

**CASS COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

**Marshall Schug Pavillion  
Dr. Lawless International Dark Sky Park  
15122 Monkey Run St.  
Vandalia, Mi. 49095**

**June 12, 2025**

**4:00 P.M.- CALL MEETING TO ORDER - President Parrish**

**INVOCATION**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - Commissioner File**

**ROLL CALL – Secretary Dohm**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT - Director Wyman**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- Dark Sky Update
- Russ Forest Update

**NEW BUSINESS**

- Patty’s Updates
- Dr. Lawless Tribute Campaign
- Heritage Southwest
- Foreign Relations
- Lawless Disc Golf Course
- LWCF Overview

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Next regular meeting July 10, 2025. Please call 445-4456 if you cannot attend.**

**CASS COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**  
**REGULAR BOARD MEETING**  
**Room 130**  
**120 N. Broadway – Cassopolis, MI 49031**  
**May 8, 2025**

**4:00 p.m. – CALL MEETING TO ORDER** –President Parrish

**INVOCATION** – Commissioner Bailey

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – President Parrish

**ROLL CALL –**

|                          |                   |                    |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Director Wyman – P       | Sam Barrera – P   | Annie File –P      | Lyndon Parrish -P |
| Jamie Stafne –P          | Jayne Bailey – P  | Fritz Kucklick - P |                   |
| Joyce Sheteron-Locke - P | Robert Parrish –P | Tami Stewart - P   | Jeff VanBelle – P |

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Motion to accept:** Commissioner Kucklick

**Second:** Commissioner L. Parrish

**Approved**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Motion to accept:** Commissioner Stafne

**Second:** Commissioner L. Parrish

**Approved**

**INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS** – Steve Kush, Ambrosia Neldon, Jennifer Rentfrow, Justin Locke

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – None

**COMMITTEE REPORTS** – None

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT** – Director Wyman

1. Was Presented
2. Welcome Tami Stewart to the Parks Board.
3. Ramping up to summer. The massive clean-up continues. Working with MSU to take out 2 of the big fallen trees by their contractor, and maybe take out the ones in the turn-around area.
4. Thank goodness for NIMBA and the fantastic job they do with their clean-up of the mountain bike trail.
5. Spring Eggstravaganza was great with over 300 people. We were able to deliver ½ truck load of food items to Helping Hands of Cassopolis.
6. Thanks to Robert & Patty for representing Parks at the Cassopolis High School event featuring area agencies sponsored by Helping Hands and Ross Beatty Adult Education.
7. Camping season at Dodd started May 1 and we've already had 3 different camping rentals.
8. Annual pass sales are up from last year, which was a record setting year.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**1. Dark Sky**

- a. April 22 was interviewed on channel 16 at their noon broadcast.
- b. April 26 hosted a youth group at Dark Sky from Chattanooga, TN
- c. Did an interview with M-Live
- d. Did an interview with WBBI on Beaver Island
- e. Conducted 2 classes at Penn Harris Madison

- f. Asked if the red lights have been installed and if the sign has been made for the headlights
  - g. Brought up how will the observatory and dark sky going to go ahead when Commissioner R. Parrish is no longer here
    - 1. Possible astrology club aspect
  - h. Director Wyman will be traveling to Indiana to check out the moveable concrete possibility
2. **LWCF Update**
- a. Moving along slowly, should be able to request an extension if needed
  - b. The government did not pull the funds for the grants
  - c. Director Wyman informed the group that the #1 amenity for parks right now is a splash pad

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- 1. **Stevens Park**
  - a. Someone has inquired about donating money for 5 years to make improvements to Stevens Park
- 2. **June Meeting**
  - a. Will be at Lawless Park at 4:00 p.m.
  - b. Possibly a presentation regarding the Dr. Lawless monument
- 3. **Garlic Mustard Pull**
  - a. May 22 and 28 from 10:00 – 2:00. The Friends of the Parks will provide refreshments

## **BOARD MEMBER COMMENT/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- 1. Commissioner Kucklick commented that he had ridden the mountain bike trail and it was beautiful.
- 2. Commissioner VanBelle commented about an open-house meeting regarding the road going into Camp Friedenswald and the possibility of the road collapsing. Needing assistance with signage, etc.
- 3. The Road Commission will be fixing the culvert going under Peninsula Drive leading out to Shavehead Lake.

## **Committee Set for Parks 5-Year Plan:**

Director Wyman  
Commissioner Bailey  
Commissioner Kucklick  
Commissioner R. Parrish

**Motion to adjourn:** Commissioner VanBelle

**Second:** Commissioner Barrera

## **MEETING ADJOURNED**

Respectfully submitted,  
Patty Dohm  
Recording Secretary

**Next regular meeting June 12 at Dr. Lawless Park. Please call 269-445-4456 if you cannot attend.**

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT**  
**CASS COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION**  
**June 12, 2025**

**Dr. Lawless:**

- OCBA submitted construction drawings for the LWCF project at Lawless Park.
- Hosted Boy Scout Troop from Niles.
- Hosted walk with a naturalist.
- Hosted two garlic mustard workdays with CISMA SWxSW, Cass County Conservation District and community volunteers.
- Host one Dark Sky nights.
- Hosted a group from Heritage Southwest and MDNR.
- Hosted two shelter reservations.
- Attended two BOC meetings concerning ordering a new county vehicle assigned to parks.
- Met with volunteer concerning disc golf course.
- Provided wagon rides for students from Heritage Southwest.

**Dodd:**

- Tested negative during water re-testing.
- Hosted five shelter reservations.
- Hosted two cabin rental nights.
- MEC fixed downed power lines.

**Russ Forest:**

- Hosted one shelter reservation.
- Hosted Marcellus Middle School River Study Group.
- Met with MSU and loggers concerning Russ West damage.
- Utilized Benson Tree Service to drop two broken oak trees.
- Provided wagon rides for a small group of visitors from Taiwan.

**Stevens Memorial Park:**

- Buoys placed and opened for swimming.
- Mowed
- Spread woodchips under play equipment.

**Sears Park:**

- Continue to encourage fishermen to purchase an annual park pass.
- Mowed
- Ordered "No Overnight Parking" signs for placement.

**Harmon Park East / West:**

- Buoys placed and opened for swimming.
- Continue to encourage fishermen to purchase an annual park pass.
- Mowed

**Veteran's Park:**

- Hosted a tree planting with the DAR Samuel Felt Chapter.

As you can imagine, with all the rain and warmer temperatures, Jay and Jodi spend much of their time mowing, trimming and cutting back within all our parks. In between that, they prepare for and support the various groups visiting our parks this time of year. Russ west is still closed and will continue to be closed until we can get it cleaned up and the electricity re-connected. The good news is we did get a couple of the big oaks taken down to the ground so we can remove them safely. I also met with Michigan State University and the loggers to discuss the conditions of the park. They agreed to

assist us with the removal of some large trees on the trail and within Russ West. I represented the parks for a tree planting ceremony at Veteran's Park and met with representatives from the DNR and Heritage Southwest concerning outdoor education programming within Cass County. Reservations for the shelters and cabins are going strong with Jodi spending more time collecting fees at Dodd Park on the weekends.

Patty continues to update many of our flyers, maps and data on social media and beyond. As reported last month, annual park pass sales show no signs of slowing down with shelter and cabin rentals in full swing. We just had a lady from Knoxville, Tennessee rent a cabin for four nights over the fourth of July. Patty will be providing examples of the updates she has been working on to enhance the visitor experience within our parks.