



Allegan County Parks, Recreation, & Tourism

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November 9, 2010
Human Services Building
Spartan Conference Room
10:00am

Minutes of a Scheduled Joint Meeting of the Allegan County Parks & Recreation Commission and Allegan County Tourist Council

A scheduled joint meeting of the Allegan County Parks & Recreation Commission and Allegan County Tourist Council was called to order by the Parks Commission Chairman Bruce Culver and Tourist Council Chairman Norm Smith on Tuesday, November 9, 2010 at 10:04am 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:

PARKS COMMISSION

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bruce Culver
Larry Rasmussen
Robert Kaarlie

Mark DeYoung
Maryln Langeance
Lenore Ryun

ABSENT:

Chuck Pullen
Fritz Spreitzer

Becky Rininger
Kelle Tobolic

TOURIST COUNCIL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Norm Smith
Dianna Stampfler
Betsy Hill

Larry Johnson
Jan Cushman
Luetta Crane

ABSENT:

Stephanie Peterson
Terry Bonnell

R.J. Peterson
Al Weener

Also Present:

Kevin Ricco, Parks Director
Ronda Foreman, Parks and Tourism Clerk

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

Kevin requested an addition to the agenda, Item 6. *Tourism Contacts Report – Ronda.*

A motion was made by Maryln Langeance, seconded by Larry Rasmussen to approve the agenda as amended for the Parks Commission. The motion carried.

A motion was made by Dianna Stampfler, seconded by Larry Johnson to approve the agenda as amended for the Tourist Council. The motion carried.

APPROVAL OF OCTOBER MEETING MINUTES – PARKS COMMISSION, TOURIST COUNCIL

A motion was made by Bob Kaarlie, seconded by Larry Rasmussen to approve the October 5, 2010 Parks Commission meeting minutes as presented and mailed. The motion carried.

A motion was made by Jan Cushman, seconded by Betsy Hill to approve the October 19, 2010 Tourist Council meeting minutes as presented and emailed. The motion carried.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Kevin stated the winter maintenance for the parks is close to being done with most expenditures already entered for the year. He is going to take advantage of any remaining funds by ordering a lot of the 2011 supplies now instead of waiting until the spring. On the revenue side of the report we may still see some from the campgrounds although the majority of the fees have already been collected. Revenue for 2010 was pretty solid across the board with some parks exceeding expectations while others saw a decrease. One disappointment was the equestrian campsites at Pine Point and Ely Lake campgrounds; they did not do as well as anticipated. There was a decrease in the daily trail fees collected at Silver Creek Park for the equestrian trails, but there was also an increase in season pass sales for the year. The largest decrease was at the Gun Lake boat launch; folks are not paying the \$5 fee to use the ramp and Kevin has information on an automated gate that will be discussed later in the meeting.

A motion was made by Bob Kaarlie, seconded by Lenore Ryun to approve the financial reports for the Parks Commission as printed and presented. The motion carried by everyone present.

On the Tourist Council side of the report there is not much to consider; the balance is \$1152 and the majority will go to the writer at the Gazette who wrote the articles for the 2011 visitor's guide. The revenue collected is from Heritage Trail book and CD sales, or is profit from the guide. According to Celeste everything is on track for next year's guide although she is still waiting to hear from a couple of key advertisers. All costs should be about the same as last year and the guide will go to the printer the beginning of December.

A motion was made by Dianna Stampfler, seconded by Norm Smith to approve the financial reports for the Tourist Council as printed and presented. The motion carried by everyone present.

CONTACT REPORT

The October 2010 contact report and inquiry pie chart were included in today's agenda packet. Ronda reports a total of 241 itemized inquiries and 104 contacts for the month, which was up over last years total contacts of 88. Of the 104 contacts she received, 11 were from Michigan but outside the county, 13 were from out-of-state, and 80 were from unknown locations. She mailed 23 tourist inquiry packets and reports 3 Heritage Trail books were sold. Also on the report are the numbers of third quarter clicks from the Travel Michigan website; the highest numbers were 612 for Gun Lake Park and 588 for Silver Creek Park & Campground.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

PARKS AND TOURISM MARKETING STRATEGIES

Kevin asked if anyone has ideas of how the two groups can work together to market the county. Dianna stated we need to focus on letting people know what the county has to offer and suggested playing off other promotions that are already in place such as the DNRE free fishing days or Camping/RV Month in August. Larry suggested an open house for the parks in the spring. Kevin stated there is a grass roots group that wants to make New Richmond Days an annual event. There is another group that is putting together a triathlon who has contacted Kevin about using Littlejohn Lake Park; he believes this is another opportunity where we could become involved and draw more attention to the park. Although the date has not yet been set, Parks will

participate in Kanoe the Kazoo in 2011. Besides the equestrian trails, Bob stated we should also make folks aware of the non-equestrian trails that are linked to our campgrounds that are used for cross-country skiing, mountain biking, hiking and snowmobiling. Betsy and Jan have spent some time driving the Heritage Trail checking and cleaning the interpretive signs and making note of restaurants, hotels, and attractions that can be found along the route; the website will be updated to include the information. The photo contest can be a great marketing tool; Norm suggested having a traveling display of past contest photos to take around to libraries, hospitals, township halls, etc.; Larry proposed having a specific category for each contest. Lastly, Kevin has a meeting today with folks at the casino who are putting together a kiosk where we can promote various events and attractions throughout the county.

PARKS COMMISSION: GUN LAKE PARK FEE GATE INFORMATION

Kevin directed everyone's attention to a price proposal included in today's agenda packet from Traffic & Safety Control Systems Inc. for an automated gate at the Gun Lake Park boat launch. Kevin met onsite with the sales representative, Jason Wiitala, to discuss what the parks requirements would be for the gate to be practical and the available options. The quote for approximately \$33,000 is about what we expected; the company is not interested in any type of payment plan so the gate would have to be paid in full once it is installed. The next step is to sit down with the Finance Director, David Vanderovaart, to discuss the gate and secure financing. After that we can go through a sealed bid process from other companies; there are seven to eight companies in the mid-west who deal with different types of automated gates. If we want the gate installed by next spring, the order would have to be placed by January.

A motion was made by Bob Kaarlie, seconded by Maryln Langeance to approve a sealed bid process for an automated gate from various companies once Kevin Ricco secures the financing with the Finance Director, David Vanderovaart,. The motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

PARKS COMMISSION: APPROVE EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT AT WEST SIDE

Kevin was contacted by Nathan James, a nice young man who would like to do an Eagle Scout project at one of the county parks. A project Kevin has wanted to do for some time now is to have trails implemented on the 36 acres located across from West Side Park; although we cannot build on the acreage the land is part of the park and is there for the public to enjoy. He laid out the process to be followed by Nathan, and asked for the plans to be submitted in writing which is included in today's agenda packet.

A motion was made by Bob Kaarlie, seconded by Mark DeYoung to approve the Eagle Scout project at West Side Park proposed by Nathan James. The motion carried by everyone present.

Kevin stated once Nathan gets a trail marked out with spray paint, he will go out and walk it before giving his approval. As part of the project, Nathan must put together a team to lead through the process of implementing the trail.

OTHER BUSINESS

Kevin was contacted by a representative from Southwest Michigan Living asking if we would like to place an ad or directory listing in their publication. At this time with the current budget, no one was interested in the opportunity.

NEXT MEETINGS:

PARKS COMMISSION: DECEMBER 7, 2010 @ 8:30AM (SPARTAN CONFERENCE ROOM)

TOURIST COUNCIL: DECEMBER 10, 2010 @ 11:00AM (SALT OF THE EARTH)

ROUND TABLE

Larry Johnson stated the annual Festival of Trees at Camp Kidwell will be held on Thursday, December 2nd through Sunday, December 5th, 2010. Also at Camp Kidwell is Winter Camp for kids the week after Christmas. Visit www.campkidwell.org for more information.

Jan Cushman reported the Halloween Trail for Treaters in Otsego, a trick-or-treating event where participating businesses distribute candy, was a huge success packed with kids! An Art Hop is planned for downtown Otsego on December 2nd and 3rd.

Kevin Ricco stated he is finalizing the 2011 meeting schedules and wondered if the two groups are interested in holding another joint meeting. Everyone was in agreement November is a good month for a joint meeting; Kevin will put it on the schedule using the Parks Commission regular meeting date and time.

Ronda Foreman reminded everyone orders for the wreath fundraiser are due today.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:58am.

By: _____
Ronda Foreman, Clerk