CHARLEVOIX COUNTY PARKS COMMITTEE

Monday – June 17, 2019
Meeting Location:
Thumb Lake Park
00665 Magee Rd. S.
Boyne Falls, MI 49713

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

Members Absent: Ryan Novotny

Staff: Parks and Planning Director Kiersten Stark, Administrative Assistant Lauren Richards, and County Commissioner Shirley Roloff.

Public: Leslie Helwig

Call to Order/ Pledge of Allegiance:
The regular meeting of the Charlevoix County Parks Committee was called to order at 5:30 pm on June 17, 2019 at Thumb Lake Park by D. Jason.

Recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance was led by D. Jason.

Approval of Agenda:
A motion was made by A. Wilkin and seconded by S. Vrondran 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 May 20, 21019 meeting as presented. Motion was seconded by T. Wieland. Voice Vote: All in favor. Motion passed.

Financial Reports:
K. Stark reported the following:

- She is going to ask Becki King (Charlevoix County Fiscal Officer) to attend next month’s meeting to answer questions about the financial reports.
- K. Stark said there have been a few repairs in the past month on equipment at Whiting Park and the shower building.
- The septic tanks at Whiting Park were pumped last week. There are no records of when it was last done.
S. Vrondran asked who pumped the septic tanks. K. Stark said K & J Septic.

- K. Stark said we just purchased stone to do temporary shoreline repair at Whiting Park.

S. Vrondran asked who will be doing the repair. K. Stark said County Maintenance and some Trustees will be working on it tomorrow. K. Stark said the stone will be temporary and is comprised of small river rocks.

- K. Stark said charges for service (revenue from camping fees) are over $5,000 but we have had to issue some refunds due to some reservable sites being under water.
- K. Stark reviewed the trial balance report and how to compare the balance between this and last year.

S. Vrondran asked about seasonal employees. K. Stark explained there are currently two seasonal employees and the department is looking to fill a full-time, year-round position. The person in that position would supervise maintenance at Whiting Park in the summer and would work for County maintenance in the winter.

S. Roloff joined the meeting.

T. Wieland asked why utilities are over $1000 for this month. K. Stark said she doesn’t know why; there have not been any changes. S. Vrondran asked what all is included in utilities. K. Stark said cable, internet, and electricity.

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

**Director’s Report:**
K. Stark reported the following:

- As stated earlier, Staff will be working on stabilizing the shoreline at Whiting Park.
- K. Stark said her focus has been on assisting with daily operations at Whiting Park.
- There are some issues with the Boyne City to Charlevoix Non-motorized Trail that she will be discussing later.
- Earlier this month, the Planning Commission took a tour of Whiting Park and held a brief meeting.

D. Jason asked K. Stark if she had heard from Lynn Stephens (Forester) about marking trees. K. Stark said he is hoping to have the trees marked within the next month or so. He has been held up by other projects.

**Old Business**

**Boyne City to Charlevoix Non-motorized Trail Status Report**
K. Stark reported the following:

- Phase One
  - The new landscaping will be planted along the trail within the Boyne City limits by the end of this month. The landscaping company was supposed to have the
landscaping done by Memorial Day; K. Stark said in the future, we will need to consider instilling a financial penalty for not completing projects within the specified time. She said she plans to make arrangements with another local landscaping company to maintain the plants once they are put in due to limited staffing.

Discussion took place regarding high water levels.

- There was an auto accident Memorial Day weekend that took out a portion of fencing out on Phase One in front of Robin Grams’ property. K. Stark has received some quotes to do the repair. Harbor Fence Company’s proposal is $5,305.06 and The Fence Company of Northern Michigan’s proposal is $4,797.07. Currently, the County is responsible for paying for the repairs. K. Stark said she will be taking the quotes to Administration and believes they can approve up to $5,000 in emergency repairs. This will be an insurance claim.

D. Jason said the fence needs to be repaired as soon as possible.

- Phase Two
  - Home owners in the Forest Cove Association on Mulberry Ln. submitted a complaint to the Sheriff about the lack of visibility when pulling out of the drive on to Boyne City Road. The Sheriff assessed the situation and decided the fencing near the drive should be angled back near the entry to allow for better visibility. K. Stark said the fencing can be moved by County Staff. K. Stark discussed the signage at Mulberry Ln. and said the current engineers said the “no motorized vehicles” signs can be removed which will help with the obstruction of vision too; the engineers will confirm this with MDOT. K. Stark said the fencing will be moved and the “no motorized vehicles” signs will be taken down on Wednesday of this week. In addition to moving the fence and removing the “no motorized vehicles” signs, the association has agreed to allow the County to put in a stop sign at the end of Mulberry Ln.

S. Roloff asked how much the stop sign costs. K. Stark said she didn’t know at this time.

- Phase Three
  - Gosling Czubak is going to continue project scoping and verifying preliminary engineering. In addition, they will be doing some surveying. K. Stark said they have discussed some things that can be done this year to make the process move faster. Gosling Czubak thinks we may be able to begin construction next fall if we receive a Trust Fund grant this year.
  - The County just received a proposed contract/agreement from Gosling Czubak for approval.

**Whiting Park Boat Launch**

K. Stark brought the conceptual drawing for the boat launch to the meeting in case anyone wanted to see it or had any new suggestions. She has nothing new to report at this time. The next step is to get a contract/agreement in place with Performance Engineers and Voice Environmental Group,
which should take place within the next month.

D. Jason said he is concerned about the cost of paving the boat launch. He said he wonders if we really need a double ramp and so much parking. B. Williams said the fishermen who attended last month’s meeting said the launch will be in good use. They even said they are fine with waiting a little longer if it means we get things right.

D. Jason said he is concerned the estimates are on the low end of overall cost and is worried about how much the project will cost in the long run. S. Vrondran said D. Jason is right about the construction cost. She has seen this happen with the road commission projects this year.

**Whiting Park Proposed Rule Changes**

K. Stark said Bryan Graham (County Legal Counsel) drafted a proposed ordinance. She would like the Parks Committee to review it before it’s approved.

S. Roloff asked about the questions that were posed on the boat launch at last month’s meeting.

S. Roloff also asked about the location change for the Parks Committee meeting in October. K. Stark explained that the Park is going to be closed before the meeting date, so she wanted to move the meeting.

B. Williams asked about the rule regarding “no dogs on the beach”; he would like there to be a dog section at Whiting Park. K. Stark said the primary concern is about people not picking up after their dogs. Pet dander was also a concern that was brought up at the Commissioners’ meeting. Additional discussion took place regarding allowing dogs on the beach.

B. Williams asked if the County Commissioners could reconsider having a dog beach at Whiting Park.

C. Kobylczak said if you don’t allow dogs on the beach initially, you don’t have to worry about trying to prevent problems in the future if the committee changes its mind about allowing dogs on the beach.

S. Vrondran said now is not a good time to try this since we are short staffed already.

S. Roloff asked how many Parks Committee members support allowing dogs on the beach; three members raised their hands. S. Roloff said she does not support allowing dogs on the beach.

K. Stark said if we did a trial run, we don’t have enough Staff to police it. D. Jason asked if we could ask the Board for a trial run. K. Stark said she agrees with S. Vrondran that this summer might not be the best time for a trial run, but she will bring it up to the Board again.

K. Stark said the rules are going to be in a single ordinance and the ordinance would have to be amended if the dog beach didn’t work out.

**New Business**
**Recreation Plan-Subcommittee Report**

Tuesday June 11th the subcommittee met with Carrie Klingelsmith from Beckett and Raeder to go over the Recreation Plan. They reviewed the process and priorities. D. Jason, S. Vrondran, and two Planning Commission members attended, as well as K. Stark. They will be working on the community engagement portion next. L. Richards has been working on updating the recreation inventory. C. Klingelsmith will be going around to County parks to photograph them. The subcommittee reviewed the capital improvement plan and will be meeting again in mid-July. C. Klingelsmith will have a draft survey to review at the next meeting. There will be an online survey with a link on Facebook and the County website.

D. Jason asked how much it is to contract with Beckett and Raeder. K. Stark said approximately $15,000. D. Jason asked if some of the money will come out of next year’s budget. K. Stark said yes.

D. Jason asked if mailing surveys would be economical. S. Vrondran said mailing surveys is very costly. K. Stark said there has been good response in the past from mailed out surveys. D. Jason would like to know the cost of mailing surveys.

**Advocacy Report:**

S. Vrondran said Parks Committee members need to advocate now more than ever because of the Recreation Plan update. She said she has spoken with the Clerk at South Arm Township and the Clerk is concerned about Whiting Park and would like to see some updates done.

B. Williams said there are no hooks in the restrooms at Whiting Park and he has been requesting these for a long time. K. Stark said she can work on getting some hooks installed.

S. Vrondran said we should be putting all of the events that occur in the area in the Recreation Plan.

A. Wilkin said she left messages with the townships she is responsible for but she hasn’t heard back from them.

**Public Comment**

L. Helwig thanked the Parks Committee for its ongoing support with milfoil mitigation. L. Helwig gave a history on milfoil monitoring and treatment at Thumb Lake.

C. Kobylczak said the picnic tables at Thumb Lake Park need to be painted. 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.

**Meeting Adjourned:**

A motion was made by A. Wilkin and seconded by S. Vrondran to adjourn the meeting. Voice vote, all in favor. Motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 6:55pm.

The next regular meeting will be at 5:30pm on July 15, 2019 at the Green Building at Whiting Park.

**Minutes Submitted by:**
Lauren Richards