

Mecosta County Park Commission
March 12, 2009

The March 12, 2009 meeting was called to order by the Vice Chairman at the Administrative Office in Paris, MI at 7:00 pm. MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Cookingham, Mrs. Fitzgerald, Mrs. Howard, Mr. Jefts, Mr. Nichols, Mr. Stout, Mrs. Strong, Mr. Todd and. MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Peek and Mr. Wayer. Also present: Gary Brown, Erin Bean, Karen Morningstar and various members of the public.

Minutes: February 12, 2009 Board Meeting: Mr. Cookingham moved, seconded by Mrs. Strong to approve the minutes of the February 24th Board Meeting as presented. Motion carried.

February 17, 2009 Personnel Committee Meeting: Mr. Cookingham moved, seconded by Mrs. Fitzgerald to approve the minutes of the February 17th Personnel Committee Meeting as presented. Motion carried.

February 17, 2009 Masterplan Committee Meeting: Mrs. Strong moved, seconded by Mr. Jefts to approve the minutes of the February 17th Masterplan Meeting as presented. Motion carried.

February 17, 2009 Rules & Regulations Committee Meeting: Mr. Todd moved, seconded by Mr. Jefts to approve the minutes of the February 17th Rules & Regulations Committee Meeting with corrections. Motion carried

Personnel Committee Meeting was discussed: meeting was held to discuss complaints received about the Brower Manager and seasonal employee evaluations. Superintendent stated that a list of expectations for all park managers has been put together laying the ground rules. A copy of the evaluation was distributed to the Board members. Mr. Nichols stated the evaluation is more subjective than objective. Mr. Jefts asked if there were more problems brought to light.

Masterplan Minutes Review: Mr. Jefts reviewed the discussion regarding the Mecosta Morton Area Historical Society. This group has a lot of support however, their plans for the location of the cabin is not in the best interest of the Park Commission's operation of School Section Lake Veteran's Park. MCPC would like to see the cabin constructed near the location of the School House and offered a parking lot area on the other side of the entrance road along 90th Ave. Concerns were raised over the several projects planned and too many getting started before anything is completely finished along with the responsibility of the maintenance for the buildings. Another concern is once the area/buildings are designated historical, they cannot be used for anything else if this group fails to keep the operation running along with the lack of having the school house open for visitors in the past. Superintendent explained the Mecosta Morton Area Historical Society has responded with correspondence to be discussed later in the meeting and members are present at tonight's meeting.

Rules & Regulations Meeting discussion: Superintendent explained three out of the five guests who expressed unhappiness have now signed up for seasonal sites at Brower Park. Superintendent also informed the Board of a conversation with the County Administrator who confirmed the Park Commission is an advisory board to the County Board who actually approves the Rules and Regulations. Therefore, the new rules at Brower will be presented at a meeting of the County Board on April 2nd @ 10:00 a.m. for formal approval.

Haunted Hatchery: was brought forward on the Agenda as requested by the Circle K group. Leslie Gilbert and Ron Kanitz were very pleased to give back to the County for the use of the Hatchery. Circle K was able to purchase items for needy children and also presented the Vice Chairman with a donation of \$500.00 to be used for children's programming in the parks. The Park Commission was thanked for the use of the building and was also offered the use of the sign located in the top of the building.

Public Comment: None

Correspondence: was brought forward on the agenda at the request of the Mecosta Morton Area Historical Society. Mrs. Howard explained the School building is a place to get started. The Remus Historical group has pledged \$100 and volunteer help. The Morton building inspector is willing to waive the necessity of a ramp for ADA due to the entrance door of the building not meeting ADA code and would need to be changed – this would take away from the historical aspects of the building. Mrs. Howard reiterated the group needs to consider moving the cabin from their proposed location to the area next to the school house. Mr. Raymond Pointer Jr. expressed the need to get started on the interior of the school house and projected completion of the project in 4-6 weeks. The ramp would alter the integrity of the historical building. The construction of the outside porch or foyer would be up to the Mecosta County Park Commission. Mr. Cookingham stated the Mecosta Morton Area Historical Society is expecting the Mecosta County Park Commission to cover a lot of the costs such as trash removal, a ranger to police the areas, maintenance, parking lot, grounds maintenance and part of the construction. Walt (last name never stated) said we're not going to have 50 cars enter the park in a day to view the historical area and he would like to work out a special ticket stamped with the time in and time out for visitors of the historical area. Mr. Pointer Jr. asked how school groups are able to enter the park for free. He was informed if they enter the park in a school bus, the bus is allowed in for free. Mr. Jefts described the parking area along with its intentions to allow visitors to access the historical site. The entire project needs to be the most practical for everyone. Mrs. Strong questioned what all is the Mecosta County Park Commission expected to pay for. Superintendent requested a schedule of the open dates and times for the school house. Mr. Pointer Jr. explained their target date for opening is July and they need the building open prior to the park opening to allow bidders in to view the interior of the building. Current plans are to have the building open every weekend from Thursday – Sunday for 2-3 hours per day. Mr. Pointer Jr. mentioned (not remembering where the offer came from) obtaining a free campsite for the individual in charge of tours for the building during the open times. Mr. Pointer Jr. was quickly informed that offer never came from the Park Commission and this option was not a possibility. Mr. Nichols stated he supports the school house being open and guests coming into the park to view the historical area would not be happy about having to pay the entrance fee to view the area. Mr. Jefts asked Mr. Pointer Jr. the size of the cabin the group wishes to construct. Mr. Pointer Jr. stated 20'X24' with a lean to or open porch and two 3'X6' public viewing windows. A date and time to open the school house for bidders will be worked out with the Superintendent. Mrs. Howard requested to have the Mecosta Morton Area Historical Society update the Park Board on a monthly basis. Mr. Nichols clearly informed the Mecosta Morton Area Historical Society, the Mecosta County Park Commission has the right to veto any bidder on their project. Mr. Jefts stated the Mecosta County Park Commission has specific insurance requirements of any contractor. Superintendent requested to have a Committee oversee this project – Vice Chairman referred it to the Masterplan Committee. This discussion ended at 8:27 p.m.

Reports and Updates:

Great Lakes Park Training Institute: a Report was presented from the Brower Manager regarding his attendance at the Great Lakes Park Training Institute at Pokagon State Park.

DNR Office Space from March 2008 Board Meeting: Superintendent stated the DNR may not move out of the office space now-this decision is still up in the air. The office is currently used about one day per week and no matter what the DNR plans on using the 7-stall garage.

Beachview Lodge: Superintendent presented the Vice Chairman with a drawing detailing the dimensions of the building to pass onto his son as discussed last month. Other options are not needed at this time.

Change in Internet Service: Superintendent reported its not the best he's ever seen, yet faster than dial up and the best part is we can all be online at the same time. This provides for more confidentiality. Alltel will be in the area soon hopefully.

County Maps: Superintendent reported of the Assistant Superintendent's attempts of obtaining additional advertising to offset the cost of the maps. Superintendent also informed the board of a conversation with Mrs. Howard regarding the Road Commission maps. Superintendent spoke with Joyce who stated the Road Commission is getting ready to print more maps. In 2005 5,000 maps were printed for .30 each. The more maps ordered = a cheaper price per map. April 1st is the current deadline to advertise for our map and we currently have three advertisers out of the approximately 20 needed. Mr. Cookingham moved, seconded by Mr. Jefts to have staff try to get ads by the April 1st deadline and either order 10,000 maps at a cost of \$4300.00 or talk with the Road Commission to share costs of their maps. Motion carried unanimously.

Septic Tank Cleaning: a representative from Kerkstra presented a presentation from the company offering to help us in many ways. The proposal covered the cost of .15 per gallon for over 4,000 gallons pumped and .18 for under 4,000 gallons pumped, RV pumping for our guests that would provide a return of \$3.50 per pump in a credit of tank pumping for the Park Commission, Pit toilet cleaning @ \$17.50 per seat (this would resolve the issue of HEP B shots for host campers), includes the toilet paper and hand soap (dispensers would cost \$10 ea.) and most importantly, Kerkstra is willing to help us with the DNR's requirement of a certified groundwater discharge operator. The Superintendent has taken the test to become certified and failed. This test is not easy. Kerkstra has \$1 Million insurance coverage for liability with an additional \$1 Million umbrella. Kerkstra is requesting exclusive rights. Spillage is not likely with vacuum trucks and any contamination would be easily and immediately cleaned up. Kerkstra will maintain and share records on the tank pumping. Kerkstra offered to perform the services on a trial basis for a period of one year, then if the Board approves, enter into a contract for 2-3 years. Mr. Jefts moved, seconded by Mrs. Strong to enter into a contract with Kerkstra for a period of one year and a year by year contract covering three years, allowing with assistance with the pit toilets and being named as additional insured on their policy. Motion carried unanimously.

Merrill Restrooms: Superintendent explained the past problems with the building of the tiles falling off the walls, glue residue being left behind, which causes more issues when trying to remove the glue from the walls. Solutions of painting, grinding and using solvents to remove the glue have not worked. The option of spraying a bed liner type material on the walls would cost approximately \$400 per stall plus plywood cost and on top of this, the painter is very difficult to get in touch with. Superintendent presented another option of installing plywood covered with FRP board, which is water proof and fastened to the plywood with "flowerets". Oakland County Parks currently has this installed and highly recommends it. This project could be handled in house and would cost approximately \$250-300 per stall. Mr. Todd moved, seconded by Mr. Jefts to perform the work in house as recommended and use ½" treated plywood. Motion carried unanimously.

Brower, Tubbs and the Haymarsh open weather permitting on April 3rd.

Incident/Accident Report: One Incident Accident report was reviewed regarding a cracked windshield that will be fixed as soon as possible.

New Assistant Maintenance Foreman: Superintendent informed the Board of the verbal resignation of Mark Herring. Dave Ingraham will be starting work on Monday, March 16th.

Financial:

Revenue vs. Expenses: was reviewed

Adjustments: none

Approval of Bills: Mr. Todd moved, seconded by Mr. Cookingham to approve the bills as presented including the customary and ordinary bills. Motion carried by roll call vote.

Financial Report was given

Set Asides were reviewed.

Public comment: None.

Other Business:

Hiking Trail on Consumers Property: was tabled due to the lateness of the evening. This topic will be placed on the next agenda.

Food Cart at Brower Park: Superintendent stated two individuals are interested in bicycling through the park selling various items to guests. Superintendent was directed to bring proposals before the Board next month. Any approved vendor is to have a background check performed.

Grant Possibilities: Paris Park for the Ponds area and Davis Bridge Bank Stabilization Project. Superintendent spoke with representatives of Timberland RC&D and requested to seek grant money available from the stimulus package. Superintendent was told to go for it!

Friends Group: Michigan State Police Post Commander – Nerbonne has put together a Friends of Paris Park group. This group is full of movers and shakers. They have applied for a \$1000 grant from the Fremont Area Community Foundation and is currently selling paper fish cutouts for \$1 each trying to raise money to purchase fish for the ponds. A separate revenue account will be set up in General Ledger to track these donations. The Friends of Paris Park has also pledged labor to improve the facilities and is trying to set up a master gardening group for landscaping projects. A lot of effort has been put forth in such a short time by this impressive group. Mrs. Howard suggested to have the Park Board members match any donated funds.

Youth Workers: organized through Eagle Village for disadvantaged 16-24 year olds and looking for competitive specific projects with supervision. Superintendent asked if the Board wished to pursue obtaining one person per park. Mrs. Howard moved, seconded by Mr. Cookingham to encourage the Superintendent to submit the necessary paperwork as soon as possible with potential projects and report back to the Board next month. Motion carried unanimously.

Google Analytics: our website had 963 hits in the last month even though our website is currently under construction. Most visits were for Brower and School Section. The Assistant Superintendent has worked very hard on it and it looks great.

Masterplan Committee Meeting: Superintendent will contact Mr. Jefets to schedule a meeting date and time.

Museum Artifacts: Mr. Cookingham is still trying to get in contact with Mr. Karberle for the museum artifacts.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 9:57 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jackie Fitzgerald
Secretary