



Allegan County Parks, Recreation, & Tourism

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February 1, 2011
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 Parks Commission Chairman Robert Kaarlie on Tuesday, February 1, 2011 at 8:30am in the Spartan Conference Room in the lower level of the Human Services Building, 3255 - 122nd Avenue, Allegan, Michigan.

Roll Call showed the following members:

PRESENT: Mark DeYoung Lenore Ryun
 Robert Kaarlie Kelle Tobolic
 Becky Rininger Maryln Langeance
 Larry Rasmussen Bruce Culver

ABSENT: Dean Kapenga Chuck Pullen

Also Present: Kevin Ricco, County Development Director
 Ronda Foreman, Parks and Tourism Clerk
 Kris Allred, Silver Creek Park Manager

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

None.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Bruce Culver, seconded by Lenore Ryun to approve the January 4, 2011 meeting minutes as mailed and presented. The motion carried.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Being the start of a new year, Kevin stated there is nothing to report on the financial statements at this time. A motion was made by Bruce Culver, seconded by Lenore Ryun to approve the February financial statements as presented. The motion carried.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No comment at this time.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

TIMBER HARVEST – UPDATE

The Forester Tom Stadt is still in the process of marking trees; Kevin let him know that he and several members of the Parks Commission would like to walk the areas once he is done. Up to now Tom has been concentrating on Littlejohn Lake Park which is almost complete. Next he will move on to the Silver Creek Park area where many of the trees to be marked are located on the north side of 134th Avenue. Tom has suggested to Kevin as we get closer to the actual harvest, we may want to talk to a neighboring turkey farmer and offer him a small compensation to allow us to haul off logs by passing through his property; if he says no we would have to come up with a different plan. Hopefully the harvest can be put out for bid by mid-summer with it commencing in late fall or winter of 2011.

GUN LAKE PARK AUTOMATED FEE GATE – UPDATE

Kevin has been working with the Finance Department to procure the funding to purchase an automated fee gate at the Gun Lake Park boat launch. Last Friday the RFP (Request for Proposal) went out nationwide to around 14 vendors, several are located in the Midwest. One factor Kevin asked to have included in the scoring process is someone who gives quick support if something goes wrong with the gate. In a couple of weeks an onsite meeting has been set up for interested vendors so they can physically view the site and ask questions; bids are due in three weeks on February 17, 2011. Kevin would like to get it to the Board of Commissioners in early March and hopes they will take action at that meeting to speed up the acquisition, which has a six to eight week lead time not including the installation. He commented it would be nice to have the gate up and running by Memorial Day weekend.

Kevin received an email this morning from a gentleman who agrees folks should start paying to use the launch but is concerned about traffic backups and parking issues. Kevin will let him know all of his concerns have been addressed and we will do everything possible to minimize any potential issues. Mark asked if there will be a way to track who is using the launch, specifically those with a Season Pass who may be letting others use their card to gain access to the ramp without paying; Kevin replied the cards will have their own entry code so we will be able to track how often the card is used.

2011 STAFFING UPDATE

Kevin is happy to report all four park managers are coming back to work the second half of next season and he has submitted a personnel request to post the positions for the first half of the season. One of our past managers, Mel Fargo who retired after the 2009 season, may be interested in filling one of the positions. At the time, his reason for retiring was he did not want to work the entire summer season. Kevin is hoping there are other retirees out there who would also find a shortened season appealing. The positions will be posted on the County website, Allegan County News, and the Flashes. Kevin stated in years past there has not been a shortage of applicants; last time he had to sort through about 300 applications.

NEW BUSINESS

SPECIAL EVENT PERMITS UPDATE – RONDA/KEVIN

Kevin updated the Commission on the special event permits that have been issued so far for 2011. In addition to the three horseman groups who took advantage of the early registration for their events at Silver Creek Park and Campground, the Boy Scouts are having their Klondike Derby at the park this coming weekend. On the weekend of February 19th, Barry County is holding their Winterfest celebration at Gun Lake Park. Numerous fishing tournaments are booked for the summer at Dumont Lake and Gun Lake Parks and the baseball fields at Littlejohn Lake Park have been reserved by three teams for Little League practice. A wedding is scheduled for West Side Park in August; Kevin stated we should keep wedding requests in mind when we are ready to make improvements at the parks.

GUN LAKE PARK RAIN GARDENS

As everyone may remember about a year and a half ago the Commission was approached by the Gun Lake Improvement Board who wanted to start a rain garden at Gun Lake Park at no cost to the County. At the time they backed off from the project due to a lack of funds. Now they have more funds they can use for grant matching and are putting together another package for the project. Kevin let them know if anything is changed from the original plan, they will have to get this group to approve the project again.

NEXT MEETING – MARCH 1, 2011 @ 8:30AM

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

Bruce Culver congratulated Mark DeYoung for being elected as the Chairperson for the Allegan County Board of Commissioners.

Ronda Foreman brought copies of the 2011 Inside Allegan County Visitor's Guide which was delivered the first week of January. She asked everyone to take what they want and to let her know if they need more.

Kevin Ricco reminded everyone of how the State is now selling their annual park passes to folks when they renew their vehicle registration. 15% of the revenue generated will be set aside for grant funding for local park programs with a 25% match; they hope to start taking applications this year. Kevin stated it would be nice for smaller scaled projects, such as purchasing a new pavilion. He will keep everyone updated and will give the rules once they are finalized; if the grant funding doesn't happen this year it will be in 2012.

Mark DeYoung is excited about the educational activities that are being implemented, such as the rain gardens at Gun Lake Park. He believes this opens the door for other ideas to help educate the community for instance, an educational program about horses at Silver Creek Park and Campground.

Maryl Langeance reported that she and Ronda set up a display at the Otsego Area Historical Museum that includes the past photo contest entries from the Tourist Council's photo contest, and invited everyone to stop by and check it out.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:25am.

By: _____
Ronda Foreman, Parks and Tourism Clerk