

**CASS COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
120 N. Broadway St – Conference Room
November 10, 2021**

9:00 a.m. – CALL MEETING TO ORDER –President Kucklick

INVOCATION – Commissioner R. Parrish

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Commissioner Kring

ROLL CALL –

Director Wyman – P

Hailey Harman - A

Lyndon Parrish - P

David Kring – P

Robert Parrish - P

Annie File - P

Fritz Kucklick – P

Jamie Stafne - P

Bruce Campbell - P

Jeff VanBelle - P

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Commissioner R. Parrish

Second: Commissioner L. Parrish

APPROVAL OF MINUTES –

Motion: Commissioner R. Parrish

Second: Commissioner Stafne

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS –

Blair Garceau, Birch Lake Homeowners Association

Matt Newton, Deputy County Administrator

PUBLIC COMMENT –

1. Ms. Garceau wanted it put on record that Director Wyman is hoping to work with DNR to fix the problem at Birch Lake boat launch.
2. Director Wyman stated that according to Robert's Rules of Order, responding directly to comments or questions in the public comment section is not supposed to happen.
 - a. Deputy Administrator Newton states that he believes the parks commission can set their own rules pertaining to public comment.
 - b. Commissioner File believes with such a small commission that it is ok to respond directly to public comment questions.

COMMITTEE REPORTS – None

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Director Wyman

1. Was presented.
 - a. Birch Lake Boat Launch – Director Wyman is looking forward to working with DNR representative who will be providing a plan of action for the repair.
 - i. Director Wyman apologized for not taking care of the problem by now.
 - b. Discussion followed.
2. Wildflowers were planted around the sign at Lawless – discussion followed.
3. Director Wyman attended the BOC workshop at the Edward Lowe Foundation and complemented the willingness of the road commission to help further the cause for park improvements.
 - a. Deputy Administrator Newton commented that we are all stronger when we work together and that the facility review is moving forward – discussion followed.
4. Float boat operators are not happy that the Dowagiac River was not opened up more so they could navigate the river easier – discussion followed.

BUDGET – Director Wyman

1. Will be part of the audit process.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Dark Sky
 - a. Viewed the Dark Sky Mini-Documentary “Robert Parrish” that was produced by Josh Long of the Grotto Network of Notre Dame – discussion followed.
 - b. Working with Dr. Seaman to facilitate a meeting with Notre Dame to further the development of our Dark Sky observatory – discussion followed.
 - c. Star calendar to be presented at next meeting.
2. Lawless Master Plan
 - a. Large copies of the plan were displayed to the commission. Approval will be at the next parks meeting.
3. Special Events
 - a. Sandhill Crane had 307 participants. Very positive feedback and looking to add a food truck next year.
 - b. Harvest Festival also very positive with more than 700 visitors. Proud of the amount of food donated to local food banks and all the support from the community.
 - i. Commissioner File stated that everyone is so happy when they enter the park and especially when they leave.
 - ii. Special kudos to Patty Dohm and the LEO’s from Edwardsburg.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Leadership Meeting
 - a. Director Wyman met with county leadership and discussed visually improving the Schug portion of the master plan to present to the county BOC.
 - b. Deputy Administrator Newton talked about improving the parks web presence and the creation of an application for ARPA funds.
2. EDA
 - a. Director Wyman met with SWMPC to discuss the possibility of EDA funding. They suggested doing a market study on the Dark Sky area, nature center and the lodge. All separate studies that could be beneficial if securing future funding for our projects – discussion followed.
3. Annual Pass Discount
 - a. Annual pass discount approved. Commissioner Kucklick suggested keeping better records on who buys passes so we may contact them in the future; trying to improve and grow our e-contact list. Discussion followed.
4. Commission Vacancy
 - a. Encouraged our commission members to find potential candidates for our commission vacancy.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT/ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Commissioner VanBelle mentioned the inner county drain meeting on the Dowagiac River.
- Director Wyman acknowledged those who protect our freedoms as Veterans’ Day is coming up.

Adjournment:

Motion: Commissioner R. Parrish

Second: Commissioner File

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Respectfully submitted,
Patty Dohm
Recording Secretary

Next regular meeting December 9, 2021