

## **Mecosta County Park Commission Commission Meeting**

The January 21, 2025, Commission Meeting of the Mecosta County Park Commission was called to order at the Mecosta County Services Building at 5:00 PM by the Commission Chairman, Mr. Stanek.

### **Roll Call**

**Members Present:** Mrs. Bradstrom, Mr. Griffith, Mr. Hatkowski, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Lambrix, Ms. Miller, Mr. Vogel, Mr. Zimmerman and Mr. Stanek. **Members Absent:** Mrs. Strong **Others Present:** Jeff Abel – Superintendent, Taylor Jutila – Operations Director, Jose Santiago-Rivera – Operation Manager, Jaydin Johnson – HR & Marketing and Kathryn Hunt – Administrative Clerk.

**Approval of Agenda** Agenda stood as presented.

**Approval of Minutes** Hearing no objections, the minutes of the December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Park Commission Meeting stood as presented.

### **Election of Officers**

**Chairperson, Vice Chair, Secretary** Mr. Stanek opened the floor to 2025 officer nominations. Mr. Hatkowski motioned, seconded by Mrs. Bradstrom, to nominate the current slate of officers to be retained for the 2025 year and to close nominations. Motion passed with a roll call vote, 8 yes to 1 no (Mr. Zimmerman.)

**Rules of Order/Chair to Vote** Mrs. Bradstrom motioned, seconded by Mr. Vogel to follow Robert's Rules of Order with an amendment to permit the Chairman to act as a voting member of the Commission. Motion carried unanimously.

**2025 Committee Assignments** Mr. Stanek asked that the members of the Commission send any committee appointment preferences to him for consideration. Appointments will be finalized and distributed prior to the next Commission meeting.

**Public Comment:** None.

### **Resolution – Farrow**

WHEREAS: Mr. Dan Farrow has faithfully served the Mecosta County Park Commission for a total of 3 years. Mr. Dan Farrow has served on several Mecosta County Park Commission sub-committees.

WHEREAS: Mr. Dan Farrow has, during his appointment with this Commission, given freely and unselfishly of his time, experience and varied expertise, which have contributed significantly to the development, improvement and continued operations of the Mecosta County Parks, now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the Mecosta County Park Commission and Superintendent of said Commission does hereby express sincere gratitude for the faithful and dedicated contributions which Mr. Dan Farrow has made and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That this resolution be made a permanent part of the proceedings of this commission and that a true copy be given to Mr. Dan Farrow as a record of his exemplary service.

Motion by Lambrix, seconded by Griffith, to accept the resolution as read into the meeting minutes. Motion carried Unanimously.

## Reports & Updates

### Superintendent's Updates

The Superintendent updated the Commission on 17 current and completed projects, including:

**2025 Reservations Opening Dates** Reservations for Monthly Camping, Pavilions, and Family Group Camp opened on January 8th. Nightly camping and cabins open on February 12th at 9:00 AM.

**Trust Fund Project – School Section Lake** Our Bathhouse/Pavilion/Playground Renovation project for School Section Lake, was recommended for funding. We have made our engineers for the project aware of the award and will be working with them to start creating finalized plans and bidding documents. This is likely going to be a 2026 project construction timeline.

**Reservations System Reporting** We were set-up and able to access all of our financial/reservations reports as of January 6th. We are still learning the new reporting system. We are only allowed 2 users for the reporting, which are currently set-up as Taylor and myself.

**Dragon Trail** Has received a few awards recently including a National Recognition as Best New Backcountry Trail in the US by Singletracks. We were advised that another award for the trail is coming soon, but it has not been released publicly yet. Nick and I will be doing a session at the MParks Conference titled “Building The Dragon – A Natural Surface Trail Project.” The presentation will cover planning phases, construction phases, construction techniques, economic impact, user data, and operational items such as signage, safety, and marketing.

**Regional Permits** Were balanced and closed out for 2024. Mecosta County sold 152 with Newaygo selling 88 for a total of 240 for the 2024 season. This is down from 294 sold in our initial season of 2023.

**School Section Lake Fish Survey** We've heard back from the School Section Lake Property Owners Association and they noted that they are planning to move forward with the netting survey this spring and will let us know as soon as details and dates are finalized.

**Sick Time Accrual Modifications** The County has approved a change in the accrual of sick time from 8 hours per month, credited at the end of the month, to 3.6924 hours per pay period \* 26 pay periods. Both equate to 96 total hours of sick time accrual per year, however the new method meets the requirements of the sick time mandates that go into effect on Feb. 21st. We have asked if they would like us to present the same modification for our full-time staff, to which they noted that there are likely going to be more changes to the act, and they would prefer if we wait until our Feb. 18th meeting to review and approve any necessary changes at that time. Additional changes currently would include sick time accruals for seasonal and part time staff at 1 hour earned per 30 hours worked. We are waiting to see how the act will be changed prior to February 21st.

**Stove at FGC** In researching a new stove for the Family Group Camp, quotes were more than double the amount of \$5,000 that we budgeted for a similar unit to what we currently have it place. Taylor contacted a repair company from Mt. Pleasant who completed a site visit. They believe they can repair our current oven issues for just under \$1,000. We are proceeding with the repair of the oven as the rest of the unit is still in working order.

**Job Postings – Part Time Administrative Office Clerk Assistant** We have posted the budgeted 2 positions for Part Time Administrative Office Clerks. Each would be a maximum of 24 hours per week year-round with hopes of providing weekend coverage at the administrative office during the parks operating season and to act as a call center, providing phone and e-mail services to our park visitors.

**Save the Ponds Updates** - Mr. Hatkowski provided an update on the progress of the Save the Ponds Committee. Mr. Hatkowski requested approval by the Park Commission to add an option to the point-of-sale program that would allow for customers to donate to "Save the Pond" as an add-on option for in-park purchases. Mr. Lambrix motioned, seconded by Mrs. Bradstrom to have a donation option added to the point-of-sale program. Motion was unanimously approved through a roll call vote.

## **Correspondence**

**Pasquantonio's – WPVRA** A year end report related to the status of the trail system and use of trails at the White Pine Valley Recreation Area by the Pasquantonio's, who are the primary volunteers who maintain these trail systems was distributed to the Commission members.

## **Committee Actions**

### **Finance**

**Budget Adjustments, December 2024** Mr. Griffith motioned, seconded by Mr. Vogel to approve the December Budget Adjustments as presented. Motion was unanimously approved through a roll call vote.

**Cabin Mattress Purchase** Three quotes were presented toward the purchase of 50 new mattresses for the Brower Park cabins. Mr. Lambrix motioned, seconded by Mrs. Bradstrom, to proceed with the purchase of 50 new mattresses from the recommended vendor. Motion was unanimously approved through a roll call vote.

**Vehicle Purchase** The Superintendent requested approval to spend up to the budgeted \$18,000 toward the purchase of a used truck to be placed into the in park vehicle rotation. Motion by Mr. Griffith, seconded by Mr. Vogel, to approve the purchase of a used vehicle at a not to exceed budgeted amount of \$18,000. Motion was unanimously approved through a roll call vote.

### **Rules & Regulations**

**Nuisance Goose Resolutions Request – Morton Township** Motion by Mr. Hatkowski, seconded by Ms. Miller to request Morton Township's consideration of a resolution in support of a goose egg/nest destruction permit and/or Canadian Goose capture and euthanize permit for School Section Lake Veteran's Park and residential properties on the lake. Motion was unanimously approved through a roll call vote.

### **Financial**

**Financial Report - Revenue & Expenses, Cash Spreadsheet, Year-to-Year** - Reports were reviewed and discussed. Motion by Vogel, seconded by Lambrix to approve the reports as presented. Motion carried.

**Approval of Bills** – Mrs. Bradstrom motioned, second by Mr. Vogel to accept the Bills as presented in the amounts of \$8,361.64 / \$39,839.38 / \$5,173.95 / \$29,586.88 & \$3,534.12. Motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

### **Other Business**

**Next Commission Meeting** is scheduled for 5 PM, Tuesday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, at the Mecosta County Services Building.

**Adjourned:** 5:55 PM.