

Mecosta County Park Commission

Commission Meeting

The February 17th, 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 the Commission Chairman, Mr. Stanek.

1. Roll Call

Members Present: Mrs. Bradstrom, Mr. Griffith, Mr. Hatkowski, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Vogel, Mr. Zimmerman, and Mr. Stanek.

Members Absent: Mr. Lambrix, Ms. Miller, and Mrs. Strong.

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.

Mr. Stanek introduced the three new full-time Mecosta County Park employees. Jamie McConnell, Brenda Goldammer and Kimberly Erickson were asked to give the board a brief introduction of themselves.

2. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Stanek requested a revision to the agenda to change the “Correspondence” heading to “Event Application” with an Easter Event request provided to the Commission for consideration. The agenda stood approved as amended.

3. Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Bradstrom motioned, supported by Mr. Vogel, to approve the minutes of the January 20th Personnel and Park Commission meetings. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Public Comment

None.

5. Reports and Updates

a. Superintendent’s Updates

- **School Section Project Bidding** – Bid Documents are being finalized currently. We have received the draft blueprints for the building and pavilion and have been requesting slight adjustments to those plans. We are awaiting the draft landscape plan with information related to sidewalks, parking spaces, benches, and similar items. We have been working with 3 different playground sales companies and have proposals from each.
- **Playground Grant** – We have been approved through Sinclair Recreation and MParks to receive a National Demonstration Site grant for the playground structure at School Section, if we move forward with the project through Sinclair Recreation as the contractor. The grant will provide matching funds for the components of the play structure, but does not match funds for surfacing material or installation. Based on the two proposals we are currently considering from Sinclair Recreation the grant amount would be in the range of \$80,000-\$90,000. Sinclair Recreation is a vetted and approved vendor through the DNR Trust fund.
- **5 Year Recreation Plan** – Was approved by the DNR.

- **Paris Storage Area Fence Project** – Received funding recommendation through the DNR Wildlife Budget cycle. They asked that our contribution be the clearing of the fence route. We contacted the Road Commission and hired them to utilize their forestry mulcher to clear the fence route.
- **Seasonal Interviewing** – We are touching up some of the Seasonal Job Descriptions currently and plan to start working through returning employee and new employee seasonal applications soon.
- **Goose Nest Destruction Permits** – Have been submitted for the 2026 season for Brower and School Section Lake Parks. We need to apply for the permit every year even if the geese aren't nesting at a park (Brower).
- **New Paris Tubing Van** - The new van (from the Commission on Aging) was delivered, and we will begin getting it ready for the season.
- **New Modern Cabin** - The new cabin at School Section Lake will be moved and potentially completed by next week.

b. Save The Ponds – Organization Update

Mr. Hatkowski shared a brief update on Save The Ponds and commented that the public comment time has now expired for the EGLE permit. Mr. Hatkowski and Jeff Abel met with the engineer on Friday (2/13) to discuss next steps.

c. Reservations Report

Reservations revenue report was shared and discussed with the revenue for each of the four main parks based on the opening date from 2016-2026 (to date). After reviewing the reported numbers, it shows that opening a month earlier in 2026, has helped to trend ahead of 2025.

6. Event Application

Marjorie Steele from EDRA of MI, presented an Event Application for their annual Paris Easter Party to be held at Paris Park on Saturday, April 4th from 11:00AM - 2:00PM. The event is free to the public where there will be variety of vendors such as a food trunk, face painting, and a mobile zoo. She is requesting that the park gates be opened to vendors to come in and set up within the park to allow attendees to park in the main parking lot. Brenda (HR, Events, and Marketing Mgr.) will follow up with her closer to the event date. Mr. Vogel motioned, supported by Mr. Hatkowski to approve the Event Application and move forward with the Paris Easter Party event. Motion carried with a roll call vote.

7. Committee Actions

a. Finance

i. Mountain Biking Study – Student Lodging Request

There is a request to do a mountain bike user study at the Dragon Trail. College students will spend a week on the trail and will plan to survey 20-25 people per day who are using the trail. They are requesting the parks accommodate the student survey takers with either a campsite or a cabin for the week that they are working on the survey. Mr. Vogel made a motion, supported by Mrs. Bradstrom, to offer them a cabin first but allow them a campsite if they have a camper. Motion carried unanimously.

b. Personnel

i. Full-Time Employee Update

All full-time positions are filled, and the employees were introduced at the beginning of the meeting.

8. Financial

a. Financial Report – Rev & Expenses, Year-to-Year, Cash Spreadsheet

Reports were reviewed and discussed.

b. Approval of Bills

Mrs. Bradstrom motioned, supported by Mr. Johnson to approve bills as listed and submitted in the amounts of \$3,500.32, \$8,328.72, \$25,967.46, \$11,491.96, and \$5,405.54. Motion carried unanimously with a roll call vote.

9. Public Comment

None.

10. Other Business:

Next Meeting is March 17th at the County Services Building in Big Rapids.

11. Adjourned: 5:28 PM