

Regular Meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission

Approved Minutes

- Date:** September 3, 2008
- Time:** 4:00 p.m.
- Place:** Fillmore Complex, Conference Room D
- Present:** Ted Bosgraaf, Bobbie Jones Sabine, Crystal Unema, Joyce Kortman, Roger Jonas, Ray Statema, Jim Miedema and Phil Kuyers
- Absent:** Paul Geerlings and Russell Brown
- Staff:** John Scholtz, Director; Curt TerHaar, Coordinator of Park Planning and Development; Sherry Costello, Administrative Clerk; and Dave Mazurek, Park Operations Superintendent
- Guests:** Fred Vaas, Joyce Smith, Billie Johnston, Karen Holt and Jeremy Gonsior

Subject: Approval of Minutes

- PR 08-066 Motion: To approve the minutes of the Commission's July 30, 2008 regular meeting.
- Moved by: Unema Supported by: Statema Unanimous

Subject: Eastmanville Farm Barn Painting

- PR 08-067 Motion: To reject all bids for the Eastmanville Farm barn painting project and rebid after further research and environmental specifications can be determined.
- Moved by: Unema Supported by: Miedema Unanimous

Subject: Holland Harbor Fishing Access Grant Request

- PR 08-068 Motion: To authorize staff to submit a grant application to the Great Lakes Fishery Trust for the Holland Harbor Fishing Access Project.
- Moved by: Unema Supported by: Sabine Unanimous

with a fine attached for offenders. Mazurek stated that if an area is posted as “closed to public” then park staff can impose a civil infraction on the offender.

Commission members received the Parks and Recreation expenditures through July 31, 2008. There were no questions, however, Scholtz noted that an adjustment would have to be made to the Gas & Oil account due to the rising fuel costs.

President Bosgraaf asked if there were any questions or comments on the Director’s report. Scholtz highlighted a few topics from his report including the installation of a cell tower in the Pigeon Creek forest opens space site, plans to expand the parking at the Pigeon Creek Park horse lot on Stanton Street, and the possibility of hunting at the recently purchased Boynton property. Scholtz indicated the Boynton property could possibly be hunted this fall, but may not be appropriate for the long term as this area will eventually be a busy park. He also noted that the boundaries still need to be staked and hunting will not be feasible this fall.

Bosgraaf called on Mazurek to present the Park Operations Report. Mazurek reported the revenues collected for the 2008 season were \$237,519. He continued to report that only two bids were received for the Eastmanville Farm barn painting project with only one of them being a complete bid. Mazurek recommended that all the bids be rejected so new research and specifications could be developed with assistance from the Environmental Health Department and the project delayed to 2009. A motion was supported and passed to reject the Eastmanville Farm barn painting bids with the project to be re-bid after further research.

Bosgraaf reviewed the Park Naturalist’s Report and asked for questions or comments. Kortman expressed how much she loved the newsletter and asked if staff was sending it to enough residents. Unema confirmed that the newsletters were distributed to local libraries and Visitor Bureaus and Bosgraaf commented that two people who filled out a comment card requested to be placed on the mailing list. Kortman suggested that when someone purchases an Annual Permit they should be placed on the mailing list. Scholtz suggested that the Public Relations Committee could address this topic at their next meeting.

Bosgraaf received the Planning Committee meeting report and spoke briefly about the museum visit. He noted that staff has already done some preliminary work to assess the feasibility of the museum and should set up a committee with the West Michigan Park Association to see what the next steps should be.

Bosgraaf then called on Unema for the Friends of Ottawa County Parks update. Unema reported on the Friends sponsored family fishing night and distributed pictures of the event. She then announced that the Friends of Ottawa County Parks annual meeting will be held on September 17th, 2008 at the Ottawa County Fillmore Complex at 7 p.m. and encouraged all to attend. Bosgraaf thanked Unema for all of her work with the Friends group.

Bosgraaf then called for discussion of Old Business and TerHaar reviewed the bids for the Hemlock Crossing Wetland Project and the Bur Oak Landing Access Improvement Project and stated that both projects were underway.

Bosgraaf called for New Business and Scholtz highlighted the grant proposal to the Great Lakes Fishery Trust (GLFT). He noted that staff was just recently made aware of the GLFT grant opportunity and felt that the Lake Macatawa waterfront project fits the grant goals and is also consistent with the Park 12 Master Plan. Scholtz presented a location map and a conceptual plan with two fishing structures for review. He asked Commission members for approval to submit the grant and gave the deadline for submission to be September 9, 2008. A motion was supported and passed to have staff proceed with the grant request.

Bosgraaf then called for Public Comment and Ms. Karen Holt, a resident of Lake Michigan Avenue. She noted the following concerns:

- A large number of non-cottage owners are bringing dogs to the beach with owners that are not picking up after their animals. Staff is inadequate to police the area.
- The endangerment of walkers by bike riders riding down the walkways.
- Patrons smoking on the beach.

Ms. Holt requested the support of the Parks Commission to devise a plan to help protect the property owners of Park 12. Ms. Holt continued in praising the current park staff for their work but felt that the concerns she presented are too large for the staff that are currently assigned to the area. She stated that some patrons have used abusive language towards her and other residents when they have brought park rules to the attention of these patrons. She also stated that cottage owners are fully aware of the rules and regulations of the park and requested help and support in enforcing the rules with the public. Bosgraaf thanked Ms. Holt for coming. Mr. Vaas, a resident of Ottawa Beach Road stated that he has spoken to the State Park regarding dog users. Bosgraaf noted that dogs are allowed on the pier on a leash. Ms. Johnston, a resident of Terrace Avenue stated that many of the biking problems are not just children. She has witnessed adult bikers as well. Ms. Johnston then continued in notifying Commission members that she has counted more than 42 pedestrians that have cut through her property on their way to the beach. She continued in saying that they are entering through the back of her property. Bosgraaf noted that the road behind Ms. Johnston's property belongs to the State of Michigan and when he resided in this same area they had to police it themselves. Scholtz stated that they are coordinating a trail plan with the State Park and will make sure it is very clear on all signs that the trail is not a route to the beach.

Bosgraaf then announced a volunteer day for dune grass planting on October 4, 2008 at Mt. Pisgah and welcomed everyone to come and participate.

Bosgraaf called for comments from Commission members and Kuyers noted that there seems to be more and more issues with dogs and there may be citations needed in order to control problem. Sabine commented on the 911 contact information update mentioned in the Park Operations report and expressed the importance of updating this information

annually and when new areas are open to the public. Mazurek noted that address signs are currently installed in front of each park. Sabine recently visited Grose Park for a family reunion and noted that her family members were very impressed with the park.

Meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.