parks Commission and committee meeting dates are attached. Proposed Parks Commission meeting dates and times are 3 p.m. in the Board Room at the Fillmore Complex as follows:

Wednesday, January 24 at 3:00 p.m.

Wednesday, February 21 at 3:00 p.m.

Wednesday, March 20 at 3:00 p.m.

Wednesday, April 24 at 3:00 p.m.

Wednesday, May 22 at 3:00 p.m.

Wednesday, June 19 at 3:00 p.m.

Wednesday, July 24 at 3:00 p.m.

Wednesday, August 21 at 3:00 p.m.

Wednesday, September 18 at 3:00 p.m.

Wednesday, October 23 at 3:00 p.m.

Wednesday, November 20 at 3:00 p.m.

Wednesday, December 18 at 3:00 p.m.

## Financial Information:

Total Cost: \$0.00

Parks Fund Cost: \$0.00

Included in Budget:

If not included in Budget, recommended funding source:

**Action is Related to an Activity Which Is: Non-Mandated**

**Action is Related to Strategic Plan:**

Objective:

## Administration:

Recommended by Parks Director:

**Committee/Governing/Advisory Board Approval Date:**

## Ottawa County Parks & Recreation Commission

	<b>Commission Meeting</b>	<b>Planning Committee</b>	<b>Community Engagement Committee</b>	<b>Finance &amp; Policy Committee</b>	<b>Executive Committee</b>
<b>Month</b>	<b>2nd to last Wednesday 3:00 p.m.</b>	<b>1st Tuesday 3:00 p.m.</b>	<b>every other month 2nd Tuesday 3:00 p.m.</b>	<b>every other month 2nd Tuesday 3:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Monday before packet release 3:00 p.m.</b>
January	1/24/2024				
February	2/21/2024	2/6/2024	2/13/2024		2/12/2024
March	3/20/2024	3/5/2024		3/12/2024	3/11/2024
April	4/24/2024	4/2/2024	4/9/2024		4/15/2024
May	5/22/2024	5/7/2024		5/14/2024	5/13/2024
June	6/19/2024	6/4/2024	6/11/2024	6/12/2024	6/10/2024
July	7/24/2024			7/9/2024	7/15/2024
August	8/21/2024	8/6/2024	8/13/2024		8/12/2024
September	9/18/2024	9/3/2024		9/10/2024	9/9/2024
October	10/23/2024	10/1/2024	10/8/2024		10/14/2024
November	11/20/2024	11/5/2024		11/12/2024	11/11/2024
December	12/18/2024	12/3/2024	12/10/2024		12/9/2024

# PRELIMINARY OTTAWA COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION PLANNER 2024

2024

COMMISSION AND COMMITTEE MEETING DATES

Please check the calendars below for any exceptions to the rules.

COMMISSION/COMMITTEE	STARTING	ENDING	RULE
<b>PARKS &amp; REC COMMISSION</b>	1/24/2024	12/18/2024	SECOND TO LAST WEDNESDAY AT 3:00 P.M.
<b>PLANNING COMMITTEE</b>	2/6/2024	12/3/2024	FIRST TUESDAY AT 3:00 P.M.
<b>COMM ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE</b>	2/13/2024	12/10/2024	SECOND TUESDAY OF EVERY OTHER MONTH AT 3:00 P.M.
<b>FINANCE &amp; POLICY COMMITTEE</b>	3/12/2024	11/12/2024	SECOND TUESDAY OF EVERY OTHER MONTH AT 3:00 P.M.
<b>EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE</b>	2/12/2024	12/9/2024	MONDAY BEFORE PACKET RELEASE AT 3:00 P.M.
<b>COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS</b>	1/2/2024	12/24/2024	SECOND TUESDAY AT 9:00 A.M., FOURTH TUESDAY AT 6:30 P.M.*
<b>COUNTY PLANNING COMMITTEE</b>	1/9/2024	12/3/2024	FIRST TUESDAY AT 9:00 A.M.*

JANUARY							FEBRUARY							MARCH							APRIL							MAY							JUNE							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	28	29	30					26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
														31																					30							
JULY							AUGUST							SEPTEMBER							OCTOBER							NOVEMBER							DECEMBER							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30						27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31					

\*County Board dates are indicated by red text.  
No Parks Planning Committee meeting in July

# Action Request

Electronic Submission – Request # 326



Ottawa County Parks &  
Recreation Commission

**Committee:** Parks Board

**Meeting Date:** 1/24/2024

**Vendor/3<sup>rd</sup> Party:** SEASONAL WAGE ADJUSTMENT

**Requesting Department:** PARKS AND RECREATION

**Submitted By:** JASON BOERGER

**Agenda Item:** 12B SEASONAL WAGE ADJUSTMENT

## Suggested Motion:

To approve the adjustments to the 2024 seasonal and part-time Parks staff wage scale and policies effective April 1, 2024 as approved by the County's Human Resources department and presented by Parks staff, and forward to the Board of Commissioners for approval.

## Summary of Request:

Park Management staff met with HR staff concerning seasonal wages. Together we generated an informal survey of comparable local jobs and employers with whom we may compete for staff. Below are our recommendations:

1. Simplify all seasonal rates to either skilled or unskilled. If a position requires specific prior skills or experience such as supervisory experience, extensive educational background, equipment operating skills, certifications, or other skills that we would not normally teach on the job, that position is considered skilled. If all necessary skills for a position will be taught on the job, that position is considered unskilled. Skilled jobs include: Maintenance Crew, Seasonal Supervisor, Program Lead, Project Support Specialist, Stew Crew, Volunteer Program Supervisor, and Guest Services Supervisor.
2. Remove pay steps for seasonal and part-time employees, but instead increase the pay rate annually by the same percentage recommended by the BOC for FT staff (HR predicts and recommends we add 4% for 2025).
3. Increase the pay rates for 2024 to be competitive in the current market to \$15.50 for unskilled and \$18.50 for skilled.
4. Combine Park Attendant and Grounds Attendant into one position (Seasonal Park Caretaker).

The budget in Munis for 2024 non-benefited salaries is \$1,018,315.22

The current proposed rates at 100% position occupancy would cost \$1,113,460.50

That is a shortfall of \$95,145.28 or 8.55%

We propose increasing the wages but not immediately adjusting the budget. Historically, we have fallen well below our seasonal salary budget. In 2023 we only used 67% and in 2022 we used 80%, and in every year on record the unspent balance in the non-benefited salaries line was over \$100,000. If we did exceed the current budget, that would mean that these changes made a significant positive impact on our ability to hire and retain staff. If we did need to adjust the budget, it would likely only be by a small percentage increase towards the end of the fiscal year. Also, this would not be implemented until April 1st, as a result, these factors make it even more unlikely that we would exceed the already approved budget.

## Financial Information:

Total Cost: \$1,113,460.50

Parks Fund Cost: \$95,145.28

Included in Budget: No

If not included in Budget, recommended funding source:

## Action is Related to an Activity Which Is: Non-Mandated

## Action is Related to Strategic Plan:

Goal 1: To Maintain and Improve the Strong Financial Position of the County. Goal 2: To Contribute to the Long-Term Economic, Social and Environmental Health of the County. Goal 4: To Continually Improve the County's Organization and Services.

Objective:

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**Administration:**

Recommended by Parks Director:

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**Committee/Governing/Advisory Board Approval Date:** Finance and Policy: 01/09/2024

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**Ottawa County  
2023 Seasonal Wage Scale**

	Position	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
8269	GATEKEEPER	\$ 11.25	\$ 11.76	\$ 12.02	\$ 12.28
5499	GROUND ATTENDANT	\$ 13.30	\$ 13.81	\$ 14.07	\$ 14.32
2789	GUEST SERVICES SUPERVISOR	\$ 16.88	\$ 17.39	\$ 17.65	\$ 17.90
8639	MAINTENANCE CREW	\$ 14.83	\$ 15.35	\$ 15.60	\$ 15.86
2729	NATURALIST GUIDE	\$ 13.81	\$ 14.32	\$ 14.58	\$ 14.83
5469	PARK ATTENDANT	\$ 12.79	\$ 13.30	\$ 13.55	\$ 13.81
8699	PARKS CUSTODIAN	\$ 13.30	\$ 13.81	\$ 14.07	\$ 14.32
2779	RESERVATION SPECIALIST	\$ 13.04	\$ 13.55	\$ 13.81	\$ 14.07
2799	SEASONAL PARK SUPERVISOR	\$ 16.88	\$ 17.39	\$ 17.65	\$ 17.90
5479	STEWARDSHIP CREW	\$ 13.30	\$ 13.81	\$ 14.07	\$ 14.32
2798	VOLUNTEER OUTREACH COORDINATOR	\$ 16.88	\$ 17.39	\$ 17.65	\$ 17.90

**Current 2024 Seasonal Wage Scale (2.27% increase over 2023)**

	Position	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
8269	GATEKEEPER	\$ 11.51	\$ 12.03	\$ 12.29	\$ 12.55
5499	GROUND ATTENDANT	\$ 13.60	\$ 14.12	\$ 14.39	\$ 14.65
2789	GUEST SERVICES SUPERVISOR	\$ 17.26	\$ 17.79	\$ 18.05	\$ 18.31
8639	MAINTENANCE CREW	\$ 15.17	\$ 15.69	\$ 15.95	\$ 16.22
2729	OUTDOOR EDUCATOR	\$ 14.12	\$ 14.65	\$ 14.91	\$ 15.17
5469	PARK ATTENDANT	\$ 13.08	\$ 13.60	\$ 13.86	\$ 14.12
2779	RESERVATION SPECIALIST	\$ 13.34	\$ 13.86	\$ 14.12	\$ 14.39
2799	SEASONAL PARK SUPERVISOR	\$ 17.26	\$ 17.79	\$ 18.05	\$ 18.31
5479	STEWARDSHIP CREW	\$ 17.26	\$ 17.79	\$ 18.05	\$ 18.31
2798	VOLUNTEER OUTREACH COORDINATOR	\$ 17.26	\$ 17.79	\$ 18.05	\$ 18.31

**Proposed 2024 Wage based on local comps**

	Position	Wage
8269	GATEKEEPER	\$ 15.50
2789	GUEST SERVICES SUPERVISOR	\$ 18.50
8639	MAINTENANCE CREW	\$ 18.50
2729	OUTDOOR EDUCATOR	\$ 15.50
	PROGRAM LEAD	\$ 18.50
	PROJECT SUPPORT SPECIALIST	\$ 18.50
5469	PARK CARETAKER	\$ 15.50
2779	RESERVATION SPECIALIST	\$ 15.50
2799	SEASONAL PARK SUPERVISOR	\$ 18.50
5479	STEWARDSHIP CREW	\$ 18.50
2798	VOLUNTEER OUTREACH COORDINATOR	\$ 18.50

\*The wages would be consolidated into two rates: skilled and unskilled.  
\*\*Seasonal Wages would be increased each year by the same percentage approved by the BOC for FT staff.

**Local Wage survey**

Employer	unskilled	skilled
MDNR	\$15.00	\$18-\$27
Kent Parks	\$16.02	\$18.00
Muskegon County Parks	\$15-\$15.50	\$17-\$17.50
Allegan County Parks	\$15.19	
City of Grand Haven	11.71- 16.81	
City of Holland	\$14.00	\$18.00
Holland Township	\$14.25	
Michigan's Adventure	\$16- \$17	\$20- \$28
GEI Consultants		\$18-\$25
Muskegon Conservation District		\$15.50
Wild rivers Invasive species coalition		\$18.00
Genesee Conservation District		\$18- \$22
Taco Bell	\$14.00	\$16.00
McDonalds	\$15.00	\$18.00
Burger King	\$15.79	

# Action Request

Electronic Submission – Request # 328



Ottawa County Parks &  
Recreation Commission

**Committee:** Parks Board

**Meeting Date:** 1/24/2024

**Vendor/3<sup>rd</sup> Party:** FACILITY CONDITIONS OF USE

**Requesting Department:** PARKS AND RECREATION

**Submitted By:** JASON BOERGER

**Agenda Item:** 12C RESERVATION FACILITY CONDITIONS OF USE DOCUMENT

## Suggested Motion:

To approve the Conditions of Use document that will be agreed to by all future facility renters once the new recreation software is in use.

## Summary of Request:

In 2023 the Parks Commission updated the Facility Reservation Fee Policy (attached). With the implementation of RecTrac, the new Parks reservation software Parks staff have worked with Corporation Counsel to combine several Conditions of Use documents that have been historically used for different types of reservation facilities into one document. This new Conditions of Use document will be used for all new facility reservation contracts once the new software, RecTrac, goes live. This new Conditions of Use document includes two terms not included in the 2023 Facility Reservation Policy, Decorations and Seating. Both of these terms have been the standard operating procedure in the past.

## Financial Information:

Total Cost: \$0.00

Parks Fund Cost: \$0.00

Included in Budget:

If not included in Budget, recommended funding source:

## Action is Related to an Activity Which Is: Non-Mandated

## Action is Related to Strategic Plan:

Goal 4: To Continually Improve the County's Organization and Services.

Objective:

## Administration:

Recommended by Parks Director:

## Committee/Governing/Advisory Board Approval Date:



**Ottawa County Parks &  
Recreation Commission**  
12220 Fillmore St. West Olive, MI 49460  
(616)738-4810 www.miottawa.org/parks

## **FACILITY RENTAL CONDITIONS OF USE AGREEMENT**

### **CANCELLATIONS**

If the reservation holder cancels the reservation, the following policy applies:

- 61+ days prior to the reservation – 80% refund of reservation fee plus 100% refund of security deposit, or the reservation may be rescheduled for a \$20 rescheduling fee.
- 31 to 60 days prior to the reservation – 50% refund of reservation fee plus 100% refund of security deposit, or the reservation may be rescheduled for a \$20 rescheduling fee.
- 0 to 30 days prior to the reservation – Reservation fee will not be refunded, 100% of security deposit will be refunded, and reservation may not be rescheduled.
- No show, no call, or cancellation after the reservation date – Neither the reservation fee nor the deposit will be refunded, and reservation may not be rescheduled.

If the facility is unavailable due to a building maintenance issue (e.g. a fire, plumbing or HVAC issue, etc.), natural disaster, pandemic, government restriction, or other problem outside of the control of both Ottawa County Parks and the renter, the renter will be offered the following options:

1. Refund of the reservation fee minus 10% and full refund of any security deposit
2. Reservation may be rescheduled at no additional cost.
3. Account credit of 100% of the reservation fee to be used for a future reservation, park program, or merchandise and full refund of any security deposit.

If Ottawa County Parks chooses to cancel the reservation for any reason not listed above, 100% of all fees will be refunded or the reservation may be rescheduled at no additional cost.

### **MINIMUM AGE**

The individual agreeing to these conditions of use must be 18 years of age or older and is responsible for the organization's/group's conduct, behavior, and respect for the facility.

### **DEPOSITS**

Deposits are required for all indoor rental facilities. Part or all of your deposit may be forfeited for rule or conditions of use violations, damage, theft, alcohol rules violations, exceeding stated building or event capacity, or when additional staff time is needed to clean up non-typical messes. In addition, some violations may result in civil or criminal citations and/or an immediate shutdown of your event without a refund. In the event that the County incurs costs relating to your rental that exceed the amount of any deposit collected (e.g., cleaning costs or damage repair costs), you may be invoiced for the difference.

### **DAMAGE TO PERSONAL PROPERTY**

The Parks Commission assumes no responsibility for damage to or loss of any property of the facility renter or others brought into the facility prior to, during or after facility use. The renter is responsible for any damages by the Renter or Renter's guests.

### **PARK RULES AND REGULATIONS**

Rental facility users must abide by all park rules which can be found at:

<https://www.miottawa.org/Parks/rules.htm>

### **ARRIVAL AND RENTAL TIME**

All set up must occur during paid rental time. Reservation changes must be approved 14+ days before rental. No early arrival or late departure are permitted without proper notice and payment. If you have made arrangements with staff to meet you on-site at the start of your reservation and you are not present at the agreed upon time, \$25 will be held from your security deposit per hour late.

### **DEPARTURE TIME AND CLEANUP**

All clean up must occur during paid rental time. Place all trash in the bins provided and clean up after your reservation. All personal belongings must be removed at the end of your event. If any messes, spills, or damage to the facility are found after your event that require staff time beyond normally scheduled hours to clean or repair, your deposit, if applicable, may be forfeited or you will be billed at a rate of \$75 per hour, plus materials if necessary. Time changes must be approved 14+ days before rental.

### **PARKING**

Parking is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Space is not guaranteed. Vehicles must park in marked spaces. Motor vehicle permits are required at all Lakeshore parks from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day. Please be aware that parking availability may be very limited or full during weekends, with the busiest times being between 11 am and 4 pm.

### **DECORATIONS**

You may NOT use the following at any rental facility:

1. Adhesives including but not limited to tape, glue dots, or glue.
2. Items with flames, including but not limited to candles, torches, sparklers, lanterns, or fireworks.
3. Items that could damage structures or trees, including but not limited to tacks, screws, or nails.
4. Objects released into air or water, including but not limited to free-floating balloons or powders.
5. Sprinkled decorations including but not limited to glitter, confetti, rice, or artificial flower petals.
6. Items that would leave evidence after the event, including but not limited to sidewalk chalk or zip ties.
7. Ground cover or any other material that would kill grass.

Real flowers or petals may be used as decorations; however, they must be completely cleaned up and removed after your event.

### **SEATING**

Tables and chairs may be moved within the building, onto the deck, or outdoor paved surface that is part of the reservation. If moved outside, they must be moved back indoors prior to departure. Tables and chairs may not be moved to any natural surface (i.e. grass).

### **TENT RENTAL**

An Ottawa County Parks pre-approved tent rental vendor must be used if a large event tent or any tent over 120 ft<sup>2</sup> is to be erected at your event.

### **SPECIALTY APPLIANCES AND SMALL APPLIANCES**

Specialty appliances such as cotton candy, popcorn, or ice cream machines are not allowed. Only one small appliance (i.e. crockpot) of any kind should be used per plug. Do not use power strips for appliances, as the circuit breaker may trip.

### **PETS**

Pets or comfort/therapy animals are not allowed in any indoor facility. Service animals are always welcome.

### **SMOKING & VAPING**

No smoking or vaping of any substance is allowed in or within 25' of any building or structure.

### **ALCOHOL**

Alcohol is only permitted if you added the request to your reservation and meet the following conditions:

1. It must be at an approved facility: Connor Bayou Woodland Cabin, Grand Ravines Lodge, Nature Center at Hemlock Crossing, or Weaver House.
2. An Ottawa County Parks pre-approved bartending service must be used to serve all alcoholic beverages.
3. An additional \$250 refundable alcohol security deposit must be paid.

If alcoholic beverages are present at your event without reservation approval or if alcohol is not being served by an Ottawa County Parks pre-approved bartending service, your reservation will result in forfeiture of your security deposit, possible event closure, and/or possible civil infraction citations.

### **COMMERCIAL USE**

Ottawa County Parks prohibits commercial activity in all parks and open spaces ([Rule 6.1k](#)). Rental facilities may not be used for commercial business purposes unless a special use permit has been obtained. The application can be found here: [https://www.miottawa.org/Parks/pdf/Special\\_Use\\_Permit.pdf](https://www.miottawa.org/Parks/pdf/Special_Use_Permit.pdf)

Commercial photographers hired by the facility renter for special event photography are not required to obtain a permit.

### **FIRE CODE**

At no point should the posted maximum occupancy of the building be exceeded, or fire exits blocked in any way.

**It is the responsibility of the facility renter to inform their guests of these rules and regulations.**

## RELEASE & INDEMNIFICATION FOR RESERVATIONS INCLUDING ALCOHOL

This release and indemnification agreement made on {Date} between {FullName} of {Address}, hereinafter called "Indemnitor"; and County of Ottawa, of 12220 Fillmore Street, West Olive, Michigan, hereinafter called "County."

Whereas, the County is the owner of a public park reservation site known as {FacilityName}, hereinafter called "the Site"; and

Whereas, Indemnitor desires to use the Site for purpose of an event; and

Whereas, the County has no involvement with or control over the event to be conducted by Indemnitor;

Now, therefore, in consideration of the respective covenants herein contained, it is hereby agreed:

1. Indemnitor hereby agrees to fully and completely indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the County, its officers, agents, representatives, and employees from and against any and all liability, loss, or damage County may suffer as a result of damage or injury of any type, claims, demands, costs, suits, or judgments against it arising directly or indirectly from Indemnitor's use of the Site for the purpose of an event, which will take place on {DateRange}.
2. Indemnitor hereby agrees to the normal rental cost for the Site.
3. Alcohol may only be served at the following Sites:
  - a. Connor Bayou Woodland Cabin
  - b. Grand Ravines Lodge
  - c. Nature Center at Hemlock Crossing– Great Room
  - d. Weaver House at Pine Bend Park
4. If Indemnitor requests that beer and/or wine are served at the Site, the Indemnitor hereby agrees to cover costs related to serving of alcohol and to pay a \$250 alcohol security deposit in addition to the standard \$250 security deposit for use of the Site. Security deposits are completely refundable unless damages, undue wear and tear, park rule violations, or violations of this agreement lead to withholding all or part of the deposit(s) for damages and/or other expenses.
5. **If alcohol is served at the Site, Indemnitor hereby agrees to use a bartender service to serve the alcohol.** The bartender service must be licensed, insured, and trained, and approved by Ottawa County Parks and Recreation staff at least 30 days prior to the event.
6. Indemnitor hereby agrees to abide by the following rules relating to alcohol use:
  - a. All applicable State and local laws and ordinances are in effect.
  - b. No underage drinking is allowed.
  - c. Only beer and wine may be served.
  - d. Alcohol may only be served from bottles, cans, or boxes.
  - e. Alcohol is allowed in specified areas only. Alcohol is allowed in the indoor rental facility, decks, patios, and porches associated with the rental facility, lawn areas that are designated as part of the facility reservation and not open for public use, in the tent area when applicable, and between the tent area and indoor rental facility. Alcohol is prohibited anywhere else in the park including the parking lot, trails, and docks.
  - f. **Alcohol consumption must cease 1/2 hour before the end of an event.**
  - g. No cash bars are allowed.
  - h. No pay-for-admission events are allowed.
7. Indemnitor hereby agrees to allow park staff or designee access to the Site or event as needed to monitor activities.
8. Indemnitor hereby warrants that they have the full right, power, and authority to execute this agreement.

In witness whereof, the parties have executed this Agreement on the day and year first above written.



# **FACILITY RESERVATION FEE POLICY**

**The Ottawa County Parks & Recreation Commission enhances quality of life for residents and visitors, by preserving parks and open spaces and providing outdoor and natural resource-based recreation and education experiences.**

**Adopted 5-24-2023  
Resolution: PR 23-38**

## **I. PHILOSOPHY**

- a. The guiding principle of the Ottawa County Parks Commission philosophy in regard to fees and charges is to efficiently offer reservable areas and facilities within the parks that are desired by the public and enhance the park experience and to ensure that all Ottawa County residents have equal opportunity to utilize these facilities. This principle is accomplished through the utilization of two primary revenue sources: tax dollars and fees and charges. Tax dollars provide basic operational costs for Ottawa County Parks services. Fees and charges offset operating costs and continue to be an important source of income to assist in narrowing the gap between the levels of millage support and other revenue.
- b. This system of fees and charges is to supplement but is not designed to completely replace other existing financial resources. Facility rentals must be made available on a level consistent with the needs of Ottawa County residents, in accordance with national and local trends, and always within budget allocations and in compliance with administrative directives.
- c. Fees and charges must be viewed as a method for continuing and expanding the ability to provide quality parks and reservable facilities at a level that is fair and equitable to both renters and other park visitors.
- d. The establishment and collection of facility rental fees is an administrative function overseen by the Director in compliance with the policies, directives, and approved budgets of the Park Commission.

## **II. FEES AND CHARGES REVENUE CLASSIFICATIONS**

Facility rentals provide a direct benefit to an individual or group. They are not an essential component of the general use of the park. For this reason, all costs associated with operating a facility that will be rented for exclusive use by an individual or group must be offset by the revenue that the facility rentals generate. They are classified as a revenue-generating service and should therefore produce income that will cover all costs and produce income to be applied to the Park's general fund. Fees should be set based on current market research conducted every two years. Fees should be in line with other government-run facilities, less, in general, than private businesses, and a minimum of 125% of the total cost to operate the facility. Individual facilities that are in high demand, have a unique setting, or have premium amenities will be priced higher than others.

## **III. SECURITY DEPOSIT**

Security deposits are required at all indoor facilities and overnight camping facilities where the renter is not a nonprofit organization or an organized youth group. Historically picnic shelters and youth group camping reservations have not resulted in damage where a deposit would be necessary, so the refunding of the deposit would be an unnecessary burden for those rental types.

#### **IV. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE POLICY**

- a. At the Weaver House, Connor Bayou Woodland Cabin, Grand Ravines Lodge, and the Nature Center at Hemlock Crossing, alcohol is allowed by permit only. The presence of alcohol at an event or group facility rental without a special permit will result in forfeiture of your security deposit, possible citations, or event closure.
- b. Special Permit Rules and Requirements:
  - i. All alcohol served at an Ottawa County Parks Facility Rental must be served by a County approved bartender hired at the expense of the facility renter. The renter must notify Park staff of the bartender that has been hired prior to the event.
  - ii. Only beer and wine, including champagne, mead, and hard cider, are allowed. No hard liquor.
  - iii. No cash bars or events requiring admission fees.
  - iv. Alcohol must remain inside your designated reservation area; alcohol is not allowed in parking lots or public park areas.
  - v. Guests may not bring alcohol. All alcohol must be provided by the bartender or in the case of a tasting event the alcohol can be provided by the renter and served by the bartender.
  - vi. Serving of alcohol must cease 30 minutes prior to the end of the event. All consumption must cease at the end of the event.
  - vii. It is the host's responsibility to monitor guest consumption. Follow applicable laws, and to not allow anyone to drive if they are intoxicated.
- c. Alcoholic beverages will be permitted to be brought in and consumed within the individual treehouses, yurts, or campsites at the Explorers Camp at Ottawa Sands but may not be consumed in any public or common area of the Camp or the Park. No special permit is required in this instance.

#### **V. SMOKING**

Smoking or vaping of tobacco (nicotine), marijuana (THC), or any other substance is not permitted within or immediately adjacent to any Ottawa County Parks rental facility.

#### **VI. FAIR SHARE POLICY**

- a. Ottawa County residents  
Ottawa County residents make a significant contribution to the financing and operation of Ottawa County Parks. The Ottawa County Parks property taxes are paid whether or not the individual participates in or uses the facilities of the park system. The Fair Share Policy is intended to apportion to non-residents an equalized fee so that they can contribute to the overall financing of the Ottawa County Parks of Ottawa County on an equitable basis with the resident.
- b. Non-resident fees

Non-residents will pay a rental fee approximately 35% higher than the resident fee.

## **VII. PREMIUM FACILITIES**

Premium facilities are those that typically host weddings, wedding receptions, or events that require more pre-planning than a typical rental. These facilities also include outdoor space that will accommodate a large tent. A premium facility rental will include at least one planning call and one on-site tour (if needed) with Park staff prior to the event. Renters will also be met at the facility by a Park reservation specialist at the rental start time to ensure that everything is set up properly and as planned. Additional on-site meetings or tours will require an additional fee. The fee charged for a tour prior to booking the facility will be deducted from the cost of the facility rental if/when the reservation is made and will count as the one included on-site tour. Premium facilities include Connor Bayou Woodland Cabin, Grand Ravines Lodge, and the Weaver House at Pine Bend Park.

## **VIII. OVERNIGHT RENTALS**

### **a. GROUP RENTALS**

Overnight facilities designated for larger groups like the Pigeon Creek Group Camp or the Kirk Park Lodge during the winter may be rented by nonprofit groups or organized youth groups at the published rate without a security deposit. Other groups or families may apply for a special use permit to rent the facility and will be considered on a case-by-case basis by Park staff. These other groups or families will pay a premium rental fee of two times the published rate and will be required to pay a refundable security deposit.

### **b. FAMILY/ INDIVIDUAL RENTALS**

Overnight facilities designed for small groups or families may be rented to anyone in accordance with XIV.

## **IX. EARLY ARRIVAL**

Facility renters may request to arrive earlier than the published rental window. This request must be made a minimum of two weeks prior to the reservation. The request will only be granted if Park staff can be made available to accommodate. If approved, the facility renter will pay the specified hourly fee in addition to the regular hourly or time block fee.

## **X. LARGE TENTS AND AMUSEMENTS**

Pre-approval and an additional fee are required for large tents and amusements such as bouncy houses or similar inflatables. Requests will be approved at many sites to allow tents and amusements; however, there are restrictions about where they may be located and how they must be installed. No more than two of these permits will be issued per reservation (one of each or two of one kind). In addition, all amusements require proof of liability insurance and a signed indemnification form. Tents over 144 ft<sup>2</sup> must be set up by a preapproved vendor. Tents 144 ft<sup>2</sup> or less do not require a permit.

## **XI. FACILITY TOURS**

A 30-minute facility tour may be set up with Park staff for the specified fee. One complimentary facility tour is included with each premium facility rental.

## **XII. FACILITY CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICY**

- a. If the person renting a facility cancels the reservation, the following policy applies:
  - i. 61+ days prior to the reservation: 80% refund of reservation fee plus 100% refund of the deposit, or the reservation may be rescheduled for a \$20 rescheduling fee.
  - ii. 31 to 60 days prior to the reservation: 50% refund of reservation fee plus 100% refund of the deposit, or the reservation may be rescheduled for a \$20 rescheduling fee.
  - iii. 0 to 30 days prior to the reservation: The reservation fee will not be refunded, and the reservation may not be rescheduled. 100% of the deposit will be refunded.
  - iv. No show, no call, or cancellation after the reservation date: Neither the reservation fee nor the deposit will be refunded, and the reservation may not be rescheduled.
  - v. Exceptions to cancellation policy:
- b. If the facility is unavailable due to a building maintenance issue (e.g. a fire, plumbing, or HVAC issue, etc.), a natural disaster, pandemic, government restriction, or other problem outside of the control of both Ottawa County Parks and the renter, the renter would be offered a 90% refund of the reservation fee and 100% refund of the deposit, or the reservation may be rescheduled at no additional cost, or the funds may be placed on account for a future reservation, park program, or merchandise.
- c. If Ottawa County Parks chooses to cancel the reservation for any reason not listed above, 100% of all fees will be refunded, or the reservation may be rescheduled at no additional cost.

**XIII. INCENTIVES/DISCOUNTS**

At the discretion of the Park Director, discounts may be authorized for the following:

- a. County or other government agencies
- b. Partner nonprofit agencies
- c. Facility promotion
- d. Park staff's determination that it is in the best interests of good customer service

**XIV. AGE REQUIREMENTS**

Renters must be at least 18 years of age in order to rent an Ottawa County Parks facility.

**XV. ASSESSING COSTS**

Costs are assessed using historic data. These costs shall be evaluated and re-calculated every 2 years to ensure that they are either offset by revenue or justified by a mission related benefit.

Average Cost Per Reservation Site

Reservation Site	Total Average Cost per Reservation	Current Pricing resident	Current pricing non-resident	Current pricing resident per/hr	Current pricing non-resident per/hr	Time /Days	Proposed pricing resident	Proposed pricing non-resident	Proposed pricing resident per/hr	Proposed pricing non-resident per/hr
<b>North Area</b>										
Grose Forest Picnic Shelter	\$38.50	\$66.00	\$96.00			Daily	\$ 75	\$ 101		
Grose Lake Picnic Shelter	\$38.50	\$66.00	\$96.00			Daily	\$ 75	\$ 101		
Riverside Park Picnic Shelter	\$37.50	\$36.00	\$66.00			Daily	\$ 50	\$ 68		
Connor Woodland Cabin	\$124.00	\$92.00	\$112.00	\$23.00	\$28.00	Mon-Thur	\$ 200	\$ 270	\$ 50	\$ 68
	\$124.00	\$300.00	\$330.00	\$50.00	\$55.00	Fri-Sun+Holidays	\$ 390	\$ 527	\$ 65	\$ 88
<b>South Area</b>										
Pigeon Creek Lodge	\$96.00	\$186.00	\$216.00	\$31.00	\$36.00	Daily	\$ 180	\$ 243	\$ 30	\$ 41
Pigeon Creek Lodge Winter	\$96.00	\$124.00	\$144.00			Daily	\$ 120	\$ 162	\$ 30	\$ 41
Pigeon Creek Group Camp Area	\$77.50	\$48.00	\$78.00			Daily	\$ 80	\$ 108		
<b>Groups without nonprofit status: by special permit only</b>										
Weaver House at Pine Bend	\$132.00	\$88.00	\$108.00	\$22.00	\$27.00	Mon-Thur;	\$ 200	\$ 270	\$ 50	\$ 68
	\$132.00	\$294.00	\$324.00	\$49.00	\$54.00	Fri-Sun+Holidays	\$ 390	\$ 527	\$ 65	\$ 88
Nature Center at Hemlock Crossing	\$81.00	\$105.00	\$165.00	\$35.00	\$55.00	Mon-Friday (classroom only)	\$ 120	\$ 162	\$ 40	\$ 54
	\$81.00			\$50.00	\$70.00	Mon-Fri (Great room)	\$ 195	\$ 263	\$ 65	\$ 88
	\$81.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,250.00			\$1000 Fri-Sun (Whole building)				
Paw Paw Picnic Shelter	\$38.50	\$36.00	\$66.00			Daily	\$ 50	\$ 68		
Upper Macatawa Picnic Shelter	\$38.50	\$36.00	\$66.00			Daily	\$ 50	\$ 68		
<b>East Area</b>										
Grand Ravines Lodge	\$124.00	\$108.00	\$128.00	\$27.00	\$32.00	Mon-Thur;	\$ 200	\$ 270	\$ 50	\$ 68
		\$294.00	\$324.00	\$49.00	\$54.00	Fri-Sun+Holidays	\$ 390	\$ 527	\$ 65	\$ 88
Grand River Park Picnic Building	\$66.00	\$108.00	\$138.00	\$18.00	\$23.00	Daily	\$ 120	\$ 162	\$ 20	\$ 27
Hager DeVries Room	\$103.50	\$156.00	\$186.00	\$26.00	\$31.00	Mon-Thur	\$ 180	\$ 243	\$ 30	\$ 41
		\$186.00	\$216.00	\$31.00	\$36.00	Fri-Sun+Holidays	\$ 240	\$ 324	\$ 40	\$ 54
Hager Park VandertAnn Room	\$103.50	\$156.00	\$186.00	\$26.00	\$31.00	Mon-Thur	\$ 180	\$ 243	\$ 30	\$ 41
		\$186.00	\$216.00	\$31.00	\$36.00	Fri-Sun+Holidays	\$ 240	\$ 324	\$ 40	\$ 54
Hager Park Picnic Building	\$63.00	\$66.00	\$96.00			half day	\$ 85	\$ 115		
Hager Park Maple Shelter	\$38.50	\$66.00	\$96.00			DAILY	\$ 75	\$ 101		
Spring Grove Picnic Building	\$78.00	\$60.00	\$90.00			Fireplace side	\$ 100	\$ 135		
	\$78.00	\$66.00	\$96.00			Kitchen side	\$ 125	\$ 169		
	\$78.00	\$126.00	\$186.00			Entire building	\$ 225	\$ 304		
Spring Grove Picnic Building w/wedding	\$115.50	\$180.00	\$210.00			Fireplace Side+Wedding Trellis	\$ 220	\$ 297		
	\$115.50	\$186.00	\$216.00			Kitchen side + Wedding Trellis	\$ 245	\$ 331		
	\$115.50	\$246.00	\$306.00			Entire building + Wedding Trellis	\$ 345	\$ 466		
<b>West Area</b>										
North Beach Park Picnic Shelter	\$43.50	\$126.00	\$156.00			Daily	\$ 150	\$ 203		
Kirk Park Picnic Shelter	\$38.50	\$66.00	\$96.00			Daily	\$ 75	\$ 101		
Kirk Park Lodge	\$96.00	\$108.00	\$138.00			Daily	\$ 120	\$ 162		
Kirk Park Lodge Overnight	\$111.00	\$96.00	\$126.00			Daily	\$ 110	\$ 149		
<b>Groups without nonprofit status: by special permit only</b>										
Tunnel Park North Picnic Shelter	\$38.50	\$66.00	\$96.00			Daily	\$ 75	\$ 101		
Tunnel Park South Picnic Shelter	\$38.50	\$66.00	\$96.00			Daily	\$ 75	\$ 101		
Kouw Park Picnic Shelter	\$38.50					New	\$ 75	\$ 101		
Windsnest Park Picnic Shelter	\$38.50					New	\$ 75	\$ 101		
<b>General Fees/Deposits*</b>										
Early Hours (prior to reservation window)		\$50.00					\$ 50			
On-site tour (30 mins)		n/a					\$ 25			
Re-scheduling fee		\$20.00					\$ 20			
Alcohol Permit Fee		\$50.00					\$ -			
Alcohol Security Deposit		\$250.00					\$ 250			
Premium Facility Security Deposit		\$250.00					\$ 250			
General Security Deposit		\$100.00					\$ 100			
Tent Permit		\$25.00					\$ 35			
Amusement Permit (limit 2 per facility)		\$25.00					\$ 35			
<b>Totals</b>										

35% non-resident surcharge

\*General Fee/ Deposits are not subject to the 35% non-resident premium

# Action Request

Electronic Submission – Request # 331



Ottawa County Parks &  
Recreation Commission

**Committee:** Parks Board

**Meeting Date:** 1/24/2024

**Vendor/3<sup>rd</sup> Party:** MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

**Requesting Department:** PARKS AND RECREATION

**Submitted By:** CURT TERHAAR

**Agenda Item:** 12D CONTRACT FOR MDNR SUPPORT OF BASS RIVER TRAIL SEGMENT

## Suggested Motion:

To approve the Cooperative Agreement with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for funding assistance in the amount of \$715,000 for the development of the Idema Explorers Trail Bass River Segment Phase 1 and forward to the Board of Commissioners for final approval.

## Summary of Request:

Discussions with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for construction of the Idema Explorers Trail through the Bass River State Recreation Area involved negotiations in regard to trail location and funding. One result of these negotiations was the commitment from the State to assist with funding for a more expensive but less intrusive route through the property. Exact sources of all of this State funding have not been determined, but this agreement represents the third installment of this commitment and provides sufficient funds to complete the first phase (west) of the trail through State property. In 2023, the state DNR granted \$50,000 & \$75,000 through two separate agreements towards the Bass River segment of the Idema Explorers Trail.

Bass River Phase 1 (west)

Total Estimated Cost: \$1,632,096

Funding Sources:

MDNR: \$840,000

ARPA: \$535,000 (secured)

Greenway Fund (Parks Foundation): \$257,096 (secured)

## Financial Information:

Total Cost: \$1,632,096.00

Parks Fund Cost: \$0.00

Included in Budget: Yes

If not included in Budget, recommended funding source:

## Action is Related to an Activity Which Is: Non-Mandated

### Action is Related to Strategic Plan:

Goal 2: To Contribute to the Long-Term Economic, Social and Environmental Health of the County.

Objective:

## Administration:

Recommended by Parks Director:

**Committee/Governing/Advisory Board Approval Date:**



GRETCHEN WHITMER  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
LANSING



M. SCOTT BOWEN  
DIRECTOR

**Cooperative Agreement**  
Between  
Michigan Department of Natural Resources  
Parks and Recreation Division  
and Ottawa County Parks and Recreation

**I. PURPOSE**

This Cooperative Agreement (CA) entered into this \_\_\_ Day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2024, between the State of Michigan by the Department of Natural Resources' Parks and Recreation Division (MDNR-PRD) and Ottawa County Parks and Recreation (County) for the purpose of granting funds to the County for the purpose of providing non-motorized trail development within, and connectivity to, the Bass River Recreation Area.

**II. AGREEMENT**

MDNR-PRD agrees to convey to the County the amount of Seven Hundred Fifteen Thousand Dollars and 00/100 (\$715,000.00). The County agrees, that in exchange for these funds, it will undertake the necessary development work for the Idema Explorers Trail, Grand River Greenway - Phase 1 construction from Riverside Park to Boat Launch Lot of an AASHTO paved linear trail through Bass River RA, as part of the greater county-wide Grand River Greenway in accordance with terms of Operating Agreement #PRD-T-002-2022.

**Equal Opportunity and Access:**

MDNR-PRD provides equal opportunities for employment and access to Michigan's natural resources. Both state and federal laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, disability, age, sex, height, weight or marital status under the U.S. Civil Rights Acts of 1964 as amended, 1976 MI PA 453, 1976 MI PA 220, Title V of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, and the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended.

The County and its members, employees and staff shall adhere to the same policy and not refuse such person(s) any accommodation to facilities, service or privilege offered to or enjoyed by the general public.

**Addressing Issues and Concerns:**

Any concerns or issues should first be discussed with the MDNR-PRD Representative, Jill Sell, at SellJ1@michigan.gov. If resolution cannot be found with the above identified MDNR Representative, then it should be elevated to the MDNR Resource Protection & Promotion Section Chief, Jason Fleming, at flemingj@michigan.gov or 517-930-6726 for final resolution.

**INFORMATION RELEASE / OWNERSHIP**

News Releases: News releases pertaining to this CA, data or the project to which it relates will not be made without prior written MDNR-PRD approval.

Publication: The County will not use, release, publish or present any analyses, findings, results, or techniques developed under this agreement, or any information derived therefrom until such analyses, findings, or techniques have been reported to the MDNR-PRD. No material may be published that is exempt from disclosure under Michigan Public Act No. 442 of 1976, known as the "Freedom of Information Act," without express permission from the MDNR.

Data Release: The County shall not make available for review and/or provide to any source outside of the scope of this agreement any information released by the MDNR-PRD.

Data Ownership: Any data provided by the MDNR-PRD for use under this CA will remain the sole property of the MDNR-PRD and must be returned upon the request of the MDNR-PRD.

**Dissolution:**

This CA may be terminated by any party upon notice to the other parties to this agreement. Such termination shall be effective 30 days after notice is received by the parties to the agreement., and any unencumbered funds shall be returned to the MDNR-PRD.

**Assignment:**

This CA may not be assigned to any other party without the prior written approval of the MDNR-PRD.

**Revisions/Amendments to Agreement:**

This CA may be changed, amended, modified, extended or assigned only by mutual consent of the parties, provided that consent shall be in writing and executed by the parties hereto prior to the time such change shall take effect.

**Governing Law:**

This CA is governed by, and construed in accordance with, the laws of the State of Michigan. Any dispute arising under this CA must be resolved in the Michigan Court of Claims.

**IV. APPROVAL/SIGNATURES**

This CA is effective upon execution by the Parties.

**Ottawa County**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Michigan Department of Natural Resources  
Parks and Recreation Division**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Ronald A. Olson, Chief Date



Ottawa County Parks &  
Recreation Commission  
12220 Fillmore Street, West Olive, MI 49460  
(616) 738-4810 [www.miottawa.org/parks](http://www.miottawa.org/parks)

## MEMORANDUM

Date: 01/22/24

To: Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission

From: Aaron Bodbyl-Mast, Parks Planner

RE: Request to sign Lower Grand River Water Trail Memorandum of Understanding

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Parks staff is recommending the Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission (OCPRC) sign a proposed memorandum of understanding with the Lower Grand River Organization of Watersheds (LGROW) related to the proposed Lower Grand River Water Trail. LGROW is requesting several agencies sign the memorandum of understanding to increase the likelihood that the trail will receive state designation. The following memo provides history of water trail planning along the Grand River and additional information about the Lower Grand River Water Trail planning process.

### **Background**

Efforts to increase the profile of the Grand River as a non-motorized “water trail” for paddlers extend back several decades, with the OCPRC playing a pivotal role throughout. These efforts included in-depth engagement with residents, local units of government, and partners through this time period. In fact, according to OCPRC records, the first major effort was in 1997 with the City of Grand Rapids leading an application for American Heritage Rivers Designation for the entire Grand River. This effort included former President Gerald R. Ford and Fred Meijer as honorary co-chairs and letters of support or resolutions from several Ottawa County local units of government. The application was not successful. In the 2006 Ottawa County Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan, a recommended plan action was to develop a water trail on the Grand River which would connect the growing system of parks along the Grand River Greenway. Implementation efforts appear to have commenced in 2009, with the Grand River Heritage Water Trail designation by the state coming in the 2010-2011 period (though no official document or motion could be located to verify the exact date). In 2014, with the assistance of a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant, several universally accessible kayak launches were installed with official water trail signage. A Grand River Heritage Water Trail web page was also launched with information about the trail route and its cultural, historical, and natural features.

While the OCPRC had led the way with the Grand River Heritage Water Trail effort, the Michigan Heritage Trails program is now defunct as the State act that established it (PA 454 of 2002) was repealed in 2014 and replaced with the Pure Michigan Trails program (PA 210 of 2014). As a result, there is no longer any official state designation associated with the OCPRC managed trail. However, in 2017, the West Michigan Environmental Action Council (WMEAC) completed an assessment of the water trail with recommendations for further enhancements and safety improvements. During the process, WMEAC engaged local units of government with a focus on emergency response agencies.

In 2016, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) initiated a Grand River water trail planning process for the entirety of the river, with a vision of establishing an official water trail for the length of the river. Parks staff participated in several of these meetings. Additionally, over the past 15 years, the

## Memo

City of Grand Rapids has led various river-focused planning projects, including River for All and the Grand Rapids Whitewater Project, with the Whitewater Project being of critical importance to allow for suitable passage for paddlers by removing six dams along a two-mile stretch of the river.

These regional efforts furthered momentum for formalizing a water trail along the river. There are three watershed organizations that have responsibility for the “lower”, “middle”, and “upper” sections of the river. From Ionia to Grand Haven, LGROW has been heading up regional discussions and planning efforts. East of Ionia, the “middle” and “upper” watersheds groups have already received designation for their sections of the river.

### **The Lower Grand River Trail**

In light of the water trail designations for the middle and upper Grand River, LGROW engaged the National Park Service to develop a water trail plan for their service area with the intent to eventually prepare an application for state water trail designation through the MDNR. Several parks staff members have been participating in this process, including on the plan steering committee, which included various public engagement opportunities and direct engagement with local units of government. Several staff members were also present at an open house at the Connor Bayou cabin in April 2022.

For both the 2017 assessment by WMEAC and the LGROW plan, the main concerns expressed by the public and stakeholders were regarding safety, emergency response, and user conflicts (e.g. motorized boats and non-motorized boats). Both reports include several recommendations to address these issues including better wayfinding, education, and communication with emergency response agencies. The plan can be accessed from this [link](#). As part of the plan process, LGROW requested that the County adopt a resolution of support for their initial planning process. This resolution (attached) was adopted in April 2022.

A major reason that Parks staff supported this resolution was that they believe the inclusion of Ottawa County in a water trail that covers the entire river would be beneficial (even more so knowing that no other official designation is in place). The designation of the Lower Grand River Water Trail as a state water trail would be the best step in designating the entire river as one trail, providing greater promotion of the Grand River trail system and eventually resulting in a "Pure Michigan Water Trail" designation. Additionally, since the Grand River extends across many jurisdictions, concerns regarding safety will be better addressed by coordinating regionally on items like wayfinding, education, and promotion rather than just at the local level.

### **Proposed Memorandum of Understanding**

In order to increase the likelihood that a state designation will be achieved, LGROW is now requesting that the Parks Commission sign a memorandum of understanding to solidify its role as a partner in the Lower Grand River Water Trail. The draft memorandum of understanding requests that the OCPRC perform services that it has been providing for the former Grand River Heritage Water Trail, such as site maintenance, promotion, and programming. The termination clause allows an easy exit from the agreement with 30-days' notice. The memorandum of understanding does not require any upgrades or installation of new amenities; though, as part of enhancing the Grand River Greenway, improvements for the water trail are often considered (such as the new access point at Ottawa Sands) by staff.

If state water trail designation is received, Parks staff will coordinate with LGROW to update signage (most likely as part of a needed replacement of these signs to save costs) to incorporate information about the water trail. Considering that coordination has been ongoing for several years regarding promotion and programming related to the water trail, it is not anticipated that any additional time will be required. Currently, the Park Planner and Coordinator of Natural Resources Management participate in several LGROW committees.



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**  
**Between**  
**Lower Grand River Organization of Watersheds**  
**and**  
**Ottawa County Parks and Recreation**

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is by and between the Lower Grand River Organization of Watersheds (LGROW), an agency of the Grand Valley Metro Council (GVMC) with its principal office located at 678 Front Ave., NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49504, and Ottawa County Parks and Recreation, an department of Ottawa County, with its principal office located at 12220 Fillmore Street, West Olive, MI 49460, (hereinafter referred to as “Access Site Owner”).

Purpose: The purpose of this MOU is to establish a cooperative relationship between LGROW and the Access Site Owner for the development, promotion, and management of the Lower Grand River Water Trail.

Scope of Cooperation: LGROW and Access Site Owner agree to cooperate in the following areas:

1. Promoting the Lower Grand River Water Trail, including all access sites, as a recreational destination for canoeing, kayaking, and other water-based activities.
2. Developing and implementing educational programs and events related to the Lower Grand River Water Trail and the access sites.
3. Providing information and technical assistance to the access site owners for the development and improvement of access sites.
4. Facilitating communication between the access site owners and other stakeholders involved in the Lower Grand River Water Trail.

Responsibilities of Access Site Owner:

1. Maintain the access site in a safe and usable condition for the public.
2. Comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and permit requirements related to the access site.



3. Allow LGROW to include the access site for the purposes of promoting and managing the Lower Grand River Water Trail.
4. Inform LGROW of any changes to the access site or its management.

Responsibilities of LGROW:

1. Include the access site in promotional and informational materials related to the Lower Grand River Water Trail.
2. Provide technical assistance and support to Access Site Owner for the improvement and maintenance of the access site.
3. Advise the Access Site Owner of any relevant laws, regulations, or best practices related to the access site.
4. Facilitate communication between the Access Site Owner and other stakeholders involved in the Lower Grand River Water Trail.

Term of MOU: This MOU shall commence on the date of signing and shall continue in full force and effect in perpetuity or terminated by either party upon 30 days written notice.

Amendments: This MOU may be amended by mutual agreement of the parties in writing.

Governing Law: This MOU shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Michigan

Cara Decker, Environmental Programs Director, Lower Grand River Organization of Watersheds

Date:

[Name and Title of Access Site Owner Representative]

Date:

COUNTY OF OTTAWA

STATE OF MICHIGAN

RESOLUTION INDICATING SUPPORTING GRAND RIVER WATER TRAIL

At a regular meeting of the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners of the County of Ottawa, Michigan, held in the Ottawa County Fillmore Street Complex, West Olive, Michigan, in said County on the 26th day of April, 2022 at 1:30 o'clock p.m. local time.

PRESENT: Allen Dannenberg, Joseph Baumann, Roger Bergman, Randall Meppelink, Kyle Terpstra, Francisco Garcia, Gregory DeJong, James Holtvluwer, Douglas Zylstra, Philip Kuyers, Matthew Fenske

ABSENT:

It was moved by Commissioner Gregory DeJong and supported by Commissioner Roger Bergman that the following Resolution be adopted:

WHEREAS, the citizens of Ottawa County value its natural resources and outdoor recreation opportunities afforded by the Grand River; and

WHEREAS, the citizens value the Grand River for water quality and fish and wildlife habitat; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of the County will greatly benefit from the recreational, natural and cultural experiences provided by the water trail; and

WHEREAS, water trails present great opportunities to grow local and regional economies, strengthen regional identity, attract out-of-state tourists and workers, promote healthy lifestyles, and showcase Michigan's incredible water resources; and

WHEREAS, the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, the Michigan Comprehensive Trail Plan, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Parks and Recreation Division Strategic Plan, and the Michigan Water Strategy all call for the establishment of a statewide system of designated water trails; and

WHEREAS, a State Water Trail Designation will provide sound information to help customers make recreational activity choices and to provide clear, consistent communication about trails that contribute to successful recruitment and retention of new water trail users and encourage return visits to regional destinations; and

WHEREAS, a water trail will be successful if it can provide a quality trail experience for users and possess broad community support and local partnerships; and

WHEREAS, this water trail is consistent with the 2021 Ottawa County Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Plan for recreational facilities for its citizens; and

WHEREAS, the County has previously supported activities that promote recreation on the river, including receiving a state designation as a “Heritage Water Trail” for the Ottawa County section of the Grand River under Public 454 of 2002 and the Grand River Greenway initiative whose vision is to make the river a “model ecological and cultural-multi-use corridor”; and

WHEREAS, incorporating the Grand River Heritage Water Trail into an overall Grand River Water Trail furthers long-term efforts by Ottawa County Parks to work together on a regional basis with stakeholders through the Grand River Watershed;

WHEREAS, the citizens of Ottawa County have indicated their support for the water trail; and

WHEREAS, Ottawa County affirms and supports the water trail, beginning in Jackson County and ending at Ottawa County to be of value and benefit to the citizens of Ottawa County and its neighboring counties.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioner of Ottawa County, Michigan;

Section 1: That the Grand River Water Trail on the Grand River in Ottawa County is hereby recognized and accepted by the Board of Commissioners on behalf of the citizens of Ottawa County, and visitors from throughout the State of Michigan and the United States;

Section 2: That this Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption; and

Section 3: That we hereby direct each department in the County to support and implement the water trail.

Adopted/Issued this date by the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners

YEAS: Allen Dannenberg, Joseph Baumann, Roger Bergman, Randall Meppelink, Kyle Terpstra, Francisco Garcia, Gregory DeJong, James Holtvluwer, Douglas Zylstra, Philip Kuyers, Matthew Fenske

NAYS:

ABSTENTIONS:

RESOLUTION ADOPTED.



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Matthew R. Fenske  
Chairperson, Ottawa County  
Board of Commissioners



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Justin F. Roebuck  
Ottawa County Clerk/Register

CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned, duly qualified Clerk of the County of Ottawa, Michigan, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a Resolution adopted by the Board of Commissioners of the County of Ottawa, Michigan, at a meeting held on April 26, 2022 the original of which is on file in my office. Public Notice of said meeting was given pursuant to and in compliance with Act No. 267, Public Acts of Michigan, 1976, as amended.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereto affixed my official signature this 26th day of April, A.D., 2022.



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Justin F. Roebuck, Ottawa County Clerk/Register