



GENESEE COUNTY PARKS

Get away. Right away.

COMMISSION MINUTES: June 13, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT IN-PERSON:

President Joe Krapohl
Secretary Anne Figueroa
Commissioner James Avery
Commissioner Domonique Clemons
Commissioner Michelle Davis
Commissioner Michael J. Keeler
Commissioner Cathy Lane
Commissioner Gloria Nealy
Commissioner Kevin Sylvester

MEMBERS ABSENT: Vice President James Washington

STAFF PRESENT IN-PERSON:

Patrick Linihan, Parks Director; Cassie Voelker, Director of Finance and Park Operations; Emily Stetson, Parks Program Manager; Rick Witham, Chief Park Ranger; Nancy Edwards, Recreation Programs and Grants Officer; Kari Koske, Administrative Assistant

OTHERS PRESENT: Tom Kehoe, Genesee, MI

1. CALL TO ORDER. President Joe Krapohl presided and called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM.
2. PUBLIC COMMENT. Anyone wishing to address the commission must state their name and address and they have 3 minutes to speak.

Public comment received.

3. CONSENT AGENDA. President Joe Krapohl asked Commissioners if there were any items they wish to remove from the consent agenda for discussion. No items were removed.



GENESEE COUNTY
PARKS AND RECREATION
COMMISSION

ACTION TAKEN:

Motion by Commissioner Keeler
Supported by Commissioner Nealy

MOTION AND SUPPORT TO APPROVE ITEMS A-C AS LISTED IN PACKET.

ROLL CALL

YEAS: Avery, Clemons, Davis, Figueroa, Keeler, Krapohl, Lane, Nealy, Sylvester

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Washington

MOTION CARRIED 9-0-1

4. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Canoemobile by Wilderness Inquiry sold out. 1,007 participants, with representation from 16 local school districts.
- Midwest Invitational Rodeo took place at Cummings Center, with support of City of Flint. Had about 4,000 show up to event. Good event to bring into the community.
- My City Magazine listed Crossroads Village as the best attraction in Genesee County.
- Wolverine opening weekend was full.
- New marketing campaign with the Mounds-- Duck Duck Jeep. Ducks available for sale at the Mounds, very popular.
- Genesee County Day—had over 3,800 people show up, a great success. Thank you to commissioners who showed up for the dunk tank.
- Flint River Restoration Project starting to mobilize.
- Thank you to Commissioner Washington for presenting a leadership in-service training. Very well received.
- Social Media announcement for the Halloween Hustle by the Crim.
- Union Sportsman Alliance Day at Bluegill Boat Launch; sold out program. They love Bluegill Boat Launch; they're going to help put in a programming pavilion there. Thank you to the local UAW chapter that heads that.

A. REQUEST TO AWARD ITB #24-373

Request approval to award ITB #24-373 for Engineering and Construction Management Services for Development of a Universally Accessible Launch on the Flint River at the Confluence of Swartz Creek to ROWE Professional Services, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$41,500.00. NO USE OF COUNTY GENERAL FUND. NO USE OF PARKS FUND.

ACTION TAKEN:

Motion by Commissioner Keeler
Supported by Commissioner Lane

Keeler: So there will be another one on the river side and one on the creek side?

Linihan: The one on the creek side isn't easily accessible, especially during high water, so this will meet the need. One of the things that we have been doing is to come up with some accessible points throughout the whole river, so you have that inclusive paddling experience.

MOTION AND SUPPORT TO AWARD ITB AND REFER TO BOC APPROVAL PROCESS.

ROLL CALL

YEAS: Avery, Clemons, Davis, Figueroa, Keeler, Krapohl, Lane, Nealy, Sylvester

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Washington

MOTION CARRIED 9-0-1

B. REQUEST TO AWARD ITB #24-374

Request approval to award ITB #24-374 for Engineering and Construction Management Services for Renovation of Historic Foot Bridge to MacMillan Associates, Inc, for a total contract amount not to exceed \$94,400.00. NO USE OF COUNTY GENERAL FUND.

ACTION TAKEN:

Motion by Commissioner Keeler

Supported by Commissioner Avery

Keeler: What exactly are they doing—updating the suspension bridge?

Linihan: We have issues with the structural integrity of the bridge. A couple years ago we had MacMillan come in and do an assessment of all the (historic) structures we had in the parks and the bridge was one of the top things. They'll do more of an in-depth scope and manage the project.

MOTION AND SUPPORT TO AWARD ITB AND REFER TO BOC APPROVAL PROCESS.

ROLL CALL

YEAS: Avery, Clemons, Davis, Figueroa, Keeler, Krapohl, Lane, Nealy, Sylvester

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Washington

MOTION CARRIED 9-0-1

C. REQUEST TO APPROVE TRAIL ETIQUETTE GUIDELINES

Request to approve the proposed Trail Etiquette Guidelines for posting and signage.

Linihan: We are designated under the Trailways Act because of the Iron Belle Trail. There is nothing that legally gives us the authority, without amending the Park rules, to enforce a speed limit. We can look at it as the speed limit being advisory or we can look at codifying it. If we do codify it, unless otherwise posted, suggest the speed limit would be 15 MPH.

Keeler: Where did the speed limit come from?

Linihan: The speed limit was part of the e-bikes section. The 20 MPH was the max that the e-bikes could travel.

Keeler: If you're riding at 20 MPH, you're on the road and you're cooking—you've got wind at your back. If it's 20 MPH, the only people going 20 are people that are assisted with the e-bikes and everyone else will be going a lot slower.

Linihan: I think 15 is fair. I agree—I think 20 is a little fast. I would leave that up to the Commission on what they would want to do. If we do want to amend the Park rules it would be a good idea to form a subcommittee. We don't update the park rules very often and it's a tedious process, so I'd like to make sure there isn't something we want to update or add.

Keeler: In the etiquette there, is there something about keeping your dog on a leash?

Linihan: No, but that's in the Park Rules.

Keeler: A lot of people on the trail, and a lot of people with dogs. I think you're going to get some people who think if there's no people around, they'll just unleash their dog and let them run wherever he wants to go and that could be nuts for bicycles.

Linihan: We can add it. I think it's a fair thing to remind people of. On top of our park rules, it is also State law.

Lane: I think we should say helmets are required.

Linihan: That falls under recreational immunity. Keep in mind too that these are advisory rules, so to say that it is required—there's no teeth to go after Mike for not wearing his helmet.

Lane: Rather than advisory, we should on the important issues be very firm—dogs on leashes and helmets.

Krapohl: Our process for changing the rules require us to get approval from Lapeer County Board of Commissioners and Genesee County Board of Commissioners so I like Patrick's idea of reviewing and updating all our rules and I think that's one thing we could discuss in the committee is to look at our risk involved, and involve the risk manager and legal counsel to see where we would fall within making that a requirement. I think that would be a good place to address that.

Avery: I wanted to extend the challenge that Michigan doesn't require a helmet for motorcycles, and I wonder if it makes it tough to challenge to try and enforce that.

Clemons: First, if there is going to be a committee to work on park rules, I would like to be a part of that committee, but not only looking at rules, but especially rules that could in place have folks get tickets or fines for utilizing parks without a helmet, and we look at the economic and equity side of things to make sure we are also providing programs that provide helmets and those resources and we aren't limiting folks from using the Parks or punitively punishing them for not having economic resources for them.

Sylvester: Adding on to Commissioner Avery, if you don't wear a helmet and you're riding a motorcycle, you are required by law to have some kind of insurance rider so maybe that's a way around that.

Lane: Rules should be changed in the wintertime so we can set them up and have them there to start off.

Clemons: I agree—I think now is the perfect time to get the ball rolling on that knowing the Board approval in our County is a 3-6-week process, add 3-6 weeks for Lapeer County, probably 3-6 weeks at least for a committee to come up with those rules, and we are in the Fall already. Now is a good time to get started so we can implement these rules in the Fall and they're ready for the next calendar year for next season.

Linihan: Something I'd like to point out too—these etiquette guidelines were brought by the Commission, that's why we are having this conversation here. Usually, these sort of regulations within a facility are taken care of at an administrative level but since this was brought by the Commission and is something that the Commission wanted to work on, that's why this is on the table today.

ACTION TAKEN:

Motion by Commissioner Lane
Supported by Commissioner Keeler

MOTION AND SUPPORT TO APPROVE THE TRAIL ETTIQUTE GUIDELINES FOR POSTING AND SIGNAGE WITH THE ADDITION OF ANIMALS BE KEPT ON A LEASH.

ROLL CALL

YEAS: Avery, Clemons, Davis, Figueroa, Keeler, Krapohl, Lane, Nealy, Sylvester

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Washington

MOTION CARRIED 9-0-1

5. OLD/NEW BUSINESS—

Linihan: We have had discussion about it in the past and I have quotes to do an accessible entrance at the main entrance probably within the next month you should see something.

Krapohl: We have My City Magazine; they did a nice article about the Parks and also an interview about Patrick.

Krapohl: Addressing the Open Meetings Act again. It was an oversight. As soon as it was brought to our attention, we corrected it immediately and we thank members of the public for doing that. We had no intentions of doing anything behind the scenes/underhanded. We comply with the Open Meetings Act, if there are any updates we will bring them forward. If anyone wants any Open Meetings Act training, more than happy to provide that. The Attorney General's office puts out a pamphlet for the Open Meetings Act. You can go online and look at them. If you read the Attorney General's opinions over the course of the last 20 years, it's an interesting read.

6. OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMISSIONERS TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION

Keeler: Chevy Commons—somebody is mowing where the meadow used to be and it is grass now. Do we have any reasons for that? Is that where the Playground is going?

Linihan: The first one we mow periodically. The 5900 operator that was in there initially over-mowed the park. He wasn't exactly sure where he was mowing/not mowing. He's been instructed on where to mow.

Keeler: It's going to be allowed to grow back.

Linihan: Yes—and we are increasing the sightlines along there so you'll see a little bit more than a 2 foot buffer.

Keeler: We are kind of in conversations about meadows—you can do a thing after meadows are in called 'overseeding'. It's going back in and overseeding to get more diversity. That might be something we might want to look at a grant for down the road.

Clemons: There's a lot going on in the summertime. A couple of updates.

The Clerk's office, as a fun science project, bought some native caterpillars that chrysalis and turn into butterflies, and worked with For-Mar to release them at the Butterfly Garden there, which is really cool, and we took some photos of that. Reminder for everyone we have an election coming up, very quickly. While it seems a long time until August, the actual election day, ballots go out in 2 weeks—the week of June 22 to 27. Just a reminder to everyone, be on the lookout for that and be prepared for the election. Outside of the partisan races we do have a lot of ballot proposals county wide, so it will be a big election. Finally, there's a lot of events this summer, using a lot of public lands including our County Parks and City Parks. All this

month, leading to next Wednesday, there are a lot of celebrations almost every day in commemoration of Juneteenth, which of course is the State and Federally recognized day that honors the end to slavery. There are celebrations going on throughout the county, specifically in the City of Flint, that all culminates on June 19th, the actual Juneteenth Day. We hope to see some of you at those events.

Also, in June we will be having a couple of Pride celebrations, including Flint Pride in the Park. Want to give kudos to our Parks team here, specifically the Ranger department who are helping with the security and watching over that event. It's a strong event, and we know that we often have demonstrators that have difference of opinions and those are certainly welcomed and accepted, but we appreciate having Rangers that keep the order and keep a spot specifically for the demonstrators and for those who are part of the celebration. We know there's a lot of other Parks events happening and kudos to the Rangers for keeping the events safe and the entire Parks team that's keeping our Parks running smoothly at all the events this summer.

Avery: I would like to commend Patrick and Team on the Midwest Invitational Rodeo. I heard it was a sellout and even with the weather being bad, I was encouraged by that. I heard great things about it. Kudos to Marketing and all that. Something to maybe bring back.

Sylvester: Commissioner Wright was a sponsor of the Rodeo event. I wasn't able to attend but I heard it was packed, a sellout, all good things. Looking forward to it in the future.

Lane: Kudos to Patrick because I had on there that I still did not see the handicap accessibility doors and so thank you very much.

Figueroa: I attended the Genesee County Day at Crossroads and what a bunch of fun that was. It was well attended and well executed by the staff. The look on the kids faces! I stopped in and saw the Carousel group, was happy as I was reminded that if you are in the Village, stop by and shake some hands because they do good work. They help us maintain it, they're the eyes and ears there.

Linihan: A little bit of knowledge for the Commission: we have the Friends of the Carousel. They're the ones who sell all the items inside the Carousel. All the money they raise goes back into a fund that helps with the maintenance of the historic rides. In the past year, they've got the inside of the Carousel painted. We did electrical upgrades to the Ferris Wheel, and we installed heaters for the staff down there—that still runs during Christmas time. The Friends of the Carousel are really invested in the historic rides at Crossroads Village and it's a great partnership—there's a lot that we would not be able to do without them.

7. ADJOURNMENT. Hearing no objections to adjournment, the meeting adjourned at 10:43 AM.

I, Kari Koske, Administrative Assistant certify that the above is a true and correct transcript from the June 13, 2024, Parks and Recreation Commission meeting that was duly called and held in all respects in accordance with the laws of the State of MI and the by-laws of the company and that a quorum was present.

I further certify that the votes and resolutions of the commissioners of Genesee County Parks and Recreation Commission at the meeting are operative and in full force and effect and have not been annulled or modified by any vote or resolution passed or adopted by the board since that meeting.

Kari Koske, Administrative Assistant
Genesee County Parks and Recreation Commission
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