

**Leelanau County Parks and Recreation Commission
Veronica Valley Park Committee**

Wednesday, February 11, 2021 – 9:00 a.m.

Via Zoom and at the Leelanau County Government Center, Suttons Bay, Michigan

Tentative Minutes – Meeting Recorded

<https://www.leelanau.gov/meetingdetails.asp?MAId=2061>

The meeting was called to order by Committee Chairman Dave Barrons at 9:04 a.m.

Committee Chairman Barrons deferred to recite Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Dave Barrons, *Committee Chairman*
Steve Christensen
F. Jon Walter
John Popa

Guest present.

Approval of Agenda and Late Additions/Deletions:

Motion by Christensen to approve the agenda, as presented. (no second.)

Committee Chairman Barrons asked to add a Chairman's report on two topics to the agenda; trail grooming and Kids' Fish Day.

Motion by Christensen to accept the agenda, amended. Seconded by Walter.

Discussion – none.

Ayes – 4 (Christensen, Popa, Walter, Barrons)

No – 0

MOTION PASSES.

Public Comment:

The Clerk provided the number to call in for public comment – no comment received.

Action Items –

Approval of January 15, 2021, Minutes:

Minor discussion ensued.

Motion by Barrons to move approval of the minutes of January 15, 2021, meeting to the agenda for the next scheduled meeting. Seconded by Christensen.

Discussion – none.

Ayes – 4 (Barrons, Christensen, Popa, Walter)

No – 0

MOTION PASSES.

Committee Chairman Report:

Committee Chairman Barrons asked and Maintenance Worker W. Scott Bradley noted that during a trail grooming training session conducted recently at the park, a bogie wheel broke off one of the tracks, and a part is on order. Barrons remarked they got one grooming in that day,

describing the equipment to the Committee members. The parts are scheduled for arrival on (or about) Friday. He and Planning Secretary Molly Steck have learned how to run the equipment.

Committee Chairman Barrons continued – he received a call from Lonny Rademacher (of the Lake Leelanau Lake Association’s Kids’ Fishing Day Committee). That Committee is planning on holding a Kids’ Fishing Day in June. They have spoken with DNR Fisheries Biologist Heather Hettinger; the fish supplier has a pond of fish dedicated for Leelanau County, so the event is a “go” at this point. That committee wishes to proceed with what hadn’t been done last year, due to COVID. A commemorative bench with plaque in honor of Pete Taylor, who had been an instrumental member of the fishing subcommittee is in the works. Is there is a policy on plaque size. Clerk mentioned and Barrons will follow up with County Administrator Chet Janik on the County Board of Commissioner’s committee that handles donations.

Christensen asked do we have a feel for how the two fish plantings went; did we ever get Hettinger’s netting numbers? Discussion ensued. Committee Chairman Barrons said the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians (Fisheries Division) assisted with that. Discussion followed. Christensen said he is interested in viewing the next (planting), and look at it from the committee level. Barrons noted we had the weeds sprayed last year resulting in a complete loss of weeds. Bradley added the ponds were fished “pretty hard” last year. Christensen said we didn’t even hold the fish day, but almost “every day was fish day” for the general public. Christensen asked and Bradley responded all ponds were fished well. Walter commented on his fishing visits at the park with his grandchildren. Discussion followed on the fish sampling results. Barrons said he has been in communication with Hettinger. Christensen said we should be aware that the full Parks Commission (will again need to recommend approval of the purchase of) fish. That has to happen well in advance, so we are not trying to do it when the fish are (in route). Popa noted Rademacher is “taking care of that.” Barrons noted we still need a recommendation from the Parks Commission to the County Board of Commissioners, as we need to place the order in May with the fish to arrive in June.

Wayfinding Signage Recommendation:

Clerk noted a link (embedded above) to all documentation for today’s meeting had been previously sent to all Committee members ahead of today’s session.

Christensen remarked the draft signage looks good; you have identified locations that could be confusing. Committee Chairman Barrons said the choice was to post signage as people leave the parking lot and start, and the three locations where you cannot see the parking lot; from the trail intersection, you cannot see the parking lot. Some people do get turned around, and want to know where they are in relationship to their car. The black line was suggested by GIS Analyst Rob Herman, as it really “popped off” the trail. Discussion followed on the colors and a sample sign. Walter said he had forwarded a single sheet to Popa with the sample sign and proposed cost. Popa asked does each location tell you where you are at? Barrons said a number will be assigned to each spot that corresponds on a legend. We need the number and legend. Popa asked Walter, did you forward an estimated cost? Discussion ensued on the sign material

and contents of the sign. Barrons recapped – six signs are proposed; do we need more? He voiced concern for a few other areas that have an obscured view of the parking lot. Christensen commented we can always add signs. Walter said the hard part is the plates will be numbered. Barrons said so we need to decide. Bradley added, the signs will be numbered as well. Discussion ensued. Barrons said in light of those (voicing concern on having too many signs), this is a good start. Bradley asked and Barrons responded six signs total are proposed. Clerk asked for clarification on the cost; Walter responded the cost is for signage is estimated at \$70.00 each for a total cost of \$490.00, which includes a post.

Walter voiced concern for a spot and Christensen responded Sign #6 is near the area of Walter’s concern. Popa remarked he is not a big fan of signs, and he is not sure there is a problem. The price is right; do we have a big map at the main parking lot of where things look like? Committee Chairman Barrons affirmed we have an information kiosk on site. We can replicate this signage, but in a larger size. Popa remarked one of the approved work goals was informational signs for the park. He doesn’t walk the entire park like others do. Clerk mentioned the potential of having the Planning/Community Development Department printing and laminating an oversized sign. Barrons to follow up with Herman.

Walter said what was presented by Herman, the background he shows is long-outdated. Discussion ensued on the existing orthophotos, and the potential to wait on obtaining signage utilizing the new orthophotos. In the meantime, numbered markers could be installed in the interim. Discussion followed. Committee Chairman Barrons said he will follow up with Walter on the next steps.

Motion by Christensen to recommend to the Parks and Recreation Commission to purchase wayfinding signage from Traverse Reproduction & Supply Co., Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$550.00. Seconded by Barrons.

Discussion – none.

Ayes – 4 (Christensen, Popa, Walter, Barrons)

No – 0

MOTION PASSES.

Committee Chairman Barrons said he recalls Popa’s previous concerns with excessive signage. In thinking through this a number of occasions, he had boiled it down to just this kind of sign. He gave an example of people being confused within the park’s trail system.

Paved Parking Lot Entry:

Popa said he had met with Walter last week to tour the Park entryway. It is in our approved (five-year park) plan to improve the entryway. The existing entryway does not meet any highway standards for commercial entrances. It has deteriorated over time and is a safety hazard. There is a need for a paved entryway with curbs. There is also a culvert, which is rusted on the outside. It would be a waste of time to do an internal inspection. We obtained general dimensions (https://www.leelanau.gov/downloads/vvpc_park_entrance_draft_02112021.pdf). Popa said Walter did some good work and researched standards we would need to follow. We have some rough estimates of cost – anywhere from \$10,000.00 to \$20,000.00. Curbs would be

included and are a bit more and the culvert can be done by the Road Commission at cost, since this is a public entity. A bit of excavation work will need to be done to meet standards, as sloping needs to be done to prevent runoff. We need to look further into this, and bring it up to the full Parks Commission. It could be done this year; he just isn't sure if there (are funds available). We wouldn't need to go out for bids this year (if we weren't planning on completing the project in 2021).

Popa continued; the current entryway is much larger than it has to be. This isn't the final design, if we go out for bids. More comments followed. Committee Chairman Barrons remarked the island idea and positioning was part of Gosling Czubak's recommendation in the planning of parking improvements for last year's grant application. Having it in our planning, it needs to be there. Bradley remarked the island design had been approved by the full Parks Commission; it just was never done. Walter commented he threw that in. Bradley added we had previously discussed using landscape blocks. Discussion followed.

Christensen said Popa had brought up a good point on the width of the entrance. That question needs to be answered. The Veronica Valley Park (VVP) plan is in the approved five-year plan. The width needs to be determined, and we need a ballpark number better than \$10,000.00 to \$20,000.00. Clerk voiced concern on needing the information prior to preparing a formal Request for Proposals and a (detailed) scope of services. Committee Chairman Barrons said this group needs to start with determining if this is something we think can be done this year; he doesn't think so. This project would probably go for 2022. We need financial information, because the Parks 2022 budget will be solidified this summer. Barrons asked and Popa responded \$10,000.00 is for just the asphalt; \$15,000.00 is for curbs, and another \$5,000.00 for the culvert. We would need to figure out if we want to put this in this year and go out for bids. If we decide to use an estimate and propose it for next year, he doesn't want to go out and get quotes and an estimate. Christensen asked Popa, is the \$30,000.00 a pretty good number to bring up for what could possibly be done at the full Commission meeting? Popa affirmed. Christensen said we will eventually figure out what we will spend over at Myles Kimmerly Park (on debris removal). There will be money in the budget this year. The signage cost should not be a problem. The (proposed paving) might still fit within this year's budget. We will not know until the Myles Kimmerly Park (MKP) deal is finalized, it would be nice to have this in front of the full Commission. Unless there is another one, he wouldn't be afraid to think this isn't possible for this year. If \$30,000.00 is a good number, give or take, we could talk to the full Commission about potentially still doing this this year. Popa affirmed it is a good number. At a bare minimum, we should replace the culvert and have it out of the way. The Road Commission could do so at a minimum cost. Christensen concurred that would be step one, no matter what.

Bradley commented the current parking lot is "way too big." There is only one time a year do we use it (at full capacity); normally, five cars is a "big day." Committee Chairman Barrons concurred. Bradley added that lot is a maintenance nightmare to plow with the current gravel state. He would recommend paving a smaller lot. Barrons asked if we redo the entrance, do we redo the whole lot? Do we need to plan this in stages? Step one, do the culvert this year? Christensen said as we think about lot size, we should think about buses coming in and leaving.

There is an (annual) event, where the buses do come in. Christensen asked do we need to plow the whole lot, or can it be a portion? Discussion ensued on lot size and configuration.

Walter said he could do a layout for a bus turnaround and provided some figures. He will review the plan and lot and think of ways to possibly configure it. The potential might be to keep the double loaded spots, for a bus to turn around, but shorten it overall. Christensen said that would be excellent; this discussion is leading us down the line on how the parking lot should look. He noted the entrance and entrance width – if we drop a new culvert, maybe a a shorter culvert and more narrow entrance, curb and asphalt – this is the time to think about it. Walter remarked on the number and types of vehicles that use that entrance as a turnaround. Committee Chairman Barrons remarked we should support the use by a school group. Walter and Popa can continue to communicate on this. Popa said he doesn't want to miss the opportunity to follow up with the culvert work done right away. Looking at the (approved park) plan, it looked at paving for an (ADA) spot. Discussion followed.

Christensen asked Walter to review the entry width, then communicate to Popa, who can then relay that information to the Road Commission. Popa will need to know the cost of the culvert, and if that Commission (is contracted to do) the culvert work, we need the numbers to know where we are going and if whether or not we can have the Road Commission do this. We will work with County Administration on the (bids and agreement). Committee Chairman Barrons asked and Christensen responded this is just for the culvert work, and in having the Road Commission involved, we get the culvert at cost, and they do the work and bill us. It is for a County road ditch, a County road project, and they have their own wetlands person to do that permitting. Christensen would issue the soil erosion permit. Barrons said we have broadened the whole discussion from just paving the entrance to include the entire parking lot, and break it into steps for budgeting. The first step is to move on the culvert, and get that done. Walter and Popa are to determine the entry width issue, tied to a smaller parking lot. When we get into the details, we need to keep in mind that our Porta-Potties are heavily used. We should also include improvements to the Porta-Potties, as their location is tied to parking lot access.

Christensen suggested that the next committee meeting will have a broader discussion, with Walter and Popa having better numbers to discuss. Bradley will give us ideas on the Porta-Potty situation; where and what should it look like. We have a situation over at MKP. Walter said he had looked up the costs for purchasing a Porta-Potty. Bradley clarified we lease the potties and it would run about \$60.00 more a month for a UA potty. Barrons noted that the Porta-Potty improvements can also be broken into steps. We will need the right cement pad done this year. That has to be coordinated with some (potential) screening, as a separate step. He sees people use them in the winter time. We owe it to the citizens to have that service. Walter said he was surprised how many people stop just to use the potty.

Walter said when he looked up the costs, is it still profitable to lease the Porta-Potties? Bradley affirmed. Committee Chairman Barrons said he, Bradley, Walter, and Christensen will be bringing details on this to the next session. Christensen suggested the Porta-Potties being a separate agenda item for the next session. Barrons concurred.

Fishing Access – Reconstruction, Safety Considerations:

Walter provided handouts –

- Safe-flat fishing area:
https://www.leelanau.gov/downloads/vvpc_fishing_pond_draft_02112021.pdf
- Ramps and curb specs:
https://www.leelanau.gov/downloads/vvpc_ramps_doc_02112021.pdf

Walter said in relation to how we improve the access for the fishing area, he and Popa discussed using a ramp on the existing bridge. The current ramp going up to the bridge is actually in compliance; however, the existing handrails should be somewhat lower. The handrails are a safety measure. Discussion ensued. Committee Chairman Barrons questioned and Walter gave an example of local designs he has created and the problems he had encountered with following codes. Barrons commented we can build a safe, fishing access, including a ramp, that is accessible for those in a wheelchair, but not necessarily universally accessible (UA) approved. If we go out for grants, as Christensen has pointed out, we have to “match” the code. He is on the side of not doing it quite at code, if we know it is still safe. Christensen remarked UA is now the new “gold standard” for all grant opportunities. (Donors) will be looking at what we have done, and in order to receive grant money, (any projects) have to be UA. If we are trying to get Rotary Charities to help us out with a pavilion, there are some opportunities that might come up in the future. He wouldn’t want to have something staring at them that we just completed that isn’t something they would fund. He just thought that if we are doing it, why shouldn’t we do it UA? Walter gave the specifications on the proposed safe-flat fishing area. He gave a personal analogy on foot-traffic flow to the pond, and the potential for the proposed safety measures. Barrons said we will have to continue to review the documentation and build some actual costs. He remarked on potential adjustments to the horseshoe-shaped portion of the embankment.

Bradley offered comment and Christensen clarified the proposed structural changes to the pond embankment. Walter said a five-foot flat area allows kids to move around. Committee Chairman Barrons said we would have to pull some soil back. Walters referred to the next two sheets of the handout. Discussion followed.

Barrons said at the top of the slope, if we begin to drop to the fishing flat area in the horseshoe shape, do we want kids rushing down the slope, or add plantings? Walter said he thought about that, until he started watching the kids do it. Discussion ensued. Barrons said from the top flat picnic surface, to the proposed sidewalk, they will want to go different ways down the slope. Popa gave an analogy on the slope down to the edge and provided a recap of previous comments on making the embankment safe and eliminating the former putting green and installing a picnic table. You can obtain an estimate on soil removal, and the cost of installing gravel. Discussion ensued on types of path material, and eliminating the need to mow next to the pond edge. Popa stressed we need to move forward with a path that encircles the pond.

Committee Chairman Barrons concurred we will keep moving on this.

Savin Lake Services Proposal:

Committee Chairman Barrons reviewed the draft proposal from Savin Lake Services (https://www.leelanau.gov/downloads/2021_agr_savin_lake_services_02112021.pdf).

Discussion ensued. Barrons said he is looking for consent to approve the agreement to treat the ponds and have open fishing areas, but (allow for) some weed growth. He had spoken a few times with Paul Barber, the owner of Savin. They can spray with that type of pond in mind. Barrons said he is looking for a recommendation from this group, to forward on to the Parks Commission to approve the service, so that he can take it to the full County Board in March, as we need to pay at least some of it (up front). The EGLE permit fee/application has to be accomplished by mid-March.

Motion by Christensen to recommend to the Parks and Recreation Commission to move forward with a contract with Savin Lake Services to treat the pond at Veronica Valley Park in an amount not to exceed \$2,475.00. Seconded by Barrons.

Discussion – Popa asked and Christensen affirmed the motion is to recommend. He added we will know how to recommend to the County Board. Minor discussion ensued on bid requirements.

Ayes – 4 (Christensen, Popa, Walter, Barrons)

No – 0

MOTION PASSES.

Committee Chairman Barrons said it is a timing issue, and getting it ready for the fish purchase.

Public Comment:

Clerk announced the number to call in – none received.

Board Member Comment:

None.

Motion by Christensen to adjourn. Seconded by Barrons.

Meeting adjourned to the call of the Chairman at 10:33 a.m.

Laurel S. Evans, Secretary Pro Tem