



## **Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission**

### **MINUTES OF MEETING**

**Date:** March 15, 2022

**Time:** 2:00 p.m.

**Location:** Washtenaw County Learning Resource Center, 4135 Washtenaw Ave., Ann Arbor, MI

**Members Present:** Patricia Scribner, WCPARC President, Janis Bobrin, WCPARC Vice President; Dan Ezekiel, Secretary; Robert Joerg; Sue Shink, Brenda McKinney, and Ricky Jefferson.

**Members Absent:** JoAnn McCollum, and Evan Pratt.

**Members Attending Remotely:** Robert Marans (non-voting member)

**Staff Present:** Coy Vaughn, Director; Meghan Bonfiglio, Deputy Director; Ginny Leikam, Superintendent of Park Planning and Natural Areas; Brian Machemer, Superintendent of Independence Lake, Jason Brooks, Manager of Finance and Administration (attending remotely); Ann Ziolkowski, Communications Manager; David Ries, Project Manager; Hannah Cooley, Management Analyst, Kira Macyda, Park Planner, Rosie Pahl Donaldson, Park Planner (attending remotely); Keith Russeau and Justin Fogle, The Collaborative Inc., Andrew DeLeeuw

#### **1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance**

Ms. Scribner called the meeting to order at 2:07 p.m. with a moment of silence.

#### **2. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the February 8, 2022 regular meeting were included with the agenda material.

*It was moved by Ms. Shink and seconded by Mr. Ezekiel to approve the minutes of the February 8, 2022, regular meeting. Roll call vote: 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 3 Absent (Marans, McCollum, Pratt), the motion was approved.*

The minutes of the March 3, 2022 public hearing were included with the agenda material.

*It was moved by Ms. McKinney and seconded by Mr. Joerg to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2022, public hearing meeting. Roll call vote: 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 3 Absent (Marans, McCollum, Pratt), the motion was approved.*

#### **3. Public Comment**

Darlene Bouton from Ypsilanti addressed the commission regarding dog parks in the area. She recently found out that the reason there is no water at Swift Run Dog Park it is located on a landfill. She asked if the Commission could install a water tank? She also mentioned the property

at Michigan Avenue and Platt Rd. that is owned by Pittsfield Township as there is already bathrooms and water on site. She also suggested that corporations could sponsor amenities at the dog park such as fencing.

Toni Spears, Dexter Township Resident, asked if any public engagement meetings had been scheduled yet to discuss the B2B alignment near the Miller Smith Preserve.

Susan Miller addressed the commission regarding the proposal for a portion of the Border-to-Border Trail to be constructed at the Miller Smith Preserve. Her family used to own one of the properties that make up the preserve and the preserve is named after her father. She bought it because she knew it not viable for development. She discouraged the commission from putting the trail through the preserve as it would impact the visitor experience with more bikes and dogs that are not currently allowed on the property. The construction of the trail would also impact wildlife, the vernal pools, and high FQA of the woods. She hopes the commission will not support the plan to put the B2B on the preserve.

#### **4. Communications, Projects & Activities**

Mr. Vaughn reported on the February communications which were included in the packet and provided a presentation summarizing the projects, programs, and events for the month. Mr. Vaughn also introduced Mr. David Ries, the new Project Manager, the position that was vacated with Mr. Dehring's retirement last month.

Ms. Bonfiglio presented information and updates on the seasonal staff hiring efforts. PLGC has hired about 50% of the seasonal staff needed to operate. The other facilities are concerned about reaching the needed levels.

***It was moved by Mr. Joerg and seconded by Ms. Shink to accept and file the Communications, Projects & Activities for the month of February 2022, as submitted. Roll call vote: 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 3 Absent (Marans, McCollum, Pratt) the motion was approved.***

#### **5. Financial & Recreation Reports – January 2022**

##### **A. Financial Reports**

Mr. Brooks reported on the financials and stated that the total for the claims for the month of January was \$712,967.84.

***It was moved by Ms. Bobrin and seconded by Ms. McKinney to accept and file the Financial Reports for the month of January 2022 as submitted. Roll call vote: 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 3 Absent (Marans, McCollum, Pratt), the motion was approved.***

##### **B. Recreation Reports**

Mr. Brooks presented the recreation reports for the month of February 2022 for all park facilities.

***It was moved by Ms. Shink and seconded by Mr. Ezekiel to accept and file the Recreation Reports for the month of February 2022 as submitted. Roll call vote: 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 3 Absent (Marans, McCollum, Pratt), the motion was approved.***

## **6. Old Business**

### **A. Staebler Farmhouse Renovations**

Ms. Leikam introduced the consultant team from The Collaborative Inc. who has been working on schematic design of the Staebler Farmhouse renovation. The Collaborative presented the historical context of the farmhouse and the proposed renovations including a fly through visual of the proposed renovations.

***It was moved by Bobrin, seconded by Shink to authorize staff to work the County Purchasing staff and The Collaborative team on the development of construction documents and release an RFP for construction of the renovations of the Staebler Farmhouse, based on the presentation at the meeting. Roll call vote: 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 3 Absent (Marans, McCollum, Pratt), the motion was approved.***

### **B. B2B – Miller Smith Preserve, public outreach plan**

Mr. Sanderson provided background and an overview of the proposed 3-6 month community outreach plan for the Border-to-Border Trail and Miller Smith Preserve connection, as outlined below.

1. Continue conversations with legal counsel prior to a public meeting to explore and confirm feasibility
2. Continue to analyze physical constraints with engineering team including feasibility, costs, exploration of alternative options, and other related information prior to a public meeting
3. Host a public meeting to explain the proposal in detail and solicit public feedback for consideration by the Commission. Meeting will likely be in person with a web/call in option if the venue supports it. *Meeting date and location TBD.*
  - a) Communications and advertising the public meeting: post to Parks and B2B Trail website, mailing to immediate neighbors, press release to Mlive and Sun Times, post notice on Miller Smith Kiosk and on B2B Trail in Dexter and Chelsea.
4. Solicit feedback through an on-line survey. This will be the same written feedback that is collected at the public meeting.
  - a) Provide link to watch the public meeting presentation prior to taking survey. Paper copies will be available upon request.
5. Request that Dexter City Council amend the agreement to allow the Commission to make the final decision
6. Summarize & provide all information to the Commission. Present the results of the public meeting and on-line feedback to the Commission at a regular meeting or working session
7. Develop a final staff recommendation for consideration at a regular meeting of the Commission.

### **C. Project Update – Independence Lake Boardwalk**

Mr. Vaughn introduced Mr. Machemer, Superintendent of Independence Lake, and gave a brief background of his tenure with WCPARC, as he is retiring the beginning of April. Mr. Machemer provided an update on boardwalk projects at Independence Lake. He also alerted to the commission to the possibility of a change order that may be needed to account for the depths needed for the helical piles to account for the load bearing needed.

### **D. Other Old Business**

None.

## **7. New Business**

### **A. Climate Action Plan Presentation**

Mr. DeLeeuw provided an overview of the County's Climate Action plan.

Mr. Marans pointed out that HCMA was doing similar work and encouraged staff to reach out to them. Mr. Joerg stated that getting to net zero carbon emissions is a difficult goal to achieve. He asked if offsets of carbon would be considered in factoring this. Mr. DeLeeuw responded that offsets could possibly be considered, but they prefer to focus on actual reductions first. Commissioners Ezekiel, Joerg, Marans, and Bobrin all spoke in favor of the initiative and are eager to get started on some action steps to reduce the WCPARC carbon footprint.

### **B. NAPP – Grossman MNRTF Grant Application**

Ms. Pahl Donaldson provided an overview of the Grossman property, nominated to NAPP in Round 19. The property was identified as a Tier 1 priority for acquisition at the time. To attempt to maximize NATAC's budget, staff recommends applying for a 2022 MNRTF grant to partially fund the acquisition. The property fronts the Saline River and connects to other trails and parks in the City of Saline. It also shares some river frontage with the Leslee Neithammer Preserve, which NAPP provided partial funding for the acquisition. This would be NAPP's first purchase in Saline Township.

*It was moved by Mr. Ezekiel, seconded by Ms. McKinney to approve the application to the MNRTF for matching grant funds for the acquisition of the Grossman property in Saline Township, approve a resolution (attached) to submit a grant application and provide matching funds for the remainder acquisition funds. Roll call vote: 7 Ayes, 0 Nays, 3 Absent (Marans, McCollum, Pratt), the motion was approved.*

### **C. Other New Business**

None.

## **8. Commissioners/Directors Comments**

Mr. Vaughn explained that the County had received a \$3 million earmark appropriation from Congresswomen Debbie Dingell for the Eastside YMCA project. He added that the site that was being considered in Ypsilanti Township may no longer be a viable option and that the search was on for other options.

Mr. Vaughn reminded the Commission of a presentation 2-years ago from the Ann Arbor Sports Commission regarding the possibility of developing a large indoor/outdoor field complex at Rolling Hills. He added that a Market Study had recently been completed and that this opportunity may be on a future agenda for further discussion. Ms. Bonfiglio added that the Sports Commission was also studying the possibility of a rowing course on Ford Lake and that WCPARC may be asked to participate in this project, as well.

Mr. Jefferson stated that a Summer Jazz Concert Series was planned for Ford Lake Park in Ypsilanti and that this may be something that WCPARC could help sponsor. Ms. McKinney agreed.

**9. Adjournment**

*It was moved by Ms. Bobrin and seconded Ms. McKinney to adjourn the meeting. All ayes.*

The meeting was adjourned at 4:24 p.m.