

Mecosta County Park Commission Commission Meeting

The March 18, 2025, 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: Mrs. Bradstrom, Mr. Griffith, Mr. Hatkowski, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Lambrix, Ms. Miller, Mrs. Strong, Mr. Vogel, Mr. Zimmerman and Mr. Stanek. **Members Absent:** None. **Others Present:** Jeff Abel - Superintendent, Taylor Jutila - Operations Director, Jose Santiago - Operation Manager, Jaydin Johnson - HR Manager and Kathryn Hunt - Administrative Clerk.

Approval of Agenda - Agenda stood as presented.

Approval of Minutes

Mrs. Bradstrom motioned, seconded by Mrs. Strong, to approve the minutes of the February 18, 2025, Park Commission meeting and the February 25th Personnel Committee meeting. Motion carried.

Public Comment:

Brandi Sweet informed the committee of the changes listed in the revised/updated Easter Event Application. In addition, Brandi informed the Commission of another upcoming event titled "Earth Day" in which there is a plan to clean up the trails. Mrs. Strong motioned, seconded by Mr. Vogel to accept the changes in the updated application as presented. Motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

Reports and Updates

Superintendent's Updates

The Superintendent updated the Commission on 16 current and completed projects, including: **Part Time Administrative Office Clerk Assistants** – Both positions were filled and have been at the office working with us for the past few weeks. They are catching on quickly and are much appreciated help.

MParks Conference – Taylor, Jose and I attended the conference in Traverse City - March 3rd-6th. Nick (Newaygo County) and I presented a session on the Dragon Trail that was well received by those in attendance. Our Park Commission along with Newaygo County Parks and Recreation received an award for Landscape Design of the Dragon Trail from mParks (Michigan Recreation and Park Association.) Taylor and Jose thanked the Commissioners for the opportunity to have attended the Conference. They both expressed their appreciation regarding all the contacts and networking opportunities, along with the knowledge they will be able to apply in their positions as Operations Director and Operations Manager.

Picnic Tables & Firepits at MG – Roving staff have been working at Merrill-Gorrel the past few weeks assembling the picnic tables and moving all the new firepits into the proper locations. These are all going on the Merrill side of the park.

WPVRA Updates – The Road Commission has widened the roadway back to the camping area at the site. They will additionally trim back some of the bushes and new growth trees within the campsite area. They plan to touch-up the roadway with some new gravel and perform grading later into Spring. The well is scheduled to be installed soon, once the roadway is widened to bring in the well drilling truck.

Brower Deep Water Launch Dredge Permit – We have been advised by EGLE that the permit is out for public comment currently and we can expect to have a permit in hand around April 11th.

Buckhorn Dam Removal Project – Is currently out for bid with a bid deadline of April 4th.

Rules and Regulations Update – We are on the County BOC agenda for March 20th to review our recommended Rules and Regulations updates and adoption of the ordinance.

Job Fairs – Staff will be attending job fairs at the MOISD and Michigan Works over the coming weeks.

Incident/Accident Reports - One accident was presented to the Commission for review.

Year to Date Revenue Report

The committee reviewed and discussed the comparison of year-to-year revenue figures, noting revenue related to nightly camping and cabin reservations is substantially behind pace compared to last year.

Save The Ponds – Organization Update

Mr. Hatkowski provided an update on the progress of the Save the Ponds Committee, requesting that consideration be given for the committee to partner with the Park Commission to apply for Marijuana Excise Tax (MET) funds through the County Board of Commissioners application process. Request to be evaluated under the MET Funding Application agenda heading.

MERS – Annual Statement

The Municipal Employees' Retirement System of Michigan (MERS) annual statement was reviewed and discussed.

Committee Actions

Finance

Davis Bridge Project Bids – Being a DNR Trust Fund Grant, the project is required to be awarded to the lowest qualified bidder. Sealed bids were opened and announced at the Mecosta County Parks Administration Building on March 14th. The bids were presented to the Committee for review with additional discussion regarding bid alternate items. Financial considerations were discussed regarding the bid amount compared to the project budget and how the overage in project cost will be administered. Mr. Lambrix motioned, seconded by Mr. Griffith to accept the base bid of \$529,525.00 from Midwest Construction Group to perform the work, to include the submitted voluntary alternate of 22A gravel as a cost savings of \$8,804.00 and to include the alternate of relocating the existing vault toilet at an additional cost of \$2,475.00. Motion carried with a roll call vote, 8 yes to 2 no (Mr. Vogel and Mr. Zimmerman).

Mower Bids – Considering the recommendation from the full-time maintenance staff and preference to purchase from an in-county supplier, Mr. Vogel motioned, seconded by Mrs. Strong to accept the bid of \$11,093.00 from Kuzins Equipment out of Morley. Motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

2025 Toilet Paper Supply Bids – Mrs. Bradstrom motioned, second by Mrs. Strong to accept the recommended bid of \$3,368 from X-Cel Chemical LLC for 80 cases of toilet paper. Motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

Port-a-John Provider Bids – Bids were received toward a 3-year contract of services, Mr. Vogel motioned, seconded by Mr. Griffith to proceed with the recommended bid from Randy's Portable Restrooms. Motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

RV Pumping Bids – Mr. Johnson motioned, seconded by Mrs. Bradstrom to accept the RV Pump Out Services bid from Routley's Inc. Motion carried.

MET Funding Application(s) – Mr. Lambrix motioned, seconded by Mr. Vogel, to give Mr. Hatkowski with Save The Ponds permission apply jointly with the Park Commission for \$130,000 of the Marijuana Excise Tax (MET) funds to be applied toward the raceway project and an additional \$50,000 toward phase 3 of the Save The Ponds project. Motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

Rules & Regulations

Easter Event Updated Application – Was addressed earlier in the meeting under Public Comment.

Personnel

2025 Seasonal Staff Update – Human Resources Manager Jaydin Johnson reported that all four Park Manager positions and the four Office Managers have been filled. We have eleven Office Ranger positions with ten of those filled. Two Programmer positions we are still looking to fill both. Six Park Ranger positions and four of those are filled. Five Custodial Ranger positions, all 5 have been filled. 6 Ground/Maintenance positions, 3 of those are filled. 4 Night Ranger Positions remain open. Several interviews are scheduled in the next week or two to fill additional openings. All in a total of 30 out of 42 positions have been filled with a 70% return rate of previous employees.

Financial

Financial Report – Rev & Expenses, Year-to-Year, Line-Item Detail – Reports were reviewed and discussed.

Approval of Bills – Mrs. Bradstrom motioned, seconded by Mr. Lambrix, to approve payment of the bills in the amounts of \$23,965.48, \$32,346.47, \$11,770.60 and \$30,020.67. Motion carried with a unanimous roll call vote.

Public Comment - None

Other Business

Next Monthly Commission Meeting is scheduled for 5 PM, Tuesday, April 15, 2025, at the Mecosta County Services Building.

Adjourned: 6:16 PM