

Leelanau County Parks and Recreation Commission

Regular Session – Wednesday, September 7, 2022, 3:00 p.m.

Tentative Minutes – Meeting Recorded

Leelanau County Government Center, Suttons Bay, Michigan

<https://www.leelanau.gov/meetingdetails.asp?MAId=2377>

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:

John Arens, *absent/prior notice*
Dave Barrons, *Vice-Chairman*
Steve Christensen
Don Frerichs, *absent/prior notice*
Charles Godbout
Melinda Lautner, *absent*
Casey Noonan, *Chairman*
John Popa
Rick Robbins
F. Jon Walter

Staff Present:

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

Public Comment:

Steve Stier, President, Leelanau County Historical Preservation Society (LCHPS) said he was “concerned and surprised” to learn that the County parks could be sold. He added that the people he solicited money from for the Poor Farm preservation were unaware as well. He encouraged the Parks and Recreation Commission to make every effort to find a way to ensure county parks are protected from being sold into perpetuity.

Agenda Additions/Deletions:

Motion by Godbout to approve the agenda, as presented. Seconded by Barrons.

Discussion – None.

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

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

Motion Passes

Action Items –

Approval of Minutes – August 3, 2022, Regular Session:

Motion by Robbins to approve the August 3, 2022, regular session minutes, as presented.

Seconded by Barrons.

Discussion – None.

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

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

Motion Passes

Approval of Financials:

- Transaction History Listing Report – June 1, 2022, through August 31, 2022
- Revenue & Expense Reports – Period Ending June 30, 2022; July 31, 2022; and August 31, 2022

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

Discussion – None.

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

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

Motion Passes

Committee Reports and Recommendations –

Myles Kimmerly Park Committee:

Noonan reported that he talked with Greg Julian, Kasson Township Supervisor, and Julian said that a definitive response from the County (regarding the proposal presented by Tim Stein, Cleveland Township Supervisor and himself to purchase park land from Myles Kimmerly Park to build a fire station) would help them decide whether to pursue the purchase of the property or move on to other options.

Evans reminded the group that the decision whether or not to sell the Myles Kimmerly Park property is ultimately up to the County Board of Commissioners, but she said for the September 13, 2022, County Board meeting she would add to the agenda whatever recommendation resulted from today's meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Motion by Popa “that the Leelanau County Parks and Recreation Commission reviewed the request by Cleveland and Kasson Township fire departments to sell part of Myles Kimmerly Park and we do not recommend it.”

Discussion – Evans reminded the group that there was another entity (Glen Lake Community Schools) also interested in the property, so she suggested not making the motion specific to Cleveland and Kasson Townships. Popa responded that he was not opposed to selling the parkland, but would not vote to do so in this instance. Godbout added that a finding of facts included: 1) that prior park master plans stated that Myles Kimmerly Park would be a combined passive and active recreational use park; 2) that it would be park property into perpetuity; 3) that it has been determined that a current board can override that decision; and 4) and that it is the Parks and Recreation Commission's recommendation to the County Board that they not pursue the sale of any Myles Kimmerly Park property. Evans suggested, “I move to recommend that the Parks and Recreation Commission recommend to the County Board of Commissioners to affirm County Board resolutions 1995-005 (resolution granting use of Myles Kimmerly Park to MSU-E 4-H) and 2000-005 – Parks Perpetuity, to retain the parks property as County property.” Popa added, “...at this time.” Robbins suggested, “...to retain solely as park property” versus “...to retain as County property.” Evans then suggested, “...to retain solely as parks.” Robbins suggested including Old Settlers and Veronica Valley Parks in the motion. Noonan said it made sense to include the two other parks in the recommendation because the other parks were included in the resolutions.

Motion amended by Popa that the Parks and Recreation Commission recommends to the Leelanau County Board of Commissioners to (continue to) preserve and maintain Myles Kimmerly Park, Old Settlers Park, and Veronica Valley Park as park land, as outlined in the following County Board Resolutions: 1995-005 (resolution granting use of Myles Kimmerly Park to MSU-E 4-H) 2000-005 – Parks Perpetuity. Seconded by Walter.

Discussion – Barrons inquired of Popa why he favored selling the property to build a fire station. Popa said he felt there was community benefit in having a fire station at that location, especially “on a piece of land that we don’t use for anything.” Evans said there is still interest by a couple who want to contribute towards the building of a dog park.

Ayes – 7 (Barrons, Christensen, Godbout, Noonan, Robbins, Walter)

No – Popa Absent – 3 (Arens, Frerichs, Lautner)

Motion Passes

Old Settlers Park Committee:

Noonan reported in Lautner’s absence. He said, though it rained all day, there was a decent turnout for the picnic with about 160 meals served. He said enthusiasm seemed to be dwindling for the event and that it would be nice if interest could be revived. He added that the new play structure was a big hit with the kids. Godbout inquired if the chapel had been power washed. Bradley responded that it had not. He said it was low priority given other projects on his list. Noonan mentioned that the gazebo needed to be power washed, stripped, and painted and suggested that it be a project for next year (2023). Godbout inquired about approval levels to “bless” a maintenance expense. Bradley responded that up to \$2,000.00 could be approved by his boss and up to \$5,000.00 could be approved by the County Administrator. Godbout said he was inquiring in case an estimate for the gazebo project was above \$5,000.00 to which Barrons responded that bids first need to go through the County Board of Commissioners. Christensen discussed three quotes (two verbal and one written) for an update of the master plan for Myles Kimmerly Park. All quotes were under \$5,000.00, so he said, per the County Administrator, the Parks and Recreation Commission can decide which to select. Christensen said the Myles Kimmerly Park Committee will meet first then come back with a recommendation to the Parks and Recreation Commission. Noonan remarked that he needed to follow-up with Lautner regarding a donation and a request from the family of Nancy Lamb for a memorial bench and the purchase of a small piece of playground equipment at Old Settlers Park.

Veronica Valley Park Committee:

Motion by Barrons to accept the proposal from St. Mary’s school for the cross-country event at Veronica Valley Park, as it has been held before, pending completion of required documents (insurance, etc.). Seconded by Walters.

Discussion – Barrons inquired and Popa confirmed that date of the event is October 15, 2022. Popa reminded Barrons that Popp would be excavating at the park some time in October. Barrons said Popp would be starting the project “next week” and that he thought the project would be completed prior to the cross-country event.

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

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

Motion Passes

Barrons discussed the wayfinding signage and pointed out the example in the room (post with sign mounted) which, he said, would be the same design for Myles Kimmerly Park. He said he would get with Bradley to plan how he could assist with installation. He also reported potholes in the fishing walkway. Bradley explained the height of the post for the signage was determined by national park standards. Walters said wheelchair bound visitors could easily view the signage and Bradley added that small children could also easily view at the recommended height. Barrons said he asked for assistance via email from biologist Brian Price, in identifying weeds in the ponds. He has not heard back. Christensen suggested calling the “district office” and asking for the invasive species network. Christensen also suggested talking with DNR Fisheries Biologist Heather Hettinger. Barrons again reported that Popp would begin the project for the entrance at Veronica Valley Park “next week.”

Public Comment:

Steve Stier (LCHPS) inquired if the company that created the previous master plan for Myles Kimmerly Park was one of the three estimates that Christensen gathered for consideration for the project.

Commissioner Comments:

Evans noted that although the Parks Commission was unsuccessful during the first cycle for 2% Allocation funding from the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, they had encouraged resubmission of the application for the second cycle. All applications are due to the County Board for the November meeting cycle. Discussion ensued.

Chairperson Comments:

None.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned to the call of Chairman Noonan at 3:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Lori D. Eubanks, Recording Secretary