



CASS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CASS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

September 29, 2022

4:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER - *Chair Dyes*

INVOCATION – *Commissioner Marchetti*

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – *Commissioner Jones*

ROLL CALL - *Clerk/Register Monica McMichael*

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA – *Commissioner Laylin*

NEW BUSINESS

1. Approval of Park Fee Policy Update – *Commissioner File*

ADJOURNMENT



CASS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

TO: Board of Commissioners

FROM: Scott Wyman, Parks Director

DATE: September 29, 2022

RE: Lawless Park Entrance Fee Policy

REQUEST:

Approve proposed revision to Lawless Park Fee Policy.

BACKGROUND:

In March, a grant application was submitted to the MDNR Land and Water Conservation Fund. During final review by the MDNR, it was noted that no points were to be awarded under the "Entrance Fees" portion of the application. It was noted that a revision to the policy could result in a revision that would increase the total score of the application thereby increasing the chances of securing funding.

The proposed revision covers 2 main categories. First, is simply clarifying that entering the park through any means other than a motor vehicle does not incur an entrance fee. In practice, the fee policy already applies in this way, but the revised language articulates that more clearly. Secondly, as per the MDNR application criteria, the proposed language would include an option for visitors facing financial hardship to complete a form to request a waiver of entrance fees.

The revised language was crafted in coordination with Marcy Hamilton from the SWMPC, and we believe the proposed revision will satisfy the requirements of the MDNR application, resulting in up to 30 additional points to the LWCF Grant Application.

REVIEWS:

Prior to submitting this request, this agenda item was reviewed by all impacted departments noted below: (Administration, Maintenance, HR, and IT)

Administration

FINANCIAL ANALYSIS:

The daily fee is \$2.00 for in-county and \$3.00 for out-of-county visitors. A visitor with an approved waiver would be exempt from said fees. However, we do not anticipate the option of fee waiver requests to have a substantial impact on the fees collected. Largely, waiver requests are more likely to originate from potential new visitors to the park.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve Park Fee Policy revision as proposed.

"Entrance fee waived at Dr. Lawless International Dark Sky Park for those entering the park by using public transportation, a bicycle, or walking. In addition, an entrance fee waiver may be requested by visitors who feel entrance fees will cause financial hardship, thus preventing them from entering and enjoying park landscapes and facilities. Those requesting an entrance fee waiver will be required to fill out a short form providing name, address, and reason for waiver request."

DR. T.K. LAWLESS PARK ENTRANCE FEE POLICY

EFFECTIVE: May 26, 1995

PURPOSE:

To establish a reasonable entrance fee policy at Dr. T.K. Lawless Park and to adequately explain the privileges related to the fee being requested.

CONDITIONS:

This fee policy is specifically designed for Dr. T.K. Lawless Park, although much of the policy closely parallels other County Parks fee policies.

This fee policy applies to all visitors of Dr. T.K. Lawless Park entering the park by motorized vehicle, including visitors attending: a reservation, a special event, a sporting event, or a tour not prearranged.

This fee policy applies to the vehicle entering the park and allows the legal limit of the passengers in that vehicle type to enter the park and use any non-reserved, or open facilities.

The fee policy does not entitle the visitor to any of the park's programs where an additional fee is required, unless the visitor is eligible and pays the additional fee.

This fee allows anyone properly entering the park to have access to the park during the days hours of operation.

This fee will be collected by an attendant whenever it is cost effective to do so.

FEE STANDARDS:

This fee policy distinguishes between In-County and Out-of-County visitors with the justification that In-County visitors have contributed through taxes a portion of the expense of operating this park.

This fee policy defines an In-County visitor as a visitor that has permanent residence within the county borders or owns property within the county borders. Verification of this definition will be accomplished by a driver's license or local address check.

This fee policy establishes two types of entrance fees: annual and daily. The annual pass is valid for the calendar year for which it is purchased during the posted hours of operation. The daily pass is valid for the day for which it is purchased during the posted hours of operation.

This policy establishes entrance fees as follows:

ANNUAL PASS	IN-COUNTY	\$15.00
	OUT-OF-COUNTY	\$20.00
DAILY PASS	IN-COUNTY	\$1.00
	OUT-OF-COUNTY	\$2.00

This policy establishes the annual pass shall be a durable card (approximately the size of a credit card) that must be displayed when entering the park in order to receive a daily pass. The daily pass shall be a disposable card that is to be placed on the dashboard of the vehicle while visiting the park.

sop.327 Lawless Park entrance fee revised

REVISION: July 9, 2015	IN-COUNTY	\$1.00
	OUT-OF-COUNTY	\$3.00

REVISION: January 14, 2016	IN-COUNTY	\$2.00
	OUT-OF-COUNTY	\$3.00

C) Application clearly describes the proposed, existing, and future facilities at the site, including clear site plans. However, there are concerns about expected traffic flow, access to facilities, environmental impacts or impact facilities will have on each other.	20		
D) The application does not clearly describe the proposed, existing, and future facilities at the site or there are strong concerns about the expected traffic flow, access to facilities, environmental impacts or the impact facilities will have on each other.	0		
Maximum Possible Points A + (B or C or D)	70	70	

Comments to Applicant:**6. ENTRANCE FEES**

	Maximum Possible Points	Preliminary Score	Final Score
A) No planned entrance fee: OR Site will be readily accessible by methods other than the automobile and there will be no entrance fee when using these alternative methods to get to the park (e.g., public transportation, bicycle, walk-in); OR There will be an entrance fee with partial or complete waiver available and the waiver policy is likely to be effective in bringing people with low incomes into the park.	30		
B) There will be an entrance fee with partial or full waiver but effectiveness in bringing people with low incomes into the park is questionable; OR Park entrance fee will be waived, reduced, or by-donation-only on a regular basis for all users.	15		
C) There will be an entrance fee with no waiver.	0		
Maximum Possible Points (A or B or C)	30	0	

Comments to Applicant:

Application indicated entrance fee with no ability for waiver. Opportunity to expand or allow for waiver to increase points could be provided.

7. UNIVERSAL ACCESS DESIGN

	Maximum Possible Points	Preliminary Score	Final Score
A) The applicant obtained a design review from a person with a disability in their community, an organization representing people with disabilities or an advocate for persons with disabilities. Documentation of this review was provided.	15	15	
B) The entire project is designed using the Principles of Universal Design with the intent to provide accessible recreation for all users. These criteria apply to scope items where ADA standards and guidelines apply.	30		
C) A majority of the project is designed using the Principles of Universal Design. These criteria apply for scope items where ADA standards and guidelines apply.	20		
D) Some of the project is designed using the Principles of Universal Design. These criteria apply for scope items where ADA standards and guidelines apply.	10	10	
E) ADA standards and guidelines do not apply to the scope items OR scope items do not exceed ADA standards.	0		
Maximum Possible Points (A + (B or C or D or E))	45	25	

Comments to Applicant: