



Allegan County Parks, Recreation, & Tourism

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September 2, 2008

Human Services Building

Spartan Conference Room- West

8:30am

Minutes of a Scheduled meeting of the Allegan County Parks and Recreation Commission

A scheduled meeting of the Allegan County Parks and Recreation Commission was called to order by the Chair Bruce Culver on Tuesday, September 2, 2008 at 8:30am in the Spartan Conference Room in the lower level of the Human Services Building, 3255 122nd Ave, Suite 102, Allegan, Michigan.

Roll Call showed the following members:

PRESENT:	Mark DeYoung	Georgina Rozeboom-Doster
	Larry Rasmussen	Becky Rininger
	Fritz Spreitzer	Robert Kaarlie
	Kelle Tobolic	Chuck Pullen
	Maryln Langeance	Bruce Culver

ABSENT: None

Also Present: Kevin Ricco, Parks Director
Angel Schneider, Parks and Tourism Clerk
Ronda Foreman, Parks and Tourism Clerk

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

There were no additions or deletions to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF AUGUST MINUTES

Motion by Mark De Young, seconded by Chuck Pullen, to approve the August 5, 2008 meeting minutes as printed and mailed. Motion carried by all present.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Although the returns are not back from the Labor Day weekend, Kevin suspects they will be good due to the beautiful weather experienced. Kevin also reported that eight of the past ten weekends were either rainy or cooler weather on Saturday or Sunday, with three or four of them being total washouts. Boat launch revenues are down for the summer, most likely due to the high cost of fuel. Season Pass sales are also down slightly overall from last year, although camping should come out good comparatively.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Many members of the public participated in the Littlejohn Lake Park Master Plan discussion as follows: Daniel Newman of Allegan; Evey Huppe of Hopkins; Barb Wroblewski of Hopkins; Randy Wilson of Dorr; Kris Allred

of Hamilton; Carol Hiscock of Allegan; Jill Gale of Allegan; Edward Grollemond of Allegan; Pam Brown of Allegan; Pat Seadorf of Allegan; Mark Lovett of Allegan; Melodie Dobbins of Allegan; Larry and Priscilla Massey of Allegan; and Stan and Bonnie Rumphal of Allegan.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

PRESENTATION OF LITTLEJOHN LAKE PARK MASTER PLAN DRAFT

M.C. Smith and Associates gave a presentation to the Commission, along with a large turn-out of public participants, which outlined the proposed changes and improvements to Littlejohn Lake Park. The presentation began with the existing park area that included changes and improvements to the entrance, adding an entirely new entrance that would leave the current entrance as an emergency entrance/exit only. The addition of more pedestrian walkways that are barrier free is proposed near the beach, parking lot, and picnic area that include a 'walking loop' connecting the existing trail to the beach, and a fishing dock that would be located away from the swimming area of the beach. A playground for toddlers located near the beach is also proposed to improve parental supervision. A ramp and storage area for kayaks and canoes would be added next to the beach on the opposite side of where the fishing dock would be located, along with a handicap ramp to improve access to the beach for those with disabilities. The addition of a second picnic area and creation of an enclosed dog park is suggested, along with improvements to the spectator sections near the softball fields.

Rustic equestrian campsites are proposed to be added to the south-west end of the property, complete with manure pits and horse trails. The campsites would be located a distance away from neighboring homes in the area to maintain residence privacy and would include non-equestrian sites.

M.C. Smith took questions from the Parks Commission members and revealed the cost estimates have not yet been completed. When asked about the proximity of the manure pit in relation to the campsites, he replied it would be a possibility to have it moved closer for equestrian's convenience. Becky raised the question of whether a permit for the manure pit would be required and was told, although it is unknown if a special permit would be needed, that would be part of the process of getting the entire plan approved by the state. In answer to questions regarding the dog park, Kevin replied there would be signs posted stating the rules, fresh water available within the enclosure, along with receptacles and bags for the pick-up and disposal of dog feces.

Concerns were raised during the public participation portion of the meeting regarding safety issues with the fishing dock's proximity to the swimmers at the beach. Although the location of the dock is proposed to be 50' – 75' from the beach, M.C. agreed to look into moving it further away for safety reasons. He also clarified there would be two separate ramps located on either side of the beach...one for handicapped access near the fishing dock, and one for the canoes/kayaks. Kevin added there is nothing found in the current rules that state no boat launching at Littlejohn Lake. When asked about the removal of trees to make way for the campground, M.C. replied the intention was to have a wooded campground, clearing only what is necessary. In answer to why the main entrance was being moved, M.C. said this was necessary for both the safety and convenience of those entering and exiting the park and campground; no one would want large campers and horse trailers being hauled through the picnic and playground areas. Responding to questions regarding the horse trails, Kevin stated that this is an area already owned with trails preplanned, although they will have to go through the permitting process. He has been working with DNR and states the trails are approximately 20 miles long and are not accessible to the Silver Creek trails. Bruce added it would be some time before this project is completed and would probably be done in phases, possibly the park first.

NEW RICHMOND BRIDGE PARK UPDATE – CSX EASEMENT

Kevin reports that the easement agreement was approved by the Board of Commissioners at the July 31st meeting and payment was sent out approximately four weeks ago. He was recently in touch with the CSX and according to the agreement they are waiting for the survey, which will take 60 days from the date the agreement was signed. Kevin explained Section 8.3 by disclosing the survey can be declined. Kevin expressed the urgency to close the deal but CSX is taking their time. He hopes that we will be closing by the end of the

month with bidding beginning in October. By November or December, Kevin expects to have excavating started; based on the number of contractors, there are many eager to put in their bid so he hopes to get a decent price.

LEADERS MARINE PROPERTY- TOUR DATE

Kevin reported that a date has been set to tour the property on Tuesday, September 16th at 2:00 pm. The asking price of the property is \$575,000. Anyone who has questions, please come and join the tour.

NEW BUSINESS

BYSTERVELD PARK GRANT

Kevin reports that, although it is not yet official, we scored low in several categories on the preliminary score sheet for our Bysterveld Park – Phase II grant application. Much of the lower score can be attributed to our troubles with completing the project at New Richmond. The project did not fall into any special initiative categories and may have to wait for the New Richmond project to be completed before we can get approval for more grants towards other projects. Otherwise, Bysterveld is doing well and is user friendly.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Allegan County Parks Commission will be on Tuesday, October 7, 2008 at 8:30am in the Spartan Conference Room.

ROUND TABLE

Becky Rininger

Becky reports the Allegan City Park Board was passed and the sinking funds can be applied towards building a new skateboard park and sledding hill at Jaycee Park. The cities sinking funds do not involve any tax increases or tax-payer dollars.

Mark DeYoung

Mark went to the MAC conference last month and passed around brochures for the council to look at.

Kevin Ricco

Kevin is obtaining final cost estimates for Littlejohn Lake Park before we proceed any further. He also informed the commission this will be Angel's last meeting since she has accepted a full-time nursing position.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

By: _____
Ronda Foreman, Clerk