

**JACKSON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
2192 WARREN AVENUE  
JACKSON, MICHIGAN 49203**

December 21, 2016

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

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Cmrs. **Beaman, DuBois, Lloyd, Polaczyk, Price, Seitz, Snyder, and Way**  
Excused: Cmr. **Alexander and Torres**  
Director: **Jeff Hovarter**, County Parks Director  
Staff: **Becky Humphrey, Kyle Lewis, Mark Vysoky**  
Visitors: **Roger Gaede, Debra Kubitskey**, Assistant County Administrator

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Moved by Price, supported by Polaczyk** to approve the December 21, 2016 agenda. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Moved by DuBois, supported by Seitz** to approve the November 16, 2016 Meeting Minutes. Motion carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Roger Gaede** – Reflecting on the last board meeting; speaking about the speed limit on North Drive that also leads to Vineyard Lake County Park; went to the Columbia Township board; not good news; there is some language in legislation that has passed through both houses; the language dismisses any participation of local governments setting speed limits; it is up to the State Police; there is nothing local governments can do if the Governor signs the language in.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year everybody!

**Cmr. Polaczyk** announced that Julie Alexander texted him that she was informed last night she is no longer serving on any board and she wants to thank everyone and she enjoyed serving on the Jackson County Parks Board. Julie also wishes everyone Happy Holidays!

**COMMUNICATIONS**

1. Jackson Citizen Patriot Article of December 4, 2016  
Re: Cascades Holiday Splendor
2. Jackson Host Lions Club  
Re: Thank you
3. **FFWT Board** Minutes of October 04, 2016

4. **Cascades Park Foundation** minutes of November 15, 2016

**Moved by Price, supported by Seitz** to receive Communications. Motion carried.

**DIRECTOR'S MONTHLY STAFF REPORT**

1. The first phase of the Cascades Splash Pad construction has been halted for the winter. The contractor, 5Leprechauns, is on schedule and has completed the well, pump house, and site work necessary to ready the site for spring installation of the pad and spray features. In regard to the second part of the project, we received three splash pad design and installation proposals and interviewed two firms. Based on the information gathered, staff will be recommending the Vortex proposal for approval. Vortex is a national firm whose offices are located in Williamston, Michigan. They will be installing the actual play features, the pumps and surfacing for the splash pad. I would anticipate they will begin work in mid-March if weather permits. We are on schedule to open the new Family Spray Park on or near June 14, 2017.
2. With the addition of the new Splash Park at the Cascades, the south entrance to the Cascades will be closed permanently. That will leave the north entrance as the only location to access the Cascades and the new Splash Park. The current condition of the north entrance is inadequate to handle larger events such as the fireworks shows or Family Night at the Cascades. We are working on a redesign of this entrance area that will include a new box office/ ticket office, an improved entrance/ exist, and a larger gathering plaza with park benches that can handle larger crowds trying to enter or exit the facility. The new plaza area will be the first phase of a future area to be built to recognize "Lead Organizations" who have supported the Cascades Improvements.
3. The Champions Team Fundraising Project to support Cascades improvements continues to move forward. The splash pad construction budget is \$675,000. We now have total commitments nearing \$600,000 and are having very positive discussion with a couple of new prospects who have interest in supporting the project. If those discussions are successful, we should see another \$75,000 to \$100,000 by late January. We have sent out yearend letters requesting additional support of the Cascades Improvements Project to past supporter of the park. We are also delivering a framed and signed 11"x17" picture of the Cascades Fireworks Show photographed by our very own Kenny Price to past Phase I and current Phase II donors making contributions at the \$500 and above level.
4. The Annual Deer Cull to thin the heard in and around Sparks Park (Cascades) and Ella Sharp Park is scheduled for mid- January. Actual preparations will begin January 2<sup>nd</sup>. Staff will be recommending Park Board approval. This process is often unpopular with the general public but is necessary in urban environments to insure the health of the deer population and as well as the safety of the public.
5. The Brooklyn Chamber Director has made an inquiry regarding the County's willingness to sale a piece of the county owned land on Marshall Road in Columbia Township, just west of the town limits. The Town of Brooklyn is looking for approximately ten acres to build a community center (Senior Center) and Skate Park for the community. The County owns approximately 100 acres at this site. The County Administrator and I have reviewed GIS maps of the property. We have also discussed possible long term strategies for the development of

the county parks system that would make this property a very attractive site for a larger regional county park. Staff will continue to work on a park planning document that should provide the data for developing a long term county parks growth strategy. This is only mentioned as an information item for the Parks Board. There is no immediate action needed.

6. Staff will be proposing a change in the weekly Cascades operating schedule at the January Park Board meeting. The Cascades has been open/ operated seven days a week for most of the summer period Memorial Day to Labor Day over the past two decades. The Monday and Tuesday nights are so lightly attended every week that we actually lose money on these nights. We have more staff on site than visitors to the attraction. The first sixty-five years or so the Cascades did not open on Monday or Tuesday. This time was used to clean the facility. I am going to propose we go back to that five day schedule, opening Wednesday through Sunday. It should create some dialogue ☺ and we will see where it goes. Just wanted to give you a heads up. The new Splash Park would be open all seven days each week.
7. The Lime Lake Project continues to await colder weather so the ground can firm up and we can get the equipment and heavy clay materials into the site. But if the current weather pattern is sustained we should be able to begin this project sometime in January.
8. We finally have a project agreement from MDNR to start work on The Kibby Road Trail Connector Project (connect the Sparks Park trail to the City Trail and Falling Waters Trail). I expect a request for bids will go out in early January and we should have a construction contract for approval on the February Park Board agenda. This project is way behind and we will be hard pressed to meet the funding deadline set of late June, 2017 for completion, established as part of the Weatherwax Foundation grant commitment. They have committed \$100,000 to the project. The remaining funds are from the MDNR grant. We will have to see how I can negotiate an acceptable result even if some of the construction details are not quite finished by June 30<sup>th</sup>.
9. We will be bringing to the Parks Board in January, a request to approve a new “County Parks and Facilities Naming Rights Policy”. In addition, we will be presenting a first draft of a new “County Parks Memorials, Monuments, and Recognitions Policy” for discussion. In September, 2016 the Parks Board placed a moratorium on memorials and recognitions requests for tree planting, benches and ground plaques in county parks.
10. The Parks Board has approved a new monthly meeting day starting January, 2017. The Parks Board meetings will now be held on the first Wednesday of each month. The first meeting will be January 4<sup>th</sup>. There will be a very short turn around between the December 21st meeting and the January 4<sup>th</sup> meeting with this transition. Given the fact that the Christmas and New Year’s Holidays occur during this short fourteen day period, there will not be much change in the status of county parks business. Therefore, the January Park Board Packet won’t contain a Director’s Report or financial information. The 2016 Year-end financials will be reviewed at the February 1, 2017 Park Board meeting. The January, 2017 meeting agenda action items will include approval of a new Cascades summer operating schedule, approval of a new Special Events Policy, and the approval of the County Parks Naming Rights Policy.

**Moved by Polaczyk, supported by Price** to receive the Director’s Monthly Staff Report. Motion Carried.

## **BUSINESS ITEMS**

### **Deer Cull**

**Moved by DuBois, supported by Lloyd** to waive the Firearm Ordinance for the 2017 Deer Cull done in specific areas in Cascades Park, Cascades Hills Brothers and Driving Range and Cascades Golf Course. Motion carried.

### **Splash Pad Play Features Purchase and Installation**

**Moved by DuBois, supported by Price** to recommend approval of Vortex International to the Jackson County Board of Commissioners to install the Play Components and Ancillary equipment for the Cascades Splash Pad. Nay – Snyder, Motion carried.

### **NOVEMBER 2016 FINANCIALS**

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

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

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

#### **Roger Gaede**

- The pond on the back side of the Cascades Manor House, there is a couple of clearings on the ice, is the Parks staff clearing off the pond?

### **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

#### **Cmr. Polaczyk**

- Would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas!

#### **Cmr. Beaman**

- ❖ Was recently at Disney World and they have ongoing videos – the technology is outstanding.
- ❖ An issue that concerns the Splash Pad and closing The Cascades on Monday and Tuesdays. Because the Splash Pad is going to bring a variety of people from all socio-economic paths of life and where there are people there are messes.
- ❖ Cleanliness is a concern and could cause problems
- ❖ Maybe the 2 days that The Cascades is closed would be good days to scrub!!

#### **Cmr. Seitz**

- Noticed that there may be a concern with the funds to build the Trail Connector. What is going on with that?

#### **Cmr. Snyder**

- ✓ Is the width of the Trail Connector going to be the same with as the existing walk paths within Cascades Park?

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned to the call of the Secretary at 9:34 a.m.

#### **Mike Way, Chairman**

Jackson County Parks & Recreation Commission