CHARLEVOIX COUNTY PARKS COMMITTEE

Monday – July 15, 2019
Meeting Location:
Green Building
Whiting Park
05820 Lake Shore Rd.
Boyne City, MI 49712

Members Present:
Committee Members: Susan Vrondran, Amanda Wilkin, Dennis Jason, Brian Williams, Caroline Kobyleczak, and Ryan Novotny.

Members Absent: Tim Wieland

Staff: Parks and Planning Director Kiersten Stark, Administrative Assistant Lauren Richards, Parks Manager Mariah Penix, County Commissioner Shirley Roloff, and County Fiscal Officer Becki King.

Public: Lynn Stephens (Forester)

Call to Order/ Pledge of Allegiance:
The regular meeting of the Charlevoix County Parks Committee was called to order at 5:30pm on July 15, 2019 at Whiting Park by D. Jason.

Recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance was led by B. Williams.

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

Public Comment:
B. Williams has been camping at Whiting Park and pointed out the following issues:

- We are losing money because sites 1 and 2 are still wet and unusable. He suggested determining the cost of putting sand and stone on the sites to level them out.
- He noticed the electric cord from the kayak launch is in the water which creates a hazard.
- There are no trash cans on the beach.

S. Vrondran asked if there is a lot of litter on the beach. B. Williams said no.

- He would like to see hooks put up in the bathroom near the showers for bags and towels.
- The buoys have been drifting because of the high-water level. Some of the boaters have placed them back where they belong, but B. Williams suggested moving them all in a bit to prevent drifting.
Approval of Minutes:
C. Kobylczak would like to have her comment from last month added as follows: “C. Kobylczak said the picnic tables at Thumb Lake Park need to be painted” added under “Public Comments”. S. Vrondran would like her response added as well, which is as follows: “S. Vrondran suggested maybe members of the Lake Louise Christian Community would volunteer to fix them up or the Boy Scouts could do it as a project”.

Motion was made by A. Wilkin to accept the Minutes of the June 17, 2019 meeting as amended. Motion was seconded by S. Vrondran. Voice Vote, All present in favor. Motion passed.

Financial Reports:
B. King explained how to read the Trial Balance Report. Discussion took place regarding the Trial Balance Report. B. King said some adjustments can be made to make the Trial Balance Report easier for the Parks Committee to read.

D. Jason asked exactly how much money there is available to spend on the parks.

B. King said the non-motorized trails and parks millage appropriation are not reflected in the financial reports provided. S. Vrondran asked if the Parks Committee could be provided with those reports. B. King said yes.

B. Williams looked at the financial reports and asked if the total fund balance is $514,000 or $645,000. B. King said she recommends looking at the $380,000 from 2018 because that is more in line with what the parks have to spend on capital projects; there are revenues coming in and four months left this year and budgeted items will be coming out still. Tax money was just deposited into the parks account, so it appears to have more in it than it actually does.

Discussion took place regarding interest revenue.

S. Vrondran told B. King she appreciates everything B. King does but would like to have a better overall picture. B. King said she would be happy to bring more information to next month’s meeting.

D. Jason said we’re trying to get enough money to work on various projects; factoring in the overages for the trail, the Parks Committee only has approximately $100,000 to spend.

S. Roloff said B. King is doing a nice job and the County appreciates all of her work.

Motion was made by S. Vrondran to accept the Financial Reports as presented. Motion was seconded by C. Kobylczak. Voice Vote, All present in favor. Motion passed.

Director’s Report:
K. Stark reported the following:
- Staff has been working on stabilizing the shoreline at Whiting Park. This will be the second time since May that rocks and filter fabric have been brought in.
M. Penix said the campground has been very busy and it has been a good group of campers so far. She has been working with Josh Cline (Charlevoix County Maintenance) on the sidewalk at the beach; there has been some erosion of the sand and they are trying to prevent a potential collapse.

D. Jason asked if we have a DEQ permit for putting rock along the shoreline. K. Stark said no, she thought we would only need a permit if we hired someone to bring in equipment to place larger rock. She talked with the Maintenance Department head and he thinks we may need to have larger rock brought in. D. Jason said we should apply for a permit now because the water level is only going up. B. Williams agreed with D. Jason.

K. Stark commented on the staff shortage at the Parks. B. Williams asked if community service workers are an option to make up for the staff shortage. C. Kobylczak said Hudson Township used them to paint their Township Hall. B. Williams said community service workers could clean restrooms and collect trash too. S. Vrondran said Barry Anderson is the contact for community service workers.

R. Novotny joined the meeting.

K. Stark said Vince Currier was asked to do the mowing along the Non-motorized trails, but he has been too busy. She said M. Penix has been looking for someone else to hire to do the mowing.

B. Williams asked what mowing needs to be done. K. Stark explained the sections along Phase 1, Phase 2, and the Little Traverse Wheelway that the County is responsible for mowing. B. Williams asked how much it costs to hire someone to mow those areas. K. Stark said Vince Currier previously charged us about $475 per month. R. Novotny asked if K. Stark had spoken with Chuck Vondra about getting some trustees to help. K. Stark said we have gotten trustees to help with other projects, but not mowing.

S. Vrondran asked if the tables at Thumb Lake Park have been sanded and painted yet. K. Stark said no.

**Old Business**

**Forest Management Update - Lynn Stephens, Forester**

L. Stephens reviewed the red pine harvest from this winter at Whiting Park. He said Pinney Brothers from East Jordan did the project. He explained the impact and results from the harvest.

S. Vrondran said there are some areas that should have been smoothed out more after the harvest. L. Stephens said he will go look at the harvested areas and see what the conditions are like.

L. Stephens distributed a marked tree inventory sheet and a draft bid sheet for hardwoods at Whiting Park. He explained how to read the marked tree inventory and reviewed the bid sheet. The Committee and L. Stephens discussed sending this out to bid in the next couple of months. L. Stephens listed a couple of entities that may be interested in bidding on this harvest.

D. Jason asked if there are any trees being cut in the original portion of Whiting Park. L. Stephens said no, this cut will be on the “Butler” edition only.
L. Stephens suggested hiring someone to take the tops that are left from the hardwood harvest to sell as firewood to clean up the area after the harvest.

Discussion took place regarding the project timeline.

B. Williams asked what the estimated income is from the project. L. Stephens said approximately $240,000 plus whatever income there is from the veneer.

L. Stephens said the primary focus of this harvest is the health of the woods.

C. Kobylczak asked if L. Stephens ever had someone want to clear a whole area. Discussion took place regarding cutting down whole sections of trees.

B. Williams asked when selective cutting will happen in the original portion of Whiting Park. L. Stephens said that would be the next project and he can start working on marking trees in the original portion of Whiting Park next if that’s what the Parks Committee wants.

L. Stephens will be back at the August 19th Parks Committee meeting to present the draft bid documents for the hardwood harvest on the “Butler” edition.

Boyne City to Charlevoix Non-motorized Trail Status Report

K. Stark reported the following:

- Phase 1
  - The new landscaping was planted along the trail within the Boyne City limits. It has been a challenge keeping the plants watered. Seasonal Park Rangers have been watering them daily. Boyne City is letting us fill up our water tanks at their Public Works building.
  - K. Stark met with an engineer from Gosling Czubak at the Grams’ property to come up with a plan to address trail-related stormwater runoff/soil erosion issues at the Grams property.

C. Kobylczak asked if the resolution to the runoff problem will be at the County’s cost. K. Stark said yes, because the problem is due to our trail.

S. Roloff asked if we have a soil erosion person in the Building Department. K. Stark said yes, but they do not have the ability to do the engineering that needs to be done.

C. Kobylczak asked if the engineer that designed Phase 1 didn’t see the area in front of the Grams property as a potential problem area. K. Stark said no and explained how the trail is designed in front of the Grams property.

S. Vrondran asked if K. Stark has spoken with the Road Commission. K. Stark said no. D. Jason said that should be done.

- Harbor Fence Co. was hired to repair the fence damage adjacent to Grams property, however, they are scheduling projects all the way out into September.
• Phase 2
  o The fence and trail signage at Mulberry Lane were moved to improve visibility for motorists and trail users. A new stop sign was installed for traffic on Mulberry Lane.

• Phase 3
  o K. Stark is taking the proposed engineering services contract from Gosling Czubak to the County Board for final approval next week.
  o Gosling Czubak completed and submitted a quarterly report to MDOT for our TAP grant conditional commitment.
  o She expects to hear from the DNR with the preliminary score on the grant application for Phase 3 next month.

Whiting Park Boat Launch Status Update
K. Stark plans to take the proposed contracts from Performance Engineers and Voice Environmental Group to the County Board for approval in August.

S. Vrondran said she spoke with one of the townships and they are willing to post “boat launch coming soon to Whiting Park” on their website. She talked with Bryan Graham and he said that would be fine. S. Vrondran would like us to post that we will have a boat launch coming soon on the County website too.

She asked if the adjacent property owner is aware a boat launch is being put in yet. K. Stark said she has spoken with him and he didn’t express any concern. S. Vrondran would like Staff to see if there was ever an easement for the adjacent property owner to access his home by using the park drive. Additional discussion took place regarding easements.

S. Vrondran shared a copy of a determination letter from the DEQ based on their pre-application site visit to Whiting Park in 2017, which expires this year. K. Stark wasn’t aware of an expiration date for the determination and will make a copy of the letter.

New Business
Recreation Plan Status Update
The next subcommittee meeting is this Thursday at 1pm at the Bay Township Hall.

Carrie Klingelsmith from Beckett and Raeder sent subcommittee members a draft survey via email for review and comment. She will also be visiting and conducting an inventory of County parks in August.

S. Roloff asked who is doing the survey. K. Stark said Carrie Klingelsmith from Beckett and Raeder.

D. Jason asked if the subcommittee meeting could be moved up an hour since he must be in Mt. Pleasant at 4pm. K. Stark said she can see if that’s possible. S. Vrondran said she’s fine with that.

Advocacy Report:
S. Vrondran said members should collect brochures from their designated cities and townships.

Public Comment
S. Roloff asked if members would like to do a potluck next month. Several members expressed interest. Discussion took place regarding what items each member will be bringing.

K. Stark told members they should arrive at 5pm next month so we can do the potluck prior to the meeting.

Meeting Adjourned:
A motion was made by B. Williams and seconded by R. Novotny to adjourn the meeting. Voice vote, all in favor. Motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 7:08pm.

The next regular meeting will be at 5:30pm on August 19, 2019 at the Green Building at Whiting Park.

Minutes Submitted by:
Lauren Richards