

## Leelanau County Parks and Recreation Commission

Regular Session – Wednesday, September 6, 2023, 3:15 p.m.

### Tentative Minutes – Meeting Recorded

Leelanau County Government Center, Suttons Bay, Michigan

<https://www.leelanau.gov/meetingdetails.asp?MAId=2562>

The meeting of the Leelanau County Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order by Chairman Casey Noonan at 3:15 p.m.

Noonan led the “Pledge of Allegiance.”

#### Roll Call:

John Arens, *(absent, prior notice)*  
Dave Barrons, *Vice-Chairman*  
Steve Christensen  
Don Frerichs, *(absent, prior notice)*  
Charles Godbout  
Melinda Lautner *(absent, prior notice)*  
Casey Noonan, *Chairman*  
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:

**Motion by Walter to approve the agenda, as presented. Seconded by Godbout.**

Discussion – None.

**Ayes – 7 (Walter, Barrons, Christensen, Godbout, Noonan, Popa, Ross)**

**No – 0 Absent – 3 (Arens, Frerichs, Lautner)**

**Motion Passes.**

#### Action Items –

Approval of Minutes – August 2, 2023, Regular Session:

**Motion by Ross to approve the Regular Session minutes of August 2, 2023, as presented.**

**Seconded by Popa.**

Discussion – None.

**Ayes – 7 (Ross, Walter, Barrons, Christensen, Godbout, Noonan, Popa)**

**No – 0 Absent – 3 (Arens, Frerichs, Lautner)**

**Motion Passes.**

#### Approval of Financials:

- Transaction History Listing Report (August 1, 2023 – August 31, 2023)
- Revenue & Expense Reports (Period Ending August 31, 2023)
- Review of Annual Public Water Supply Fees

Evans pointed out that pages 14, 15, and 16 show email responses from Assistant Finance Director Catherine Hartesvelt regarding the Parks Commission’s question about the accounting of “Public Water Supply Annual Fees.” Hartesvelt also responded to the Parks Commission’s question about why “Membership Dues” has such a high balance. (The table on page 16 shows Hartesvelt’s explanation.) Godbout requested to direct Hartesvelt to post the water testing expenditure under “Contractual Services” because “that’s where the money is.” Godbout noted that nothing has been spent from the Capital Improvement budget so far (in 2023).

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

Discussion – None.

**Ayes – 7 (Walter, Barrons, Christensen, Godbout, Noonan, Popa, Ross)**

**No – 0 Absent – 3 (Arens, Frerichs, Lautner)**

**Motion Passes.**

Review of Parks Risk Assessment:

Evans suggested that applicable excerpts from the August 4, 2023, Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority (MMRMA) report be included on each of the subcommittee’s respective agendas. Godbout suggested that since MMRMA’s report recommended that all three parks replace or augment surface material under the playground equipment that, to save money, material for all three parks should be purchased in one transaction.

Committee Reports and Recommendations:

Myles Kimmerly Park Committee. Composting Discussion – Ross reported that the Leelanau County Solid Waste Council donated \$500.00 towards the compost project at the Poor Farm Barn to pay for educational displays. She estimated the total cost would be \$700.00 and asked the group to do one of the following: 1) if they support the composting display next to the Poor Farm Barn as an opportunity to encourage families to do backyard composting and with Chris Skellenger (Row By Row) managing the project; or, 2) if the Parks Commission would be willing to donate “a couple hundred dollars” to defray the cost of printing the educational displays.

**Motion by Christensen that the Parks and Recreation Commission allocate funds not to exceed \$300.00 for the printing of the educational display panel at Myles Kimmerly Park. Seconded by Noonan.**

Discussion – Ross stated that the goal is to install the educational panel before winter. She added that a composting workshop will be conducted by Kate Thornhill (Leo Creek Preserve) at the Government Center on September 28, 2023, from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. Ross advised that flyers were going out “this week.” Barrons clarified and Ross affirmed that the project was not about inviting the public to bring their compost to the site, but rather that it was a display for educational purposes. Evans inquired and Ross responded that she thought the panels should be purchased by the Parks Commission since the project is on County property.

**Ayes – 7 (Barrons, Christensen, Godbout, Noonan, Popa, Ross, Walter)**

**No – 0 Absent – 3 (Arens, Frerichs, Lautner)**

**Motion Passes.**

Ross said that Steve Stier, (Leelanau County Historic Preservation Society) was thinking about the 10 acres west of the Poor Farm Barn and wondered if it could be used to create a

Recycling/Biochar exhibit as an addition to the Poor Farm Barn gardens. (No discussion from the group.)

Barrons inquired about the status of the proposed ice rink at Myles Kimmerly Park. Noonan thought the consensus was to “just do it,” and see how it goes. Bradley thought the rink was at a “full stop” because of liability. Noonan said he would call and check with Dan May (the individual who proposed the project to the Parks Commission).

Kayak/Boat Launch Discussion. Regarding the August 9, 2023, email from Irish Mae Cago inquiring about interest from Leelanau County in launching a self-service kayak rental program on “any navigable waters or waterfront parks in Leelanau,” Noonan responded with “a hard no” with regard to the boat launch at Old Settlers Park. He said it was not a good fit for the park’s concept and not a good idea to form a business at the park. He said the park is already heavily used in the summer and parking and storage of kayaks would take up too much space in the small park. He said the park was meant to be quiet and passive. Christensen commented that in the past the Parks Commission had discussed various concepts about making money at the parks (concessions, charging entrance fees), but they had all been rejected. He supported Noonan and said the park should remain a free, affordable place for the public to enjoy. Godbout noted his email response to the proposal (page 26) referencing the approved 2020 - 2024 park plan. He said the current launch is not developed or ADA /UA compliant, so it was not just a matter of bringing in kayaks; money would be needed to bring the launch into compliance. Furthermore, no funding has been requested in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) or the annual budget for such improvements. He, too, discouraged development of the launch for lack of a cleaning facility to mitigate invasive species from entering the lake.

Bradley raised the topic of a problem with motorized boats being launched at Old Settlers Park (which is not permitted) as well as overnight mooring in Little Glen Lake. Discussion ensued about the signage at the park and whether new signage by the ramp was needed along with a lock on the gate to the launch. Ross thought the Glen Lake Association should be notified of any changes made regarding the launch; Noonan disagreed. He directed Bradley to install a (County-purchased) lock and update the signage to emphasize no motorized boat launching (kayaks okay). Noonan did not feel there was an obligation to notify the Association since the park belongs to the County. Barrons inquired if the park rules needed to be rewritten so the Sheriff can enforce them. Christensen responded that this was a good topic for the Old Settlers Park Committee.

Noonan reported that as Chairman of the Parks Commission, he receives requests from the baseball community to spruce up the baseball fields and scoreboard. Noonan said that he encouraged the group to bring their requests before the Parks Commission.

Christensen reported that the Parks Commission heard back from Gosling Czubak regarding the Myles Kimmerly Park plan update. The terms of the contract will determine when and how a meeting with Gosling should be set up to review the plan. Christensen said that once a meeting is decided, things like improving the ballfields can be addressed. Christensen asked and Evans responded that full payment to Gosling has not been made.

Old Settlers Park Committee. Noonan reported that he received one verbal quote for the roadwork project at Old Settlers Park, but the contractor (Zack Stanz) cannot begin the work until “next year.” (Christensen interjected that it was bids, not quotes, that the Committee was soliciting.) Evans advised to ensure language is included in the “quotes” about how long they are good. Godbout inquired if a Request for Proposal (RFP) should be prepared for work on the gazebo (assuming funding is approved). Evans responded that a scope of service needs to be completed. Godbout clarified the process for completing a scope of service and Evans suggested and Godbout agreed he could compose it himself. In Lautner’s absence, there was no update on construction of the memorial bench for Nancy Lanham.

(Popa left at 3:44 p.m.)

Veronica Valley Park Committee. Barrons reported that there is another beaver in the pond and, consequently, flooding at the Midway bridge. He said as a volunteer, Al Zielinski has been taking the beaver dams apart to mitigate flooding. Barrons said he visited the park 10 days ago and there were no signs of beaver dams or flooding. Barrons said he called Trapper Ron and was advised that the State’s rules have changed and that, if the beavers are a nuisance, they can be removed by a licensed trapper at any time without a permit. Trapper Ron quoted \$800.00 for three weeks of trapping. (Before it was \$800.00 for an indefinite period.) Noonan directed Barrons to go ahead and hire Trapper Ron to remove the beaver(s).

Barrons reported that he, Walter, and Popa staked out the pad for the portable toilets in spray paint. Bradley said the project is pending approval by the Parks Commission on cost and materials, but once approved, Maintenance Director Jerry Culman would pour the pad. The cost will be charged to Capital Improvement. Walter expressed concern about the elevation of the slab surface – how it should slope for drainage. Barrons said he would discuss this topic at the next committee meeting. Walter said he would draft some drainage options.

Barrons said he tried contacting Bill Watson at Youth Works for an update regarding the two percent allocation application (through the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians) for irradiating invasive weeds at the park by using goats (provided by City Girls Farm). Barrons said he was assured by Watson that the application would be completed this fall. Evans advised that the County Board of Commissioners requires that an agreement be in place (which it is) and at the September 12 (2023) Executive Board session approval will be made. She added that it is just a matter of going through the process with the County Board of Commissioners. Ross said that she would attend the Executive Board Session on behalf of the Parks Commission.

Christensen mentioned that Michigan Department of Natural Resources Fisheries Biologist Heather Hettinger had said the fish were not biting on Kids’ Fishing Day because the water was too warm. She said the fish stayed at the bottom of pond where the water is cooler.

Barrons said he has not found the right signage regarding cleaning tackle to mitigate invasive weeds in the ponds. He said he will work on this project for next year. He added that the

solution might be to create the signage themselves. Christensen thought bait buckets should also be addressed in the signage.

“Hail Mary” St. Mary School Cross Country Event:

Regarding the Park Use Agreement for Veronica Valley Park between Leelanau County and St. Mary School, Evans said she made a few changes to the agreement as noted in red on pages 29 – 34 of the packet.

**Motion by Barrons that the Parks and Recreation Commission support and sign the agreement dated September 6, 2023, between Leelanau County and St. Mary School for the Cross County Invitational on October 14, 2023, from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Seconded by Walter.**

Discussion – None.

**Ayes – 7 (Barrons, Christensen, Godbout, Noonan, Popa, Ross, Walter)**

**No – 0 Absent – 3 (Arens, Frerichs, Lautner)**

**Motion Passes.**

Public Comment:

None.

Commissioner Comments:

Barrons mentioned that Tom Adams and Al Zielinski “have saved me” in regards to their volunteer time at Veronica Valley Park. He added that he would like to somehow recognize them. Bradley added that Luke Moeggenberg should also be recognized. Noonan agreed, adding that Luke has been a valuable asset helping out at the parks. Ross requested that the topic of “recognition of park volunteers” be added to the next Parks agenda.

Chairperson Comments:

None.

Adjournment:

**Motion by Godbout to adjourn. Seconded by Noonan.**

With no further business to come before the Parks Commission, the meeting adjourned to the call of Chairman Noonan at 4:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Lori D. Eubanks, Recording Secretary