

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



October 4, 2017

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Present: Cmr. **Edgar, Polaczyk, Price, Seitz, and Way**
Absent: Cmr. **Beaman, DuBois, Shotwell, Snyder, and Torres**
Ex-Officio: **Jeff Hovarter**, Parks Director
Staff: **Becky Humphrey, Kyle Lewis, Jack McCloughan, Mark Vysoky**
Visitors: **Roger Gaede, Debra Kubitskey**, County Assistant Administrator, **Mike Overton**, County Administrator, **Rick Sigers**, Jackson County Parks Association, and **Todd Zeller**

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved by Price, supported by Seitz, to approve the October 4, 2017 Agenda as amended by adding 7c. Looking at Cleaning up Lagoons and 7d. Irrigation System on Cascades Golf Course under Future Business. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Roger Gaede – Emphasis to use a previous study of all Jackson County Parks to provide useful information the parks need for improvements.

Communication #5 mentions that the Cascades Civil War enactment is one of the largest in the Midwest. However, for the entire United States, there is only one larger and that is held at Gettysburg.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

- September 2017 Minutes
- Communications
- Monthly Staff Report for September 2017
- Receive August 2017 Financial Report
- Receive August 2017 Financial Summary Report
- Approval of August 2017 Claims Report

Moved by Price, supported by Edgar to approve the October 2017 Consent Agenda. Motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS

1. Thank you letter from Rotary Club of Jackson
Re: 2017 Golf Outing Sponsor
2. Letter to David Herlein, Supervisor, Spring Arbor Township
Re: Letter of Support for Teft Road Connector Trail
3. E-mail from Katena Cain, Non-Profit Network
Re: Possible dates for Visioning Sessions for Jackson County Parks

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4. MParks Article featuring Jackson County Parks
5. 2018 Parks Board Tentative Schedule
6. **Cascades Park Foundation** minutes August 29, 2017
7. **FFWT Board** minutes September 5, 2017
8. **Jackson County Parks Association** minutes of September 26, 2017
9. **Champion Team** minutes - No Meeting

MONTHLY STAFF REPORT

- ✚ The camping season has come to an end for Jackson County Parks. Historically Swains Lake and Pleasant Lake, the two park locations the County operates a campground, have been closed to the public immediately after Labor Day weekend. Both of these county parks offer many day use amenities, such as playgrounds, sports courts, picnic shelters, lake access, and walking paths. I have asked staff to review this policy and provided me with a methodology for allowing public access/ use of these parks during the non-camping season. It is my intent to open these two parks to public use all year. This would be consistent with the current access to all other county parks.
- ✚ The Cascades Golf Course has been experiencing significant physical challenges the past eighteen months. I have been meeting with staff to discuss the issue for more than a year, asking for both solutions and action to rectify the situation. However, the condition of many tee boxes, fairways, and sand areas reached an unacceptable level as we entered the month of August, 2017. Three weeks ago I made a change in leadership of the golf course grounds maintenance program. I moved Chris Polich in to the Golf Course Maintenance Superintendent position on an interim bases, effective September 18, 2017. Chris has over twenty years of experience working on our golf course before being moved to the Parks Mechanic position in 2016. We have published a job advertisement in several trade publications and plan to interview candidates for the position later this fall. Mr. Polich will be given consideration if he chooses to apply.
- ✚ Staff met with both Columbia Township and Henriette Township leaders in the past month at their request. These meeting were at the Township's request to discuss future plans to make investment in the county parks within their respective townships. The tone of the discussions made it very clear the townships are dissatisfied with the lack of investment/ attention the County has given to the county parks. The County Administrator/ County Commission did approve \$50,000 in planning funds for 2018 to be used to develop master site plans for a significant number of the county parks. These are planning dollars only, but are critical to establishing a shared vision between the county and the townships as it relates to county parks improvements. The development of a plan that creates a shared vision and creates stakeholders in the townships will go a long way in advancing the cause of developing a long term funding source for park improvements and maintenance. It is our intent to engage the services of a consultant and begin holding public input forums in the townships during the first two quarters of 2018. Shared Park Board participation in these forums would be greatly appreciated.
- ✚ I was approached by Spring Arbor Township representatives asking us to provide them with a letter of support for the funding/ construction of a new multi-use trail that would connect the town of Spring Arbor to the Falling Waters Trail. The connecting point would be on Teft Road at the northern point of

county owned land at Lime Lake. I prepared a letter of support that is included with the communications in the board meeting packet.

- ✚ The City of Jackson has begun the Kibby Road reconstruction project in front of the Manor House. This project is being done in two phases with the first phase to be completed before Christmas. The first phase includes completion of a multi-use trail section connecting the recently completed county trail connector to the Sparks County Park Trail System at Denton Road.
- ✚ I prepared and published in early September a “request for proposals” for the design/ build of the new events & conference center on the fairgrounds. Proposal submittals will be opened on October 11, 2017 at the County Tower Building. The budget for this project is \$6 million. The project will require a significant investment of my time over the next two years. We anticipate completion of design by late spring, 2018 and plan to break ground to construct the building in August, 2018. The new events & conference center is scheduled to open in January, 2020. In addition to this project, we also anticipate issuing a contract to “remove the fairgrounds track and renovate the infield area”. This project is expected to cost nearly \$2 million and would be completed in time for the 2019 county fair.
- ✚ 2017 was an exciting summer for the Cascades. A number of changes in the physical foot print of the Cascades as well as operational changes were implemented. Attendance at The Cascades totaled 35,857 for the 2017 season. The “Falls” accounted for 21,201, while the opening season of the family splash pad accounted for 14,656. Attendance at the “Falls” in 2016 was 27,081. Wednesday night *Family Night* attendance in 2017 totaled 8,085 (compared to 8,953 in 2016). Firework attendance in 2017 totaled 3,740 (compared to 3,809 in 2016). The highest attended night at the “Falls” was the July 3rd Firework Show with a total attendance of 1,732. *Free Fridays*, sponsored by the Rotary Clubs of Jackson, totaled 2,685 in attendance at the Splash Pad. The highest attended day at the splash pad was July 21, with a total attendance of 881.

BUSINESS ITEMS

- a. Park Ordinance-Revision consideration Chapter 8, Section 10: Animals & Birds
- b. Special Events Policy – Close/ partially close The Cascades
- c. Park Board Workshop – Strategic Planning (*please bring your calendars*)
- d. 2018 Jackson County Parks Board Meeting Schedule

Moved by Polaczyk, supported by Edgar to accept the 2018 Jackson County Parks Board meeting schedule. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Roger Gaede – Item 1. About dog vaccinations, it is too vague. It probably applies to rabies. A rabies vaccination is required in Jackson to purchase a dog license.

Splash Pad coloration need to consider that portions of the pad is iron stained.

Work on the lagoons will require a DNR permit.

DIRECTOR COMMENTS – Jeff Hovarter

Fairground Update

Fair Event and Conference Center - RFP's are due October 11th – Open at 1 p.m.
Design Build, Review, Evaluate, and Recommend

Notice to sell Bond
Happen by the End of the Year

Fairground Track

JCDOT, Possibly use talent we have
Remove race track, Re-do Electrical, Design B
Bidding – Spring 2018
Start project day after the 2018 Fair ends.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Cmr. Polaczyk – Is there State or Federal monies for the Lagoons? Was it looked into? Discussion

Cmr. Price – Is Mike and Mark looking at the 103rd State Park? Has anyone attended meetings? Are we on the outside – inside? Discussion

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned to the call of the Chair at 8:59 a.m.

Mike Way, Chairman

Jackson County Parks Commission