

CASS COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
T.K. Lawless International Dark Sky Park/Michigan Dark Sky Preserve
Cassopolis, MI, MI 49031
August 12, 2021

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

INVOCATION – Commissioner R.. Parrish

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Commissioner R. Parrish

ROLL CALL – Recording Secretary Dohm

Director Wyman – P

Thomas Atkinson – p

Annie File - P

Bruce Campbell - A

Hailey Harman - A

David Kring – P

Fritz Kucklick – P

Lyndon Parrish - A

Robert Parrish - P

Jamie Stafne - P

Jeff VanBelle - P

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion: Commissioner R. Parrish

Second: Commissioner File

APPROVAL OF MINUTES –

Motion: Commissioner R. Parrish

Second: Commissioner File

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS –

Paul Fallon

Administrator Carmen

PUBLIC COMMENT –

1. Paul Fallon
 - a. Was attending the meeting to see what progress was being made on the boat launch at Birch Lake.
 - b. Director Wyman indicated that he is looking into funding and checking with the DNR crew that specializes in stabilizing boat launches.
2. Administrator Carmen
 - a. Talked about/answered questions regarding parks' board meetings, website, and funds from American Rescue Plan Act

COMMITTEE REPORTS – None

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Director Wyman

1. MEANDR meeting at Dodd Park
 - a. Marcy Hamilton was able to secure a grant from Gateway Foundation for \$5,000 to pay for professionals to open a corridor in the Dowagiac River

BUDGET – Director Wyman

1. Was presented.
 - a. Getting into crunch time, having to adjust some line items.
 - i. Especially fuel, with the higher cost of fuel and all the rain causing extra mowing.
 - b. Commissioner File indicated the \$6,500 that was taken from the parks' budget for the feasibility study should be returned.
 - c. Director Wyman is working with O'Boyle to get more precise estimate on redoing the Schug. As soon as that has been received, Director Wyman will be presenting that to the BOC.
 - d. From the Zoom presentations Director Wyman attended, the American Rescue Plan Act is an 80/20 match grant that must be applied for by November.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Dark Sky
 - a. Commissioner R. Parrish is working on the yearly required report to IDA, which he hopes to submit a month prior to the deadline.
 - b. He will be working on the quarterly newsletter after the park report to IDA.
 - c. And after the newsletter, he will be working on his delegate report to IDA.
 - d. Josh Long from Notre Dame productions contacted Commissioner R. Parrish to do a 3-minute professional video of dark skies.
 - e. Trying tent camping for only the Perseids Meteor Shower with great interest.
 - f. Made a presentation to the Future Stars from SMC.
 - g. Due to the resurgence of the variants of Covid, he will discontinue allowing visitors to view the stars through his telescope.
2. Parks/Recreation/Culture/Tourism Committee
 - a. No report
3. Lawless Master Plan
 - a. Director Wyman met with them last week.
4. Special Events
 - a. Star Party
 - b. Mike Lowe
 - c. Harvest Fest
 - d. Sand Hill Crne

NEW BUSINESS

1. Russ Forest Lease
 - a. The lease is up for renewal. 90% of the verbiage is identical as the old one.
 - i. Except the lease is for 5 years, which may hinder submitting for some DNR grants.
 - ii. Removal of items upon termination of lease was changed to 3 months instead of originally 6 months.

MOTION to recommend Director Wyman move forward with the new lease with Michigan State University for Russ Forest Park made by Commissioner VanBelle

SECOND: Commissioner Atkinson

BOARD MEMBER COMMENT/ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Commissioner VanBelle – Rudy Road in Dowagiac will be closed starting next week for his project, that will hopefully only take one week.
- HHW is Saturday, August 21 at the Road Commission parking lot.
- MEAP Field Day at Kevin Hershberger Farm – August 25.

Adjournment:

Motion: Commissioner R. Parrish

Second: Commissioner VanBelle

Respectfully submitted,
Patty Dohm
Recording Secretary

Next regular meeting September 9, 2021 at County Services Building