

# MINUTES

## CALHOUN COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Thursday, July 7, 2016  
315 W. Green St., 1-400, Marshall, MI 49068



1. Vice Chair Chapman called the meeting to order at 4:02.
2. Roll Call – Michigan State University Extension Support Staff, Pat Dadow

Present: Annette Chapman, Bill Comai, Jesse Jacox, Lindsey Johnson, Christine Kosmowski (arrived at 4:03), Allyn Miller, John Rodwan, Ron Sootsman, Blaine VanSickle

Absent: Derek King

Also Present: Community Development Educator Ingrid Ault, County Administrator Assistant Brad Wilcox, MSU Extension Support Staff Pat Dadow, MSU Extension Program Assistant Vera Prince

3. Approval of Agenda

*Moved by Member Kosmowski, second by Member Jacox to add agenda item 8d "Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi" event application as an action item and approve the July 7, 2016 agenda of the Calhoun County Parks and Recreation Commission as presented by Ault.*

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

4. Approval of Minutes

*Moved by Member Miller, second by Member Jacox to approve the June 2, 2016 minutes of the Calhoun County Parks and Recreation Commission as presented by Sootsman.*

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

5. Public Comment

Comment was made by Mr. Lindsey Wheeler that logging was done on Metcalf Lake property and it took all the old big beautiful hardwood trees for profit. Mr. Wheeler was concerned that logging was being

done in along the Trailway and he wanted to know if the Parks and Recreation Commission has plans to save and protect the trees in the Calhoun County owned parks especially the Ott Biological Preserve.

Member Comai responded that this is the main reason for the maintenance and management plan for the Ott Biological Preserve to save the trees. Vice Chair Chapman stated that there has been no logging since 1995 and thanked Mr. Wheeler for his concerns. Community Development Educator Ault will make sure to invite Mr. Wheeler to the public hearing for the Ott Biological Preserve maintenance and management plan.

6. Subcommittee Reports

a. Trailway Workgroup

Community Development Educator Ault stated the Trailway Workgroup is working to select a final meeting date for the work group and hopes to bring the maintenance and management plan to the Parks and Recreation Commission shortly.

b. Finance Subcommittee

Community Development Educator Ault stated the Finance Subcommittee getting ready to schedule upcoming meetings.

c. Interactive Map – Staff report

Community Development Educator Ault stated there is nothing new to report.

7. Unfinished Business

a. Ott Biological Preserve Maintenance and Management Plan

Member Chapman stated she thought the workgroup did a marvelous job. She expressed that this was a through document with good details and maps. She suggested the document should include a piece about the historic bridge located in this park.

Community Development Educator Ault stated they have a list of stakeholders and will make public outreach to send the plan to for soliciting input and will be scheduling a public meeting soon for more feedback. Ault also thanked everyone who worked so hard on creating the Ott Biological Preserve Maintenance and Management Plan.

8. New Business

a. Historic Bridge Park Subcommittee

Community Development Educator Ault asked for members to volunteer to be a part of the Historic Bridge Park Subcommittee to create a management and maintenance plan. Member Johnson stated she like would be a part of this committee. Member Chapman mentioned that Vern Messler would most likely want to be on this committee and Member Comai volunteered if he was needed.

b. Annual Park Tour

The Parks and Recreation Commission scheduled the annual park tour for Thursday, September 29 at 11:00 am. The tour will begin at the Calhoun County Trailhead at Emmett and Raymond and be by golf cart provided the Medical Care Facility is available that day. It will end at Historic Bridge Park with a picnic lunch. The carts can seat a total of fourteen people and extra seats will be offered to other officials such as County Administrators, Emmett Township Officials, or County Commissioners.

c. Locking Historic Bridge Park During Closed Hours

Community Development Educator Ault presented a Memorandum to the Parks and Recreation Commission asking their opinion of whether Historic Bridge Park should be closed every evening and reopened every morning. Members discussed the issues and concerns and gave ideas of alternative ways to deter people from entering the parks after closed hours and to try to prevent vandalism and theft in the County owned parks. Some suggestions were signage, cameras, neighborhood and police watches and positive influences of taking pride in the parks.

*Moved by Member Jacox and second by Member VanSickle to leave the Historic Bridge Park open at this time.*

On a voice vote, Motion **CARRIED**

d. Event Application – Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi

Member Rodwan of the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi explained the Environmental Protection Agency sponsored Tribal Water Workshop and Healing Water Event. Rodwan is requesting to have the event at the Historic Bridge Park pavilion on Tuesday, October 4, 2016.

*Moved by Member Kosmowski and second by Member Jacox that the Parks and Recreation Commission approve the event application of the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi.*

On a voice vote, Motion **CARRIED**

e. Any other new business

There was none.

9. Community Development Educator Report

Community Development Educator Ault gave a visual report of the progress of the Calhoun County owned Parks.

- Updated the kiosk at Historic Bridge Park with a large park map, emergency and park numbers, park rules, and other items of interest.
- Victory Life Church volunteers cleared undergrowth at the Charlotte Highway Bridge and Baurer Road Bridges. Vern Messler met with them to guide project.
- The Juvenile Probation Department cleared weeds and trimmed the landscaped areas, and added mulch to the beds.

- The remaining pine trees were removed behind the Calhoun County Medical Care Facility that were too close to the power lines.
- A new volunteer has used his own equipment to brush hog and mow unkempt areas in Kimball Pines Park. He is working with Mark Roberts to maintain the disc golf course and he has also moved some big logs to a more appropriate location to prevent motor vehicles in the park.
- Posting of the stolen bench on Facebook has spurred a lot of interest and activity of goodwill in the parks.

Member Chapman proposed to acknowledge volunteers for the good deeds they have done in the County parks. It was suggested that this be added to the board agenda for the next meeting.

Member Kosmowski thought that we could add sites to the clean-up list for volunteers to do at the Annual Krazy for the K-zoo, Saturday, October 1<sup>st</sup> where they give them lunch and a small token of appreciation afterwards.

#### 10. Commissioner's Time

Member Comai inquired about the Metcalf Lake property. Member Kosmowski stated is owned by the city of Battle Creek but has the Calhoun Conservation District managing the land which is in Barry County.

Member Jacox questioned the responsibility of the County maintaining the parks and stated he feels that we should concentrate on Historic Bridge Park and the Trailway which are the most used. He also would like to see a fee established to help manage and maintain the parks. Member Jacox passed out the first nineteen pages of the manual from the Enbridge Endowment and made references to the expectations described in it. County Administrator Assistant Brad Wilcox mentioned that there is a gap in the expectations of the Endowment of reimbursing the County for upkeep of the Parks. Member Jacox explained Mr. Schroeder of the Enbridge Foundation would like to see the project succeed and is willing to help craft the Capital Improvement Plan for Historic Bridge Park.

Member Chapman stated that the Historic Bridge Park Workgroup would be working together on these issues.

#### 11. Public Comment

Mr. Wheeler asked if we could set up an overall plan to preserve trees. Member Comai stated that the Maintenance and Management Plans are documents meant to preserve all natural habitats in the County Parks for the future. Member Chapman thanked Mr. Wheeler for his thoughts, comments and concerns and mentioned that there would be more discussion on this in the future.

#### 12. Adjournment

The July 7, 2016 regular session of the Calhoun County Parks and Recreation Commission adjourned at 5:00 pm.