

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

June 15, 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, Snyder, Torres, and Way**
Director: **Jeff Hovarter**, County Parks Director
Staff: **Becky Humphrey** and **Dan Lusty**
Visitors: **Kay Dunkel, Roger Gaede, Rick Sigers, Linda Hutchinson, Terry Orban, Laura Kaiser, Jerry Daly, Jim Stormont**, Grass Lake Township Supervisor, **Charlie Trombley** and **Kevin Cotter**

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Polaczyk, supported by Beaman to approve the June 15, 2016 agenda. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Torres, supported by Price to approve the May 2016 Meeting Minutes. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Julie Alexander – Is an associate of the Marine Corp. League – Had a flag retirement ceremony hosted at Sparks Park. The weather was perfect and wants to publically thank the staff and had a lot of press. Flags were passed out and it was a great opportunity. Thank you.

Rick Sigers – As a representative of the Jackson County Parks Association, there is a member that will be 96 on July 20th. Has a birthday card if any of the Commissioners would like to sign.

Roger Gaede – There is a derelict looking tree by the ice cream shop and needs to be taken down. JATA is now taking down trees.

COMMUNICATIONS

1. Letter from Weatherwax Foundation
Re: Challenge Grant
2. Jackson Community Foundation Fund #365
Re: Cascades Restoration Project Endowment Fund
3. Jackson Community Foundation Fund #541
Re: Cascades Non-endowed Special Project Fund

4. Jackson Community Foundation
Re: Marion S. Grattan Memorial Parks Endowment Fund and Addendum (Parks Association)
5. Jackson Community Foundation
Re: Jackson County Parks Association Endowment Fund
6. Jackson Community Foundation
Re: Grant History
7. **Cascades Park Foundation** minutes of May 18, 2016

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

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- ✚ Cascades Phase II Renovations Project Update – The Pump House/ Splash Pad sub-phase continues to evolve. I have a tentative meeting of the Champions Team schedule for July 21st to discuss the current thinking which is to build a down sized pump house that can be easily added on/ expanded later while putting more of our resources into the “Splash Pad” Aquatic Center. This will create a much greater opportunity for public use creating many new stakeholders as future champions of the Cascades Renovation Project. The current “in hand” are \$275,000. We need to raise another \$250,000 to be comfortable in funding the current project scope.
- ✚ Clock Tower Project (at The Cascades) – We met with Jim Egan from the Noon Rotary. The Park Board approved a plan to locate a new decorative clock tower in Sparks Park north of the Cascades entrance between the entrance and the north parking lot along the trail. The Noon Rotary has the parts in hand for the clock tower and would like to begin install later this summer. They have agreed to fabric the rebar cage for the base and Parks staff will pour/ form the concrete base the clock tower will be secured to. Parks will also identify the dedicated electrical power source for the clock.
- ✚ Camp Teetonkah Acquisition Project – The deadline for submittal of proposals the Michigan Crossroads Council has been set for July 15, 2016. I will be spending a great deal of time the next couple of weeks writing/ preparing the proposal document. So I will likely be less accessible for this period of time as I try to isolate myself to focus the document development.
- ✚ The Parks Planning & Operations Manager position has been officially posted. The closing date to apply is July 30, 2016. We will begin reviewing applicants immediately and plan to interview candidate's right after the July 4th holiday. I am hoping to have this staff position filled by the end of July.
- ✚ High Speed Internet/ Wi Fi in the Parks Office - Comcast is in the process of installing high speed cable/ internet connection at the Parks Office over the next week or so. There are some kinks to be worked out with the IT Department to make sure we also continue to have Wi Fi capabilities but with a much better response time (greater bandwidth).
- ✚ Fairgrounds/ Large Animal Wash Area Improvements – The large animal wash area site has some challenging storm drainage issues. The City of Jackson and the MDEQ have been

inspecting/ working with Fairgrounds staff for the past several years to try and rectify the issues. Currently there is no way to prevent animal waste from ending up in the Grand River as livestock wait to enter the wash stations. We have hired an Engineering Firm who has provided a design solution that meets every ones approval. The construction will begin immediately and the project improvements will be completed prior to the 2016 Fair which begins August 7th.

- ✚ MDNR Project Agreements – as of the writing of this report, Project Agreements for Lime Lake Wetland Restoration and the Trail Connector Projects are on the Agencies & Affairs Committee agenda for approval. These will also need to be approved at the full Commission meeting on July 21st. Upon approval we plan to begin design work with ASTI Environmental on the Lime Lake Project and the Spicer Group on the Trail Connector. We would hope construction on both of these projects could begin this fall, 2016.
- ✚ Healthy Lifestyles Initiatives – Staff have been collaborating with staff from the County Health Department to implement several healthy lifestyles programs. We are now offering a “healthy choices” menu at the Cascades concession stand. We are also working to develop fitness/ exercise program/ classes at the Cascades in conjunction with the Health Department and the Jackson YMCA.
- ✚ Foot Golf and Zorbing – We have officially opened our Foot Golf Course at the Cascades Golf Course. It is located on the Short Course. We have seen an exceptional response from the community. We sold 120 rounds of foot golf the first two weeks which is more rounds than we sold to play regular golf on the short course those two weeks. This is clearly a sport attracting the younger Millennials generation. We plan to meet in the next week with a group who would like to collaborate on introducing Zorbing to the Jackson community. This sport is again very attractive to the Millennials.
- ✚ Pleasant Lake County Park will be hosting a number of events this summer through the efforts of Rick Zdanowitz, the owner of PLP Restaurant. There was very successful car show on Memorial Weekend at the Park and there are three more Classic Car Shows scheduled this summer at the Park. In addition the Park will be the staging site for the Pleasant Lake 5K Fun Run in August.
- ✚ HGTV Lakefront Bargain Hunt – The HGTV Show Lakefront Bargain Hunt will be in Southeast Michigan filming one of their series show in the Irish Hill area. They have contacted us requesting permission to film the Cascades in action on the evening of July 23rd. They plan to include this footage in the show when it airs on HGTV later in the year.

Moved by Price, supported by Seitz to receive the Directors Report. Motion Carried.

OLD BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS - None

May 2016 FINANCIALS

Moved by DuBois, supported by Torres to receive the May 2016 Financial Reports. Motion carried.

Moved by Polaczyk, supported by Snyder to receive the Financial Summaries. Motion carried.

Moved by Lloyd, supported by Beaman to approve the May 2016 Claims Report. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Linda Hutchinson – Friend of Camp Teetonkah, a non-profit, Boy Scouts Cross Road Council

- Would like to keep as Boy Scout camp and open to the public
- Did a survey with 138 signatures – they want Camp Teetonkah to be kept as a Boy Scout camp and have the Friends of Camp Teetonkah run the facility.
- What concerns are from the public if the county acquires the Camp –
 - Lake traffic increase - so much already, do not want any more on the lake.
 - The care of the grounds – who is going to do it and how?
 - Who is going to keep people out and from tearing up the grounds - i.e. snowmobiles and quads
 - The land that has been donated – can the families get the land back if it goes to the County?
 - Do not want to pay more money in taxes to support the facility.
 - How is the county going to support the facility?
- Questions that have been asked of the Friends of Camp Teetonkah –
 - Where did all the money go that was in the endowment? Discussion
 - Where is the oil well money going? Discussion
 - The Gun Range – 2 of them – very loud. What is going to happen with them?

Roger Gaede- HGTV should be contacted to let them know that the 2nd weekend in August is the world's largest Garage Sale; from Jonesville, Michigan all the way to Detroit, I believe. It is along US 12.

Terry Orban, neighboring farmer and Friend of Camp Teetonkah –

- Relatives sold land to the camp in the 1950's.
- His family strongly believes in youth and environment.
- People do not know boundaries; they are trespassing all the time! He is paying 3x's the amount of insurance on his property because of a fatality from someone that was trespassing on his adjoining property.
- The houses in Camp Teetonkah are party houses. People go there to party and then they go out on his property.
- They are used to having kids coming up to his house from the camp. It started to happen more frequently in the 70's.
- Strongly feels that his family should be able to buy the property back 30-40 acres that his family had sold to the Boy Scouts. The property is 3 fields back by the camp. His family really wants to buy the property back.

Jim Stormont, Grass Lake Township Supervisor – Is here to get an education on all sides of the story of Camp Teetonkah and all of the opportunities and support what is best for all.

Kevin Cotter - Feels that the Parks Board needs to have this information in the light of day.

- Doesn't the County have plenty of properties already?
- It is going to cost more money which means more taxes.
- Why is the County proposing to own another piece of property that is going to be a money drain?
- Why does the County need to keep building an empire?
- Don't we have enough already?
- Are all the positions on the Parks Board appointed positions?

Jerry Daly, Friend of Camp Teetonkah – Just getting involved with the Friends of Camp Teetonkah. Wants to save Camp Teetonkah. Good presentation of Camp Teetonkah by Jeff Hovarter.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Cmr. Beaman – The Jr. Grand Prix Race – he had friends that went and really enjoyed the event. The 1776 Musical – 3 hours is a long time to sit in a seat. It was okay since it was our first stab at this type of event.

Cmr. Snyder – The State of Michigan is well blessed with natural resources that are well preserved. The individual or individuals had a lot of foresight with the preservation of the natural resources that make up Camp Teetonkah. Neither the Parks Board of Commissioners nor the County Board of Commissioners have committed as of yet. Is it an asset – yes. Is it an opportunity – yes. Is the facility financially sound to maintain in perpetuity? The Parks Director has been issued the task of researching the feasibility of making Camp Teetonkah a county park.

Jackson County Parks have partnerships. The partnership with the Friends of the Falling Waters Trail group has been very successful. An opportunity that the Friends of Camp Teetonkah could have is to become a partner with Jackson County Parks and the Friends would have more of an opportunity to work with the county and have more of a voice and have their voices heard. It would be a suggestion to explore that opportunity and make a proposal to partner with the County.

This opportunity does not happen but maybe once in a lifetime and the County would be remiss in its duties if we did not take a look at acquiring and maintaining Camp Teetonkah.

Cmr. Torres – Was golfing at Cascades and heard all kinds of laughter coming from the Short Course; there was a group of kids playing Foot Golf and having a great time! Kudos for making this opportunity happen!

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned to the call of the Chair at 9:27 a.m.

Mike Way, Chairman

Jackson County Parks & Recreation Commission