

Leelanau County Parks and Recreation Commission
Veronica Valley Park Committee
Monday, April 12, 2021 – 1:00 p.m.
Leelanau County Government Center, Suttons Bay, Michigan
Tentative Minutes – Meeting Recorded
<https://www.leelanau.gov/meetingdetails.asp?MAId=2134>

The meeting was called to order by Committee Chairman Dave Barrons at 11:00 a.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America was led by Committee Chairman Barrons.

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

Guests present.

Approval of Agenda and Late Additions/Deletions:

Christensen remarked that Maintenance Worker W. Scott Bradley is available by phone; he had left a bench brochure for review. Committee Chairman Barrons suggested adding the bench discussion as Item #1a.

Motion by Christensen to accept the agenda amended. Seconded by Popa.

Discussion – none.

Ayes – 3 (Christensen, Popa, Barrons)

No – 0 Absent – 1 (Walter)

MOTION PASSES.

Public Comment:

The Clerk provided the number to call in for public comment (231-256-8109) – no comment received.

Action Items –

Approval of March 15, 2021, Minutes:

Motion by Christensen to approve the minutes of March 15, 2021, as presented. Seconded by Popa.

Discussion – none.

Ayes – 3 (Christensen, Popa, Barrons)

No – 0 Absent – 1 (Walter)

MOTION PASSES.

Bench Discussion:

Christensen noted there is a standard bench that Bradley orders, and he could order that at any time. We use these same benches at Myles Kimmerly Park; Bradley purchases the wood locally. We just need to let him know and Bradley will get it ordered. Christensen described the benches available. Discussion ensued. Committee Chairman Barrons said the County Board has

a (Building & Grounds) Committee which will review the request. The dollar figure he had added was not to exceed \$500.00. Barrons said the Lake Leelanau Lake Association (LLA) Kids' Fishing Day Committee does not (have an opinion on bench selection). Popa questioned and Barrons responded no action is required on our part at this time.

Parking Lot Entry Design Update:

Committee Chairman Barrons asked Popa, relative to Popa's discussion with the Leelanau County Road Commission, which then led to a request for a narrower entrance, and subsequently Walter then drew up a new proposed rendering (for the reconfigured parking lot) of a narrower entry. Popa said when we met last month, we came up with a recommendation to put in front of the (Parks Commission), and that recommendation was then forwarded on to the County Board of Commissioners. He had met with the Road Commission since that last session, they toured the site, (Manager Brendan Mullane) then forwarded a letter to Executive Assistant Laurel Evans. Road Commission staff disagree with (the need for) a 100-foot culvert; (the current parking lot configuration) doesn't meet standards and is unsafe, when you do not have good control of people entering and leaving (the park).

Popa continued; he then met with Walter, who provided a revised sketch for a 30-foot entrance. In talking with both Bradley and Walter, the proposed signage in the center will have to come out and installed on the side. If and when this project gets approved, we will "paint" the lot the way Bradley wants it for plowing. Lot spaces now are deeper than 18-feet. We will make the stripes deeper, and still have a nice spot for buses to turn around – https://www.leelanau.gov/downloads/vvp_parking_lot_drawing_04122021.pdf. We will have a 30-foot entrance, and the new culvert won't be 100-feet long. There may be some "Miss Dig" issues. If and when we get approval by the Board... we need to make sure there are no barriers there. The (reconfigured lot) will be a nice, wide parking lot.

Committee Chairman Barrons commented Popa will be going before the County Board tomorrow, relative to the culvert replacement. The Road Commission has dictated the decision to narrow the entrance. Do we need to go in front of the Board? Discussion followed. Barrons said in terms of width, Walter's design (reflects inclusion of) buses and their turning radius. Christensen said it looks good to narrow the entrance to the parking lot for safety; it's hard to argue that. It will be different, but it will be a good change. Discussion followed on prioritizing the project with available funding with other parks projects.

Committee Chairman Barrons said that Frerichs had pointed out that Parks & Rec capital expenses and maintenance totals \$80,000.00; is that a good representation on the number of funds to spend on the current project? Evans indicated a discussion with Accounting staff would be able to give members a better idea of available funding. Christensen said we will need to touch base with Bradley on what that number represents. We do have a bottom-line accounting practice with Parks, and have been careful not to go into the "red". Committee Chairman Barrons said he has never had a sense of how much money Parks and Recreation has in total. For the culvert, trail debris cleanup and weeds eradication – how much money of this year's budget is left? Popa commented this culvert is "failing"; we could call this maintenance if we had to. "I'm ready to spend money."

Committee Chairman Barrons said his intent with the discussion of the parking lot redesign and the culvert, is that there is no other action required now. Walter had contacted him late last week that all flights out were canceled due to the volcano eruption where he is vacationing.

Culvert Replacement Update:

Already discussed.

Invasive Weed Management Spray Plan Review:

Committee Chairman Barrons said he had hoped to get an aerial photo for the group to review. He plans to speak with Savin Lake Services soon on how to have a mixture of weedy and clear areas, without wiping out everything. Discussion ensued on the fishing pond. Popa asked and Barrons affirmed they are talking about spraying the water. Discussion followed on potential treatment areas. He will speak with Savin and report back at the next meeting.

Committee Chairman Barrons added we have talked of getting control of the weeds and then moving away from spray. The LLLA Kids' Fishing Day Committee member Lonnie Rademacher has urged him to speak with someone on this alternate method. There was an article in *The Leelanau Ticker* about laying burlap tarps down to control the milfoil (<https://www.leelanauticker.com/news/lake-leelanau-braces-for-a-second-summer-combating-the-new-weed-on-the-block/>). They do have tarp availability – perhaps we could use this next year. This is where we would really want the LLLA to organize volunteer manpower for tarp placement and removal. That is looking ahead for subsequent years. Christensen said they are also looking at the EGLE (The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy) permitting for that process in Lake Leelanau. Barrons asked and Christensen responded he would imagine if they need a permit for that lake, we would also need one for the pond. When he presented to the County Board, he was quizzed on the possibility of dredging for weed control. He will speak with DNR Fisheries Biologist Heather Hettinger on this issue. Barrons said dredging was the best bet for the longest solution with the best impact; can we get a ballpark cost estimate? Discussion followed on the invasive weed removal options. Barrons to follow up with Brian Price on the tarps and will report. Christensen asked Barrons to flesh out with Savin what is their idea of dredging, how much is recommended for removal, and where would the materials go. Discussion ensued. Barrons to follow up before the next Committee meeting.

Grand Traverse Band 2% Allocation Request Update:

Committee Chairman Barrons said he has received a completed application from Bill Watson of YouthWorks. The full request is \$22,000.00, with 48% funded by the Tribe, and 52% from a match from two outside sources Watson has identified to provide the local match. He will bring this before Commissioners during its May Executive Board session.

Motion by Christensen to recommend to the County Parks and Recreation Commission to follow through with the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians 2% allocation on behalf of Bill Watson of the YouthWorks group, for assistance in invasive species eradication at Veronica Valley Park. Seconded by Barrons.

Discussion – none.

Ayes – 3 (Christensen, Popa, Barrons)

No – 0 Absent (Walter)

RECOMMENDATION PASSES.

Committee Chairman Barrons remarked the work will include the goats; he has been visualizing where the paddocks can be set up and has looked at some extension of the prairie. The goats could do the “mowing”, as had been done prior to seeding the existing prairie. Popa asked and Barrons affirmed he will make sure it is on the agenda for the Parks Regular session.

Friends of Veronica Valley Park Discussion, Planning:

Committee Chairman Barrons commented he has said several times, and put it in part of the second grant application, that part of our plan is to establish a volunteer structure; we could still do so this year. Forester Kama Ross has really shown the way, by organizing volunteers with the tree planting projects she has completed. He was amazed at both of the planting sessions from last year. We had a couple show up that because of Covid, had purchased an RV. They were traveling the country on their way to British Columbia, and if they found a volunteer project, they would do it. He is proposing that they have a booth at Kids Fishing Day and he will announce an organization, Friends of Veronica Valley Park. In working with Bradley, we can come up with an “evergreen” list of volunteer projects. Ross is really behind this. This effort will go on. Popa noted there was a nice resume of applicants wanting to be appointed to the Parks and Recreation Commission. Those names, address and phone numbers are a good place to start. Christensen commented make sure you garner Ross’s list, as she is retiring in October. Discussion followed.

Public Comment:

Clerk announced the number to call in – none received.

Board Member Comment:

Popa said he would like a potential safety walkway around the pond on the next meeting agenda. He had met with an engineer, and they came up with a real good design. The cost (proposed) is low. He met with Bradley to determine where we can dump some of the fill. He would also like this item on the next meeting agenda. Instead of a four-foot walkway, make it seven-foot. More comments followed.

Committee Chairman Barrons asked members to review their schedules for the next committee meeting. Discussion followed.

Motion by Christensen to adjourn. Seconded by Popa.

Meeting adjourned to the call of the Chairman at 11:50 a.m.

Laurel S. Evans, Secretary Pro Tem