

Leelanau County Parks and Recreation Commission

Regular Session – Wednesday, August 2, 2023, 3:15 p.m.

Tentative Minutes – Meeting Recorded

Leelanau County Government Center, Suttons Bay, Michigan

<https://www.leelanau.gov/meetingdetails.asp?MAId=2547>

The meeting of the Leelanau County Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order by Commission Secretary Steve Christensen at 3:15 p.m.

Christensen led the “Pledge of Allegiance.”

Roll Call:

John Arens
Dave Barrons, *Vice-Chairman (absent, prior notice)*
Steve Christensen
Don Frerichs
Charles Godbout
Melinda Lautner
Casey Noonan, *Chairman (absent, prior notice)*
John Popa
Kama Ross
F. Jon Walter

Staff Present:

Laurel S. Evans, Executive Assistant
W. Scott Bradley, Maintenance Worker

Public Comment:

None.

Agenda Additions/Deletions:

Godbout requested to add “Lanham donation” to the agenda under the Old Settler’s Park report. Ross requested “Gardens at Poor Farm Barn” be added to the agenda under the Myles Kimmerly Park report.

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

Discussion – None.

Ayes – 8 (Arens, Christensen, Frerichs, Godbout, Lautner, Popa, Ross, Walter)

No – 0 Absent – 2 (Barrons, Noonan)

Motion Passes.

Action Items –

Approval of Minutes – June 7, 2023, Regular Session:

Lautner requested an edit to the June 7, 2023, minutes to reflect that she was “absent prior notice.”

Motion by Lautner to approve the Regular Session minutes of June 7, 2023, as amended. Seconded by Arens.

Discussion – None.

Ayes – 8 (Arens, Christensen, Frerichs, Godbout, Lautner, Popa, Ross, Walter)

No – 0 Absent – 2 (Barrons, Noonan)

Motion Passes.

Approval of Minutes – June 7, 2023, Executive Committee Session:

Motion by Lautner to approve the Executive Committee minutes of June 7, 2023, as presented. Seconded by Christensen.

Discussion – None.

Ayes – 8 (Arens, Christensen, Frerichs, Godbout, Lautner, Popa, Ross, Walter)

No – 0 Absent – 2 (Barrons, Noonan)

Motion Passes.

Approval of Minutes – July 5, 2023, Executive Committee Session:

Godbout requested an edit to the last paragraph on page one of the minutes to read, “Godbout suggested adding the expense of updating **all park plans** by Gosling Czubak Engineering...”.

Motion by Walter to approve the Executive Committee minutes of July 5, 2023, as amended. Seconded by Lautner.

Discussion – None.

Ayes – 8 (Arens, Christensen, Frerichs, Godbout, Lautner, Popa, Ross, Walter)

No – 0 Absent – 2 (Barrons, Noonan)

Motion Passes.

Approval of Financials:

- Transaction History Listing Report (July 1, 2023 – July 31, 2023)
- Revenue & Expense Reports (Period Ending July 31, 2023)

Motion by Popa to approve the financials, as presented. Seconded by Walter.

Discussion – Bradley reported expenses are at 35 percent of budget. Lautner questioned why “Membership and Dues” was so high. Bradley explained that the state’s water testing was included in that line item. Godbout said he thought “water testing” was reflected under “Contractual Services” in previous years. Christensen requested and Evans responded that she would talk with Accounting and have an update for the next meeting.

Ayes – 8 (Arens, Christensen, Frerichs, Godbout, Lautner, Popa, Ross, Walter)

No – 0 Absent – 2 (Barrons, Noonan)

Motion Passes.

Committee Reports and Recommendations –

Myles Kimmerly Park Committee:

Evans discussed letters received in support of pickleball courts. Discussion ensued about the popularity of pickleball and its appeal to all ages. Godbout mentioned that six pickleball courts are in the park plan for Myles Kimmerly Park. Evans added that Planning & Community Development Director Trudy Galla had recently applied for a grant from the Rural Readiness Grant Program. If the County is awarded the grant, it would be used to hire a grant writer. Evans suggested they could then task the potential new grant writer with applying for a grant for pickleball courts at Myles Kimmerly Park. Lautner said that the (Grand Traverse Band of

Ottawa and Chippewa Indians) two percent (allocation) might also be an option. Walter offered to create draft drawings of the pickleball courts project, if needed.

Christensen said that by consensus everyone is looking forward to reviewing the new park plan that includes pickleball courts. Frerichs reported that no park plan update has yet been received from Gosling Czubak Engineering, so the Myles Kimmerly Park Committee is at a standstill for prioritizing future projects at the park. Frerichs added that the recent risk assessment by Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority (MMRMA) identified costly maintenance issues which will now also compete for dollars spent at the park.

Popa inquired about the status of the “Kasben agreement” (Maple Valley Nursing Home) and if Kasben has made any effort towards decommissioning his drain field that currently resides on County property. Bradley reported that trees have been pulled and testing stakes are in place, so Kasben has been working on it.

Frerichs discussed three visioning and planning sessions (July, August, and September) by Solon Township for gathering public input and suggested perhaps doing the same once the park plan update is completed.

Ross inquired if the proposed skating rink was discussed during the risk management assessment. Bradley affirmed that it was not discussed. Discussion ensued about where to site the ice rink, how to maintain it, and how to manage hockey players versus recreational skating at the rink.

Ross reported that she had an informal conversation with Chris Gallanger (Row by Row), Steve Stier (Leelanau County Historic Preservation Society), and Kate Thornhill (Leo Creek Preserve) about collaborating to add an educational composting component at the Poor Farm Barn gardens. Also discussed was a 4-H club. Ross thought the Solid Waste Council would support the endeavor. Arens inquired about compost odors wafting to the neighbors. Ross did not think it was a concern since the compost pile would be small.

Old Settlers Park Committee:

Godbout reported on issues identified at the recent risk assessment; the gazebo degradation and its imminent maintenance, and the material under the playground equipment needing removal and replacement. He commented that additional wood chips need to be added under the swing set that are twice the distance of the height of the swing set.

Godbout clarified that the Stanz Dozer Service document included in the packets was not an invoice, but rather an estimate to do sideline road work in the park (provide gravel and the equipment to do the project). Godbout said that \$10,000.00 is included in the 2023 budget to complete the project. Godbout noted the project included extended parking near the portable toilets. Lautner mentioned the boulders that were proposed to be placed between the swing set and the parking lot and wondered if MMRMA would deem them a hazard. Evans and Bradley advised that two or three quotes are still needed for the roadwork at the park before going to the

County Board for approval of the expenditure. She said if all documentation is in place, the recommendation to the County Board could be added to the Parks September agenda.

Regarding the bench donation by the Lanham family in memory of Nancy Lanham, Lautner reported that the Lanham family was unable to secure the same artist that built the Binsfeld bench, but that they did find a different artist who will build a bench that is a slightly different design (no back on the bench). The artist will begin building the bench “midmonth,” but it will not be completed in time for the annual Old Settler’s Park Picnic. Lautner added that the stones for the bench will be taken from the Lanham’s farm. Lautner reported that the bouncer donated to the park by the Lanham family will be a Lady Bug; however, it has not yet been ordered, so it will not be installed in time for the picnic. Lautner said she plans to meet with Landscape Architect Lori Lyman in the near future to discuss landscaping ideas at the park. Christensen inquired and Lautner affirmed that the Lanham family donations have already been recognized by the County Board.

Lautner reminded the group about the upcoming Old Settler’s Park annual picnic on Sunday, August 6, 2023.

(Popa left meeting at 3:50 p.m.)

Veronica Valley Park Committee:

Walter reported on the construction of a pad for the portable toilets. Bradley, Popa, Barrons, and Walter met at the park to stake out the location of the pad using posts and spray paint. Walter said a privacy fence was determined to be a safety issue because someone with nefarious intentions could hide in the screening, so that element was removed from the design. Bradley reported that Maintenance Director Jerry Culman has agreed to pour the pad. Walter estimated the cost of the concrete for a 150 square foot pad at \$1,500.00. Christensen asked Walter to gather the cost numbers so he could approve them and the project could move forward.

Kids Fishing Day (June 16, 2023) – Lautner and Bradley said there was a good turnout, though Alan Campbell (of the Lake Leelanau Lake Association’s Kids’ Fish Day Committee) thought attendance was down based on hotdog consumed. Ross said she had asked Heather Hettinger (Fisheries Biologist, Michigan Department of Natural Resources) who was also in attendance about the reason for the poor fishing conditions and Hettinger thought it was just “too hot.” The fish stayed at the bottom of the pond where it was cooler.

Public Comment:

None.

Commissioner Comments:

Lautner reported that she will not be attending the September Parks meeting and requested to be noted as “absent prior notice.”

Ross inquired about the timeline for when the Parks Commission goes before the County Board for upcoming budget meetings. Evans responded that the Parks Commission has already submitted its budget requests to the County Board and that the budget meeting dates have yet to be determined. Ross pointed out that on page 10 of the July 5, 2023, Executive Committee meeting the minutes state that, “Chairman Noonan stated that \$55,000.00 is the proposed 2024 budget for Parks and that he **would not** be asking for an increase.” Christensen noted that the list of Capital Outlay projects that was submitted to the County Board (\$140,000.00 total) is significantly above the Park’s Commission’s allotted budget and that the County Board will have to “do a little pick and choose.” Ross’s comment was that she thought the Parks Commission should be doing the prioritization rather than the County. Christensen suggested perhaps adjusting the Parks’ process for determining budget priorities; that is, not leaving it all to the Executive Committee and allowing more input by the full Commission.

(Walter left meeting at 4:16 p.m.)

As a point of detail, Arens requested that the posted agenda for today’s meeting (August 3, 2023) be corrected to read, Stanz Dozer Service **Estimate** (versus Invoice), so that Stanz Dozer Service does not expect payment from the County. (Item 3.b.i. on the agenda.)

Chairperson Comments:

None.

Adjournment:

Motion by Godbout to adjourn. Seconded by Ross.

With no further business to come before the Parks Commission, the meeting adjourned to the call of Secretary Christensen at 4:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Lori D. Eubanks, Recording Secretary