

**JACKSON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
1992 WARREN AVENUE
JACKSON, MICHIGAN 49203**

March 16, 2016

CALL TO ORDER: Mike Way, Chairman at 8:00 a.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Present: Cmrs. **Alexander, Beaman, DuBois, Lloyd, Polaczyk, Price, Seitz, Torres, and Way**
Absent: Cmr. **Snyder**
Director: **Jeff Hovarter**, County Parks Director
Staff: **Becky Humphrey, Mike Hoskins, Dan Lusty**
Visitors: **Adam Brown**, Deputy County Administrator, **Roger Gaede**

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Seitz, supported by Price to approve the March 16, 2016 agenda. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Torres, supported by Seitz to approve the February 2016 Meeting Minutes as amended. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Roger Gaede - Aware of the Master plan for the Fair - Was happy to see JJR put the Fair Master Plan together, they also planned Cascades Park Master Plan - Very encouraged to see Pat Doher a part of the Fair Master Plan.

COMMUNICATIONS

1. Cascades Manor House 2015 Annual Review
2. Cascades Park Foundation and Manor House History
3. 2014 Jackson Community Fund Statement for The Cascades
4. 2015 Jackson Community Fund Statement for The Cascades
5. 2016 Jackson Community Fund Statement for The Cascades
6. Village of Grass Lake
Re: 2016 Stock Outboard Races
7. Email from Denise Weber Center Stage Jackson
Re: Changing dates for 1776 Musical
8. **Cascades Park Foundation** minutes of February 17, 2016

9. **Jackson Civil War Society (Cascades Inc.)** minutes of February 18, 2016
10. **Champion Team** minutes from February 22nd and February 29, 2016 minutes
11. **Jackson County Parks Association** minutes of February 23, 2016
12. **Friends of the Falling Waters Trail** (No February Meeting)

Moved by DuBois, supported by Beaman to receive the communications. Motion Carried.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Updates Communications:

❖ Cascades Champions Team Committee Work

- A Fundraising Lunch will be held April 14th at The Manor House. There will be 176 invitees and the Team has a goal to raise \$150,000.
- Consumers Energy Scavenger Hunt outcome (Spicer Group Engineering)- the trip to the Toledo plant did not result in a big find which would have been one or more large pumps that could be used. But there were a list of miscellaneous items with an estimated value of \$20,000 that will be donated by Consumers.
- The Team has created a subcommittee to research opportunities to engage a professional fundraising firm/consultant.

❖ Earth Day Special Events Request

- based on evidence of past practice, staff is recommending *Earth Day Outdoor Coalition* be given permission to launch kayaks on pond at Sparks Foundation Park on April 23, 2016 as part of the Earth Day special event activities.

❖ Trail Connector Project

- Request for Qualifications for Engineering Services/ Trail Connector Project- we received five responses. Staff is still reviewing proposals. Once a firm is selected and approved we can begin engineering design on the project. This project is being partially funded by a MDNR Trust Fund Development Grant. Under MDNR guidelines we cannot start construction until an Appropriation Bill has been approved by the State legislature and a "Letter of Agreement" has been received from the MDNR Grants Division. We can however begin/complete engineering and the construction bid processes so long as we do not enter into an agreement with a contractor. We expect the Appropriation Bill approval sometime in June, 2016 and the Letter of Agreement by late July.

❖ Old MDNR Grants Close Out Process

- Both Swains Lake Bathhouse (Passport Grant, 2011) and Trail Connector Land Acquisition (Trust Fund, 2013) have yet to be closed out and the County has not been reimbursed by the State for expenditures. Staff had a conference call with MDNR Representatives to discuss a plan for completing/assembling a grant close out package for MDNR approval within the next ninety days.

❖ **Cascades Golf Course Irrigation Status**

- All pumps and electronics have checked out without pressurizing the system. The manufactures rep. has review the controller unit. The Tech will return and the game plan is to pressurize the system as soon as weather allows.

❖ **B Cycle Project on Falling Waters Trail**

- Installation in late spring as weather permits. Staff will be meeting with local business sponsors and B Cycle representatives to discuss marketing/promotion.

❖ **Horton Mill Pond/ Snyder Park**

- The lighting project will move forward once weather permits.
- MDEQ is requiring under Part 315, Dam Safety, Natural Resource and Environmental Protection Act, that the Horton Dam be inspected and a report prepared by the end of 2016 calendar year.

❖ **Clear Lake Community Center operating agreement renewal**

- Staff has not yet reviewed the agreement or met with representatives. A recommendation will be made in April.

❖ **Camp Teetonkah**

- The Michigan Crossroads Council of Boy Scouts has approached the County regarding transfer of 257 acres on Big Wolf Lake. A County Staff team has toured the site. In developing an Impact Report, I will be doing the research and analysis including a pro forma financial report for the County Administrator. As a first step, I will be preparing a timeline/ milestones document outlining each step of a strategic review and operational analysis process. I plan to have that document developed by the end of March for consideration.

❖ **Fair Board Activities**

- Fairgrounds Master Plan has been approved by the County Commission. Parts of the plan have potential implications for county park system. The most impact full concepts involve the development of riverfront greenspace to allow for a multi-use trail, river access, and passive recreation opportunities as well as the development of new community events center.
- The County Commission approved a “Memorandum of Understanding” with Commanding Curve Corporation to jointly explore opportunities to recruit/ attract a professional baseball franchise to Jackson County. The Fairgrounds Master Plan includes possible improvements to the grandstand area for use as a baseball stadium.

New Communications:

❖ **Horton Mill Pond/ Snyder Park**

- There is possible private funding for playground improvements. Staff has developed a cost estimate for completing such a project based on site limitations.

❖ **Development of a more specific special events policy to support new application process**

- A Special Events Application has been approved by the Board. It is necessary however to flush out more specific direction as it relates to special events versus rental/ reservation of park property/ facilities for individual or group use. We are proceeding this year with use of the approved application for activities that will close down or limit

other public uses. Later in the year it is our intent to bring a more detailed special events policy to the board that will provide more specific direction.

❖ **Marketing/ Promotions of County Parks**

- Website Redesign Project- the County has hired Civics Plus, Inc., a web design firm, to completely rebuild the county website. We plan to take advantage of this opportunity and make significant improvements to the Parks website including the ability to take advantage of social media and make real time changes to information.
- Staff is looking at the budget impact/ cost effectiveness of replacing our old black & white copy machine with a new color copier.

❖ **2017 Operation Budget/ Phase I**

- The Finance Dept. has requested a review/ update of narratives, performance measures, and accomplishments. I am focusing on the accomplishment section of the documents. I will not likely make changes to the narratives or performance measures until I have had a year to experience the parks system in action.

❖ **Center Stage Jackson Community Theater**

- Cascades performance “1776”- we are working our way through the special events process with Center Stage. The tentative dates for performances at the Cascade Falls are June 10, 11, 12, and 17, 18, 19, 2016. This is a change of dates from what was approved by the Parks Commission in November.

❖ **Met with Tim Proietti, Cascades Ice Cream Co.**

- Mr. Proietti is looking long term and has requested a longer 20 yr. operating agreement be considered. It was agreed we would continue this discussion after the 2016 summer operating season.

❖ **Playmakers Fitness Foundation Events**

- Rob Antcliff, Events Director, has unofficially requested use of Sparks Foundation Park as the site to host a Community 5K Fun Run involving 500 plus participants. His organization has also been engaged by Consumers Energy to organize an employee fitness run here in Jackson for all of their employees across the state. They are looking at May 2nd as a possible date and are interested in also hosting that event in Sparks Foundation Park as a trail run for the August run.

❖ **Jackson Area Career Center**

- Met with Crissy Stark to discuss a summer jobs program collaboration that would provide some additional support/ labor in cleaning up some of our county parks.

❖ **The Jackson County Parks Association**

- They have indicated their level of contribution to support 2016 parks improvements will be in the range of \$15,000 to \$18,000.

❖ **The Cascades Park Foundation**

- They have indicated that if there is not a financial need to financially support the trail connector project (if it is fully funded), they would like to consider supporting at some level improvements to the playgrounds in Sparks Foundation Park.

❖ **I completed the County’s three day High Performance Organizations training, March 8, 9, and 10.**

❖ **The Cascades Concession Operations**

- Issued a Request for Proposals to operate a food and beverage service at the Cascade Falls/possible lease arrangements involving vendor making bldg. improvements, customer service improvements, and increased revenues for the county park system.

❖ **Parks Organizational Structure**

- As Parks Director, I will begin a review of the county parks staff organizational structure over the next three or four months. The goal will be to determine if there is a need to adjust the staff structure to be more effective in aligning with the County's Strategic Plan, the Parks Master Plan, and any emerging programming and parks improvements opportunities.

❖ **Technology Issues/connectivity-speed at park office, maintenance facilities, campgrounds.**

- The contract/license with Vermont Systems (RecTrac Reservations/scheduling/special events registration software issues) has been canceled. The software performance and changes to a more expensive web based application made this arrangement cost prohibitive. We will begin looking for a replacement software system.

Moved by, Lloyd, Supported by Price to receive the directors report. Motion Carried.

OLD BUSINESS

1776 Musical

Moved by Polaczyk, supported by Price to approve the change dates from June 17-19 and June 24-26 to June 10-12 and June 17-19 with the potential rain date of June 24-26 and the continued negotiations. Motion carried. Nay-Alexander

Earth Day

Moved by Seitz, supported by Polaczyk to approve use of the Lagoons on April 23, 2016. Motion carried. Price - Abstained

NEW BUSINESS

The Village of Grass Lake

Moved by Torres, supported by DuBois to approve the Stock Outboard Races on Grass Lake, July 8 – 10 and September 9 – 11, 2016 with all the administrative requirements. Motion carried.

FEBRUARY 2016 FINANCIALS

Moved by Polaczyk, supported by Seitz to receive the February 2016 Financial Reports. Motion carried.

Moved by Lloyd, supported by Seitz to approve the February 2016 Claims Report. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Roger Gaede

- Musical was a laser light show done so there has been a precedent.
- The pump scavenger hunt for The Cascades - don't give up on Ohio-Toledo is an excellent source of working on pumps and possibly acquiring pumps.

Jackson County Parks and Recreation Commission

March 16, 2016

- Beach areas - because buoys are in the water, you don't need signs.
- Lagoon dredging is part of the master plan – per MDEQ we were required to keep the spoils in park.
- There is a fund in the Jackson Community Foundation for maintenance of The Cascades.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Cmr. Alexander – About the Lime Lake Restoration grant - What is the status? When will we know?

Cmr. Price – For 2017, can we get a mariachi band? Is the work still going on to have a private food vendor at The Cascades?

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned to the call of the Chair at 9:02 a.m.

Mike Way, Chairman

Jackson County Parks & Recreation Commission