



MINUTES

CALHOUN COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Thursday, September 7, 2017
315 W. Green St., 1-400, Marshall, MI 49068

1. Chair King called the meeting to order at 4:03.
2. Roll Call – Michigan State University Extension Support Staff, Pat Dadow

Present: Annette Chapman, Bill Comai, Jesse Jacox, Lindsay Johnson, Derek King, Allyn Miller, Ron Sootsman (by phone)

Absent: Tammi Damerow, Fred Heaton, John Rodwan

Also Present: Community Development Director Jen Bomba, GIS Manager Brent Thelen, GIS Technician Chelsea Robinson, MSU Extension Support Staff Pat Dadow

3. Approval of Agenda

Moved by Member Miller, second by Member Jacox to approve the September 7, 2017 agenda of the Calhoun County Parks and Recreation Commission as presented by Jen Bomba.

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

4. Approval of Minutes

Moved by Member Chapman, second by Member Johnson to approve the August 3, 2017 minutes of the Calhoun County Parks and Recreation Commission as presented by Jen Bomba.

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

5. Public Comment

There was none.

6. Special Order of Business

- a. Presentation by the Calhoun County Trailway Alliance

Mark Lelle from the Calhoun County Trailway Alliance (CCTA) invited all to the ribbon cutting and grand opening ceremony of the Albion River Trail Expansion on Saturday, September 16, 2017 at Victory Park

in Albion from 3:00 pm to 3:30 pm. This is during the “Festival of the Forks” event in Albion. He presented the background of the CCTA and the goal is to link all the communities in Calhoun County to connect with the other major trailways in the area. He informed the Parks and Recreation Commission the goal is to have a complete trailway across Michigan which includes The North Country Trail, The Great Lake-to-Lake Trail and The Iron Belle Trail.

Mr. Lelle explained that right now there are several areas that use the roadway to connect trails and they would like to change this to have the trailway connect without the use of roads to be safer. He also discussed the gaps in many areas of the trailway and the different construction options used to make a trailway. Lelle mentioned that one of the challenges in Calhoun County is the major highways running through it, I-69 and I-94, and getting across or around them. His presentation pointed out the many business impacts, some of which are concerns, but most contributing revenue to the communities.

Member Chapman asked what the timeline was to have it completed. Lelle stated that would take around 10 years to finalize the whole thing.

Community Development Director Jen Bomba added that the Calhoun County Trailway Alliance and the County have been sharing information and working together on the expansion of the Trailway subsequently building a relationship.

Member King thanked Lelle for his informative presentation.

7. Subcommittee Reports

a. Historic Bridge Park Workgroup

Member Jacox stated the workgroup met recently and worked on the maintenance and management plan. Community Development Director Jen Bomba reiterated the goal of the workgroup is to have the plan in place by the end of the year. She stated that they also looked into a Capital Improvement Plan with the workgroup for upkeep in the park in the years ahead. Some of the 2018 plans for improvement mentioned were the Kiosk updated and repaired, drainage issues on the playground and repairs. She feels they are making a lot of progress.

b. Interactive Map – Staff report

Community Development Director Jen Bomba introduced GIS Technician Chelsea Robinson, our new Community Development team member. Ms. Robinson presented a demonstration of how the interactive map will work when finalized. She explained that this will be accessible on the Calhoun County website where links to different interactive maps are located, as well as under the Parks and Recreation page. The parks interactive map will have icons that show the different amenities in each of the parks. The icons will then have pop-up windows that provide the public with details for each park. There will also be icons that display pop-up windows for specific amenities within the Calhoun County managed parks.

Bomba explained that in doing the interactive map they realized this is a great tool for the GIS department to use to help other offices for tracking data they may need. For instance the Road Department could share road construction information with; the area, the date started and when it is

expected to be done, what materials were used, etc. Bomba would like to have several interactive maps debut in the near future. She explained that this could also be used to track maintenance in the parks.

c. Trailway Workgroup

Community Development Director Jen Bomba stated the workgroup has not met for some time. The goal is to finish the maintenance and management plan hopefully by the end of the year. The group is scheduled to meet next week and she will have a more in depth report next month.

8. Unfinished Business

There was none.

9. New Business

There was none.

10. Department Report

- Community Development Director Jen Bomba stated she is looking at the budget with the Finance Subcommittee Members Sootsman and Chapman. She will also be working with the County Finance Director to give a budget report at the October Parks and Recreation Commission meeting. She mentioned this report would be more long term than just one year out.
- Bomba indicated there are three Parks and Recreation Commission members' terms expiring at the end of the year. They are Annette Chapman, Lindsay Johnson and John Rodwan. She will touch base with each of them to see if they are interested in continuing to serve on the Commission.
- Bomba reported receiving \$3,300 from the Enbridge Endowment to cover the cost of a broken slide at the playground, replacing rocks for drainage on the playground and repairs on a Kiosk.
- Bomba remarked that there was a tree down in the Ott Biological Preserve across the County Trailway. She was waiting on a quote to remove it and in the meantime it was cut down for an event that needed it out of the way. Bomba felt that this was a good problem, but it is concerned because of the time it takes to get maintenance done. She also mentioned that this event was not on our calendar schedule. Member Comai affirmed his opinion that we should have a Park Ranger.
- Community Development Director Bomba would like to kick off the Kimball Pines subcommittee and get a meeting scheduled. The members who volunteered for this are Jacox, Sootsman, Comai and Chapman. Bomba brought up a few items that will need to be addressed regarding Kimball Pines Park such as grants or funds for a new pavilion and signage.
- Member Chapman pointed out that the Finance Committee had asked Ault (former Community Development Educator) for worksheets on several occasions to track all grants received. Members discussed the different grants and monies received and the other questions about restrictions and timelines that go with them. Community Development Director Bomba stated that she will work with the County Finance to get an accurate budget report.

- Bomba stated that there has been a lot of use of the parks and many pavilion rentals. She mentioned that someone had written their own sign that the pavilion was reserved which was not done by our department. Member King suggested putting up a sign near the pavilion with whom to call for rental information. Bomba explained this information was in the Kiosk. Member Jacox stated he would like to see the Kiosk moved closer to the Historic Bridge Park pavilion so it would be better observed and protected from vandalism.

11. Commissioners' Time

Jacox asked if there was a way to use the interactive map for people to donate or contribute money to the parks. Member King reiterated that this has been an ongoing discussion as to how to take in donations. Members shared ideas to bring in revenue, donations and sponsoring events. Member King made a point that you can't get it if you don't ask for it.

Mark Lelle mentioned Kalamazoo and Jackson County both have Parks Foundations that raise a lot of private money. He stated the Trailway Alliance submitted a proposal to the Kellogg Foundation, which they denied, even though they gave 2 million to the Kalamazoo Parks Foundation, for reasons stating they would rather fund something more encompassing in all the parks in the County. This may be of interest to them.

Member Jacox asked about the old railroad maps that showed old Indian trails. Member Chapman thought these might be located at Willard Library. She suggested Bomba look there first. Member Sootsman asked if anyone checked the book *Native American Trails*.

12. Public Comment

Jim Coury suggested sponsoring a "wishes list" to raise money. He wondered if anyone heard about an advertisement listing a bridge for sale. He thought it was in Wisconsin and they would pay someone to come and get it.

Jack Childs has been enjoying the Calhoun County Trailway and has offered his assistance on a volunteer basis to cut brush or whatever needs to be done. He asked to contact him if we could use his help. He would like to see the invasive species under control and Kimball Pines back in a more usable park. He explained the Leila Arboretum has 4 inch pipes asking for donations and you just drop your money in.

13. Adjournment

The September 7, 2017 regular session of the Calhoun County Parks and Recreation Commission adjourned at 5:27 pm.