



Allegan County Parks, Recreation, & Tourism

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March 2, 2010

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 2, 2010 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: Chuck Pullen Mark DeYoung
 Larry Rasmussen Fritz Spreitzer
 Robert Kaarlie Becky Rininger
 Kelle Tobolic Maryln Langeance

ABSENT: Bruce Culver

Also Present: Kevin Ricco, Parks Director
 Ronda Foreman, Parks and Tourism Clerk
 Kris Allred, Silver Creek Park Manager
 Lenore Ryun, FACETS Member

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

None.

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Larry Rasmussen, seconded by Kelle Tobolic to approve the February 2, 2010 meeting minutes as presented and mailed. The motion carried by everyone present.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Kevin stated there is not much to report on this month's financial statements; there has not been much spending in the past month and the statements are virtually the same. A motion was made by Maryln Langeance, seconded by Larry Rasmussen to approve the current financial statements as presented. The motion carried by everyone present.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Two visitors are present to observe the meeting; Kris Allred and Lenore Ryun, both from the City of Allegan.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NEW RICHMOND BRIDGE PARK – RIBBON CUTTING UPDATE

Kevin drew everyone's attention to their packets where they have a worksheet outlining the items that were decided during last month's meeting for the New Richmond grand opening ceremony scheduled for June 5, 2010 at 10am. The refreshments, seating, bridge decorations, and someone to direct parking still need to be determined. So far, both Kevin's wife Esther and Lue Crane of Crane's Orchards have said they will contribute to the refreshments, and Chuck volunteered to help direct parking. Most will park in the parking lot on the north side of the park and others will park along the street on the south side. Kevin was asked if folks could park in the church parking lot on the south side if needed; he stated that is private property and we would have to get permission. The whole program should be done in about one hour; the Outdoor Discovery portion will begin after the speakers are finished and will be geared towards wildlife in and around the Kalamazoo River. A press release will be posted on May 20, and invitations will go out to the donors on May 3. Kevin stated if it is a nice day he anticipates a lot of people will show up. If anyone wants to volunteer for refreshments, seating, bridge decorations, or to help direct parking, please let Kevin know.

EQUESTRIAN TRAILS UPDATE – RIBBON CUTTING, OTHER

Kevin stated the ribbon cutting ceremony for the equestrian trails is coming along for May 21, 2010 at 2pm at Silver Creek Park. Although most speakers have been confirmed, Rebecca Humphries and Sara Schaefer from the DNR may also say a few words. While Jan Cushman from the Tourist Council will provide punch and cookies, volunteers are still needed for more refreshments, seating, and someone to direct parking. A press release will be posted on May 3 and on April 26, invitations will be sent to all the volunteers who helped clear and mark the trails; Kevin has asked FACETS to provide him with addresses.

There are still a few odds and ends to take care of before the grand opening including the installation of the new message center in the day ride parking area and the placement of the remaining trail markers. Land Information Services is almost done updating the maps, and the mileage for the trails will be included in the legend. All tallied there are almost 30 miles in the Silver Creek area and another 30 miles in the combined Pine Point/Ely Lake areas totaling close to 60 miles of trails. Kevin is working with PJ Printing for an Equestrian Trail System brochure and fold out map that will include the entire trail system for all three areas. The ceremony coincides with the Judged Trail Ride on May 22, so there should be a good turnout. Bob asked about the contract with FACETS; the one he received is only for five years instead of the length of the lease agreement. Kevin stated it was recommended to renew the contract for a shorter period of time renewable every five years; after speaking to FACETS attorney it was agreed the time frame would be adequate. If anyone would like to volunteer for refreshments, seating, or to direct parking, please let Kevin know.

NEW BUSINESS

PARKS COMMISSION VACANCY

Kevin stated everyone has two applications in their packets that Administration received to fill the vacant Parks Commission seat; one is from Laura Canaan of Laketown Township and the other is from RJ Peterson of Saugatuck. As everyone may recall from last month's joint meeting, RJ is also a member of the Tourist Council. As for Laura, she would represent the northwest corner of the County and has served two terms as a Laketown Township Parks Commission member.

A motion was made by Fritz Spreitzer, seconded by Larry Rasmussen to recommend Laura Canaan to fill the vacant Allegan County Parks Commission seat. The motion carried by everyone present.

GOALS/OBJECTIVES/CORE SERVICES

Included in the agenda packets is the 2010 Budget Worksheet to use as a guide to determine the goals, objectives, and core services of the Parks Commission for the 2011 budget. Kevin stated this is a requirement of the budget process and this year we are starting earlier than normal; it is due in April and each department must give a presentation to the Board of Commissioners. We are at a disadvantage since our 2010 season doesn't start until Memorial Day weekend, not to mention the fee changes and the opening of New Richmond

Bridge Park and the equestrian trails; it will be difficult to predict how we will do in 2011. Kevin asked the group to review the worksheet and provide some input for the 2011 budget; is there anything that is missing or requires more explanation.

After some discussion, suggestions included accentuating the equestrian trails and adding them to the Special Use permit section. Also under item six, future expansion and development somewhere along the Kalamazoo River for camping opportunities for paddlers should be added, along with the expansion and connection of bike paths with adjacent counties and the promotion of winter recreational activities. Kevin stated we currently do not have enough funds to maintain what we have; the roof on the Littlejohn Lake Park maintenance building needs replaced and he also gets a lot of complaints about the crumbling boat ramp at Gun Lake Park. He stated the most important elements should reflect the services we provide to the public. Fritz agreed stating we need to sell what we have locally and provide recreation areas for the public to enjoy at a reasonable cost. Kevin thanked everyone for their input stating it will now be a stronger document.

2011 USER FEES

Kevin met with Matrix, the firm that conducted the fee study for Allegan County last year, and some of their recommendation for the park and campground fees are unrealistic with some being too high and some too low. As an example, \$400 to rent the pavilion at Dumont Lake Park compared to the \$80 currently charged for a full day's rental. The idea behind the study is the Finance Department wants to use their recommendations annually to evaluate the fee structure for the upcoming year.

APRIL MEETING DATE – CHANGE?

Kevin stated he would not be here for the April 6, 2010 meeting. Although his attendance is not mandatory, he asked if the date should be changed. Bob suggested April 14th; several members stated they would not be able to make that date either.

After some discussion, a motion was made by Becky Rininger, seconded by Maryln Langeance to cancel the April 6, 2010 Parks Commission meeting. The next scheduled meeting will be held on May 4, 2010 @ 8:30AM. The motion passed unanimously.

NEXT MEETING – MAY 4, 2010 @ 8:30AM (APRIL 6, 2010 MEETING HAS BEEN CANCELED)

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

Maryln Langeance stated she would not be in attendance for the May meeting; she will be helping out with elections on that day.

Lenore Ryun asked if folks could purchase a season pass through the mail. Kevin stated yes, they can go to the Parks web site and print the application to be mailed in with their payment.

Kris Allred thanked the Commission; she has enjoyed attending the monthly meetings.

Kevin Ricco reports he will not be sponsoring or taking part in the 2010 Kanoe the Kazoo event as he will be too busy in the spring with the two ribbon cutting ceremonies.

Chuck Pullen asked if bids were being accepted for the day ride staging areas at Pine Point and Ely Lake. Kevin stated yes but for Ely Lake only; Pine Point already has a parking area for the day riders.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:41am.

By: _____

Ronda Foreman, Clerk