

Leelanau County Parks and Recreation Commission
Tuesday, February 7, 2023
Leelanau County Government Center, Suttons Bay, Michigan
Tentative Minutes – Meeting Recorded
<https://www.leelanau.gov/meetingdetails.asp?MAId=2485>

The Veronica Valley Park Committee meeting was called to order at 9:31 a.m. by Committee Chairman, Dave Barrons.

Chairman Barrons waived recitation of the “Pledge of Allegiance.”

Roll Call: Dave Barrons, *Committee Chairman*
Steve Christensen
John Popa
F. Jon Walter (*Absent, prior notice.*)

Staff Present: Laurel Evans, Executive Assistant

Guests Present:
None.

Approval of Agenda and Late Additions/Deletions:

Motion by Christensen to approve the agenda, as presented. Seconded by Popa.

Discussion – None.

Ayes – 3 (Barrons, Christensen, Popa)

No – 0 Absent – 1 (Walter)

Motion Passes.

Public Comment:
None.

Action Items –

Approval of Minutes – January 4, 2023:

Motion by Barrons to approve the January 4, 2023, meeting minutes, as presented. Seconded by Christensen.

Discussion – None.

Ayes – 3 (Barrons, Christensen, Popa)

No – 0 Absent – 1 (Walter)

Motion Passes.

Beaver Update:

Barrons inquired and Popa responded that he had not talked with Don Clark about taking over the beaver trapping project at Veronica Valley Park. Barrons said he would follow up with Bradley on the status of the project.

GTB 2% Allocation Application:

Barrons reported that they were not awarded the 2% allocation funds for the use of goats for invasive weed control and asked the group if they wanted to apply again in the spring. Evans suggested including information and pictures of the goats in action and to offer \$300.00 to \$500.00 as part of the match to demonstrate serious interest in the grant. Barrons said he spoke with Bill Watson and asked him to proceed with another application in the spring. He added that even if Watson does not have goats, he thought they should ask him for an application that includes two weeks assistance from his crew for **Adama** mitigation.

Motion by Barrons to recommend to the Parks and Recreation Commission to utilize Bill Watson’s services to create a third application for invasive species mitigation at Veronica Valley Park. Seconded by Christensen.

Discussion – Christensen suggested that Barrons relay to Watson, Evans’ suggestions (include in the application pictures of the goats in action and offer \$300.00 to \$500.00 match).

Ayes – 3 (Barrons, Christensen, Popa)

No – 0 Absent – 1 (Walter)

Motion Passes.

Motion by Barrons to recommend to the Parks and Recreation Commission that the Parks Commission contribute \$500.00 from the Parks budget towards the match for the Tribal 2% application. Seconded by Christensen.

Discussion – none.

Ayes – 3 (Barrons, Christensen, Popa)

No – 0 Absent – 1 (Walter)

Motion Passes.

Savin Lake Services Proposal:

Barrons reported that he had not heard back from Paul Barber, owner of Savin Lake Services, but from discussions with the Lake Leelanau Lake Association (LLLA), it is likely that the Veronica Valley Ponds will need chemical treatment for weed control. Barrons said he wants to conduct an extra walkaround with Savin Lake Services and LLLA techs to eliminate being “the middleman.” Popa and Christensen supported this proposal. Barrons added that an advance of \$200.00 to Savin Lake Services is needed to cover costs for the necessary permits.

Motion by Christensen to recommend to the Parks and Recreation Commission to advance to Savin Lake Services \$200.00 so they can move ahead with obtaining permits. Seconded by Barrons.

Discussion – Popa thought the motion should be to approve \$2,325.00, the amount quoted by Savin Lake Services in their letter of January 20, 2023, for their standard maintenance service.

Christensen withdrew his motion.

Motion by Christensen to recommend to the Parks and Recreation Commission to approve the 2023 Pond Management Contract quote from Savin Lake Services for standard pond maintenance in an amount up to \$2,325.00. Seconded by Popa.

Discussion – Evans inquired and Christensen confirmed that the quote from Savin Lake Services was for three treatments.

Ayes – 3 (Barrons, Christensen, Popa)

No – 0 Absent – 1 (Walter)

Motion Passes.

The group agreed to wait for an invoice from Savin for the costs tied to permits and process payment at that time.

Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Discussion:

Barrons opened the discussion for updating the five-year master plan starting with the requirement of matching the priorities and actions of the Parks Commission with the CIP. Barrons said there will be a yearly cost requirement at Veronica Valley Park that has to be expended for invasive species management and that service should be priority one. He added that the Park's Commission goals need to be updated because some have been achieved.

Barrons said on a sidenote, he plans to investigate the local network for invasive species (located in the Traverse City Conservation District Building on the Boardman River) on how they are organized and how to become a more substantive partner.

Several projects at Veronica Valley Park were lumped into a \$200,000.00 budget line and Evans suggested breaking out each project to a separate line with its associated cost. Christensen thought the cost for weed management at Veronica Valley Park was a maintenance cost and suggested bumping up the maintenance budget from \$30,000.00 to \$50,000.00; Popa agreed. A bird viewing platform at Veronica Valley Park was not supported by Popa and Barrons. Barrons preferred instead a universally accessible walking circuit. He added that the disabled community would be well served with a looped trail that covers the front ponds and some of the prairies. Christensen pointed out that universal access portable toilets with enclosures were part of the \$55,000.00 budget for 2023. Barrons said there needs to be a link to the disabled parking space. Discussion ensued on the former parking lot project/plan. Barrons said he would add a review of Walter's design to the March 1, 2023, committee meeting to determine what can be done for \$15,000.00, and he said he would like to continue have 10- to 15-minute discussions at each meeting to update and complete a prioritized list for Veronica Valley Park.

Barrons commented that the current prairie was planted very dense and wondered if it should be expanded towards the pond. He said he would follow up with U.S. Fish & Wildlife about additional prairie plantings.

Public Comment:

None.

Board Member Comment:

Popa noted that (DNR Fisheries Biologist) Heather Hettinger needs to attend a future meeting so that she can advise the group on spraying and permitting protocol. Barrons said he would contact her to see if she could attend the April 5 (2023) Parks Commission meeting and to see if she could participate in the spring walkaround with Savin and LLLA. Evans offered to provide Hettinger's contact information, if needed. Evans commented that April 5 was good timing with regard to moving it to the April Board of Commissioner's meeting.

Motion to Adjourn:

By consensus, Chairman Barrons called for the meeting to adjourn.

With no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 10:29 a.m.

Lori Eubanks, Recording Secretary