

**ISABELLA COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
Wednesday, September 6, 2023**

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**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Vasold at 6:00 pm.

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT**

Bob Willoughby, Craig Clingan, John Dinse, Jordan Bruursema, Randy Vasold, Ruth Barrett and Tim O’Neil

**COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT**

Bob Busch, Frank Engler, Jeremy Murphy

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Director Alexis Hansen, Assistant Parks Supervisor Emma Vanacker, Administrative Assistant Nichole Manley

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**Agenda was accepted as presented (Willoughby/Barrett).**

**INTRODUCTIONS**

N/A

**MINUTES**

The August 3, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes were reviewed. **It was moved (Dinse/Willoughby) to approve the August 3, 2023 Meeting Minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.**

**GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS**

N/A.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS**

The Director presented the bills for August 2023. **It was moved (Clingan/Bruursema) to approve the Financial Summary Report for August 2023. Motion carried unanimously.**

**CAMPGROUND SUMMARY REPORT**

Director Alexis Hansen gave an update on the Campground Summary Report for August 2023.

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

**Parks**

Director Hansen noted that most of the seasonal employees are now done for the season. A year end picnic was held at Herrick Recreation Area on Monday, September 4, 2023 to celebrate.

**Projects/Capital**

The Director stated that the playground for the North (Beach) Side of Herrick Recreation Area has been ordered and the first half has been paid for. Delivery will take place in 8-14 weeks and the

project will start in early spring 2024. The water tower that is part of the current playground will remain.

The new pavilion at Deerfield Nature Park is now complete. It has been named the Marsh Pavilion and holds 8 eight-foot picnic tables. If anyone would like to reserve, please call the Parks Main Office.

Isabella County Parks and Recreation reapplied for the second round of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Sparks Grant for the Herrick Recreation Area Development Project which includes improvements to the bathhouse, playground and pit toilet on the south side of Herrick Recreation Area. Isabella County Parks is asking for \$319,000 in grant funding for this project. An announcement should be made this month in regards to the grant funding.

The Director noted that the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail project went out for quotes and 3 were received. This is for a one-mile section to have the cracks filled and sealed. The project will begin the week of September, 18, 2023. \$1,000 was generously donated by the Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail to update the mile markers along the trail. A grant was submitted to the Mt. Pleasant Convention and Visitors Bureau to do more crack fill and sealing as well as updating signs along the trail. The Director is working with Midland County to have cohesive signage along the trail. Isabella County Parks Staff is also looking to replace the bollards with pinchless gates to allow access for emergencies. The Director is looking into funding for this project.

#### **Accident/Incident**

The Director noted that recently, Park Staff at Herrick Recreation Area dealt with an unruly camper. A no trespassing order was given to this individual. This has led to discussion of updating the Park Rules and Ordinances moving forward.

#### **Programs/Events**

The 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Art From Our Park event will be held at Deerfield Nature Park on Saturday, September 23, 2023 from 12:00-4:00pm.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

##### **Meridian Park – Acquisition Project**

The purchase agreement was approved on Tuesday, September 5, 2023 by the Board of County Commissioners, however, it was signed in the wrong spot and must be updated. A Ribbon Cutting is being planned for the end of October to celebrate this project.

##### **Deerfield Nature Park Passing Flare**

No update at this time.

##### **Deerfield Pavilion**

The Director gave an update on the project in her Director's Report.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### **2024-2028 Master Recreation Plan**

The current Master Recreation Plan expires on December 31, 2023. The new Master Recreation

Plan must be submitted by February 1, 2024 to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR). A Request for Quotes was made and 3 quotes were received, all three being under budget. The Director noted one more quote may be submitted by the deadline. All of the firms that have submitted quotes have been recommended by individuals who have worked with them previously. Public input will be received via survey through Monday, October 2, 2023 and will then be given to the firm to utilize. A special meeting will need to be scheduled in January that will have a public hearing to meet the requirements of the DNR.

#### **Park Rules and Ordinances**

Director Hansen stated that the last time the Park Rules and Ordinances were updated was July 28, 2011. Being that the Master Plan is being updated, the Director would also like to update the Park Rules and Ordinances at the same time. The Park Rules and Ordinances should be looked over to make notes and will be discussed at the next meeting.

#### **North (Beach) Side Playground at Herrick**

The Director gave an update on the project in her Director's Report.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Commissioner Willoughby noted that the Drain Commission is currently waiting on permits for one project and working on maintenance.

Commissioner O'Neil stated the Planning Commission meeting in August was cancelled.

Director Hansen stated McDonald Park is having a Ribbon Cutting of their new fitness park at 10:00am on September 7, 2023.

**The next Parks and Recreation Board Meeting** is scheduled for Wednesday, October 4, 2023 at Deerfield Nature Park – Pond Overlook Pavilion.

**ADJOURNMENT: It was moved to adjourn (Willoughby/Clingan) at 6:48 pm. Motion carried unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Craig Clingan, Secretary