



MINUTES

CALHOUN COUNTY
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Thursday, December 6, 2018
315 W. Green St., 1-400, Marshall, MI 49068

1. Chair King called the meeting to order at 4:04 pm.
2. Roll Call – Community Development Program Assistant, Amber Herman

Present: Annette Chapman, Jesse Jacox, Lindsay Johnson, Derek King, Allyn Miller, John Sackrider, Ron Sootsman (via phone)

Absent: Bill Comai, Fred Heaton, John Rodwan

Also Present: County Assistant Administrator Brad Wilcox, Community Development Director Jen Bomba, Community Development Program Manager Doug Ferrall, Community Development Program Assistant Amber Herman

3. Approval of Agenda

Moved by Member Jacox, supported by Member Chapman, to approve the December 6, 2018 agenda of the Calhoun County Parks and Recreation Commission as presented.

On a voice vote, Motion **CARRIED**.

4. Public Comments

There was none.

5. Unfinished Business

There was none.

6. New Business

- a. Discussion on new meeting time and/or frequency

In an effort to increase attendance at the Parks and Recreation Commission meetings, it was discussed about decreasing the number of meetings and having them every other month. In order to make that change, it will be necessary to change the by-laws for the commission. Member Miller made the comment that if something needed to be addressed on an off month a

special meeting could be held. Community Development Director Jen Bomba commented that by having bi-monthly meetings start in February, they would better align with the opening and closing of the county parks. Member Jacox also questioned moving the time of the meetings to 5 pm, however County Assistant Administrator Brad Wilcox brought up the fact that additional meetings that are held after the parks meeting would make for a tight schedule, as well as county employees needing to be in attendance after 5 pm.

Moved by Member Jacox, supported by Member Chapman, to approve the Parks and Recreation Commission Bylaws to be amended to state meetings shall be bi-monthly, starting the new schedule in February, with a special meeting date in April to avoid spring break week.

On a voice vote, Motion **CARRIED**.

b. 2019 meeting schedule

Based on the previous passed motion, and pending the approval of the Board of Commissioners, the 2019 meeting schedule will be as follows:

Thursday, February 7, 2019
April meeting to be determined
Thursday, June 6, 2019
Thursday August 1, 2019
Thursday, October 3, 2019
Thursday, December 5, 2019

7. Department Report

a. 5-year plan discussion

Community Development Program Manager Doug Ferrall reported the 2019 Parks and Recreation Master Plan will begin to be developed in January. While a committee to work on this could be formed, ultimately that committee would be reporting to and asking for input from the commission. Due to the potential for redundancy and/or delay, Mr. Ferrall requested approval to work on the plan with staff and other stakeholders and bringing the work forward to the commission when needed for direction on future plans and goals. Member Chapman asked about input from the public. Mr. Ferrall affirmed having a plan to work with cities, villages and townships regarding their specific parks and talking with their administrators or environmental specialists that work with their parks system to get their public data, having one on one interviews with how the county can best help the municipalities with their parks, as well as having county wide surveys or open forums. He also stated staff members Herman and Pat Dadow will be helping with the 5-year plan in pulling data and compiling community reports into a similar county wide community report in order to start seeing what the community looks like and what the needs are. Member Miller requested to have general questions specific to the commission be given to the commission members prior to when they will be needed so members can form a response. Member Jacox also requested information that can be shared with the public while the surveys or open forums are being completed in order to better educate the public to why their input is important.

b. Riverside Park

Mr. Ferrall shared a drone video of Riverside Park, performed by Brent Brown, parks volunteer. In viewing the matting provided and used by ITC, questions have come up regarding what can be done with Riverside Park. He was able to two quotes for a study of the options regarding Riverside Park, one being \$4000, the other at \$8000. Questions include what could be done, how can it be maintained, if there is a feasible plan which could be addressed through either study. Potential funding for development has been identified through the ITC grant process. Members Miller and Chapman expressed concern of time and funds being used for multiple projects when the larger project of Kimball Pines Park is still being addresses, while Member Jacox expressed concern of losing interest in funding from ITC if nothing is done. Member Johnson addressed the potential cost of mitigation due to permanent impact in a wet land area. Member Miller asked what expectations might arise just from having the study done. Member Chapman again brought up the issue of funding and budget being a priority for Kimball Pines Park not being in the current master plan. Member King asked about the funding issue. Mr. Wilcox responded the funding is an issue of operating budget verses capital budget, and if budgets continue to be seen as co-mingled, vision for parks development will be difficult. He sees operating budget as another issue that this current discussion. Member Johnson commented the difficulty is not only monetary, but time and attention by staff to maintain current parks. Member Jacox asked about any potential grants from the Firekeepers Casino. Member King responded those grants are small and Member Sackrider stated those are typically for casino impact. Member of the community, Jim Courey asked to speak, which was allowed. His statement included the facts that while it is currently unknown how Riverside Park could be funded, there is a potential that future funding may be available as well as the fact that if nothing is done, the opportunity for potential funding may be lost. Member King verified that this was not an action item, to which Mr. Ferrall stated he was not looking for action, however he did not want to continue exploring the potential if no one was interested. Mr. Wilcox then suggested doing a wetland assessment instead of a complete assessment with the DEQ to see if anything is a feasible use of the land. Members of the commission agreed with the suggestion. Mr. Ferrall is to contact the DEQ and report the assessment back to the commission.

Interspersed in the Riverside Park discussion, the Kimble Pines Park entrance was discussed as well as the matting remaining in Riverside Park and ITC keeping the matting area open, and the current situation for the Albion property being assessed for a county park.

c. ITC \$2000 grand additional opportunities.

It was reported that the grant has been received from ITC for Riverside Park, which can be used for anything other than equipment. Additionally, ITC is interested in Riverside Park which could be eligible for a \$10,000 grant through them, which would have to be applied for.

d. 2018 in review

- Received the Enbridge grant to remove the lunger in Historic Bridge Park and add an access point, add concrete to the picnic area and plant two rain gardens.
- Bollards were installed on the trails to restrict snowmobile access this week.
- New park signs for Ott Preserve are in place.
- On trail signage for each trail has been received and will be placed in early 2019.

A mini-Parks Annual Report will be available soon after collaboration with Communications Director Lucy Blair is complete.

8. Commissioner's Time

There was none.

9. Public comment – Limited to 3 minutes

- a. Nancy McFarland (CCTA) – MDot gave an estimate for Michigan Avenue signage and wanted generic signage stating "Trailhead" with arrows. The cost is \$5500 for 4 signs. The initial sign will be on Arlington by Michigan Ave. Ms. McFarland also reported on various trail events that have happened recently.

(Parks Millage Group) – Second millage meeting has taken place and potential elections dates have been identified. She reported the county can spend funds on elections as long as it is only educational, i.e. what is needed, how much it will cost, this is the state of the parks.

- b. Jim Courey – reported on clean up that has happened in the parks, as well as regeneration happening naturally at Kimball Pines Park. Mr. Ferrall stated transplanting some of the crowded small trees will be taking place when the weather becomes warmer.

10. Adjournment

The August 2, 2018 regular session of the Calhoun County Parks and Recreation Commission adjourned at 5:08 pm.