



## MINUTES

### CALHOUN COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

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

1. Chair King called the meeting to order at 4:04.
2. Roll Call – Community Development Support Staff, Pat Dadow

Present: Annette Chapman, Bill Comai, Tammi Damerow (via phone), Fred Heaton, Jesse Jacox, Lindsay Johnson arrived at 4:10, Derek King, John Rodwan, Ron Sootsman (via phone)

Excused: Allyn Miller

Also Present: Community Development Director Jen Bomba, Community Development Support Staff Pat Dadow

3. Approval of Agenda

*Moved by Member Heaton, supported by Member Jacox to approve the February 1, 2018 agenda of the Calhoun County Parks and Recreation Commission as presented.*

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

4. Election of Officers

- (a) Chair

Member Comai nominated Member King, supported by Member Chapman, for a one year term as Chair of the Parks and Recreation Commission for 2018.

- (b) Vice Chair

Member Jacox nominated Member Chapman, supported by Member Comai, for a one year term as Vice Chair of the Parks and Recreation Commission for 2018.

- (c) Secretary

Member Jacox nominated Member Johnson, supported by Member Chapman, for a one year term as Secretary of the Parks and Recreation Commission for 2018.

*Member Chapman moved to approve the slate of officers as nominated, supported by Member Jacox.*

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

5. Approval of Minutes

*Moved by Member Chapman, second by Member Jacox to approve the December 7, 2017 minutes of the Calhoun County Parks and Recreation Commission as presented.*

On a voice vote, Motion CARRIED.

6. Public Comments

Jim Coury mentioned the death of a Marshall Community member.

7. Special Presentation by ITC

ITC Regional Manager Cynthia Stump introduced herself and Communication Specialist Karen Boyd. Cynthia passed out gifts for those who could answer questions pertaining to ITC from their previous visit in 2015. She explained ITC owns the high voltage electric transmission lines in Michigan.

Cynthia and Karen handed out an information packet for the project that will impact the Calhoun County Parks this winter and into spring. The project is called the Verona – Barnum Creek Jct. Transmission Line Rebuild. ITC will rebuild approximately six miles of its 138,000 volt transmission line in Calhoun County. The existing structures and conductor (wires), providing greater reliability in southwest Michigan. Site preparation work will begin in early March and the project is expected to be completed sometime in June depending on the weather throughout the process. After that restoration will begin. Cynthia mentioned that if inclement weather arises the restoration process may have to wait until fall.

Cynthia stated part of the project will be continued vegetation management under and near the transmission lines. She explained there are some dead or dying trees that will be removed, two in Kimball Pines and two in the Ott Biological Preserve and a few in Riverside Park that were marked (in blue) in 2015 but never removed.

Karen explained the crews will come in and prepare the corridor for construction with silt fencing, and matting of the area to protect the environment. The project will be to change approximately 35 poles to 230,000 volts, to improve reliability and safety of the transmission infrastructure, and meet new energy demands.

Nancy Macfarlane, of the Calhoun County Trailway Alliance asked, what is the restoration process and do they replace trees?

Cynthia explained, ITC does not replace tree but they do give monetary funds to replant trees in areas not around the transmission lines. Community Development Director Bomba mentioned ITC has provided a \$2,000 stipend called, *Right Tree, Right Place* to replace trees for this project. She also mentioned they can leave the logs and limbs if needed as a wind row and for habitat.

Member Jacox asked why there was such a difference of \$10,000 stipend from 2015 to \$2,000 for this year. Cynthia explained this is per budget needs as an investment into Calhoun County as a whole with other partnerships and, since there was a significant amount in 2015, there may not be a need for as much this year. She feels that if shown a need, more could possibly be allocated for 2018.

Member Comai asked if there could be a reestablishment of the native Leadplant in the Ott Biological Preserve. Cynthia will look into it. Member Johnson asked if there is a certain mix of seed they use for restoration with more pollinators. Karen stated that can change what they use if the other mix is available. She mentioned they partner with Wildlife Habitat Council. Member Johnson stated her employer, Consumers Energy, uses a Pheasants Forever seed mix. Karen said she would pass the information along to the restoration crews. And if we had a special seed mix we wanted them to use, if we could get them to her, she would see if they could be applied.

Member Jacox requested 10 hours of ITC's vegetation crew's mulching machine to make trails in Kimball Pines Park. Jacox proposed staking out areas 8 to 10 feet wide for them to cut the paths that would be beneficial to future projects. Cynthia will take this proposal back to the project team and will follow up with Jen.

Members Sootsman and Jacox, with Jen and the ITC representatives, discussed the best options of access points into the parks for the project. Jen will work with Roy Elsholz, Field Supervisor to find the best access points. Cynthia pointed out that legally per the trail agreement they do not have to fix damages along the easement, but they have always worked with the Community as a partnership to take care of any unsafe problems and restore the area back to the way it was before. She also informed the Commission that there will be Trailway closures for safety reasons, which they will inform Jen about prior to the work. They will post signs, have barriers and flaggers stopping people from coming through. Typically closures will be a mile long for one day depending on circumstances.

Member Rodwan asked about a policy regarding discovering archeological or cultural resources. Karen stated they would stop work immediately. She said they always do a cultural research report before a project begins and it would have been done and sent to Jen. Cynthia pointed out that these narratives are not for public display.

Cynthia summed up that ITC will continue to communicate with the County with regard to this new project including; use of the machine, the reseeding mix, whether to leave downed trees and old transmission poles, and possible access problems at Wattle Road. She explained customers are welcome to call anytime between 8 am – 5pm. and they will try to resolve problems as soon as possible. Chair King thanked them for coming.

## 8. Subcommittee Reports

### a. Historic Bridge Park Workgroup

Member Jacox relayed that the workgroup is hoping to move forward with the adoption of the Historic Bridge Park Maintenance and Management (M&M) Plan after discussion during this meeting. Community Development Director Jen Bomba remarked that she did not receive any public comment about the plan. She received valuable feedback from Michael Schroeder of the Kalamazoo River Community Recreational Foundation (KRCRF), he pointed out some inconsistencies in the plan. They have decided to hold off with specific changes until the new Project Coordinator comes on board.

Jen feels like the HBP M&M plan is ready for adoption with the only changes since it was presented at the last meeting being an update of the guiding principles. These will follow the mission statement and the guiding principles of the Calhoun County Parks and Recreation Master Plan. She also stated the final paragraph of the summary will be updated to reflect that this is a working document and is intended to be amended over time on an annual basis. She recommends approval of the plan under New Business at this meeting and over the next year staff will work to review and consider the changes recommended by the KRCRF.

Jen explained Michael Schroeder is the KRCRF president who happens to be the landscape architect who designed the park. She stated that he is an asset and is building a relationship to use his services and insights from projects he has completed in other communities.

b. Trailway Workgroup

Jen mentioned the next Trailway workgroup meeting is February 9<sup>th</sup>. She will have more updates after the upcoming meeting.

9. Unfinished Business

There was none.

10. New Business

a. Historic Bridge Park Maintenance and Management Plan

Action: to approve the HBP Maintenance & Management Plan

Member Comai asked if the plan was complete. Jen stated that the plan is complete. She expressed there are comments from the workgroup of the need for more capital planning, improvements, revenue sources and funds to maintain above what we are being reimbursed.

Member Chapman asked if the bridge inventory and history from Vern Mesler is in the document. Jen stated it is an appendix in the document. She also noted that has Mr. Mesler's recommended maintenance of the bridges, including power washing etc. are part of the maintenance spreadsheet. She hopes to adopt the plan tonight and will provide a complete Historic Bridge Park Maintenance and Management Plan with appendices printed for all Commissioners.

*Moved by Member Jacox, supported by Member Johnson to approve the draft of the Historic Bridge Park Maintenance and Management Plan as presented.*

On a voice vote, Motion CARRIED.

b. Review of options for new County Parks and Recreation logo

Jen displayed new logo options for the County Parks and Recreation created by Greenstreet Marketing & Design. This logo will be used for signs and promotions including brochures, flyers and the website. She mentioned she has received funding from the Battle Creek Community Foundation (BBCF) as a mini grant to pay for the development of the new logo. The Commissioners gave her their feedback and Jen

will take the information back to Greenstreet to get an updated logo to further review at our next meeting. Member Chapman wanted it noted; she is not offering any suggestions because she is part of the BCCF that is paying for it.

c. Any other new business

There was none.

11. Department Report

Community Development Director Jen Bomba gave her department report.

**Historic Bridge Park review:**

- Maintenance & Management Plan presented 2/1/18, adoption with intent to refine language based on comments from the KRCRF
- Request for reimbursement for HBP expenses covered by the endowment has been submitted to KRCRF, total request for 2017 = \$33,728.83
- Summit Pointe Connections handling trash collection two days a week
- North Country Trail will be constructing a new kiosk at the beginning of the asphalt walkway that leads to the Dixon Bridge
- Finalizing a use survey that will go to 2017 pavilion users
- Preparing to bid the janitorial and grounds maintenance for 2018 season

**Trailway:**

- Presented a preliminary cost of maintenance for the Trailway at the January CCTA meeting, getting feedback from them
- Trailway workgroup meeting scheduled for 2/9 to review draft plan and preliminary maintenance budget
- Various issues with damage to Trailway surface and boardwalks from snowmobiles, considering an insurance claim as well as placement of additional bollards to block entrance of these vehicles onto boardwalks
- Damage to Trailway from Kimball Pines gravel lot

**Kimball Pines**

- Lock and chain on gate vandalized - repaired 1/29
- With adoption of new logo, signs can be designed and installed

Member King mentioned he has seen signs of vehicles going beyond the gates. Jen stated these gates were vandalized and should be repaired to not allow vehicles to the parks. She reiterated the parks remain open just not to vehicles. Member King mentioned there is a particular gate beyond the Medical Care Facility that seems to be left open. He will ask the Road Department if this area is considered a roadside park.

Jen is excited to hire the new Project Coordinator. The position has been posted and she feels there are some great candidates.

### **Misc. Parks**

- ITC project to begin as soon as possible
- New logo options presented 2/1
- New brochure being developed by Community Development support staff
- Interactive Park Map going from Parks & Recreation webpage to GIS with various other maps within next month
- Finance Dept. working on preliminary year-end budget presentation for parks funds for 2017

Member Comai asked for an update on the Albion land purchase. Jen stated the County will be meeting with the landowner to finalize negotiations on the 65 acres of land. The next step will be putting in for a project grant. She stated Albion College will be heavily involved with this as a partnership to expand the college's equestrian center.

### 12. Commissioners' Time

Member Jacox hoped his asking ITC for 10 hours to cut paths at Kimball Pines will get the old deadfall from 2011 cleaned up.

### 13. Public Comment

Nancy Macfarlane thanked Jen for turning in an insurance claim for the heavily damaged boardwalk from the snowmobiles. She would like to see extra bollards or blocks put up and she gave suggestions as to different kinds.

Member Comai asked about identifying who did the damage. Jen is working with Emmett Township Public Safety on the problem.

### 14. Adjournment

The February 1, 2018 regular session of the Calhoun County Parks and Recreation Commission adjourned at 5:44 pm.