



Allegan County Parks, Recreation, & Tourism

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March 3, 2009

Human Services Building
Spartan Conference Room

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 Vice Chairman Robert Kaarlie on Tuesday, March 3, 2009 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	Chuck Pullen
Larry Rasmussen	Becky Rininger
Robert Kaarlie	Georgina Rozeboom-Doster
Kelle Tobolic	Fritz Spreitzer
Maryln Langeance	

ABSENT: Bruce Culver

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

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

Fritz had one item to add to the agenda under NEW BUSINESS 12a. DNR Plans for State Forests. A motion was made by Maryln Langeance, seconded by Becky Rininger to approve the addition of 12a. DNR Plans for State Forests and to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed by all present.

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Becky Rininger, seconded by Larry Rasmussen to approve the minutes from February 9, 2009 as presented. Motion carried by all present.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Kevin stated there is nothing new to report at this time; the financial statements look much the same as last month. A motion was made by Larry Rasmussen, seconded by Maryln Langeance to approve the financial statements. Motion carried by all present.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Lenore Ryun of Allegan; Kris Allred of Hamilton; Emily Stough from Allegan County Community Mental Health.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW RICHMOND BRIDGE PARK UPDATE

Kevin reported that he met the engineer from Apex Contractors on site a couple weeks ago to check the stakes that have been placed laying out the new boardwalk. They walked the entire site on both sides making sure the stakes were in the right locations according to the drawings, as well as relate them to the topography and trees. Obviously, Kevin's goal is to try to save as many of the larger trees as possible and ended up making only a couple of minor changes. Kevin stated the boardwalk trails are going to look very nice when completed. He then asked the Commission if they had seen the public notice in the newspaper regarding the closing of the boat launch for construction through the month of March. During this time the launch can still be used as long as no one is there physically working. If weather permits, it should not take the whole month and may possibly only take two to three weeks. Kevin said there may be some who are upset but we had no choice but to shut down the boat launch during construction for safety reasons.

EQUESTRIAN TRAILS LEASE UPDATE – AGREEMENT WITH FACETS

Since the last meeting, Kevin did a discussion presentation concerning the Equestrian Trails Lease to the Board of Commissioners at their meeting on February 12th. In Kevin's opinion, if the BOC would have voted on that day, he believes the lease would have passed. They have requested more information and there will be another discussion during the BOC meeting on March 12th, although Kevin will be gone on vacation. He has gathered the additional information requested with the exception of a signed volunteer agreement with FACETS (Friends of the Allegan County Equestrian Trail System), although he will attach a draft to the lease agreement with an explanation there will be verbiage changes. Hopefully the BOC will recognize that significant progress on the agreement has been made and it is just a matter of getting the language the way it should be for the County, as well as for the volunteer group. If the BOC would rather wait until the volunteer agreement is fully signed by both parties, the lease agreement probably won't be signed until sometime in April.

Becky stated she was contacted by a gentleman who is an avid hiker and voiced concerns that some of trails are already eroded and is worried that if horses start using them, they will cause more erosion and diminish the hiking aspect. Kevin stated that, although he has no idea which trails the gentleman is referring to, the trails that have been approved by the State and the DNR Wildlife Division are trails that route around the areas of extreme erosion. Many sections of trails are going to be closed; the only ones that will remain open are the trails that are in the lease agreement and have been mapped out and approved by the State and the Natural Resource Commission of the DNR. Kevin ended the trails lease update by inviting any concerned people to attend the Board of Commissioners meeting on March 12th; in his opinion this is too important for the County to pass up.

SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT POLICY UPDATE

Kevin gave an update on the Special Event Permit Policy stating the Board of Commissioners has approved the amended policy. Now that the new policy is officially in place, it will really help as we receive more calls requesting permits for the upcoming season.

GUN LAKE RESTROOM BUILDING REMOVAL UPDATE

Kevin reminded the Commission that last fall they approved the removal of the dilapidated building out at Gun Lake Park. The demolition has been scheduled to take place on April 13th and 14th. In preparation, Kevin arranged for the delivery of the dumpsters and also the power service had to be moved, which has already been completed. Kevin received three bids from local contractors; the highest one being \$1400, the second highest at

\$900, and the lowest bid at \$500, which was the one selected. Kevin stated it will be nice to get the old building out of there before the park opens for the summer.

BYSTERVELD PROPERTY UPDATE

Kevin requested to go to a closed session of the meeting. A motion was made by Mark DeYoung, seconded by Fritz Spreitzer to move to a closed session. Motion carried by all present.

A motion was made by Fritz Spreitzer, seconded by Mark DeYoung to move to an open session of the meeting. Motion carried by all present.

A motion was made by Fritz Spreitzer, seconded by Larry Rasmussen that the Parks Commission will no longer pursue the Bysterveld property discussed during the closed session. The motion carried by all present.

LAKE MICHIGAN PROPERTY UPDATE

Kevin requested to go to a closed session of the meeting. A motion was made by Fritz Spreitzer, seconded by Larry Rasmussen to move to a closed session. Motion carried by all present.

A motion was made by Mark DeYoung, seconded by Fritz Spreitzer to move to an open session of the meeting. Motion carried by all present.

NEW BUSINESS

DNR PLANS FOR STATE FOREST

Fritz reported that during the last Board of Commissioners meeting, John Lerg, a representative from the DNR, was in to discuss their plans for the state forests and provide information regarding a new policy that has been brought down from the UP. When asked how many trees would be removed, the BOC were informed it would be 80% in 15 years or less. Becky commented there was a lot of public outcry after the last cutting because it was such a butcher job. From conversations Kevin has had with John, the 80% that he is referring to means that 80% of the game area is subject to some timber harvest; it is meant to be a selective cut and they do not intend to go out and clear-cut 80% of the forests. Kevin agreed with the comments that the last cutting was a disaster; he hopes the DNR paid attention and doesn't make the same mistake again. In Kevin's opinion, this is a way for the State to make some revenue from harvesting the timber. Fritz reported there will be another meeting held at 6:30pm on March 23rd at the Comfort Inn in Plainwell for the public's input.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Allegan County Parks Commission will be on Tuesday, April 7, 2009 at 8:30am in the Spartan Conference Room.

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

Mark DeYoung asked how Gun Lake WinterFest turned out at Gun Lake Park, which was held on February 21st; he had heard from some that it was great. As far as Kevin knows, he had not heard anything contrary to what Mark had heard and stated that although there was not much snow the weather was very nice for the event. Overall, everything went a lot smoother this year and did not have any of the problems experienced in previous years. The Barry County Chamber of Commerce, the promoters of the event, kept in better contact leading up to the event to ensure all the bases were covered.

Georgina Rozeboom-Doster introduced Emily Stough from Allegan County Community Mental Health. Emily works with Career Concepts at ACCMH and is interested in obtaining volunteer opportunities at the County parks for her clients. She stated that with so many people unemployed, they need something to keep

themselves busy in the interim and would like to volunteer. Kevin stated that we always need help at the parks and during certain times of the year, it is hard to keep up with the clean-up. It's a win/win situation; not only do the parks benefit but the volunteers have an additional reference and can put the experience on their resumes. Kevin asked Emily to get with him after the meeting and they will exchange contact information.

Fritz Spreitzer reminded everyone of the electronics recycling that will take place on March 28th at the fairground; there will be a small fee for televisions and computer monitors.

Kevin Ricco was contacted by Gun Laker Magazine about renewing the ad we have placed in the magazine in previous years. It is a black and white ad 2-1/4" X 4-1/2" for \$310, specifically advertising Gun Lake County Park. With things being as tight as they are with such a small advertising budget in Parks, Kevin would rather save the \$310 and use it for something else, maybe to promote or market the equestrian trail system or something that gives more bang for the buck. Everyone agreed with Kevin and decided not to renew the ad at this time.

Ronda Foreman asked everyone to be sure their 1st quarter vouchers are signed and turned back in today. She also informed the Commission that she has received two requests for season pass donations; one came from Wings of Hope Hospice for their upcoming auction and the other from Benthium Elementary School for their Family Fun Night at the end of March. In the past, we have granted similar requests by donating a total of two passes per request. Everyone was in agreement when Becky commented she thinks it is a great idea; not only would we be donating to worthy causes but it is also good for public relations. A motion was made by Becky Rininger, seconded by Maryln Langeance to approve the donation of four Allegan County Park 2009 Season Passes; two for the Wings of Hope Hospice auction and two for Bentheim Elementary School's Family Fun Night. The motion carried unanimously.

Bob Kaarlie wanted to speak to a comment made by Becky earlier in the meeting when she brought up a possible conflict of interest he may have when it comes to business affecting both the Parks Commission and FACETS, whom he is also a current member. Bob stated that when it comes time for a vote regarding these two issues, he will abstain from the vote.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30am.

By: _____
Ronda Foreman, Clerk