

## Mecosta County Park Commission Commission Meeting

The July 21, 2020 Commission Meeting of the Mecosta County Park Commission was called to order at the Mecosta County Services Building and via live video conference at 5:00 PM by the Commission Chairman, Mr. Stratton.

### Roll Call

**Members Present:** Mr. Johnson, Ms. Miller, Mr. O'Neil, Mr. Roels, Mr. Perialas, Mr. Stanek, Mr. Stratton, Mr. Sweir and Mr. Vogel. **Members Absent:** Mrs. Bradstrom. **Others Present:** Jeff Abel - Superintendent, Erin Bean - Operations Manager and Kathy Maclean - Administrative Clerk.

### Approval of Agenda

Mr. Vogel motioned, seconded by Mr. Roels to approve the Agenda with the addition of Staff Vehicles added to Committee Action-Finance. Motion carried.

### Approval of Minutes

Mr. Stanek motioned, seconded by Mr. Vogel to approve the minutes of the June 16<sup>th</sup> Commission, June 26<sup>th</sup> Masterplan and the June 29<sup>th</sup> Finance Meetings. Motion carried.

**Public Comment:** None.

### Reports and Updates

#### Superintendent's Updates

The Superintendent updated the Commission on 25 current and completed projects, including:

**Power Issues** the parks encountered the following issues over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend: A Consumers Energy transformer at *School Section Lake* melted; causing a Saturday evening 5-6-hour power outage for the park office and the horseshoe sites. The breaker for *Merrill* sites 31-36, cabins 3 & 4 and the manager trailer were constantly tripping. *Brower* 200-amp breaker in the Pines for sites 134-155 was tripped frequently. *Paris's* manger trailer electric service wiring melted causing the trailer to be without power for a few days, but has since been fixed. *Merrill* and *Brower* 200-amp breakers have been replaced and appear to have resolved issues.

**Well Issues** A pressure switch failed at *Brower* creating high water pressure and subsequent toilet issues. *Paris Park's* well is not pulling enough water, the well contractor believes the inlet screen needs to be addressed in the off season.

**Septic Updates/Issues** the *School Section Lake* FGC lodge tank is requiring almost weekly pump outs, a more permanent solution needs to be addressed in the off season. The Beach bathhouse at *Merrill-Gorrel* had an extra cleanout installed prior to the season, but continues to have clogging issues this season.

**Old Settlers** annual event has been cancelled this year.

**Trivia Weekends** at *School Section Lake* have been cancelled this year.

**Wheatland Music Festival** has been cancelled this year.

**Ice Mountain Grant** A grant request, with the help of Prein and Newhof, has been submitted to cover \$20,000 of \$26,000 for a long-term erosion and stabilization project at Davis Bridge Park.

**Hot Boat Weekend** the Sherriff's Department has noted that they will provide support to us at Brower as the Wheatland Music Festival has been cancelled this year.

**Streetlights** 15-20 lights park system wide are currently not working, we hope to have one company evaluate all streetlights soon.

**Dragon Trail Updates** - First Ride Event took place and received some great publicity. A \$50,000 Big Prairie Township donation commitment has been received and the WMMBA has committed up to \$37,000 in matching funds from individual donors. Website T-Shirt campaign has raised \$1,800 to date. Mr. Perialas noted that the Brower staff work on the amphitheater grounds was outstanding.

**Incident /Accident Report** – 5 reports were reviewed and discussed.

**Correspondence** - None.

## **Committee Actions**

### **Masterplan**

**Meet and Greet Events** the decision was made to cancel in person events this year. An alternate format for public input and feedback will be offered.

**Paris Ponds Structure Issues** at least 5 holes have developed in the runway that are diverting water intended to flow into the third and subsequent ponds, into the ground below and are creating sinkholes and concerns of ground stability.

**Paris Icehouse Dam Sinkhole** a 3' wide sinkhole has opened up between the icehouse pond dam and the White Pine Trail. The area has been fenced off as the hole opens to the rushing river below. Multiple stakeholders have been contacted.

### **Rules and Regulations**

**Executive Order 2020-147 - Masks** are required to enter the camp store at School Section Lake, mask required signage is posted at the bathhouses, the park offices are closed to the public and staff are wearing masks while performing face to face transactions. Additionally, outdoor groups are reminded to wear masks or social distance when it is obvious that they are not of one household.

### **Personnel**

**Staff Update** filling positions continues to be difficult; park system-wide, we are down 8 seasonal employees and our last 3 hires have been placed through a temp agency.

### **Finance**

**2021 Rates and Fees** A spreadsheet of all 2021 rates and fees as recommended by the Finance Committee was provided and reviewed. One significant change was modifying the Family Group Camp operation to weekly only rentals with a recommended rate at \$1750 per week and reservation period running Sunday to Sunday. Stanek motioned, seconded by Mr. O'Neil to approve the rates as recommended by the Finance Committee. Motion carried.

**2021 Seasonal Operating Dates, Holidays and Site Allocations** the presented schedule for seasonal operating and holiday dates was reviewed, noting the sequencing and nights of stay remain the same as the most recent seasons. The demand for Brower and School Section Lake's seasonal and transient camp sites was discussed, noting there is not enough site inventory at either park to accommodate the current demand for either classification of camper. Mr. Vogel

motioned, seconded by Mr. Roels to approve the operating dates, holiday dates, and site allocations as presented. Motion carried.

**Seasonal Site Deposits** the Commission's prior change and approval to increase Brower's lottery deposit to \$500 was noted. Mr. Perialas motioned, seconded by Mr. O'Neil to increase Seasonal Camper Deposits to \$300 at School Section Lake, Merrill-Gorrel and Paris Parks. Motion carried.

**School Section Lake Walleye Stocking Request** Mr. Vogel motioned, seconded by Mr. Johnson to approve the requested increased rate of \$750 for MCPCs portion of the 2021 stocking of Walleye into School Section Lake. Motion carried.

**MERS Program Funding** changes to the assumption calculations used to determine how well the program is funded were reviewed. Finance Committee to evaluate changes prior to creation of the 2021 budget.

**Staff Vehicle** the repairs needed for the 2008 Ford F250 4X4 truck were reviewed. Mr. Johnson motioned, seconded by Mr. Roels to authorize the repairs of the truck at a quoted rate of \$5,400. Motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote. The Finance and Buildings & Grounds Committees have been assigned with the development of a 10-year replacement schedule for equipment and vehicles.

## Financial

### **Financial Report - Revenue & Expenses, Cash Spreadsheet, Year-to-Year, Concessions -**

Financials were reviewed and discussed. Revenue is trending back up, in comparison to last year; at the lowest point revenue was behind last years pace by \$200,000 due to COVID, after starting the season \$70,000 ahead of the 2019 pace.

**Approval of Bills** - Mr. Stanek motioned, seconded by Mr. Perialas to approve the bills in the amounts of \$29,425.34, \$71,271.06 and \$28,660.62. Motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

## Public Comment:

*T Fitzgerald* read to the Commissioners W Champlin's email regarding School Section Lake Park management, the use of marijuana in the park, golf cart off road usage and other rule breaking.

*P Bortsler* is concerned about marijuana use in School Section Lake Park, swimming outside of designated areas, golf carts in the woods and bathhouse cleaning schedule.

*L Dood* is unhappy with the reclassification of some of the 12 sites to Prime in Brower Park.

*G Russo* asked about improving WiFi in Brower Park.

*A Meersdom* inquired about the Rules & Regulations for golf cart usage and designated swim areas.

## Other Business:

**Next Meeting** is 5:00 PM, August 18<sup>th</sup>, at the County Services Bldg. on Northland Dr., Big Rapids.

**School Section Veterans Memorial Project Dedication** - July 25<sup>th</sup> at 1 PM

**Brower Seasonal Camper Lottery** - August 8<sup>th</sup> 9:00 AM

**Adjournment:** 7:00 PM