

## Leelanau County Parks and Recreation Commission

Regular Session – Wednesday, February 2, 2022, 3:00 p.m.

*or immediately following the Organizational Session, whichever is later*

### Tentative Minutes – Meeting Recorded

Leelanau County Government Center, Suttons Bay, Michigan

<https://www.leelanau.gov/meetingdetails.asp?MAId=2284>

The meeting of the Leelanau County Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order by Chairman Casey Noonan at 3:00 p.m.

Chairman Noonan led the “Pledge of Allegiance.”

Roll Call:

Dave Barrons, *Vice-Chairman*  
Steve Christensen  
Don Frerichs  
Charles Godbout  
Melinda Lautner  
Casey Noonan, *Chairman*  
John Popa  
Rick Robbins  
Michael Smith  
F. Jon Walter

Staff Present:

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

Public Comment:  
None.

#### Agenda Additions/Deletions:

#### **Motion by Popa to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Walter.**

Discussion – Christensen inquired if there should be a motion to add a discussion about Bill Watson and the goat project. Evans advised to hold the topic until more information is available, but no later than April (2022).

**Ayes – 10 (Barrons, Christensen, Frerichs, Godbout, Lautner, Noonan, Popa, Robbins, Smith, Walter)**

**No – 0 Absent – 0**

**Motion Passes.**

#### Action Items –

#### Leelanau County Poor Farm Barn Use Committee Update:

Noonan reported that he discussed the Poor Farm Barn Use Committee structure with County Administrator, Chet Janik. The recommendation was to operate as an advisory committee.

Noonan confirmed that the number of members will remain the same as what is listed on the lease. Noonan added that no meeting date and time has been confirmed for meetings.

Approval of Minutes:

- January 19, 2022 (Organizational Session)
- January 19, 2022 (Regular Session)

**Motion by Lautner to approve the Organizational Session minutes of January 19, 2022, as presented. Seconded by Barrons.**

Discussion – Godbout noted that under “Commissioner Comment” the minutes should be corrected to reflect that he was an accountant and worked in computer science not “an accountant in computer science.”

**Lautner reworded: Motion to approved the Organizational Session minutes of January 19, 2022, as amended.**

**Ayes – 10 (Barrons, Christensen, Frerichs, Godbout, Lautner, Noonan, Popa, Robbins, Smith, Walter)**

**No – 0 Absent – 0**

**Motion Passes.**

**Motion by Smith to approved the Regular Session minutes of January 19, 2022, as presented. Seconded by Lautner.**

Discussion – none.

**Ayes – 10 (Barrons, Christensen, Frerichs, Godbout, Lautner, Noonan, Popa, Robbins, Smith, Walter)**

**No – 0 Absent – 0**

**Motion Passes.**

Approval of Financials:

- Transaction History Listing Reported dated January 1, 2022 Thru January 31, 2022
- Revenue and Expense Report Period Ending January 31, 2022.
- FY 2022 Advertising, *Leelanau Enterprise*  
Evans noted that she provided copies of previous advertising in the *Leelanau Enterprise* as requested by Lautner. Lautner inquired about how the Temporary Office Assistant would be funded. (There was no funding listed in the line item.) Evans said Accounting will perform a budget amendment/journal entry to add money to the account.

**Motion by Christensen to approve the financials, as presented. Seconded by Lautner.**

Discussion – none.

**Ayes – 10 (Barrons, Christensen, Frerichs, Godbout, Lautner, Noonan, Popa, Robbins, Smith, Walter)**

**No – 0 Absent – 0**

**Motion Passes.**

**Motion by Godbout to approve advertising expenditures for 2022 in the Leelanau Enterprise in the amount of \$650.00 for the Visitors’ Guide and \$470.00 for the color tour magazine. Seconded by Christensen.**

Discussion – Timing for when new photos would be due for the color tour magazine was discussed. Bradley thought he had had photos that could be used and said he would look for them. Lautner mentioned that the advertng costs were small, so she supported the

expenditure; however, she inquired if there was feedback showing how many visitors are drawn to the parks as a result of advertising. Evans responded that she could generate a report showing the number of hits to the Parks page, but she did not think she could obtain data from the QR Codes posted at the parks. Lautner thought it might draw more people to Veronica Valley Park if the native plantings were highlighted in the write-up as well as amenities such as the four-season trails and that the park is dog-friendly.

**Ayes – 10 (Barrons, Christensen, Frerichs, Godbout, Lautner, Noonan, Popa, Robbins, Smith, Walter)**

**No – 0 Absent – 0**

**Motion Passes.**

Potential Grant Opportunity:

Evans discussed a recent online grant workshop provided by the DNR that discussed granting opportunities in 2022. She said the workshop underscored the importance of having all your “ducks in a row” with documentation, visuals, and a timeline for how you want your project to progress. She said she would provide to the committee a booklet from the website that explains the process. Evans said the grant coordinator would also provide information about grant opportunities outside of those that are state-funded. Evans added that the bottom line to pursuing grant funding is to plan, plan, plan. Godbout said his takeaway from the workshop was that it took about 18 months from the application process to the final grant award. Evans said another concern is that you have to ensure there are no impacts to the project. She gave waste as an example, then mentioned Myles Kimmerly Park with its septic fields. This mention segued to a discussion regarding the lease with the Maple Valley Nursing Home – when the lease was up; if the lessee was aware that the lease would not be renewed; how much notice should be provided; and the amount of work to be completed by lessee to build a new septic field before the lease sunsets (April 2023).

Returning to the grant process discussion, Barrons said he thought the timeline for pursuing a grant was more like a two-year endeavor. He felt it was more productive to work on park improvements within the Park’s budget a little at a time rather than committing the time and effort to pursue grants. He added that northern Michigan was at a scoring disadvantage because of high property values. He said he was not discouraging the pursuit of grant funding; rather, he was just providing feedback based on his experience. Barrons asked Evans about an email she had sent a while back regarding regional grant funding from an entity based in Petoskey (he thought). He remembered padding for under playground equipment being available through the grant and thought it might be a good option to pursue because it was an easier application process. He offered to work with Evans to resurrect the email. Barrons noted that he hoped to have more information to bring to the upcoming Veronica Valley Park Committee meeting regarding an application for two percent money for weed mitigation using goats.

Committee Reports and Recommendations –

Wayfinding Signage:

Barrons said that he would wait to report on the wayfinding signage until after Veronica Valley Committee meeting (Monday, February 7, 2022). Frerichs asked about adding trail miles to the signage. Barrons said he was open to a discussion.

Myles Kimmerly Park Committee:

Committee Chairman, Frerichs presented two cost analyses for 1) a shed addition to the maintenance building for storage and an office space; and 2) an enclosure for the toilets. Frerichs explained that after reviewing the five-year Parks plan, he proposed focusing on construction of a kiosk that included an enclosure for the toilets with universal access and drinking fountains which are included in the 5-year plan. Robbins reminded the group that drinking fountains were shut down because of the pandemic, with no date certain of when they will be turned back on. Robbins also discussed an estimate of \$125,000.00 to \$150,000.00 from Elmer's to pave the one-mile loop at Myles Kimmerly Park, which is significantly less than the \$300,000.00 previously estimated for this project. Christensen suggested passing this information to the County Board for their consideration. Barrons said paving the loop trail was a good candidate for the Recreation Passport grant sponsored by the DNR. Robbins thought before the other projects commence, if the walking trail is the priority, that a plan should be designed that shows placement of buildings and related infrastructure so that the projects do not overlap.

Walter expressed support for the drinking fountains because the teams who use the playing fields need drinking water. Evans mentioned that touchless, bottle-filling stations (have been proposed) to replace drinking fountains (within the Government Center). Popa thought drinking fountains were a "waste of money" and too high maintenance. Smith commented that refrigerated water was not necessary and suggested installing little hand pumps like what is installed along the TART trails. Noonan supported the entire kiosk project and agreed the bottle filling station was a better option over drinking fountains. Lautner added that delivery drivers, bikers, and disk golfers are among those who use the facilities at the parks. Robbins suggested installing a water vending machine and making a little revenue from it. Noonan said there are a lot of people who prefer bottled water over well water and thought the vending machine was a good idea.

With looming expenditures of approximately \$35,000.00 for the entrance at Veronica Valley Park and installation of the playground equipment at Old Settlers Park, Noonan said the 2022 budget was nearly spent, but that it was not too soon to start planning for the kiosk project in 2023. He said if there was money left from this year's budget, it could be dedicated to site planning for the kiosk. Lautner said that at a recent Planning Commission meeting, she updated the group on the playground equipment to be installed at Old Settlers Park and Nate Griswold offered assistance with the installation. She was unsure if the assistance being offered was monetary, but she said if it was, they would not have that hit to the budget. Frerichs thanked the group for their input and consideration of the project. With regard to the excavation work by Elmer's for the walking trail, Robbins said that if Elmer's has to truck away the dirt removed from clearing the trail, it would add to the project cost, so he suggested either using the dirt to build a berm or screen it and sell it.

Noonan said he would follow up with Tim Newman of Kasson Contracting to confirm a time when he will be removing the grub shack. Christensen reminded Noonan that a moving permit will be needed and that the County would cover the cost.

Old Settlers Park Committee:

Lautner reported that she will be pursuing the offer for assistance from Nate Griswold for the playground equipment installation. Lautner inquired about where to get boulders to add as barriers near the swing set. Christensen suggested talking with Zack and John (Stanz) because he thought they might want to assist with the rocks, given that they drive over park property. Christensen said he would be happy to get involved if chips are needed for under the playground equipment. He said based on his experience with chips for the Veronica Valley Park, Risk Management requires chips to be certified.

Veronica Valley Park Committee:

Barrons reported that along with the wayfaring signage, he plans to bring a parking lot design to the March Parks and Recreation Commission meeting that matches the entrance design for Veronica Valley Park. He said he will also have more information regarding the two percent allocation request for weed mitigation/goats at the March meeting.

Christensen asked and Bradley responded that he has groomed the trails at both Veronica Valley and Myles Kimmerly Parks.

Popa turned the discussion back to potential grant opportunities. Evans said the Neighborhood Enhancement Program opportunity (referred by Trudy Galla in email to Evans) has closed (for 2021) but thought private grants like Rotary Charities or the Olsen Foundation might be better options because they do not have a lot of requirements to qualify. She said what is required is a good plan to win a grant award. Popa said he did not feel the group was doing anything and felt they needed to take more action towards pursuing grants. Noonan said it is not something that is done as a group; it takes someone to spearhead the effort. Evans reminded the group that County Board approval is necessary to apply for and accept a grant. Barrons thought the paved loop trail at Myles Kimmerly Park would be a good candidate for the Recreation Passport grant. Barrons also discussed a Rotary grant that is awarded every month and does not have a lengthy process to apply. He said the grants are in amounts of \$500.00, \$800.00, or \$1,200.00 and are for finishing touches on disabled access. He said most awards go to private homes to finish projects like ramps or to install safety bars. He said it was recommended by Rotary to wait until the fishing access project was completed at Veronica Valley Park and then see what might be needed for access from the parking lot. Barrons said he plans to look into this grant a little more.

Christensen said he was uncertain about how to proceed but suggested a few volunteers from the group spearhead a plan for pursuing grants. Evans suggested working with the DNR's regional grant coordinator (Alexandria McBride) for direction because she seemed amenable to answering questions. Evans said she would send the contact information for the grant coordinator to everyone. Godbout suggested sending the walking trail project and the kiosk project to the grant coordinator and ask her if these projects would qualify for grant funding in her opinion and if so, how to proceed for a grant. Evans added that the grant coordinator would also have suggestions for private grants. Smith volunteered to make the call.

Public Comment:

None.

Commissioner Comments:

None.

Chairperson Comments:

Noonan commented that he liked the way the Commission is working and that he felt they were moving in a good direction. Barrons concurred.

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned to the call of Chairman Noonan at 4:15 p.m.

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Lori D. Eubanks, Recording Secretary