

Leelanau County Parks and Recreation Commission

Regular Session – Wednesday, November 1, 2023, 3:15 p.m.

Tentative Minutes – Meeting Recorded

Leelanau County Government Center, Suttons Bay, Michigan

<https://www.leelanau.gov/meetingdetails.asp?MAId=2592>

In Chairman Noonan’s absence, the Regular Session of the Leelanau County Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order by Commission Secretary 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, *Secretary*
Don Frerichs
Charles Godbout
Melinda Lautner
Casey Noonan, *Chairman (absent, prior notice)*
John Popa
Kama Ross, *(absent, prior notice)*
F. Jon Walter

Staff Present:

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

Public Comment:

None.

Agenda Additions/Deletions:

Godbout requested the addition of “Approval of Parking Improvements Proposal” and “Gazebo Refurbishment Scope of Service Notification” be added under the Old Settlers Park Committee report.

Motion by Godbout to approve the agenda, as amended. Seconded by Arens.

Discussion – None.

Ayes – 7 (Godbout, Lautner, Popa, Walter, Arens, Christensen, Frerichs)

No – 0 Absent – 3 (Barrons, Noonan, Ross)

Motion Passes.

Action Items –

Approval of Minutes – October 4, 2023, Regular Session:

Motion by Popa to approve the Regular Session minutes from the October 4, 2023 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, as presented. Seconded by Lautner.

Discussion – None.

Ayes – 7 (Popa, Walter, Arens, Christensen, Frerichs, Godbout, Lautner)

No – 0 Absent – 3 (Barrons, Noonan, Ross)

Motion Passes.

Approval of Financials –
October Parks Financials:

- Revenue and Expense Report (Period Ending October 31, 2023)
- Transaction History Listing Report (October 1, 2023 Thru October 31, 2023)

Bradley reported expenditures at 52 percent of budget. He added that tractor maintenance and two other projects, one totaling about \$5,000.00, were still outstanding. Charges to “Memberships Dues and Fees” seemed high and Lautner questioned the reason. Bradley explained that state fees for water permits were charged to that account which Godbout said were miscategorized. Lautner questioned the balances in “Taxable and Nontaxable Travel” accounts and questioned if they should be increased, but no decision was made.

Motion by Godbout to approve the financials, as presented. Seconded by Frerichs.

Discussion – Frerichs asked Lautner if the Board of Commissioners (BOC) approved rolling over to 2024 the Parks Commission’s unspent Capital Outlay. Lautner responded that she thought the BOC would approve the request; however, she did not think an additional \$100,000.00 would be approved to pave the walking trail at Myles Kimmerly Park.

Ayes – 7 (Godbout, Lautner, Popa, Walter, Arens, Christensen, Frerichs)

No – 0 Absent – 3 (Barrons, Noonan, Ross)

Motion Passes.

Administrative Assistant –

Approval of Stipend for FY2023 Work:

Motion by Lautner to recommend to the County Board of Commissioners approval of the budgeted stipend for Executive Assistant Laurel S. Evans, in the amount of \$3,600.00 for work performed as the Parks Administrative Assistant for Fiscal Year 2023. Seconded by Arens.

Discussion – Godbout inquired and Evans confirmed that the stipend was for work performed in support of the Parks Commission in Fiscal Year 2023.

Ayes – 7 (Lautner, Popa, Walter, Arens, Christensen, Frerichs, Godbout)

No – 0 Absent – 3 (Barrons, Noonan, Ross)

Recommendation Passes.

New Administrative Assistant Search:

For those who were unaware, Evans announced her retirement stating that her last day in the office would be December 8, 2023. She added that due to unused vacation, she would be “on the books” through March. Evans suggested that the group work with the Human Resources Director to find a suitable replacement. Christensen told Evans that she would be missed.

Christensen inquired how Lori Eubanks is paid to transcribe the minutes. Evans explained that Eubanks is a Temporary Office Assistant tasked to the Parks and Recreation Commission and that she is paid from the Parks budget.

Christensen thought the next step should be to task Chairman Noonan to appoint a non-quorum committee to move forward with “figuring out where we go from here.” Frerichs inquired if Evans’ job description included the support of the Parks and Recreation Commission. Evans responded that it did not. Frerichs said it would be helpful if the group could review Evan’s job description. For the purpose of being able to respond to questions from future

candidates about the time commitment to perform the job, Arens asked and Evans responded that she was unsure how many hours each month she dedicates to the Parks Commission. Evans said that she works above and beyond the duties in her job description. Christensen thought that the Parks Commission would most likely be sharing administrative support and that it would not be “just us” using the position. Evans offered that possibly the Clerk’s office would be a good option for providing administrative assistance since they have a good understanding of Robert’s Rules of Order (a parliamentary procedure for conducting meetings of representative bodies).

Popa reminded the group of a previous discussion of about three years ago regarding the need for a part-time person who could perform duties beyond clerical support – someone with “boots on the ground.” He said the Parks Commission could be more productive if a dedicated position was added so that grants could be pursued, contracts could be facilitated, and the overall goals of the Parks Commission could tracked and pursued. Lautner concurred. She added that she was unsure how the BOC was moving forward with the addition of a Facilities Manager, but that she did not think the position would be granted in 2024. She said that ideally, they needed an internal person who “had time on their hands,” who could be compensated with a stipend, or better yet, would not require a stipend, and who had an interest in the Parks Commission. Christensen said he would advise Chairman Noonan of the recruitment work ahead.

MMRMA (Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority) Risk Assessment – August 4, 2023 – Report Review:

Popa suggested that each committee review MMRMA’s report and recommendations and take action as appropriate, then report their progress at future Parks meetings. Christensen supported this idea and, by consensus, a review of the recommendations by MMRMA will be added to future Parks agendas and will be updated accordingly until all items have been addressed.

Winter Activity Guidelines (Pages 17-27 of packet):

Evans explained that, with regard to installing an ice rink at Myles Kimmerly Park, the “Winter Activity Safety: Model Guidelines” document that she obtained from MMRMA was particularly relevant. Popa found the document to be an excellent resource and asked that it be saved somewhere for easy access for future reference. Godbout said they would add it as an addendum to the new parks plan. Christensen said that, by consensus, he would have Veronica Valley and Old Settlers Park committee chairs add the guidelines to their respective agendas and have each committee report its progress at the monthly Parks Commission meetings.

Parks Commissioner Recommendation:

(John Arens’ term expires December 31, 2023; he is a 25-year resident of Leelanau County and resides in Cedar, Michigan – Centerville Township.)

Motion by Lautner that the Parks and Recreation Commission recommend to the County Board of Commissioners the reappointment of John Arens to the Parks and Recreation Commission, for a term expiring on December 31, 2026. Seconded by Godbout/Popa.

Discussion – None.

Ayes – 7 (Lautner, Popa, Walter, Arens, Christensen, Frerichs, Godbout)

No – 0 Absent – 3 (Barrons, Noonan, Ross)

Recommendation Passes.

Committee Reports and Recommendations –

Myles Kimmerly Park Committee (MKPC). Maple Valley Nursing Home Drain Field Update – Evans referenced photos of the remains of the drain field that were taken by Bradley. Godbout asked and Bradley confirmed that the drain field had been abandoned and that the lines that remained were nonfunctional (no sewage could flow into the chamber that remains below the surface in the park). Bradley added that the sewage lines had been cut on the north side of Burdickville Road. Bradley recommended digging out the chamber rather than covering it up. Lautner inquired if the cost of remediation was covered in the lease with Maple Valley Nursing Home. Evans responded that remediation costs were not addressed in the lease and would be the responsibility of the County, but that the cost would be less than anticipated.

Motion by Lautner to recommend to the County Board of Commissioners to remediate or remove the drain field from Myles Kimmerly Park. Seconded by Popa.

Discussion – Lautner wanted to leave the decision to the BOC about whether to include removal of the pipelines as part of the remediation process. Popa supported this as well.

Ayes – 7 (Arens, Christensen, Frerichs, Godbout, Lautner, Popa, Walter)

No – 0 Absent – 3 (Barrons, Noonan, Ross)

Recommendation Passes.

Evans will request addition of this action on the November BOC agenda.

Park Master Plan Update. Frerichs reported that the Committee met with Kevin Krogulecki, of Gosling Czubak Engineering, on October 17, 2023, for the first review of the park’s Master Plan. Frerichs said that Krogulecki will begin working on revisions resulting from that meeting and will submit the updated Master Plan by the end of November. Frerichs said he would like to gather public input before the final rendering. Frerichs provided a brief review of the revisions and updates proposed for the next draft of the master plan, including a compromise on the length of the paved loop trail to a shorter distance (approximately a quarter mile for the first phase of the project) that would accommodate ADA and perhaps make the cost of paving a shorter trail more palatable by the BOC.

Old Settlers Park Committee –

Approval of Parking Improvements Proposal. Godbout reported that two estimates were received for the parking improvements proposal for Old Settlers Park; one from Stanz Dozer in the amount of \$4,850.00; one from 2M Services in the amount of \$2,525.00.

Motion by Godbout to accept the estimate from 2M Services for parking improvements at Old Settlers Park at a cost not to exceed \$2,525.00. Seconded by Lautner.

Discussion – Christensen inquired and Evans responded that this recommendation did not have to go to the BOC. Popa and Lautner expressed hope that the project would be completed before winter.

Ayes – 7 (Arens, Christensen, Frerichs, Godbout, Lautner, Popa, Walter)
No – 0 Absent – 3 (Barrons, Noonan, Ross) Motion Passes.

Gazebo Refurbishment Scope of Service Notification. Godbout advised the group that the scope of service for refurbishing the gazebo in 2024 was being forwarded to legal for review. Some of the projects included repairing or replacing the deck stairs and replacing the old, wood upper and lower lattice and the old skirting with vinyl components. Lautner added that vinyl would be used for the upper lattice only if the scallops could be retained; otherwise, wood would be used. Godbout also noted that the Lanham memorial bench had been installed and that the bunny bouncer donated by the Lanham family would be installed in 2024. Godbout added that electrical service to the gazebo would be installed “next week.”

Veronica Valley Park Committee:

Popa reported on the progress of the cement pad installation at Veronica Valley Park. He added that County Maintenance Director Jerry Culman will pour the pad and that the goal is to have it poured “this year.”

Motion by Popa for the Parks and Recreation Commission to approve moving forward with pouring the concrete pad at a cost not to exceed \$3,000.00. Seconded by Walter.

Discussion – None.

Ayes – 7 (Popa, Walter, Arens, Christensen, Frerichs, Godbout, Lautner)
No – 0 Absent – 3 (Barrons, Noonan, Ross) Motion Passes.

Popa discussed the purchase of a dock ladder in case of an emergency (if someone fell into the pond at Veronica Valley Park) and per a recommendation by MMRMA.

Motion by Popa for the Parks and Recreation Commission to approve the purchase of a safety ladder per the recommendation of MMRMA at a cost not to exceed \$500.00. Seconded by Walter.

Discussion – Lautner inquired and Popa responded that the ladder would be permanently installed.

Ayes – 7 (Popa, Walter, Arens, Christensen, Frerichs, Godbout, Lautner)
No – 0 Absent – 3 (Barrons, Noonan, Ross) Motion Passes.

Water overflow basin locations around the parking lot were discussed. Lautner expressed concern about the loss of parking spaces due to the proposed basin locations. Walter said the current configuration is the safest solution and that the current layout maintains the bus turnaround radius.

Public Comment:

None.

Commissioner Comments:

Frerichs commented that Steve Stier, President of the Leelanau County Historic Preservation Society, had mentioned in during (a previous) public comment that he thought the Parks' Mission Statement was outdated. Frerichs stated that he agreed. Christensen responded that the five-year plan would be a good opportunity to revisit the issue.

Chairperson Comments:

None.

Adjournment:

With no further business to come before the Parks and Recreation Commission, Christensen called for a motion to adjourn.

Motion by Walter to adjourn. Seconded by Lautner.

Ayes – 7 (Walter, Arens, Christensen, Frerichs, Godbout, Lautner, Popa)

No – 0 Absent – 3 (Barrons, Noonan, Ross)

Motion Passes.

The meeting adjourned at 4:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Lori Eubanks, Recording Secretary