Mecosta County Park Commission
Commission Meeting

The June 16, 2026, Commission Meeting of the Mecosta County Park Commission was called to order at the Mecosta County Services Building at 5:00 p.m. by Chairman Bill Stanek.

AGENDA

1. **Roll Call**:
   Members Present: Mrs. Bradstrom, Mr. Griffith, Mr. Hatkowski, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Lambrix, Ms. Miller, Mrs. Strong, Mr. Vogel, Mr. Zimmerman and Mr. Stanek
   Members Absent: none
   Others Present: Jeff Abel – Superintendent, Taylor Jutila – Operations Director, Jamie McConnell – Operations Manager, Brenda Goldammer – HR, Marketing and Events, and Kimberly Erickson – Administrative Office Clerk

2. **Approval of Agenda**
   The agenda was approved as presented**.**

3. **Minutes of May 19th Park Commission Meeting**
   The minutes were approved as presented.

   Minutes of June 5th Finance Committee Meeting
   Mr. Hatkowski commented that there was an error, Ms. Miller was not present, Mr. Hatkowski was present. These changes will be made to the minutes. The minutes were approved with the changes.

4. **Public Comment*** (comments regarding current agenda items)
   Greg and Amy Hogsett each commented and provided their account of events related to the eviction of Jim and Lori Ronan from Merrill-Gorrel Park. Mr. Hogsett left a written account of the circumstances for Commission member review.

   Jim and Lori Ronan each commented on the staff's handling of their eviction from Merrill-Gorrel Park and provided additional details for Commission member consideration.

5. **Reports and Updates**
   a. **Superintendent's Updates**
      - **Davis Bridge Project** – A section of the parking area was re-paved to address a low spot. We are having Prein and Newhof re-check the grades, as I'm not sure that the problem was resolved. We continue to have erosion issues that need to be resolved before project completion.
      - **School Section Project Bidding** – The DNR has approved all the bid specs, and we are ready to get the project out to bid. The playground installation is scheduled to begin immediately after Labor Day.
      - **Consumers Dam Sales Updates** – Are continuing to be sent out as I receive them.
      - **Merrill Gorrel Docks** – We did not receive any additional complaints after shifting the location of the dock on the Merrill side and adding some tie-off points. We are continuing to evaluate options for the Gorrel side as it has a different bottom structure and requires a different method of installation/repair.

- **Buckhorn Creek Project** – They have been making substantial progress and appear to be ahead of schedule. The full concrete box culvert has already been removed with both banks carved down to grade for installation of the creek channel.
- **EGLE Meetings** – We had ground water discharge permit inspections at School Section and Paris with no issues.
- **Paris Insurance Check** – First re-imbursement was received in the amount of $22.264.46.
- **Consumers Annual Inspections** – of Davis Bridge and Brower were completed with no issues.
- **Sand Renourishment** – We hired Reith Riley to deliver sand at School Section so we can touch up the beach areas, volleyball courts, some of the playground areas, horseshoe pits, and kid's sandboxes. We are evaluating the needs of the other parks and will have sand delivered as needed.
- **Cabin Delivered** – Our second Cabin from Newaygo trades school was delivered on June 11 to School Section. Electrical hook-up is scheduled this week, after which we are ready to immediately open the cabin for reservations.
- **FEMA Meeting** – Took place at the Dragon Trail. They felt our request was reasonable and appropriate. We are awaiting additional guidance.
- **SSLPOA** - The HOA is going to petition the homeowners about creating no wake zones in portions of the lake. They expressed concerns about the exterior fencing around the park. We will look at replacing sections of the fencing. They will have their annual picnic at the park on August 8 and extended an invitation to the commissioners.
- **Slushy Conversion** – We will be converting from Alligator Ice to Frazil at the School Section Lake Concessions building and operating under a lease agreement for the machines. Frazil bought out Alligator Ice. The conversion is scheduled for Tuesday, June 16th. We will be keeping our two current machines though we will not be using them in the store moving forward.
- **Linda Howard/Schoolhouse** – Linda called and updated the Superintendent on the window installation at the Schoolhouse. She has an Amish contractor who will come to the schoolhouse and remove one of the windows to use it as a template. He will put plywood up on the window until the new windows are installed. We will paint the plywood white so that it blends in with the siding.

b. YTD Revenue Report
The report was reviewed and discussed

c. Save The Ponds – Organization Update
Mr. Hatkowski commented that Skinner Masonry & Concrete LLC has begun the work of improving the south wall stonework in the raceway section. He added that he will take photos and add them to the Facebook page for Save the Ponds.

d. Incident/Accident Reports
The report was reviewed with no questions or comments from the commissioners.

6. Committee Actions

a. Finance

i. 2027 Rates & Fees
Mr. Hatkowski motioned, supported by Mr. Vogel, to approve the updated rates and fees as recommended by the finance committee for the 2027 camping season. Motion carried unanimously.

ii. **2027 Operating Dates & Holiday Billing Periods**
Mr. Lambrix motioned, supported by Mr. Griffith, to approve the updated dates and holidays as recommended by the finance committee for the 2027 camping season. Motion carried unanimously

iii. **2027 Seasonal Campsite Availability**
Mr. Zimmerman motioned, supported by Mr. Vogel, to approve the current number of campsites and seasonal sites to stay the same as 2026**.** Motion carried unanimously.

iv. **2027 Seasonal Camper Deposit Amounts**
The Finance Committee suggested an increased deposit for School Section, Paris, and Merrill-Gorrel Parks. With the suggested increase, all parks would require a deposit of $500 for a seasonal campsite. Mrs. Bradstrom motioned, supported by Mrs. Strong, to approve the increase from $300 to $500 for School Section, Paris, and Merrill-Gorrel seasonal campsite deposits. Mr. Lambrix commented that he felt $500 was too much for these parks. The motion carried with 8 yes votes and 2 no votes.

b. Personnel

i. **2026 Seasonal Staff Update**
Brenda Goldammer commented that all of the seasonal staff positions have been filled. We have had some turnover, but that is expected with a seasonal operation.

7. Financial

a. Financial Report – Rev & Expenses, Year-to-Year, Cash Spreadsheet
Reports were reviewed and discussed

b. Approval of Bills
Mrs. Bradstom motioned, supported by Mr. Lambrix, to approve bills listed and submitted in the amounts of $13,620.87, $15,988.68, $21,981.54, and $26,339.13. Motion carried unanimously.

8. Public Comment* (general comments) –

Mr. Zimmerman inquired about swimmer's itch at Merrill-Gorrel based on public comments made earlier in the meeting. The Superintendent noted that we do not do any water testing at any of the parks, but we also have not received complaints previously about concerns at Merrill-Gorrel.
Mr. Zimmerman also asked about the roof on the south pavilion and the culvert based on public feedback. The Superintendent commented that he will have staff check these to see if there is any urgent work required.

Mr. Griffith commented that the Michigan Trails magazine has Big Rapids on the cover. He added that Big Rapids had a nice write up due to the improvements and expansion of the White Pine Trail.

9. Other Business:

a. School Section Meet and Greet is July 17th at 7:00 PM.
b. Next Meeting is July 21st at the County Services Building in Big Rapids.

Adjourned at 5:41 PM