

Mecosta County Park Commission Commission Meeting

The December 10th, 2024, 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 Secretary, Ms. Miller.

Roll Call

Members Present: Mr. Farrow, Mr. Hatkowski, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Lambrix, Ms. Miller and Mr. Vogel.

Members Absent: Mr. Stanek, Mrs. Bradstrom, Mr. Griffth and 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

Mr. Vogel motioned, supported by Mr. Farrow to approve the minutes of the November 12th, 2024, Park Commission meeting. Motion carried.

Public Comment: None.

Reports and Updates

Superintendent's Updates –

The Superintendent updated the Commission on 18 current and completed projects, including:

Gift Cards – Have arrived and are now available for purchase.

School Section Pets – Notifications were sent to all Seasonal Campers making them aware of the change and offering a full refund until end of day on Dec. 16th, after which time the normal cancellation policy will be in effect. Currently the response has seemed to be substantially more positive than negative, with 1 cancellation received to date.

2025 Reservations Opening Dates – Reminder that reservations for Monthly Camping, Pavilions, and Family Group Camp are scheduled to open on January 8th at 9:00 AM. Nightly camping and cabins reservations will open on February 12th at 9:00 AM.

Salary Threshold Change – The adjustment to the Salary Threshold changes that occurred in July and were scheduled for a big jump in January have been overruled in court. As such, our Operations Director and Operations Manager positions will not need to be converted to hourly and instead will receive a 4% raise to their salaries for 2025, which is in-line with the rest of the county. We are keeping an eye on the changes/requirements for mandatory Sick Time in 2025.

Grand Rapids RV Show – Is coming up quickly. It is January 16th-19th in Grand Rapids. Rate Cards and Brochures will be ready to go.

Brower Electrical Project – Installation of electrical pedestals on campsites is all completed. The contractor has 3 service areas remaining to be installed, once inspected and approved, Consumers will come in to make their connections.

Davis Bridge Grant – Construction plans 99% done and uploaded to DNR Grants website. DNR needs to review and approve the plans before the project can go to bid.

Budget Adjustments – The county finance department notified parks administration that a round of budget adjustments was required to be submitted before year-end. Due to the Park Commission not having another meeting before year-end, a motion or approval is needed to allow for a review and approval process of the adjustments. Mr. Farrow motioned, supported by Mr. Vogel to allow for two approvals to be received by the Park Commission Chair, Vice-Chair, or Finance Chair in order to submit budget adjustments to the county prior to year-end, with inclusion of the adjustments presented during the January meeting for full Park Commission review. Motion Carried.

Paris Eiffel Tower – Lights have been installed on the tower in celebration of the Christmas and New Years Holidays.

Save the Ponds Updates – Mr. Hatkowski thanked all who attended the Save the Ponds kick-off event. He stated the event received great attendance from the community and exposure from news organizations. Mr. Hatkowski thanked all those who made donations on Community Giving Day, which resulted in a grand total of \$3,345 in donations for the day. This brings the donation total to around \$25,000 along with the \$75,000 from the Marijuana Excise Tax funding. Mr. Hatkowski stated approximately \$250,000 in funding is needed to get started with construction. Next meeting for Save the Ponds is Tuesday December 17th at 3:00 PM at the Mecosta County Parks Administration Offices.

Committee Actions

2025 MParks Conference – Mr. Lambrix motioned, seconded by Mr. Johnson to approve the Superintendent and 2 additional employees to attend the 2025 MParks Conference. Motion carried unanimously with a roll call vote.

Fire Pits – Mr. Lambrix motioned, seconded by Mr. Vogel, to move forward with the purchase of Concrete Firepit rings for Merrill-Gorrel Park from Cadillac Culvert. Motion carried unanimously with a roll call vote.

Pet Waste Stations – Mr. Farrow motioned, second by Mr. Johnson to purchase and install 16 Pet Waste Stations at School Section Lake Veteran’s Park. Motion carried unanimously with a roll call vote.

Financial

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

Approval of Bills - Mr. Vogel motioned, seconded by Mr. Farrow to accept the bills as presented in the amounts of \$1,200.18, \$12,568.32, \$2,281.08, \$8,410.71 and \$3,301.91. Motion carried unanimously with a roll call vote.

Other Business

2025 Park Commission Meeting Schedule was reviewed and approved as presented.

Next Commission Meeting is scheduled for 5 PM, Tuesday, January 21st 2025 at the Mecosta County Services Building - Conference Room F.

Adjourned: 5:28 PM