

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

October 19, 2016

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Present: Cmr. **Alexander, Beaman, DuBois, Polaczyk, Price, Seitz, Snyder, Torres, and Way**
Excused: Cmr. **Lloyd**
Director: **Jeff Hovarter**, County Parks Director
Staff: **Becky Humphrey, Kyle Lewis, Dan Lusty, Mark Vysoky**
Visitors: **Roger Gaede, Mike Overton**, County Administrator, and **Steve Shotwell**, County Commission Board Chair

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Price, supported by DuBois to approve the October 19, 2016 agenda with the addition of Business Item - 8c. Upper Grand River Water Trail Resolution. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Torres, supported by Seitz to approve the October 2016 Meeting Minutes with adding that John Collis gave the Zorbing presentation. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Roger Gaede – In his 2nd Public Comment in the October minutes he was referring to Clark Lake fireworks regarding the hot embers. . . boat covers – burn holes.

Steve Shotwell – Would like to extend an invitation to everyone, at 7 p.m. tomorrow, October 20th at the Dahlem Center there will be a speaker on “How Climate Will Affect Change”. The Men’s Garden Club and Women’s Garden Club will be there.

COMMUNICATIONS

1. Region 2 Planning Commission
Re: Resolution of Support
2. Friends of the Falling Waters Trail minutes of October 6, 2016
3. Champion Team minutes of October 15, 2016
4. Cascades Park Foundation minutes of October 20, 2016

Moved by Polaczyk, supported by Alexander to receive Communications. Motion carried.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. We have been contacted multiple times over the past six months by both realtors and prospective home buyers regarding an easement at Little Wolf Lake Park. There are two residential homes that can only be accessed by using the park road. If the park were to be sold there would be no way to access the back (most eastern) home and the road front home would only have street parking but would not be able to access their garage. I have reviewed the parks files on this issue. There was an approval by the County Parks Commission in 1978 granting an easement to these two properties. However it is my belief that the Parks Commission did not have the final authority to grant an easement. The final legal authority lies in the execution of actual easement documents filed and recorded with County Clerk and the County Register of Deeds. No such documents have been found. The most eastern home is for sale and there is an interested buyer who wishes to clear this matter prior to making a purchase. We have advised them to seek counsel with a real estate attorney and their realtor.
2. I have received a letter from a resident who lives/ owns property adjacent to the Horton Millpond at Alfred Snyder County Park. The main park area is located in the southeast corner of the Millpond. The County owns all of the shoreline around the Millpond. Several residents' backyards on the east side of the Millpond abut the County owned shoreline and these residents maintain/ use the County land as though it is theirs to include installing docks and storing boats along the shoreline. The resident in contact is requesting to purchase the county owned land that is shoreline behind his home. His claim/ concern is that park users walk along the shoreline and use his dock and have even taken personal items such as chairs. We have done a site inspection and now plan to meet with the John Tallis, Township Supervisor, to discuss the facts. Our initial investigation suggests that there would be very little chance that park users could enter this private property given where the primary creek inlet is located.
3. We have confirmed nearly \$200,000 in additional donations for the development of the Cascades Splash Pad Project. This brings our confirmed commitment of funds to over \$500,000. The budget is projected to be \$675,000.
4. Construction on Bid Package I of the Cascades Splash Pad will begin in late October, pending approval by the County Commission and Parks Board. What the public will see happening this fall and into the winter includes demolition and excavation of the site (south exterior/ parking lot of the Cascades), the construction of a pump house building, and the drilling of a new well.
5. We have filed the final paperwork with MDNR for project closeout/ reimbursement of funds on the Flannery Property Acquisition (trail connector on Kibby Road), and the Swains Lake County Park Bath House Construction Project. These two grants were originally issued in 2011 and 2013 respectively.
6. The Michigan Crossroads Council has yet to meet since we submitted answers to supplemental questions regarding our Camp Teetonkah Acquisition Proposal on October 7, 2016. We have a new contact, Brad Murray, who has taken the place of Frank Reigelman. Frank accepted a new position at the National Boy Scouts Office in Texas. Brad and I exchanged emails and he expects the MCC Properties Committee to meet sometime later this month. I do know that they are now in contact with the Jackson County/ Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy. The Land Conservancy made a site visit the week of October 3rd.

7. We met with Cindy Hubbell and Ryan Beal of the Brooklyn, Michigan Chamber of Commerce to discuss their plans for parks and recreation development in Brooklyn/ Columbia Township. They have begun raising funds for the development of a community center (focus on services for baby boomers) and a trail connecting Brooklyn, Columbia Lake and Clarke Lake (Spirit Trail). This would later lead to connections with Falling Waters Trail and the evolving trail system in Washtenaw County. There was much discussion regarding the County owned property on Marshall Road next to the Columbia Township Government Offices. We have operating oil wells on the property. There may be an opportunity to develop parts of this property for parks and recreation use without impacting current or future oil well development/ operation. We plan to have some GIS maps produced to examine current conditions as well as do some conceptual planning before I introduce/ present some ideas for consideration.
8. The Lime Lake Wetland Restoration Project has run into yet another snag. The lone contractor who bid the project (approved by the County Commission in October) has had a family tragedy. As a result project construction will definitely not start prior to early/ mid-winter.
9. The Kibby Road Inter-city Trail Connector Project is well into design. There are a number of issues we are working through. There appears to be a small parcel of land in the middle of the project that is identified as owned by the State of Michigan. We are doing research to figure out if this is true or a label incorrectly on the GIS maps. We are also working through possible amendments to the MDNR application that will allow us to eliminate the proposed parking lot and road in the original concept. This is an unnecessary cost considering there is significant parking at the Manor House and on Denton Road in Sparks Park. We are also looking to reduce the trail width and the boardwalk width to 10 feet (proposal width is 12 feet). We hope to work through all of these issues and have a bid package on the street by the first of November.
10. The Blackman Township Trail Connector Feasibility Study is underway. There have been meetings with all political jurisdictions as well as MDNR/ MDOT representatives. The various identified trail pathways have been walked and are being reviewed for viability. We expect the Spicer Group will have a draft report/ recommendation ready for review by the end of October.
11. I am continuing to do research on existing policies/ best practices as it relates to a Naming Rights, Recognition, and Memorials in Parks Policy for Jackson County. I plan to finish up my research and begin drafting a policy for Park Board consideration by the end of October. It is my plan to present something at the November Board meeting for discussion.
12. Now that the summer season has ended, it is worth mentioning that the two campgrounds and the Cascades attraction generated an all-time record for revenue; and Cascades Golf Course revenues have significantly exceed their five year average. It has been a good summer financially.

Moved by Snyder, supported by Polaczyk to authorize the Parks Director to notify property owners that Park property is not for sale and they need to remove their docks or they will be removed. 2 – Yeas, 6 – Nays. Motion Declined.

Moved by DuBois, supported by Seitz to receive the Monthly Staff Report. Motion Carried.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Cascades Phase II – Splash Pad Construction – Contractor Approval

Moved by Torres, supported by Price to recommend approval of the contract with 5 Leprechauns, LLC for the construction of bid package #1, Cascades Phase II Pump House and Splash Pad Project in the amount of \$363,750.00. Motion carried.

2017 Parks Board Meeting Schedule

Moved by Beaman, supported by Seitz to table the approval of the 2017 Parks Board meeting schedule. Motion carried.

Upper Grand River Water Trail

Moved by Snyder, supported by Torres to recommend to the County Board of Commissioners to adopt the Resolution to Support the Upper Grand River Water Trail for the County of Jackson. Motion carried.

SEPTEMBER 2016 FINANCIALS

Moved by Price, supported by Polaczyk to receive the September 2016 Financial Reports. Motion carried.

Moved by Torres, supported by Beaman to approve the September 2016 Parks and Golf Financial Summaries. Motion carried.

Moved by Torres, supported by DuBois to approve the September 2016 Claims Report. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Roger Gaede

- Horton Mill Pond and Alfred Snyder County Park: Is there currently a public access to the Mill Pond? Has there been in the past? Boat launch answer is yes.
- The Resolution for Upper Grand River Trail: Are landings being proposed on private property?

Steve Shotwell

- ✓ Would like to thank the Parks Board for their work and support on the Cascades Project.
- ✓ Would like to thank the support for the Upper Grand River Water Trail for the County of Jackson.
- ✓ Commends all the Parks Staff for all their hard work and the extra work being done to help with the Cascades project.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Cmr. Price

- Would like to recognize and thank Becky Humphrey, Josh Hunt, Emily Jarchow, Kristy West, Rebecca Berkemeier, Cruz Bogan, Spencer Dzierwa, Emily Esser, Jordan Evarts, Alizabeth Hicks, Shawn Kangas, Josh Morse, Carol Raykovich, Jacob Richardson, Kayla Thompson, Geoffrey Town, and Max Walz for all their hard work at The Cascades this summer.

- Thank you Jeff Hovarter for allowing the October 1st Photo Walk and thank Shawn, it was fantastic!
- Is there a possibility that we can find the old picture of people having dinner at the top of The Cascades? If we could find that picture, we could use it for promotional use – A Catered Dinner Party at the Top of The Cascades!
- There are 2 benches in the park that do not look good at all. Could we sell the benches as a memorial or at least refurbish them?

Cmr. Beaman

- ❖ The financials look great; the parks seem to be doing well.
- ❖ The wash area containment – what is going on with that?
- ❖ Jeff is doing a fantastic job! He has made some very tough decisions.
- ❖ Ran into Mike Hoskins at The Crossings and had a conversation with him. He worked for the Parks Department for 31+ years. Has the Board done or said anything to Mike to acknowledge him. Would like the Board to consider acknowledging Mike and his years of service.

Cmr. Snyder

- Geoff was speaking to the chair of a foundation – he is a young professional and he said he had two reasons why he moved to Jackson. 1) Affordability to live here and 2) The Parks, Jackson County has a great parks system!

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned to the call of the Secretary at 9:10 a.m.

Mike Way, Chairman

Jackson County Parks & Recreation Commission