

**Leelanau County Parks and Recreation Commission  
Meeting Minutes**

March 6, 2024 | 3:00 p.m.

Leelanau County Government Center – Commissioners Meeting Room  
8527 E. Government Center Dr. Suttons Bay MI 49682

**CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Chair Godbout called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. and led the “Pledge of Allegiance.”

**ROLL CALL:**

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| ▪ John Arens - <i>Absent</i>                   | ▪ Melinda Lautner – <i>Absent Prior Notice</i> |
| ▪ Keith Beduhn                                 | ▪ Casey Noonan, Vice Chair                     |
| ▪ Steve Christensen, Secretary - <i>Absent</i> | ▪ John Popa                                    |
| ▪ Don Frerichs - <i>Absent</i>                 | ▪ Kama Ross                                    |
| ▪ Charles Godbout, Chair                       | ▪ John Walter                                  |

**Staff in attendance:**

- Scott Bradley, Maintenance Worker
- Lori Eubanks, Recording Secretary
- Gail Myer, Planning Director

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

**Requests to add to the agenda:**

- St. Mary’s Use of Myles Kimmerly Park (Godbout)
- Discussion of Request for Proposal (RFP) for Gazebo at Myles Kimmerly Park (Godbout)
- Possible Violation of Lease on Property at Myles Kimmerly Park (Bradley)
- MMRMA Rap Grants (Ross)
- Supplemental Help for Project at Veronica Valley Park (Popa)

**Motion by Noonan to approve the agenda, as amended. Seconded Ross.**

**Ayes: 6 (Beduhn, Godbout, Noonan, Popa, Ross, Walter)**

**Opposed: 0 Absent: 4 (Arens, Christensen, Frerichs, Lautner)**

**Motion Carries.**

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST:** None.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Steve Stier, Empire Township – Requested that the Parks Commission consider revising the Parks mission statement to include education and entertainment as benefits of the County’s parks.

Stenette Amy, Executive Director of AAHNEE Grandmother Kee – Proposed conducting workshops at the County parks to further its mission to connect communities, culture, and the environment for the good of all.

**STAFF COMMENTS:** None.

**APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 7, 2024 MEETING MINUTES:**

**Motion by Noonan to approve the minutes of February 7, 2024, as submitted. Seconded by Ross.**

**Ayes: 6 (Beduhn, Godbout, Noonan, Popa, Ross, Walter)**

**Opposed: 0 Absent: 4 (Arens, Christensen, Frerichs, Lautner)**

**Motion Carries.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Approval of Financials

- Revenue & Expense Report - Period Ending February 29, 2024
- Revenue & Expense Report - Period Ending February 29, 2024

Bradley reported expenses at two percent of budget.

Godbout noted the \$55,000 Capital Outlay rollover was not yet reflected in the budget. Ross said she would research.

**Motion by Noonan to approve the February 2024 financials, as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Beduhn.**

**Ayes: 6 (Beduhn, Godbout, Noonan, Popa, Ross, Walter)**

**Opposed: 0 Absent: 4 (Arens, Christensen, Frerichs, Lautner)**

**Motion Carries.**

2. Godbout discussed the Parks Five-Year Plan and the DNR's requirements for the plan to be eligible for grants. Godbout said he discussed with Gosling Czubak Engineering the cost for them to design a new Five-Year Plan with and without the public input component and both estimates Godbout deemed to be too high; so, the project will go out for bid with hopes that approval of the new plan by the Board of Commissioners (BOC) will occur at the January 2025 meeting so the plan can be filed with the DNR by February 1, 2025. Myer added that in the RFP, she is soliciting for an amendment to the current plan. Discussion ensued about who owns the current plan, what software should be used for the new plan, and potential consultants who could design the new plan. Myer said she would request to have this item added as a late addition to the March 12, 2024 Executive Session agenda.
3. Bradley presented a letter from St. Mary's school requesting after hours use of Myles Kimmerly Park for an adventure party for 15 graduating seniors on June 2, 2024 between 1:00 and 4:00 a.m.

**Motion by Popa to approve the letter dated March 5, 2024 from St. Mary's requesting to use Myles Kimmerly Park for their senior event. Seconded by Godbout.**

**Ayes: 6 (Beduhn, Godbout, Noonan, Popa, Ross, Walter)**

**Opposed: 0 Absent: 4 (Arens, Christensen, Frerichs, Lautner)**

**Motion Carries.**

4. Ross discussed that she would like to move forward with submitting an MMRMA Rap Grant application to cover costs associated with the purchase of engineered wood fiber for surface application on the playground at Myles Kimmerly Park. She added that the RAP application is due April 10, 2024.

**Motion by Ross that the Leelanau County Parks and Recreation Committee approve forwarding to the Board of Commissioners a request to apply for an MMRMA Rap grant to cover the cost of purchasing engineered wood fiber for ground cover on the playground at Myles Kimmerly Park (as recommended in the MMRMA Parks Risk Assessment). Seconded by Popa.**

**Ayes: 6 (Beduhn, Godbout, Noonan, Popa, Ross, Walter)**

**Opposed: 0 Absent: 4 (Arens, Christensen, Frerichs, Lautner)**

**Motion Carries.**

Ross said she would follow up with Administrator Allen to ensure this action gets added to the BOC's March 12, 2024 Executive Session agenda.

5. Popa explained the need to re-install the park sign (which was taken down for construction a few years ago) and rebuild the picket fencing at Veronica Valley Park. He wanted to seek out a contractor to do the work. Bradley reminded Popa that whomever is hired to do the work would need liability insurance. By consensus the group gave approval for Popa to find a contractor to complete the project.

#### DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:

Myles Kimmerly Park – No report.

Old Settlers Park – Godbout reported that they are going out for bid again for the gazebo refurbishment project. Discussion ensued about the difficulty in finding a consultant who would work for the County because of how time-consuming and complicated its bid process is. Godbout said he would assist by walking through the process with any consultant interested in submitting a bid.

Bradley alerted the group regarding the triangular track across CR675. He said that there is hearsay that the new property owner wants to do “whatever he wants” to the property which is leased from the County to allow access to the property. Noonan said he would investigate.

Veronica Valley Park – Beduhn explained that the monies approved for the contract with Savin Lakes Services for evasive weed mitigation did not cover the permit required to do the work. Beduhn said that Christensen has resolved this issue. He added that the committee is researching estimates for a pavilion and ADA-approved paths throughout the park. Popa mentioned that Heather Hettinger (DNR Fish Biologist) will be attending the Park's April meeting, so he added that this will need to be added to the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT(S): None.

STAFF COMMENT(S): Bradley advised that he will be absent from the April (2024) Parks meeting.

COMMISSIONER AND CHAIRPERSON COMMENTS: Ross said she could not find mention in the BOC minutes regarding the rollover of the \$55,000 Capital Outlay to the Parks Commission's budget. Popa asked for Myer's assistance in simplifying the County's RFP process. He added that the current process is too complicated and discourages bidders. Ross offered to look into where “we tackle that project.” For budget purposes, Godbout said he would like to get a handle on what projects they want to accomplish in 2024.

#### ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business to come before the Parks and Recreation Commission, Noonan made a motion to adjourn; seconded by Walter.

The meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission adjourned at 4:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Lori Eubanks, Recording Secretary