

Regular Meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission

Proposed Minutes

- Date:** June 27, 2007
- Time:** 4:00 p.m.
- Place:** Weaver House, Pine Bend Park
- Present:** Betty Gajewski, Joyce Kortman, Phil Kuyers, Ted Bosgraaf, Crystal Unema, Bobbi Jones Sabine, Roger Jonas, Paul Geerlings.
- Absent:** Mark Oppenhuizen, Russ Brown
- Staff:** John Scholtz, Director; Curt TerHaar, Coordinator of Park Planning and Development; Sherry Costello, Administrative Clerk; Dave Mazurek, Park Operations Superintendent; and Carla Hill, Intern.
- Guests:** Fred Vaas, Joseph Beel, Joyce Smith.

Subject: Approval of Minutes

- PR 07-48 Motion: To approve the minutes of the Commission's May 30, 2007 regular meeting.
- Moved by: Kortman Supported by: Unema Unanimous

Subject: Covenant of Restriction

- PR 07-49 Motion: To approve the Covenant of Restriction agreement with Dr. Willard and Arlene Van Essen regarding encroachment and access issues at Park 12.
- Moved by: Geerlings Supported by: Kuyers Unanimous

Subject: Parks and Recreation 2008 Budget

- PR 07-50 Motion: To approve the proposed 2008 Parks and Recreation Commission budget as proposed and submitted to the Board of Commissioners.
- Moved by: Kortman Supported by: Gajewski Unanimous

Subject: Lower Macatawa Greenway Study

PR 07-51 Motion: To authorize expenditure of up to \$13,000 for design and development of a greenway path from Holland's Window on the Waterfront to Paw Paw preserve in partnership with the City of Holland, Holland Township and the Macatawa Greenway Partnership.
Moved by: Jonas Supported by: Kortman Unanimous

Subject: Park User Survey

PR 07-52 Motion: To approve the funding for Frost Research Center at Hope College to conduct a Park User Survey for Ottawa County Parks in the amount of \$8,500.
Moved by: Unema Supported by: Sabine Unanimous

Subject: Park 12 Beach Dog Use Hours

PR 07-53 Motion: To approve the establishment of Park 12 beach dog use hours for Park 12 cottagers. Hours of use are before 11 a.m. and after 5 p.m.
Moved by: Kortman Supported by: Unema Unanimous

Subject: Go Into Closed Session

PR 07-54 Motion: To go into Closed Session to discuss property matters.
Moved by: Kuyers Supported by: Geerlings
Yeas: Gajewski, Kortman, Kuyers, Geerlings, Bosgraaf, Unema, Sabine, Jonas.
Nays: None Motion passed 8 to 0.

Subject: To Rise From Closed Session

PR 07-55 Motion: To rise from Closed Session.
Moved by: Kuyers Supported by: Geerlings Unanimous

Other Items Discussed:

Commission members received the June 4, 2007 letter from the Department of Natural Resources, Grants Management Division, regarding the Bur Oak Landing Acquisition. Scholtz added that he would be seeking appraisal quotations for this property in the near future.

Commission members received the June 4, 2007 letter from the Department of Natural Resources, Grants Management Division, regarding the Mount Pisgah Dune Protection Project. Scholtz commented that engineering for this project is underway.

Commission members received the June 5, 2007 letter from Amanda Price regarding her resignation from the Park 12 Advisory Council. Scholtz recommended to hold off selecting a replacement as the group is already well along in the development of recommendations. Commission members agreed and the Council will continue without a replacement.

Commission members received the June 10, 2007 letter from William Doolittle regarding the North Beach Dune restoration project. Scholtz will respond to Doolittle's letter regarding the dune restoration project.

Commission members received the June 22, 2007 letter from Brian Stauffer requesting approval to hold cross-country meets at Riley Trails. Scholtz has not yet fully evaluated this possibility. He indicated there is always some concern with allowing organized sports events in natural areas. Sabine questioned what the extent of brush hogging that would take place specifically for this event. TerHaar explained that the start and finish lines would be in the current parking area that is already mowed. Geerlings added that he didn't think the need would be much different from what the ski trails are already. Gajewski expressed her support for the request. She felt that the earlier the younger generation receives exposure to the parks the more they will use them in the future. Geerlings recommended that staff work with Stauffer on request.

Bosgraaf called for comments in response to the comment cards received since the previous meeting. Kortman questioned why all of the comment cards filled out did not request to be put on the mailing list.

Commission members received the June 26, 2007 letter from Arthur Lucas regarding the naming of the Community Haven Property. Scholtz led a brief discussion and commented on how positive the letter was from past communications with Lucas. Gajewski added that she has heard comments from the public regarding the site being used more for equestrian purposes than for its farm heritage. Scholtz responded that the master plan features farm education prominently. TerHaar added that the same topic was addressed at the Community Haven meeting.

Bosgraaf called for public comment and Mr. Fred Vaas, a landowner at Park 12, asked to defer his comments until later in the meeting.

Ms. Joyce Smith, a land owner of Park 12, greeted the Commission.

Commission members reviewed the report of Parks and Recreation expenditures through May 31, 2007.

Scholtz commented on various items included in his Director's Report. He discussed a new invasive species called Poison Hemlock which was recently found at the Upper Macatawa Conservation Area. Mazurek passed around pictures of the plant and discussed its characteristics. Bosgraaf inquired as to what methods of control can be used. Mazurek explained that Leif will be surveying the area and they will be meeting tomorrow to discuss control options which include mowing, pulling and herbicide. Jonas asked when the plant would go to seed and Mazurek stated that he spoke to Brian from J. F. New and there was not a general consensus as to when that would occur. Scholtz continued with the announcement of the Board of Commissioners' approval of the Smoke Free Beaches resolution. The resolution will take effect on August 1, 2007 and would result in a \$39 citation for offenders. Scholtz moved on with the Bass River Recreation Area and the Park 12 parking issues. Scholtz stated that the Planning Committee would like to have a time-line established for making final decisions regarding all encroachments at Park 12. Staff is also working on the parking assessment for review with the WMPA.

Mazurek submitted his Superintendent's Report and gave updates on the Community Haven barn. Mazurek informed the Commission of a new program just implemented called the Safe Kids Initiative. This program provides life vests through the Sheriff's office as loaners for children to swim while at the beach. Mazurek also stated that the barbed wire had been removed from Fillmore at the Bend and a trail had also been mowed. He commented that he had received several positive comments about the trail. Mazurek concluded with the Weaver House update. He informed the Commission that there have been 10 reservations so far this year and 8 more pending. He also mentioned that he has received positive feedback on the facility and hopes to finish the upstairs rooms next.

Mazurek submitted Stinebower's report for review and asked if there were any questions.

Bosgraaf called on Sabine to comment on the Public Relations Committee meeting report of May 30, 2007 and it was noted that Sabine will be submitting a summary of possible names for the Community Haven site through Scholtz.

Bosgraaf called on Scholtz to comment on the Park 12 Advisory Council meeting of June 13, 2007. Scholtz summarized the meeting and indicated he is still working with the County's attorney on the Black Lake Avenue waterfront issue. He continued with the Mt. Pisgah preliminary design and the Pump House study results should be in soon. Bosgraaf reviewed the preliminary timeline for encroachment issues. Mr. Beel, a Park 12 owner, requested to comment on the timeline in respect to the Park 12 land owners. He stated that a majority of the owners close up their cottages after the Labor Day weekend

and therefore should be allowed to comment on encroachment issues before that date. Bosgraaf noted the Commission will take that under consideration.

Bosgraaf called on Kuyers to comment on the Finance and Personnel Committee meeting of June 18, 2007. Kuyers summarized the meeting which focused on the 2008 budget. Bosgraaf inquired as to when the plans will be given to WMPA. Scholtz will send to Dave Lind of the WMPA.

Bosgraaf briefly commented on the Planning Committee meeting of June 20, 2007. TerHaar distributed a hand-out entitled "Macatawa River Greenway: Unity Statement by Key Partners." Bosgraaf indicated the committee's support for the document.

Bosgraaf called for updates on Old Business. TerHaar reported on the Grose Park improvements, Park 12 retaining wall and improvements in front of the Van Essen residence. He continued with the Upper Macatawa project and stated that MDOT is working on its mitigation project.

In other business, Scholtz submitted for approval a Covenant of Restriction document that would allow Dr. Willard and Arlene Van Essen, property owners of Lots 5 and 6, to add one additional parking space at their expense if they would agree to use only one point of entry. The commission members approved the request by motion.

Bosgraaf called on TerHaar to comment on the Community Haven Master Plan meeting report of June 20, 2007. TerHaar summarized the meeting and noted one main change that is being made. The large group area will be moved up to be located next to the farm park. He stated the large group area would then be able to complement the farm park. Restrooms are important for the large group facility and sewage would be easier to dispose of from this area. Kuyers asked if there had been a decision made in regards to the lagoons. TerHaar stated that they would be pumped out and possibly re-graded for re-use as wildlife ponds. Bosgraaf asked if the surveying had been completed yet and TerHaar stated that the bids are going out now. Scholtz added that he would put the Master Plan on the August 1, 2007 meeting for approval.

Action was taken by motion to approve the 2008 Budget.

Action was taken by motion to approve the Lower Macatawa Greenway design and development funding request.

Gajewski and Scholtz presented a summarized report of their trip to the Special Parks District Forum. Gajewski commented on how much information she gained by the visit. Scholtz noted that one county had funded projects in seven different counties.

Action was taken by motion to have the Frost Research Center of Hope College prepare a Parks User Survey in the amount of \$8,500.00

Scholtz continued with a brief discussion regarding dog use hours for the Park 12 cottagers. Mr. Vaas, Mr. Beel and Ms. Smith all expressed their support for the dog use hours as proposed. Ms. Smith also added that the Advisory group had lengthy discussions regarding the hours and noted that it was passed by them with no Nay votes. Action was taken by motion to establish dog use hours for Park 12 cottagers. Park 12 cottagers would be allowed to walk their dogs on the Park 12 beach before 11 a.m. and after 5 p.m. daily. These rules would be strictly enforced and a civil infraction would be given to offenders in the amount of \$39 per occurrence.

Bosgraaf called for public comment. Mr. Joseph Beel expressed his concern with the bike path at the end of Auburn Street turning onto Ottawa Beach Road. He stated that visibility is poor if you have to stay behind the bike path before pulling out onto Ottawa Beach Road. Bosgraaf suggested the possibility of a stop sign for bike path users similar to the one used at the State Park entrance. TerHaar stated that the path would be paved in the next couple of weeks.

Mr. Fred Vaas addressed the Commission regarding winter parking issues. He stated there are twelve families that live in Park 12 year round and these people may need additional consideration as to where their parking is located. Ms. Joyce Smith questioned whose responsibility it would be to plow and maintain the parking area. Mr. Joseph Beel requested the Commission take their time on the issue and think it through before making a final decision.

The Parks Commission went into Closed Session to discuss property matters.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.