

MECOSTA COUNTY PARK COMMISSION  
MAY 14, 2009

The MAY 14, 2009 meeting was called to order by the Chairman at the Administrative Office in Paris, MI, at 7:00 p.m. This meeting was re-located from Tubbs Lake State Forest Campground due to the length of the agenda. MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Cookingham, Mrs. Fitzgerald, Mrs. Howard, Mr. Jeffs, Mr. Nichols, Mr. Peek, Mr. Stout, Mrs. Strong, Mr. Todd and Mr. Wayer. MEMBERS ABSENT: none. Also present: Gary Brown, Erin Bean, Karen Morningstar and Kelly Rodgers (new seasonal Brower Park Manager).

Board Members and staff enjoyed a picnic prior to the commencement of the meeting.

*Minutes:* April 9, 2009 Board Meeting: Mr. Cookingham moved, seconded by Mrs. Strong to accept the minutes of the April 9, 2009 Board Meeting as presented. Motion carried.

April 20, 2009 Personnel Committee Meeting minutes were approved at the April 23<sup>rd</sup> Special Board Meeting.

April 23, 2009 Special Board Meeting: Mr. Todd moved, seconded by Mrs. Howard to accept the minutes of April 23, 2009 Special Board Meeting as presented. Motion carried.

April 30, 2009 Rules & Regulations Committee Meeting: Mr. Stout moved, seconded by Mr. Wayer to accept the minutes of April 30, 2009 as presented. Motion carried.

*Public Comment.* Kelly Rodgers was introduced as the new Seasonal Brower Park Manager. Kelly was welcomed and given words of encouragement.

*Reports and Updates*

*Parks are Open:* All parks administered by MCPC are open and running. Assistant Superintendent reported on the current reservation percentages of occupancy for Memorial Day weekend (SS-81%, Brower-60%, Merrill-60% and Paris-55%).

*Brower Manager Update:* was discussed under public comment.

*Front Pond Update:* Chairman commented the pond looks absolutely great. He is very proud and thankful to Mr. Stout for his perseverance. FSU Welding class is to install the hand rail.

*Merrill Restrooms:* Superintendent explained FRP board was proposed earlier and installed in one stall. After FRP board was installed, a new way was discovered to take the glue off and epoxy paint will be applied by Memorial Day Weekend.

*Youth Workers:* Superintendent reported the program is forming with no promises. No placements have taken place yet however, the outlook looks good.

*Museum Artifacts:* Mr. Cookingham stated he still has not been able to contact with Mr. Karberle, who is reported to be in Europe at a car show. Mr. Cookingham will continue to try to get in touch with him.

*Incident/Accident:* Five reports with the board. Mr. Jefts asked if any insurance claims were sought. Superintendent stated no.

*Boat Race:* Mr. Stout reported on the meeting and the impressiveness of a thorough presentation. Incidents/Accidents along with several other questions were asked and all answered. References have all been followed up on. This is a huge revenue generating event with this group focusing on a family friendly event. Zero tolerance is accepted on misbehaving. In the last 8 years of hosting this event only one minor incident of an ankle has been reported. Trash pickup seems to be the biggest obstacle. Mr. Stout moved, seconded by Mrs. Strong to allow this event to take place at Brower Park on the weekend of August 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Wayer suggested having the Park Manager on duty all weekend and documenting all incidents for the event. Chairman suggested having the Sheriff Department and State Police assist along with insurance documentation and all paperwork nailed down prior to the event. Mr. Cookingham stated additional items (raffles, sponsorship, vendor booths, etc) can be looked at another year. Motion carried. Superintendent followed up with suggesting to add a little to make the racers happy explaining they feed on the crowd. Mr. Wayer stated a 1<sup>st</sup> aid tent involving EMS and the Sheriff Department would be appropriate. Chairman referred this discussion to the Rules and Regulations Committee. Superintendent explained the majority of the advertising comes from the raffles.

*Boat Rentals:* Superintendent reviewed spreadsheets with the Board detailing the cost of the proposed boats, projected revenue and the 2 year payoff schedule and requested direction from the Board on whether or not to purchase. Other organizations have had great response of their rentals. Mrs. Fitzgerald asked for comparisons from other local establishments – which are not available due to boat rentals not offered in this area. Kayaks are very popular. Mr. Wayer is concerned of the workload for employees. Superintendent stated this would be a perfect project for the summer youth workers. Superintendent included \$100 for incidentals in the purchase price of the boats. An annual livery inspection would be needed. Brower used to have three office workers, one has already found fulltime employment and this position is currently not slated to be re-filled due to the campground management program. Superintendent stated if a seasonal staff needed, could be hired for part time at Brower and part time working the boat rentals at School Section. Budget is currently set at \$13,741.00 with this proposal totaling \$12,300.00. Discussion followed on referring this to Rules and Regulations and Mr. Jefts commented if this were to happen, this project wouldn't get off the ground until July. Mrs. Howard likes the mix of the boats to be purchased and would like to see quick movement on this proposal. If the rentals do not produce revenue, the boats could always be sold. Mr. Jefts moved, seconded by Mr. Nichols to purchase proposed boats and have Rules and Regulations Committee hammer out the details. Discussion followed. Mrs. Strong suggested increasing the allotment for the boats to provide for additional Kayaks. Motion was withdrawn. Mr. Jefts moved, seconded by Mr. Nichols to allow the Superintendent to spend up to \$15,000.00 with details contingent on Rules and Regulations. Motion carried with Mr. Wayer opposing. Mr. Jefts stated the docking system for the boats is to be included in the \$15,000. Mr. Todd felt we are still light on the number of Kayaks to be purchased. Mr. Jefts projected campground use will

increase. Superintendent stated this will create enthusiasm in the park. Chairman reviewed with the Superintendent on the number of individual boats:

- 4 Paddle Boats for School Section
- 1 Row Boat for Merrill
- 1 Row Boat for School Section
- 2 Canoes for School Section
- 2 Kayaks for School Section

Chairman would rather see no canoes purchased and add more Kayaks. The canoes from the Family Group Camp could be rented.

At this time a break was taken to enjoy cake in celebration of the Executive Secretary's 15 years of experience.

### *Correspondence*

Four letters were reviewed. Mary Hovey regarding tree trimming – Superintendent explained the project could have been completed earlier and apologized. There were several things that went wrong including the tree cutters equipment breaking down. Superintendent will draft a letter to Ms. Hovey apologizing and denial of requested parking permits.

Robert Zielinski requested lifting the ban on guest bringing in their own firewood. Chairman stated we will not vary from procedure. The State is requesting continuance from Mecosta County and we cannot change midstream.

Laura Odette's letter was reviewed and will be placed on file.

Regan Higgs expressed disappointment and frustration over making a reservation at School Section. Superintendent followed up by saying the staff who took reservations all day, indicated in the message on their answering machine for guests to NOT leave reservations on the answering machine along with office hours. Superintendent replied to Regan Higgs' email requesting contact with School Section on the next day during business hours and if staff is not in the office during hours indicated to let him know. Regan Higgs did in fact make a reservation on the next day.

### *Financial:*

*Revenue vs. Expenses* were reviewed.

*Adjustments:* Executive Secretary requested to transfer \$12,912.56 from Contingency, \$627.44 from Miscellaneous and \$720 from Longevity to Account 722 (\$14,000) and 802 (\$260). Mr. Cookingham moved, seconded by Mr. Nichols to allow the transfer as requested. Motion carried.

*Approval of Bills:* Mr. Cookingham moved, seconded by Mr. Todd, for the transfer of funds (to cover Accounts Payable) from the 508 account at the County to our 110 account at Chemical Bank and for the approval of all of the bills, including customary and ordinary, as presented. Motion carried by roll call vote.

The Executive Secretary gave the financial report. Set Aside accounts were reviewed and indicated no change.

*Public Comment:* none.

*Other Business:*

Proposed Property @ Gorrell Lake: Chairman informed the Board of the pending retirement of Steve Perialas who is interested in selling the property and cabin near the boundary of Merrill Lake Park (Gorrel Lake side) for \$138,000.00 and offered the Mecosta County Park Commission first option. Discussion followed on the property description, cabin, rental fees and potential staff hours to maintain the property and cabin. Mrs. Strong moved, seconded by Mr. Cookingham to send a letter thanking Steve for this option and explain we need to decline at this time. Motion carried.

County Smoking Policy: Chairman stated individuals have brought to his attention about a month ago, the County Smoking policy is not being followed at the Mecosta County Park Commission. Chairman obtained a copy of the policy from the County and it was distributed and will be posted. Mr. Jefts moved, seconded by Mr. Cookingham to follow the County Smoking Policy. Motion carried. Superintendent stated he enforces staff to not smoke in County owned vehicles, on our mowers and on our gators and has had no opposition.

Attendance of Leadership Mecosta: Chairman praised the program and requested enrolling the Superintendent to the 2009-2010 class and the Assistant Superintendent in 2010-2011 for a cost of \$650.00 for each year. Superintendent stated the Assistant Superintendent has paid more dues than himself and requested to send her to the first class. Mr. Cookingham moved, seconded by Mrs. Strong to allow either the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent to attend the 2009-2010 class. Motion carried. Superintendent was encouraged to contact Lynne Scheible as soon as possible to inform her before the class fills up.

Adjournment: Mr. Todd moved, seconded by Mr. Cookingham to adjourn at 9:20 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Jackie Fitzgerald  
Secretary