

# Leelanau County Parks and Recreation Commission

Regular Session – Wednesday, September 15, 2021

## Tentative Minutes – Meeting Recorded

Leelanau County Government Center, Suttons Bay, Michigan

<https://www.leelanau.gov/meetingdetails.asp?MAId=2196>

The meeting was called to order by Commission Chairman Casey Noonan at 3:02 p.m.

The “Pledge of Allegiance” was led by Chairman Noonan.

Roll Call:  
Dave Barrons, *Vice-Chairman*  
Steve Christensen  
Don Frerichs  
Melinda Lautner  
Casey Noonan, *Chairman*  
John Popa  
Rick Robbins – *Absent/Prior notice*  
Michael Smith  
F. Jon Walter  
Todd Yeomans

Staff Present:  
Jerry Culman, Maintenance Director  
Laurel Evans, Executive Assistant

Guests Present:  
None.

Public Comment:  
None.

Agenda Additions/Deletions:  
Popa and Lautner requested to add a budget update to the agenda. Per Popa and Lautner’s request, Chairman Noonan directed to add a budget update to the agenda.

**Motion by Smith to approve the agenda, as amended. Seconded by Lautner.**  
Discussion – None.  
**Ayes – 9 (Smith, Walter, Yeomans, Barrons, Christensen, Frerichs, Lautner, Noonan, Popa)**  
**No – 0 Absent – 1 (Robbins) Motion Passes.**

Action Items –  
Approval of Minutes – Regular Session, August 18, 2021:  
**Motion by Lautner to approve the Regular Session Meeting minutes of August 18, 2021, as presented. Seconded by Smith.**  
Discussion – None.  
**Ayes – 8 (Lautner, Noonan, Smith, Walter, Yeomans, Barrons, Christensen, Frerichs)**  
**No – 0 Absent – 1 (Robbins) Abstain –1 (Popa) Motion Passes.**

Budget Update:

Lautner reported that, to date, there is a balance of \$45,000.00 in Capital Outlay and \$4,000.00 in Capital Outlay Under \$5,000.00. She added that there is money in the budget to cover transcription of the minutes and, though she was unsure whose budget would cover the cost (she guessed that it would be the County Administrator’s budget), she said the plan is to “convince” (Executive Assistant) Laurel Evans to continue providing administrative support to the Commission in return for a monthly stipend.

Popa inquired if the \$45,000.00 in Capital Outlay was to be used for playground equipment (at Old Settlers Park – \$20,000.00); a pavilion (at Veronica Valley Park – \$10,000.00); and the entrance to the parking lot (at Veronica Valley Park – \$15,000.00). Lautner confirmed that Popa was correct.

Approval of Financials:

Chairman Noonan reported that the Commission has spent 62.28% of its budget as of August 31, 2021.

**Motion by Yeomans to approve the Financial Reports (Revenue and Expense Report Period Ending August 31, 2021; Transaction History Listing Report – August 1-31, 2021), as presented. Seconded by Barrons.**

Discussion – None.

**Ayes – 9 (Yeomans, Barrons, Christensen, Frerichs, Lautner, Noonan, Popa, Smith, Walter)**

**No – 0 Absent – 1 (Robbins)**

**Motion Passes.**

Committee Reports and Recommendations –

Myles Kimmerly Park Committee:

Frerichs reported that the grub shack would be removed within the next month (October 2021). At Frerichs’ request, Evans read the following recommendation: “Recommend to the Parks and Recreation Commission to exercise Option #3 to replace the grub shack at Myles Kimmerly Park.” Frerichs explained in detail the design of Option #3. He said if there is money left in this year’s budget, the plan would be to lay the slab for the replacement building before winter; however, that could not be done until the size of the new building was decided. Frerichs asked for input from the commissioners. Discussion ensued that resulted in more questions than answers. Evans advised that before the project goes before the Board of Commissioners there needs to be a clear plan and a firm cost. Chairman Noonan said the plan needed more work by the Myles Kimmerly Park Committee and suggested that they come back to the October regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission with all the details ironed out.

Evans offered for the Commission’s consideration, changing the meeting schedule for 2022. She said because the Commissions’ projects seem to come under time crunches, moving the meeting date to the first or second Wednesday of the month would buy them more time to prepare for business needing to go before the Board of Commissioners. Noonan said pushing their Commission meetings to the end of the month might work as well. Frerichs said his committee would “get all their ducks in order” and call for a special meeting to work out the details of the grub shack replacement before the October Parks and Rec regular meeting. The

recommendation made to the Parks and Recreation Commission was withdrawn and will be held until the October Parks and Rec meeting.

Old Settlers Park Committee:

Lautner suggested that if there is money left in the budget at the end of the year, that they should purchase the playground equipment for Old Settlers Park to save money for next year's budget.

Veronica Valley Park Committee:

**Motion by Barrons to approve the recommendation from the Veronica Valley Park Committee to the Parks and Recreation Commission to approve the October 16, 2021, St. Mary's cross-country meet at Veronica Valley from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Seconded by Smith.**

Discussion – None.

**Ayes – 9 (Barrons, Christensen, Frerichs, Lautner, Noonan, Popa, Smith, Walter, Yeomans)  
No – 0 Absent – 1 (Robbins) Motion Passes.**

Evans discussed the potential that the County could receive \$8.4 million versus the \$4.2 million anticipated from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) because the state could be matching the ARPA dollars. Though she said she was unsure of eligibility, she thought it was worth a shot for the Parks and Rec Commission to submit a list of projects for County Board consideration of an award from the ARPA money. She added that as part of the Board of Commissioners' selection process, a public input meeting will be conducted sometime in October and funding decisions made after that. She said the deadline for the public to submit their requests was August 13, 2021, but she thought the County Administrator would work with them and accept their list, though it is after the deadline.

Noonan asked Frerichs to compose a request for ARPA funds for the walking trail at Myles Kimmerly Park. Evans suggested a deadline of October 12, 2021, to have the submission ready. Yeomans said to be sure to include an alpine skiing trail in the description for the walking trail request. Popa commented that paving the walking trail at Myles Kimmerly Park could cost between \$200,000.00 to \$400,000.00, compared to pickle ball courts at a cost of \$50,000.00, or playground equipment for Old Settlers Park at a cost of \$20,000.00. He thought the Parks and Recreation Commission would have a better chance at receiving ARPA funding for the lower dollar items and suggested submitting for them over funding for paving the walking trail.

Walter said that pickle ball is the fastest growing sport in the United States. He said the average age of a player is 55 years old and in Leelanau County, the average age is 56. He said adding pickle ball courts at Myles Kimmerly Park is something to be seriously considered. Smith said he noticed at Herman Park that all the pickle ball courts were full. Frerichs thought the walking trail was equally important and added that the walking trail was in the five-year plan and pickle ball was not. Popa suggested submitting a request for everything. Evans offered to show to whoever was interested the binder of submissions already received so they could get an idea of how to submit a request. She said the directions provided to the public were to complete a three-page document that outlines the request and includes potential cost.

Barrons continued his report on Veronica Valley Park. He said he would be researching the possibility of purchasing video cameras to mount near the dumpsters in the parks as a deterrent to illegal dumping. He also discussed an idea presented by Evans at the Veronica Valley Park committee meeting about conducting a survey using Survey Monkey to gather public input about what enhancements/improvements the public would like to see in the County parks. Evans explained that a scan code specific to each park could be printed on a document and posted on the signboards at the parks. Visitors could then use their smart phones to scan the code to complete the survey. Barrons said he would also be checking on the status of the ortho photos that are needed to move forward with wayfair signage in the parks. He said the last he heard the photos were to arrive in September.

Public Comment:

Evans confessed she was not initially thrilled with the idea of an offsite meeting; however, she said at the recent offsite committee meeting conducted at Myles Kimmerly Park, she saw how the group lit up and how ideas flowed as they looked over the lay of the land; therefore, she thought each park committee should consider once-a-year, offsite meetings. She said that it was difficult for staff to accommodate the Open Meetings Act (OMA) when offsite meetings were conducted, but she felt they were productive and worth the effort.

Jerry Culman, Maintenance Director, and a concerned citizen, expressed his concern about the pit toilets located at Old Settlers Park and Myles Kimmerly Park. He said he was particularly concerned with the one at Myles Kimmerly Park because it is near a residential area. He said it is an accident waiting to happen – a child could fall into the hole. He said pit toilets are unsanitary and a safety hazard and he would like to see them removed and replaced with portable toilets. Popa asked for this topic to be added to the agenda for the next meeting. Discussion followed about the pros and cons of flushing toilets and sinks with running water at public restrooms.

Board Member Comment:

None.

Adjournment:

**Motion by Noonan to adjourn. Seconded by Christensen.**

**Ayes – 8 (Noonan, Popa, Smith, Walter, Yeomans, Barrons, Christensen, Frerichs, Lautner)**

**No – 0 Absent – 1 (Robbins)**

**Motion Passes.**

The meeting adjourned to the call of Chairman Noonan at 4:01 p.m.

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Lori Eubanks, Recording Secretary