

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

**Dr. Lawless International Dark Sky Park
15122 Monkey Run St.,
Vandalia, MI 49095**

October 9, 2025

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

INVOCATION

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - Commissioner Stafne

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
- Special Events
- Grant update
- Lake Park
- Dodd Park

NEW BUSINESS

- Patty’s Update
- The Friends of Cass County Parks
- Lawless Park Overview

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT / ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADJOURNMENT

Next regular meeting November 13, 2025. Please call 445-4456 if you cannot attend.

**CASS COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Arthur Dodd Memorial Park
Minutes – September 11, 2025, Meeting**

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

INVOCATION – Commissioner Bailey

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Commissioner Kucklick

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 - A	Jeff VanBelle – P

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion to accept: Commissioner File

Second: Commissioner Stafne

Approved

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to accept: Commissioner VanBelle

Second: Commissioner Stafne

Approved

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS – Bob & Lisa Groszek

PRESENTATION –

1. Continued with his quest to have a pier at Lake Park.
 - a. Suggested several scenarios to allow him to put a pier at Lake Park.
 - b. Commission President Parrish suggested that he possibly go in front of the BOC, possibly at a COW meeting. Director Wyman will continue to work with all parties involved to find resolution to issue.

COMMITTEE REPORTS –

1. Five-Year Plan Committee – Marcy is studying the county's Master Plan.
2. There will need to be input from the residents of the county.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Director Wyman

1. Was Presented
2. The 200 middle school students that visited Lawless were on a busy schedule and not all were able to take the hayride.
3. The next board meeting will be at Lawless with possibly a hayride for the members.
4. Even though it wasn't a good night for the Perseids at Lawless, about 60 visitors were there.
5. The music group from Connecting Chords was good with about 90 people present. The Friends of the Cass County Parks paid half of their fee.
6. The memorial bench was placed last week. We need to create a policy for memorial benches in the parks.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Dark Sky

- a. Had a presentation at Beaver Island on August 22 with a star party afterward.
- b. Spoke at the Dowagiac Junior Art League at Lawless – about 30 women.
- c. Scheduled a presentation at Long Lake in Porter Twp. For next week.
- d. Visited the gentleman wanting to donate an observatory, it's 8 ft. in diameter. Shared pictures.
- e. Has written a children's book about light pollution.

2. LWCF Grant

- a. Since the estimate came in so much over budget the DNR was contacted to see if alterations can be made. Yes, the plans will have to be redone to represent changes –at the least needing to make sure the restrooms are ADA accessible.

- b. Commission members asked where we stand with the fund balance issue. Commissioner Barerra will work with Director Wyman to obtain background information on the subject.
- 3. **CISMA**
 - a. Some of the phragmite sites have been sprayed (drone). The follow-up will continue in the spring.

NEW BUSINESS

- 1. **Harvest Festival/Trunk-n-Treat**
 - a. Flyer was presented
- 2. **Historical Society Harvest Festival**
 - a. The parks will be helping with hayrides.
- 3. **Neighbors to the West**
 - a. Director Wyman met with a Berrien County official familiar with their parks funding to get information regarding how Berrien County Parks were able to get a tax levied without the vote of the people. The main question is how they levied a tax without the vote of the people under public act 90 when they are formed under public act 261. It was determined that legal council may be needed to answer this question.
 - b. It was suggested to contact MAC to see if they had any information.
- 4. **Dodd Park Overview/Future**
 - a. We need electric back in shelter #2.
 - b. Old playground equipment needs updating.
- 5. **Board Members Comments/Announcements**
 - a. Commissioner Barerra commented regarding the pier issue. Since there is not currently a pier there, we are in a safe place. It would be a big liability. Don't allow a pier there.

Motion: To follow the dedication on the original plat regarding Lake Park. – Commissioner L. Parrish

Second: Commissioner R. Parrish

Motion passed unanimously

Motion to adjourn: Commissioner R. Parrish

Second: Commissioner Van Belle

MEETING ADJOURNED

Respectfully submitted,
Patty Dohm
Recording Secretary

Next regular meeting October 9 at Dr. Lawless Park. Please call 269-445-4456 if you cannot attend.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

CASS COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION

October 9, 2025

Dr. Lawless:

- **Hosted boy scout troop.**
- **Hosted two Dark Sky evening viewings.**
- **Hosted one reservation.**

Dodd:

- **Hosted three reservations.**
- **Hosted two camping outings.**
- **Hosted re-unification event.**

Russ Forest:

- **Hosted five reservations.**
- **Hosted one school group.**

Stevens Memorial Park:

- **Mowed.**
- **Removed buoys.**
- **Closed for the season.**

Sears Park:

- **Empty trash barrel.**
- **Mowed.**
- **Enforced parking policy.**

Harmon Park East / West:

- **Enforced parking policy.**
- **Emptied trash barrel.**
- **Mowed**
- **Cut several trees at East Harmon due to decay.**
- **Closed beach and East Harmon swimming park.**

As they transition from summer to fall, Jodi and Jay are busy on getting the trails ready for the Sandhill Crane ½ Marathon and the Harvest Festival at Russ Forest sponsored by the Historical Commission. They are both on Saturday, October 11th so our parks team will be very busy as we have responsibilities at each event. In addition, our team re-roofed the bathrooms at Russ East. Look for the BIG TREE shelter at Russ East to be replaced soon as well. If the weather holds out, look for the picnic shelter at our group camp to be re-roofed this fall also. Now that our mowing contract is done, our team will be taking over those duties until the first frost, and the grass stops growing. Patty and Jodi did an excellent job representing the parks during the community event at SMC last month. Our department likes to participate whenever asked to do so within the community.