

Minutes of the Charlevoix County Parks Committee  
Monday ----August 21, 2017, 5:30 pm  
Whiting County Park

**Members Present:** Pete Gaskin, Dennis Jason, Susan Vrondran, Tim Wieland, Brian Williams, and Caroline Kobylczak

**Absent Members:** Jessica Parks

**Others:** Parks Director Ross Maxwell, Planning Coordinator Kiersten Stark, County Commissioner Liaison Shirley Roloff

**Guests:** Bob Jess, John Vrondran, Lou Marusek, Eric Knop, John Thompson, Don Lockman, Jim Karlskin, Sheri Patton, and others

**Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance:** The meeting was called to order by Chairperson D. Jason at 5:30 PM, with recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of Agenda**

B. Williams asked that Whiting Park Wi-Fi be added to the agenda.

Motion made and seconded to approve the agenda as amended. Voice vote: all in favor.  
Motion carried.

**Approval of Consent Agenda**

S. Vrondran asked that the approval of minutes of the July 17<sup>th</sup> meeting be removed from the consent agenda due to a correction needed.

Motion by S. Vrondran to approve the consent agenda as amended, to include the Financial Reports and the Director's Report. P. Gaskin seconded the motion. Voice vote: all in favor.  
Motion carried.

**Items Removed from Consent Agenda**

S. Vrondran asked that on page 3 of the July 17<sup>th</sup> draft minutes, under Old Business, at the end of the paragraph about the Boat Launch, that "Motion carried" be added at the end of the motion.

Motion by P. Gaskin to approve the draft minutes as corrected. B. Williams seconded the motion. Voice vote: all in favor. Motion carried.

**Public Comment**

Bob Jess commented on a retaining wall in the road right-of-way at See Road, adjacent to his property, and would like natural stone boulders like the original plan stated instead of cultured stone. Kiersten Stark explained that the engineers recommended the segmental retaining wall due to the location of utilities and the limited amount of space available within the road right-of-way.

B. Jess commented that the segmental retaining wall does not fit the aesthetics of his property, and also asserts that he was told a boulder wall would be installed and he felt it was a bait and switch.

D. Jason said sometimes during construction, changes need to be made from the original plans. He suggested that the Parks Committee should also hear from the project engineers before making a recommendation on the issue. P. Gaskin said the segmental retaining wall didn't look aesthetically pleasing and didn't fit in with the surroundings. Further discussion took place.

Motion by B. Williams to recommend to the County Commissioners that they go back to the original plan using natural boulders for the retaining wall at See Road. P. Gaskin seconded the motion. Voice vote: Yes 5, No 1. Motion carried.

Don Lockman stated he was mainly in support of a boat launch at Whiting Park, but he had a concern about the posted rules at Thumb Lake Park beach. The signs there say no boat launching. He asked if this meant that small fishing boats, canoes and kayaks could not be put in due to the swimming area going across most of that end of the County property. R. Maxwell stated that an area could be designated for the launching of this type of watercraft.

D. Lockman also asked about access to the lake for snowmobiles and four wheelers for ice fishing. He said, a couple of years ago, there was a sign pointing to a U-shaped washout about four feet wide that said "access to lake". D. Lockman suggested that the rules be reviewed so that user groups are not being shut out as has happened to the small boaters at Whiting Park.

D. Lockman said the main sign at Thumb Lake Park says no fish shanties at night. He said they used to fish smelt there at night. He felt this was another user group being shut out. R. Maxwell said the park closes at dusk, mainly to prevent people from having large parties there at night. D. Lockman did not think this had been a problem in the past.

D. Lockman also said he had recently visited the beach and that dogs were running off leash. He noted this is a potential lawsuit problem.

## **Old Business**

### **Whiting Park Boat Launch**

R. Maxwell stated that at the previous meeting the attendees made it clear that they wanted a small boat launch. He presented an alternative location for a small launch at the north end of the beach. He said a launch at the north end would protect the beach and recreational boating area, keep more boats away from swim area, help maintain the quiet family campground, and accommodate multiple water recreational uses of Whiting Park's beautiful ½ mile of beach.

R. Maxwell presented a conceptual drawing and estimated costs prepared by Performance Engineers of Charlevoix for a small launch site at the north end of Whiting Park's beach, as an alternative to the larger proposed launch at the south end.

Lou Marusek questioned changing the plan in mid-stream. L. Marusek also wanted the five questions that were asked last month answered.

Eric Knop questioned why there is a universal access kayak launch instead of a boat launch.

B. Williams emphasized the need to work together on a plan.

S. Vrondran stated that she didn't think the alternative plan would work due to the presence of wetlands at the north end of the beach.

D. Lockman asked where the parking would be located.

John Thompson supported a boat launch at the alternative location, but is concerned about parking.

Motion by S. Vrondran, seconded by C. Kobylczak, to recommend to the County Commissioners at least a 20-foot boat launch, along with parking, at the most appropriate location at the park.

Voice vote: Yes 4, No 2. Motion carried.

Motion by B. Williams, seconded by T. Wieland, to recommend to the County Commissioners at least a 20-foot boat launch, along with parking, at the north end of the park. Voice vote: Yes 2, No 4. Motion defeated.

### **Boyne City to Charlevoix Non-motorized Trail Status Report**

K. Stark gave an update on the Boyne City to Charlevoix Trail project.

#### Phase 1

Progress to Date:

- Grams property/stormwater runoff issue: Project engineer is drafting a letter to Mr. Grams to inform him of the planned solution
- Obtained quote for shrubs along retaining wall adjacent to Davis property within Boyne City limits

Upcoming Work:

- Install a sediment tube at top of driveway, adjacent to trail, at Grams' property to provide enhanced storm water control
- Plant shrubs adjacent to Davis property
- Submit DNR grant reimbursement requests
- Project close-out

#### Phase 2

Progress to Date:

- Wilson property/request for trail connection - Road Commission and Parks Committee had concerns regarding precedent, safety, and liability
- Hayes Township request for trail sign at Eastern Avenue (Pine Point subdivision) to direct trail users to Hayes Twp Park on Lake Charlevoix
- Site visit at See Road to discuss retaining wall and property owner concerns – July 31<sup>st</sup>
- Parks Staff assembled the benches for Phase 2 to be installed by contractor
- Trail construction nearing completion

#### Upcoming Work:

- Meet with County Board's Building & Grounds Committee for discussion and recommendation on Wilson property/request for trail connection – Sept 6<sup>th</sup>
- Install benches and trail signs
- Submit DNR grant reimbursement requests
- Press release to thank all contributors

#### Phase 3

##### Progress to Date:

- Bay Township has committed \$33,000 in local match
- Received \$8,000 grant from the Charlevoix County Community Foundation for Phase 3 trail
- Submitted MI Natural Resources Trust Fund grant application for Phase 3 trail
- Submitted MDOT TAP grant application for Phase 3 trail
- Met with Park of the Pines to discuss trail route and location of trailhead with respect to wetlands near N. Springwater Beach Road
- Requested cost estimates for remainder of trail from project engineer

#### Upcoming Work:

- Project engineer to update conceptual plan for trail route and trailhead at Park of the Pines
- Provide updated conceptual plan to Park of the Pines for approval by their governing board – Summer 2017
- Seek zoning approval for the trailhead – Summer/Early Fall 2017
- Draw up easement document for a portion of Phase 3 trail and trailhead at Park of the Pines – Fall 2017
- Determine maintenance plan for the trailhead – Fall 2017
- Apply for remaining grants for Phase 3 trail and trailhead – Fall 2017 & Spring 2018
- Develop long term plan for remainder of the trail, including cost estimates

#### Phase 4

- Finalize plans for trail route – 2017
- Apply for grants – 2018

#### **Whiting Park Modernization Project**

R. Maxwell has not yet received an estimate on possible forest management from our Forester, Lynn Stephens.

#### **Thumb Lake Park Milfoil Update**

R. Maxwell shared a letter he had received from John B. Marshall, President of Lake Louise Cottagers' Council, stating they have identified several patches of milfoil along the edges of the Thumb Lake County Park swimming area, opposite buoys # 2 & 3 and at the north end of the

Park. He stated they were fortunate to have a near perfect day for treatment of those milfoil patches, and feel confident that it was a very successful application covering those milfoil patches. He also stated their appreciation for the County's Parks funds to help maintain the health of Lake Louise (Thumb Lake).

#### **Whiting Park Wi-Fi**

B. Williams asked about the status of getting Wi-Fi set up at the park. K. Stark reported that we're still waiting for Aspen Wireless to survey the Park and develop a proposal for providing Wi-Fi service.

#### **New Business**

##### **Trailhead-Park of the Pines**

It was discussed that Park of the Pines trailhead grants will be in direct competition with grants for Whiting Park's modernization project in 2018 and we will need to decide the priority.

##### **Budget 2018**

- Increased Trails Repair and Maintenance and Professional/Contract Service budget line items with addition of Phase 1 and 2 of Boyne City to Charlevoix Non-motorized Trail
- Capital Outlay Request of \$27,000 for new commercial mower and commercial table and chairs for Green Building

##### **Other Comments**

- S. Vrondran commented on the Celebration of Bikes event in Boyne City
- D. Jason reported on his and R. Maxwell's representing Charlevoix County at the Northern Lake Michigan Islands Collaborative meeting on Beaver Island, which involved working on plans for the Beaver Island Archipelago. The meeting was organized by the DNR, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, and the people of Beaver Island.
- Parks & Recreation Advocating – An informational session for local officials for the 2018 Parks Millage Appropriation process will be held on Thurs. September 28<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. in the Pine Lake Room at the County Building
- MSU Extension "Enjoying a Healthier Lifestyle" programs set for every Monday from September 11 – October 9, 2017 from 4 – 5 p.m. at Whiting Park; public is cordially invited and Parks Committee is encouraged to attend and advocate for this project

##### **Public Comment**

None

##### **Adjourn**

Motion made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. Voice vote: all in favor. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:47 p.m. by Chairperson D. Jason.

Next Meeting: September 18, 2017 - 5:30 pm @ Whiting Park

Submitted by Tim Wieland, Susan Vrondran, Ross Maxwell, and Kiersten Stark