



133 FITZGERALD PARK DR.
Grand Ledge, MI 48837
(517) 627-7351 office
(517) 627-4234 fax
www.eatoncountyparks.org

EATON COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES

February 3, 2021

The Eaton County Parks and Recreation Commission met virtually.

PRESENT: Eric Deibel, Brian Droscha, Jack Duffy, Duane Eldred, Sarah Ferguson, Alisa Gonzales-Pennington, Jon Horford, Barbara Rogers, and Jane Whitacre

ABSENT: Kathy Weber

GUESTS: Riley Spayde – FOECP, Gerry Goffin – FOECP

STAFF: Troy Stowell-Director, Jackie Blanc-Operations Manager/Naturalist, Crystal Smith – Recreation & Event Coordinator

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Ferguson called the Parks Commission meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and roll call.

2. INTRODUCTIONS/CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

None

3. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion made by Whitacre, second by Droscha to approve the consent agenda that included February Agenda and January minutes. **Motion carried.**

4. STAFF REPORTS

- Jackie Blanc gave a brief overview of January Operations for the Department
- Crystal Smith gave a brief overview of her report that included projected programs for the future that included 9 weeks of summer camp at Lincoln Brick Park, The Ledges Auto Show at Fitzgerald Park, and Waterfest at Crandell Park and a potential Family Camp Out at Fitzgerald Park
- Director Stowell gave a brief overview of his report that was distributed by e-mail, and highlighting that the Parks Master Plan was approved by the DNR.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

6. FINANCIAL REPORTS

A. Master Voucher

January Master Voucher was received. Motion made by Droscha, second by Deibel to receive the Master Vouchers. **Motion carried.**

B. Financial Report

January Financial Report was received. Motion made by Droscha, second by Deibel to receive the Financial Reports. **Motion carried.**

7. PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

A. Friends of Eaton County Parks – Riley Spayde presented to the Commission that the Friends have adopted a 2021 Budget with heavy dollars allocated to advocacy efforts; that the Friends are expecting to plan an annual fundraiser in the Fall; and that donations are being accepted for a commemorative bench in the name of Dr. L Robert McConnell.

8. OLD BUSINESS

A. Recreation for Rural Economies USDA Grant Update

Director Stowell presented an update on the planning efforts for the USDA grant for technical assistance, noting that the application is nearly complete and should be ready for submittal by February 5, 2021 which would allow for ample time to make recommended adjustments by the USDA. Commissioner Droscha requested major talking points be developed so Commissioners can speak on the scope of the grant if questioned.

B. Fitzgerald Park Annual Fee and Encumbrance Update

Director Stowell reported that the Board of Commissioners approved the City of Grand Ledge’s proposal of a \$10 annual motor vehicle fee for Grand Ledge residents as outlined in the 9/2020 lease extension. Grand Ledge will administer the sales and all proceeds will be sent to Eaton County Parks.

At this time, no additional information is available regarding Eaton County’s potential grant encumbrance for Fitzgerald Park. Director Stowell hoped this information can be moved upon later this Spring.

9. NEW BUSINESS

C. Crandell Farm Lease Extension

Based upon the 2020 Farming Lease with Smuts Farms regarding Crandell Park, one year renewal options must be approved by the Parks Commission.

Motion by Droscha, seconded by Rogers to exercise the one year farming lease option with Smuts Farms for the 2021 calendar year. **Motion carried.**

D. Safety Concerns Discussion

Chairman Ferguson led discussion regarding procedures on how safety concerns (ice, damage, etc.) within the park system is brought to the attention to parks staff and how those issues are resolved. Additional discussion was held regarding mitigation of risk with public access and areas which could be an “eye sore.” Naturalist/Operations Manager Blanc and Director Stowell pledged to follow up with both the Commission and Friends regarding their concerns.

E. Long Term Revenue Subcommittee

Chairman Ferguson asked that the Long Term Revenue Subcommittee begin meeting again to determine the viability of a 2022 Parks Operations and Development Millage. Director Stowell and Friends President Spayde will work to reestablish committee memberships and report back to the Commission monthly.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

None

12. LIMITED PUBLIC COMMENT

None

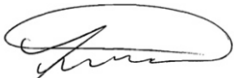
13. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Deibel asked about the status of the donated pedestrian bridge for Crandell Park. Naturalist/Operation manager Blanc noted that funds are not available for installation at this time as concrete footings are required and costly based on the needed location. Deibel followed up to see if a work group can be created to rehab and clean the bridge in the meantime to ensure long term viability.

14. ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting is scheduled for March 3, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at either Lincoln Brick Park, Grand Ledge OR virtual based on Executive Order. There being no further business, a motion for adjournment was made. The regular meeting was adjourned by Chairman Ferguson at 7:03 p.m.

For the Commission,



Troy Stowell- Director of Eaton County Parks