

Mecosta County Park Commission Commission Meeting

The August 13, 2024, Commission Meeting of the Mecosta County Park Commission was called to order at Mecosta County Services Building at 5:00 PM by the Commission Chairman, Mr. Stanek.

Roll Call

Members Present:, Mr. Farrow, Mr. Griffith, Mr. Hatkowski, Mr. Lambrix, Ms. Miller, Mr. Stanek, Mrs. Strong and Mr. Vogel. **Member Absent:** Mrs. Bradstrom and Mr. Johnson. **Others Present:** Jeff Abel - Superintendent, Taylor Jutila - Operations Director, and Jose Santiago - Operation Manager.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Strong motioned, seconded by Mr. Vogel, to approve the minutes of the July 16th Park Commission meeting. Motion carried.

Public Comment:

No public comment.

Guest Speaker – Nick Smith – Newaygo County Parks – Cabin Installations

Nick Smith - Parks Director for Newaygo County presented a cabin partnership grant agreement with the opportunity for Mecosta County Park Commission to obtain 2-3 cabins over the next 3-years as a partner in the agreement. Associated cost would include furnishing of the cabins, moving them to the desired campsite location, and connection to onsite electric. Mr. Lambrix motioned with the support of Mr. Vogel to be a partner with Newaygo County through their cabin construction grant program. Motion was passed unanimously.

Reports and Updates

Superintendent's Updates

The Superintendent updated the Commission on 16 current and completed projects, including:

- Cabin Roof Replacements - 1 Cabin at School Section and 2 at Gorrel were completed. 1 Cabin remains to be done at School Section Davis Bridge Trust Fund Grant is still waiting on approval and will likely be completed in the Spring 2025.
- School Section Park had a site visit with the new DNR Trust Fund Grand Coordinator to tour the Beach Pavilion and Playground area.
- Paris tree removal was successful removing 4 large maple trees that hung over Pond 3 along with other hazard limbs and stumps in the park.
- Consumers Annual Review for Brower Park and Davis Bridge took place and we were requested to provide the updated Operations Manual and updated liability insurance form.
- Health Department Inspections were completed for all parks and all recommendations/actions have been completed or are scheduled to be completed.

- Interviews are currently taking place for the Administrative Clerk and HR, Events, and Marketing Manager positions.

Year to Date Park Report was reviewed, noting revenue has improved in recent weeks with both Non-Vehicle and Vehicle revenues higher than in 2023.

Dragon Trail The 7 Mile Ravine has been completed and Grand Opening will be in late September.

Save the Ponds Group meeting will be hosted next week Tuesday, August 20th at 3PM at the Mecosta County Parks Administration Office.

School Section Lake Expansion Update Final walk through was completed and a closing punch list was created.

Incident/Accident Reports 4 incidents were reviewed.

Correspondence

A Thank you card was received from The Village of Barryton for the picnic tables that we donated.

Committee Actions

Masterplan

Seasonal Sites Merrill Twelve sites on the Merrill wing of Merrill-Gorrel County Park were proposed to become available as seasonal sites for the 2025 season based on their positioning on the power grid, site size and site accessibility. It has been several years since new seasonal campers were accepted into the Merrill side of the park and is believed that the utility system can handle the addition of a few new seasonal campers. Mr. Hatkowski motioned, seconded by Mr. Vogel, to approve the recommended 12 seasonal sites at Merrill as proposed. Motion carried.

Finance

Brower Lottery Outlook Currently there are 141 campers registered for the Brower Seasonal Camper Lottery with 120 sites available and 21 of those registered to be placed on a waitlist. The Brower Seasonal Lottery is Saturday, August 17th at 9:00 AM.

Personnel

Full Time Positions Status Update Interviews will be taking place next week with a few promising candidates.

Seasonal Park Manager Salary – Legal Update Legal update was received after the commission made the decision to increase the seasonal park manager salary. The perceived recommendation is that our salaried seasonal staff does not need to meet the salary threshold, but the full-time staff will need to meet the salary requirements with 2 positions that would need to be adjusted in 2025.

Financial

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

Approval of Bills - Mr. Vogel motioned, seconded by Mr. Lambrix, to approve the bills in the amounts of \$23,320.98, \$18,863.36, \$29,300.46, and \$25,714.20 motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

Public Comment: Mr. Lambrix asked if the Commission would be interested in him pursuing the allowance of E-Bikes on the Dragon Trail.

Nick Smith complimented our new playgrounds within Brower Park.

Other Business:

Next Monthly Commission Meeting is scheduled for 5 PM, Tuesday, September 10, 2024, at the Mecosta County Services Building.

Scheduling of 2025 Budget Meetings to take place over the coming weeks as budget will likely need to be finalized during Sept. meeting.

Adjourned: 6:00 PM