CHARLEVOIX COUNTY PARKS COMMITTEE

Monday – January 21, 2019
Meeting Location:
Boyne City Hall
319 N. Lake St.
Boyne City, MI 49712

**Members Present:**
Committee Members: Brian Williams, Susan Vrondran, Dennis Jason, Tim Wieland, Caroline Kobylczak, and Amanda Wilkin.

**Members Absent:** Ryan Novotny

**Staff:** Parks and Planning Director Kiersten Stark, Parks Manager Ross Maxwell, and Administrative Assistant Lauren Richards

**Public:** Robert Boch

**Call to Order/ Pledge of Allegiance:**
The regular meeting of the Charlevoix County Parks Committee was called to order at 5:30 pm on January 21, 2019 at the Boyne City Hall by K. Stark. Recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance was led by B. Williams.

**Election of Officers**
K. Stark opened elections.

A. Wilkin joined the meeting.

MOTION by S. Vrondran to nominate D. Jason for Chairperson.
Seconded by B. Williams. K. Stark asked for any further nominations. No further nominations were cast. Voice vote: all in favor. Motion passed.

D. Jason took over running the meeting.

MOTION by T. Wieland to nominate B. Williams for Vice Chairperson.
Seconded by S. Vrondran. D. Jason asked for any further nominations. No further nominations were cast. Voice vote: all in favor. Motion passed.

MOTION by D. Jason to nominate T. Wieland for Secretary.
Seconded by S. Vrondran. D. Jason asked for any further nominations. No further nominations were cast. Voice vote: all in favor. Motion passed.

**Introduction of Members**
All members and Staff took a moment to introduce themselves.
C. Kobylczak asked if R. Novotny will be present at any of the meetings. K. Stark said she is unsure why he has been absent, but she will try to reach out to him. D. Jason said the transit has been running later hours.

**Approval of Agenda:**
A motion was made by S. Vrondran and seconded by B. Williams to approve the Agenda as presented. Voice vote: all in favor. Motion passed.

**Public Comment:**
None

**Approval of Minutes:**
Motion was made by S. Vrondran to accept the Minutes of the December 17, 2018 meeting as presented. Motion was seconded by B. Williams. Voice vote: All in favor. Motion passed.

**Financial Reports:**
K. Stark said there is not a lot of revenue because the park has been closed for the season. We did receive $2,000 for the red pine timber harvest.

R. Maxwell asked why the budgeted revenue for charges for services is only $4,228 when it should be $50,000. K. Stark said she doesn’t know why and will ask about it.

D. Jason said the budget reports are confusing and hard to read. He said the numbers don’t add up. K. Stark agreed they’re difficult to read if you don’t work with them on a regular basis. D. Jason asked if Cherie Browe or Becki King could come to a meeting and explain how to read the financial reports. K. Stark said she would ask.

MOTION made by T. Wieland to accept the Financial Reports as presented. Motion was seconded by B. Williams. Voice Vote: All in favor. Motion passed.

**Manager’s Report:**
R. Maxwell reported the following:
- He is retiring in April and will be completely moved out of the Park Manager’s house by April 1st. R. Maxwell said he is willing to help with the transition and that one of the rangers from last summer plans on returning this spring.

K. Stark said she has been working on updating the Park Manager job description, so it can be posted on the County website.

D. Jason asked what role the Parks Committee will play in hiring the new Park Manager. K. Stark said the Committee can provide a recommendation. S. Vrondran suggested the applicants have an interview with D. Jason. K. Stark explained that interviews will be done at the County Building in the Human Resources office, but D. Jason may be able to be one of the individuals on the hiring committee.
- **Whiting Park**
  - R. Maxwell said the Sunrise Reservation System is up and running and works great. We have brought in $1,700 since the system went live on January 7th.
  - The red pines have been cut and there will be an update later in the meeting.
  - The Road Commission plowed a couple of times while Ross was on vacation between December 20th and January 3rd.

- **Porter Creek**
  - Ross skied the whole trail and trimmed a few branches.

S. Vrondran said the trails are looking great.

MOTION made by S. Vrondran to accept the Manager’s Report as presented. Motion was seconded by D. Jason. Voice Vote: All in favor. Motion passed.

**Old Business**

**Presentation on the City of Charlevoix Proposed Change in Trail Route (Robert Boch):**

Robert Boch, from the Charlevoix Trail Ambassadors, took a moment to introduce himself.

- R. Boch said the current trail route is not safe for bikers and there aren’t any clear markers directing bikers from the Little Traverse Wheelway to downtown Charlevoix.
- The new trail will be for multiuse purposes (walking, biking, etc) and will be open year-round.
- The proposed new trail will run through the woods near the old Elementary School and run along the back side of the golf course.
- The Elementary School is going to be converted into the new County Building and will soon be home to the senior center in Charlevoix; the new proposed trail will offer a good opportunity for seniors to be active and utilize the trail.
- R. Boch said the Charlevoix Trail Ambassadors would need some money from the City and County but are hoping to fund most of the trail with State and Federal grants.

T. Wieland said having people ride bikes along Mt. McSauba Rd. is dangerous and the new proposed route directs people away from there.

B. Williams asked if the Charlevoix Trail Ambassadors would be putting a trail through the woods by the Elementary School where there is currently no trail. R. Boch said yes.

K. Stark asked if the proposed trail would be separate from the street. R. Boch said the portion through the woods by the Elementary School is off the street, but the rest of the trail is a bike lane along the street.

Discussion took place regarding the portion of the proposed trail that runs along Michigan Avenue. The street is currently a one-way street with parking on both sides. The proposal is to remove parking from one side of the road and run the trail along the road in place of the parking spaces. The bike path would have traffic going in both directions.

R. Boch said he is seeking the Parks Committee’s input on the proposed changes.
B. Williams suggested the Charlevoix Trail Ambassadors could apply for $10,000 from the Parks Millage. K. Stark said the City of Charlevoix would have to apply for the money. D. Jason and S. Vrondran said Charlevoix Township could apply as well, since part of the trail is in the Township.

T. Wieland said because Michigan Avenue is a one-way street, the City of Charlevoix would have to approach the State about making it a two-way street for bikes only.

Discussion took place regarding the number of lanes in certain areas of Petoskey where there are trails.

R. Boch said bikers do not like to cross US 31 because it is not safe.

T. Wieland asked when the Charlevoix Trail Ambassadors would like input by. R. Boch said within the next 30 days. The City of Charlevoix said they would pass a resolution in support of the proposed new route. A. Wilkin said their meeting may be tonight and their next meeting would be in two weeks.

T. Wieland suggested the Parks Committee take some time to think about the proposed trail and bring it up for final discussion at next month’s meeting.

**Boyne City to Charlevoix Non-Motorized Trail Status Report:**

K. Stark reported the following:

- **Phase One**
  - She has submitted the final grant reimbursement request to the DNR.
  - The DNR Staff is drafting the Declaration and Notice document.
  - K. Stark sent out Request for Proposals for new landscaping to replace the Spirea bushes within the Boyne City limits.

- **Phase Two**
  - She has submitted the final grant reimbursement request to the DNR. We have been reimbursed for all but 10% of both Phase One and Two.
  - The DNR Staff is drafting the Declaration and Notice document.

- **Phase Three**
  - We did not receive the DNR Trust Fund Grant in 2018.
  - MDOT has agreed to hold our Tap Grant (conditional commitment); they have also started a new quarterly reporting program.
  - K. Stark requested to reapply for the Trust Fund Grant and received approval from the Personnel Committee.
  - The Commissioners (Personnel Committee) have decided to put the engineering for Phase Three out for bid.
    - OHM Advisors has done $17,000 worth of grant phase engineering for us at no charge.
    - We do not know if OHM Advisors will allow us to use their engineering work up until now if they will not be doing the project. K. Stark said she believes they agreed to do the grant engineering at no cost with the assumption they would be doing all of the engineering for Phase Three.
T. Wieland pointed out there have been prior issues with overages on Phase Two of the trail with OHM Advisors. K. Stark said that since she has been working with them on Phase Three, she has had no issues and has been pleased with their service.

K. Stark said a new firm is going to want to obtain their own aerials and topography which can only be acquired in the summer. T. Wieland agreed.

R. Maxwell asked if the County wants to change from OHM Advisors because OHM Advisors did free grant engineering and later submitted a bill for $17,000. K. Stark said no. They are standing behind their word and doing the grant phase engineering at no charge.

K. Stark said she is concerned about the project being pushed back. She had planned on submitting the same grant application, but if the County selects a different firm, she may not be able to resubmit the same application.

D. Jason asked who was on the Personnel Committee. K. Stark said Ron Reinhardt, Chris Christensen, and Shirley Roloff.

S. Vrondran asked if this decision to bid out the engineering is final. K. Stark said yes, procedurally this does not require a full board vote.

D. Jason asked if K. Stark had talked with Senator Wayne Schmidt regarding the availability of additional state funding. K. Stark said no. D. Jason said Beaver Island just received a large grant from the state. He would like K. Stark to contact Senator Wayne Schmidt.

A. Wilkin asked who decides which bid is taken. K. Stark said the County Board. A. Wilkin said OHM Advisors would be the most desirable because of the work they have already done. K. Stark agreed and said OHM Advisors would be asked to submit a bid.

A. Wilkin said the County Commissioners probably want to put the project up for bid because it’s procedural. K. Stark said yes, but it should have been done a year ago.

T. Wieland asked if OHM Advisors had submitted a bill. K. Stark said no but she isn’t sure if they will submit a bill for the grant phase engineering if they don’t receive the project.

K. Stark said if we get held up another year we’ll have to see if MDOT will hold our TAP Grant (conditional commitment) another year.

K. Stark said the Personnel Committee voted 2-1 (with one vote against).

D. Jason said if the subject goes to the full Board for consideration, the vote could be overturned.

MOTION by D. Jason to ask the County Board to reconsider sending the grant engineering for Phase Three of the trail out for bid due to the strong possibly of another year delay in construction. Motion was seconded by S. Vrondran. Voice Vote: All in favor. Motion passed.
**Whiting Park Boat Launch:**

K. Stark reported the following:

- A single ramp boat launch will cost approximately $190,000 and a double ramp boat launch will cost $250,000.

B. Williams explained the history of the boat launch project for new member A. Wilkin. A. Wilkin asked if there has been any negative feedback. B. Williams said no.

K. Stark presented three conceptual plans from Performance Engineers on the boat launch.

- The second drawing is like the drawing from last month, but it has parking (vehicle stacking area) along the drive near the top of the loop and some additional parking spots have been moved for better traffic flow.

T. Wieland said backing in to the parking spots in the second drawing will be a challenge. B. Williams asked about doing a drive-through parking lot.

B. Williams likes the staging area just before the boat ramp on the second drawing.

D. Jason said he doesn’t think there will be much traffic through the boat launch. B. Williams said the longest he has had to wait at Sommerset Pointe to launch has been two boats.

- K. Stark presented the third drawing that has two boat ramps.

B. Williams liked the two ramps. He asked if the double ramp costs more. K. Stark said yes, the double ramp is $250,000. She said the DNR Waterways grant is for $89,000 and has been secured.

T. Wieland asked if the second ramp could be added later. B. Williams said the first ramp would have to be on the North side. K. Stark said yes.

K. Stark pointed out the location for a portable restroom and ADA ramp to the dock on the newer drawings.

B. Williams asked if anyone had contacted Larry Kish (the homeowner who lives next door to where the boat launch will be put in). K. Stark said no.

S. Vrondran asked if there had to be a hearing for adjacent property owners. K. Stark said no, not specifically for adjacent property owners. A. Wilkin asked if there would be a general public hearing. K. Stark said yes, and Larry Kish is welcome to come.

B. Williams asked who makes the final decision on the boat launch. K. Stark said the County Board does, with consideration of the Parks Committee’s recommendation.

A. Wilkin said it sounds like all members are in favor of a double ramp. The Parks Committee may want to look at more grant options.
B. Williams asked if the Parks budget has enough funding to cover two ramps. K. Stark said yes.

D. Jason said he does not like the pull off parking area (vehicle stacking area) in the second and third drawings.

B. Williams asked S. Vrondran what her opinion is. S. Vrondran said she likes the double ramp idea.

Discussion took place regarding parking options.

T. Wieland said it is going to cost more in the long run if we wait to put in a second ramp later.

MOTION by B. Williams to recommend building the boat launch with a double ramp (as shown in the third drawing) but remove the parking along the drive at the top of the loop and add in a couple of parking spots near campsite 1. Motion was seconded by S. Vrondran. Voice Vote: All in favor. Motion passed.

R. Maxwell said to make sure someone gets the septic system plans before putting in parking by campsite 1 because that’s where the septic system runs.

D. Jason would like the third drawing put in the minutes.

Campground Reservation System Update:
R. Maxwell said he covered the update in the Manager’s Report. He pointed out there is a feature on the program that allows you to pencil in people if they do not have payment at the time of reservation; he has already utilized the feature once. The feature allows you to put a timeframe on how long the site will be held without payment before it become available again.

Whiting Park Forest Management Update:
R. Maxwell reported the following:
- He received a letter from Lynn Stephens. The red pine harvest has been completed.
- Lynn has begun marking hardwoods on the Butler property.
- We received $2,000 for the red pine harvest.

K. Stark said Lynn told her the harvesting company did a good job and he returned their performance bond.

New Business
Advocacy Report:
S. Vrondran reminded members that the deadline to apply for the Parks Millage money is February 1st. All applicants are required to have a resolution.

Bids for Replacement Planting:
K. Stark reported the following:
- We received three bids. A couple of the companies did not convert square yards into
cubic yards.

- K. Stark said she did some adjustments and determined the correct bid prices:
  - Ryan’s Landscaping- approx. $12,139.90
  - Bowman’s Property Management LLC- approx. $7,628.64
  - Robinson’s Landscaping and Nursery- approx. $4,766.00

B. Williams said he doesn’t understand how Robinson’s bid is so low.

T. Wieland said Bowman’s quote is too high on man hours.

T. Wieland pointed out that Robinson’s is the only company who accounted for top soil in their bid. He said in the interest of keeping the plants alive, we will need top soil.

B. Williams asked if Michael Cain, the Boyne City Manager, could be contacted regarding the maintenance of the plants. R. Maxwell said Boyne City should maintain the plants once they are in.

K. Stark said Mark C’s Trees told her the project is too large for him to bid, but he is willing to contract for the maintenance of the plants.

B. Williams asked what the deadline is for getting bids in. K. Stark said last Friday.

K. Stark said Dan Ulrich from OHM Advisors has recommended Robinson’s Landscaping. He spoke highly of their work.

MOTION by A. Wilkin to recommend hiring Robinson’s Landscaping and Nursery to do the landscaping along Phase One. Motion was seconded by B. Williams. Voice Vote: All in favor. Motion passed.

Recreation Plan Update:
K. Stark reported the following:

- She has begun reviewing the Plan and has identified some sections that need revision.
- The deadline to get the Plan complete is January, 2020 to remain eligible for DNR grants.
- She brought the topic up at the last Planning Commission meeting and they suggested organizing a sub-committee.
- K. Stark thought about hiring a planner but thinks a sub-committee might be a better use of time. All the maps were done in-house last time, so they should be easy to adjust.
- She said most of the time will need to be spent on the Capital Improvement Program.
- K. Stark suggested a sub-committee made up of a couple members from the Parks Committee and Planning Commission.

Parks Committee members would like to do a sub-committee.

K. Stark asked who would be interested in being on the sub-committee. S. Vrondran and D. Jason said they are interested.
Campground Survey:
K. Stark said there aren’t any updates, but she wanted to keep the topic on the Agenda. The survey is primarily linked to campground improvements, which have been tabled for now.

S. Vrondran asked if there will be a survey with the Recreation Plan update. K. Stark said yes, but the survey for the Recreation Plan update is broader and includes all parks.

Public Comment

Meeting Adjourned:
A motion was made by T. Wieland and seconded by S. Vrondran to adjourn the meeting. Voice vote: all in favor. Motion passed.
The meeting was adjourned at 7:49 pm.

The next regular meeting will be at 5:30 pm on February 18, 2019 at the Boyne City Hall.

Minutes Submitted by:
Lauren Richards