

**CASS COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Conference Room
120 N Broadway
Cassopolis, MI 49031**

January 12, 2017

6:00 P.M._- CALL MEETING TO ORDER - Recording Secretary Dohm

INVOCATION – Commissioner Washington

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - Commissioner Campbell

ROLL CALL – Recording Secretary Dohm

Director Wyman – P

Kevin Claire – P

David Kring - P

Bruce Campbell – P

Annie File –P

Linda Pruett -P

Korine Blyveis – P

Kevin Hershberger – A

Johnie Rodebush – A

Jamie Stafne – P

Pauline Washington - P

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – with the adjustment of moving the introduction of visitors and public comment next on the agenda to allow our visitor to make his presentation and leave.

Motion to accept as amended: Commissioner Campbell

Second: Commissioner File

Motion carried

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Robert Parrish

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Parrish made a presentation on Cass County Parks’ Cosmic Connection at T.K. Lawless.

Motion by Commissioner Blyveis: Director Wyman and Robert Parrish should work together to have Dr. T.K. Lawless Park be designated and certified as an official “Dark Skies” site with the idea of having an observatory located within the park.

Second: Commissioner Campbell

Discussion:

1. The cost for certification – none. If the park is approved, there will need to be a sign posted signifying this. And, will want the information on the website and Facebook, etc.
2. The size of the telescope is measured by aperture. The kind Mr. Parrish recommends will be larger lens area and shorter body.
3. The telescope will be totally computerized, but ecological as possible with solar batteries. Will need internet.
4. What is seen through the telescope can be viewed on a large screen my numerous people.
5. Good possibility of incorporating the observatory with the nature center.

Motion Carried.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Motion: Commissioner Kring: To cast a unanimous ballot for the past slate of officers.

Second: Commissioner Stafne

Motion carried.

Officers remain: President – Bruce Campbell; Vice President – Kevin Claire; Secretary – Pauline Washington

APPROVAL OF August MINUTES

Motion: Commissioner Pruett

Second: Commissioner Washington

Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None

DIRECTOR'S REPORT - Director Wyman

1. Commissioner Blyveis inquired about having a survey for unsafe trees after the wind storm the other day.
 - a. Director Wyman stated that while out in the parks they are always on the lookout for unsafe trees, but as in all parks there is an inherent risk a person takes being in nature.
2. Drone – Director Wyman and Commissioner Campbell met with the gentleman in Vandalia that makes drones. He is putting together a quote. They will also be meeting with County Administrator Folks regarding insurance, and other concerns regarding the drone. Commissioner Campbell does have permission from his grant to purchase the drone.

BUDGET REPORT - Director Wyman

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Dodd Grant
 - a. Went to bid Monday, and have had some interest already. Bids will be opened on the 26th.
2. Discover Winter Nights
 - a. Looks like not only the first winter night will be canceled, but also the second one if the weather forecast is correct.
3. Fees
 - a. The board reviewed the list of fees charged by the parks.

Motion by Commissioner Pruett: To raise the amount of monthly rent on the Lawless house to \$400; raise the amount of rent on the Schug pavilion to \$75; to increase the pier permit to \$200; to raise the entrance to Lawless Park to \$2.00 per vehicle; and to leave all other fees remain the same.

Second: Commissioner Stafne

Discussion: Commissioner Stafne stated that in raising these fees, we see the value of what we have to offer within our parks.

Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

1. NIMBA
 - a. Winter cycling is going great. NIMBA is purchasing some grooming equipment to give to the parks if we will help them maintain the winter fat tire trail.
2. Joshua
 - a. Director Wyman's son and classmates will be doing a senior project, which will be engineering a project design for the nature center at Lawless. It will cost the parks nothing, and will help towards planning for the nature center/observatory.
3. Great Lakes Park Training Institute
 - a. From February 27 through March 2, 2017 at the Pokagon State Park in Angola, Indiana is Director Wyman's yearly training opportunity.

4. MAEAP certification

- a. It looks like T.K. Lawless Park will most probably be certified in wildlife habitat and wetlands management. The only issue may be the farmer spraying his field next to the park, but there are avenues to look at to make adjustments to this.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT / ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Commissioner Campbell commented that it was a nice winter newsletter.

ADJOURNMENT 7:45 p.m.

Motion: Commissioner Claire

Second: Commissioner Blyveis

Next regular meeting February 9, 2017. Please call 445-4456 if you cannot attend.

Respectfully submitted:

Patty Dohm, Recording Secretary