

Leelanau County Parks and Recreation Commission

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

Tentative Minutes – Meeting Recorded

Leelanau County Government Center, Suttons Bay, Michigan

<https://www.leelanau.gov/meetingdetails.asp?MAId=2307>

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

Chairman Noonan led the “Pledge of Allegiance.”

Roll Call:

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

Staff Present:

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

Public Comment:

Evans noted that she included in the commissioners’ binders an overview of “Leelanau County Parks” with a list of “Recommended Capital Improvement Projects.” She encouraged the group to keep this document handy to note changes and/or additions relating to park projects. She said in a month or so the Planning and Community Development Director, Trudy Galla, will issue a blanket request for 2022 additions to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Keeping notes will ensure future plans for the parks will not be left out of the CIP.

Agenda Additions/Deletions:

Motion by Godbout to approve the agenda. Seconded by Popa.

Discussion – none.

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

No – 0 Absent – 3 (Frerichs, Lautner, Robbins)

Motion Passes.

Action Items –

Approval of Minutes:

- February 2, 2022 (Regular Session)

Motion by Popa to approve the Regular Session minutes of February 2, 2022. Seconded by Barrons.

Discussion – none.

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

No – 0 Absent – 3 (Frerichs, Lautner, Robbins)

Motion Passes.

Approval of Financials:

- Transaction History Listing Report – February 1, 2022 Thru February 28, 2022
- Revenue & Expense Report – Period Ending February 28, 2022

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

Discussion – Bradley noted expenditures were at 2.22 percent. Chairman Noonan reported that he did not have a confirmed date from Tim Newman (Kasson Contracting, Inc.) for removal of the grub shack from Myles Kimmerly Park. Evans said she contacted Newman via email and advised him that she will process the paperwork to get the check cut for the moving permit, but that he would need to pull the permit. She added that the permit cost is \$150.00 for a commercial move or \$100.00 for a residential move. Newman had confirmed to her that it would be a commercial move. Godbout inquired about why there was zero appropriations in the “Temporary Office Assistant” line item. Evans explained that the Accounting Department would prepare a budget amendment to fund the position. Evans suggested that he meet with Jennifer Zywicki, Finance Director, for a more in-depth explanation of the accounting process. Godbout clarified that his question was if there was action needed by the Parks Commission to get the allocation started. Evans responded that there was not.

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

No – 0 Absent – 3 (Frerichs, Lautner, Robbins)

Motion Passes.

Grant Discussion:

Smith referred the group to the orange line of the .83-mile loop on the trail map for Myles Kimmerly Park (part of packet – link on page one) explaining that this is the trail the Myles Kimmerly Park Committee is proposing to be paved. He said it would be one of few trails in the area that would have accessibility access. Including a path from the parking lot and to the restrooms, the total paving project would be approximately one mile. He said there was a bit of a rush to meet the April 1, 2022, grant deadline to apply for a Recreation Passport grant (for a project cost of \$150,000.00 or less) or for the Michigan Trust Fund grant (for a project cost above \$150,000.00). Smith shared information about grant requirements and the scoring mechanism, adding that a matching donation from the County and/or the public would also be needed. He said the projects are scored on items such as accessibility access, need, and public support (e.g., letters from the public, especially the disabled). Godbout noted that there was \$200,000.00 in the CIP for 2023 for the trail and inquired if that was the anticipated year for commencement of the project. Smith affirmed 2023 as the year. Godbout also inquired if the trail at “the school” would lessen the need for the trail at Myles Kimmerly Park. Smith responded that the trail at the school was more for the school’s use; the Myles Kimmerly Park trail would be for public use.

Barrons had cautionary words for the effort to try and meet the April 1st (2022) grant deadline. He warned that it was a lengthy process preparing for the presentation to the County Board of

Commissioners just to get approval to apply for the grant. He did not want to discourage the effort, but based on his experience with the Veronica Valley Park grant application, he said there would be extensive work preparing for the many detailed questions that would be posed from the County Board of Commissioners. Smith said he would continue moving forward to lay the groundwork for next year (2023). He said he was not discouraged, and if they had to wait until next year, it would allow more time to get the process done right. Chairman Noonan expressed appreciation for Smith's enthusiasm, adding that the paving project has been talked about for a long time and it is one that would benefit many.

Survey Monkey:

Evans explained that at a previous meeting, she had proposed posting a QR code with a survey soliciting feedback from the public about what they liked or what needed improvement at the parks. She said she would work with the park committees to draft no more than five questions for the survey and have something ready by the April Parks Commission meeting. Barrons commented that the information gathered would be helpful for the public input requirement on future grant applications.

Parks Brochure Review:

Christensen reported that he talked to "Paul" at the Enterprise about adding park amenities in the parks brochure. Bradley said he was still searching for autumn pictures for updating the color tour magazine ad. Discussion ensued regarding the need for more brochures. Christensen said he will bring the remaining brochures to the next meeting to hand over to the group so they can replenish at various locations around the area and deplete the current stock. Evans said the QR code on the inside of the brochures was inaccurate, but the stickers placed on the outside show the true website. Walter commented that visually impaired people do not distinguish the colors red and green and thought this might be a consideration when printing new brochures. Christensen said he will call the Enterprise to keep things moving along. There was discussion about where brochures had been distributed previously. Smith suggested including brochures in "welcome wagon" packets for new county residents. In response to a question from Lautner at a previous meeting, Evans reported that the County parks page had 710 hits in 2021 and the Parks page received 949 hits. (Reference page 12 of packet – February 16, 2022, email from Trudy Galla.) Noonan said county park information is especially helpful to visitors seeking free public parks. Smith thought adding information about things that are "free" (e.g., fishing at Veronica Valley Park) would be good information to add to the new brochures.

Wayfaring Signage:

Barrons asked the group for review and approval of the proposed wayfaring signage for Veronica Valley and Myles Kimmerly Parks (part of packet; link on page one). The white dots for the trails replaced the black hatched lines to make the trails stand out better and the post numbers were enlarged. Godbout asked about the missing distance notations on the Veronica Valley signs. Barrons responded that the park was small, so he did not see the need for the notation. Popa concurred. Walter added that the scale embedded at the bottom of the sign would be useful in determining distance. Smith, Christensen, and Godbout supported adding

the distance notation. Chairman Noonan said it was a simple fix so he suggested adding the distances.

Motion by Christensen to add distances to the Veronica Valley signs. Seconded by Smith.

Discussion – none.

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

No – 0 Absent – 3 (Frerichs, Lautner, Robbins)

Motion Passes.

Barrons said he would return with a new mock-up at the next Parks meeting.

Committee Reports and Recommendations –

Myles Kimmerly Park Committee:

Smith reported (in Committee Chairman Frerich’s absence) that, as previously discussed, they will wait until 2023 to apply for the grant to pave the loop trail to ensure thorough preparation. Smith added that the cost of oil could drastically increase the cost to pave the trail. Chairman Noonan said he would talk with Elmer’s to determine how long their estimate would be honored. (Elmer’s provided a verbal estimate to Robbins for \$125,000.00 to \$150,000.00.) Christensen added that the Myles Kimmerly Park Committee discussed a shed addition to the maintenance building for storage and office space and a kiosk with an enclosure for the portable toilets with accessible access and a water bottle filling station. He said depending on the cost and the balance in the budget, they will report back to the Parks Commission on the status of these projects. Noonan encouraged them to “keep the ball rolling.” Walter asked Bradley if there was potable water at Myles Kimmerly Park. Bradley responded that normally potable water is available; however, with the ongoing grub shack project, he said currently there is not. Smith asked about the condition of the well and Bradley responded that the well was in good shape but the electrical needs to be connected. Bradley added that the well gets tested four times a year and the tests come back with no issues.

Old Settlers Park Committee:

Bradley reported that he got an estimate for engineered wood fiber mulch (for the playground) for \$1,200.00 to \$2,800.00, including installation and cleanup. To procure locally, he can get “playground mulch” which they have to ship in. Christensen said the engineered wood fiber mulch is more expensive, but it lasts longer, stays in place, and requires less maintenance, so he said the higher cost was worth the benefits. Noonan said Zack Stanz has agreed to supply and install some boulders for the barrier to the swing set area at the park. Christensen suggested someone should follow up on the warranty stipulations for the playground equipment. He wondered if volunteers help to install the equipment, if it would void the warranty. He added that the location of the installation is important so the equipment does not have to be moved again if, for instance, Risk Management found an issue with the placement. He said a landscape architect or a specialized company or perhaps Planning Commission member Nate Griswold’s expertise was needed. Bradley said he thought that the cost of installation by the playground equipment company (Playground Boss) was \$8,000.00, and that the warranty was extended if they do the work. Noonan said the project should be done by experts who know how many workers are needed and who have the tools and expertise that is required. He added that the

project needs to keep moving ahead so the playground will be installed by May or June. Christensen suggested talking with Lautner (Chairman of Old Settlers Park Committee) to call a meeting, if necessary. Evans suggested a Zoom meeting if the Playground Boss representative could not make an in-person meeting. Smith inquired if Bradley was responsible for maintenance on playground equipment. Bradley responded that he was, but that the work was minimal based on past maintenance for Veronica Valley playground equipment.

Veronica Valley Park Committee:

Committee Chairman Barrons asked Evans about the status of the bid for the excavation work for the entrance at Veronica Valley Park. Evans said the bids were opened and awaiting review. Barrons reported that no firm decision was made on the parking lot design, but he said an amendment was made to the scope of work on the bid relating to alignment of the entrance to the parking lot. He said there should be complete flexibility to the parking lot design now that the alignment issue has been resolved.

Christensen said he had emailed DNR Fisheries Biologist Heather Hettinger regarding the process for paying for the fish used to stock the fishing pond. He said they will have the invoice well in advance so payment can be handed over when the fish are delivered. He said Hettinger will call or Zoom in to the April meeting with details. He reported that last year they purchased 242.2 bluegills totaling \$500.00.

Public Comment:

None.

Commissioner Comments:

Godbout requested to have the topic of the CIP added to the next agenda because he saw a disconnect between projects being discussed versus projects included in the CIP. Evans explained that the County Commissioners felt “blindsided” because they did not always see Park projects until they were presented for approval. That is why the group needs to review projects and ensure they are included in the CIP. She added that if the County Board is handing over money, they want to see it was planned for in advance. Popa commended Evans for creating the new binders and for keeping the Parks Commissioners organized. There was a hearty concurrence from the group.

Chairperson Comments:

None.

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned to the call of Chairman Noonan at 4:09 p.m.

Lori D. Eubanks, Recording Secretary