

**ISABELLA COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, December 4, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Vasold at 6:04 pm.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Bob Busch, Bob Willoughby, Craig Clingan, Frank Engler, Jordan Bruursema, Randy Vasold and Ruth Barrett

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT

Ann Silker, Jeremy Murphy and John Dinse

OTHERS PRESENT

Director Alexis Hansen, Administrative Assistant Nichole Manley, Park Staff Member Kathy Vanderkolk, Nancy Clingan and Liz Busch

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The Director noted that the 2025 Meeting Schedule needs to be added under New Business. Agenda was accepted as amended (Clingan/Busch).

INTRODUCTIONS

N/A

MINUTES

The October 2024 Board Meeting Minutes were reviewed. **It was moved (Engler/Barrett) to approve the October 2024 Meeting Minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.**

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

N/A

FINANCIAL REPORTS

The Director presented the invoices and credit card bills for October and November 2024. **It was moved (Busch/Willoughby) to approve the invoices and credit card bills for October and November 2024. Motion carried unanimously.**

CAMPGROUND SUMMARY REPORT

Director Hansen gave an update on the Campground Summary Report for October and November 2024.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Parks

The parks are winterized and closed for the season.

The cabin exteriors at Coldwater Lake Family Park have been repainted and the doors will be repainted soon.

The Director noted that Park Staff spent a day at Herrick cleaning out the storage building and organizing storage items.

Staff

Year-round part time staff member, Austin, has taken a permanent full-time position elsewhere. The Deerfield Nature Park Manager, Andrew, will now fill the year-round part time ranger position.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Department of Natural Resources Spark Grant

Bid submissions for the project closed November 14, 2024. Two qualifying bids were received. The high bid was \$1,052,000 and the low bid was \$524,000. The Prime Professionals had originally estimated the project cost at \$317,121 and the grant monies received for the project totaled \$319,000. The Director has reached out to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Grant Coordinator and got permission to scale the project back. The decision was made to scale the project back to stay within the original budget. Director Hansen did note that she is hopeful to look for other grants in the future that will help towards the items that had to be removed from the project to stay within budget.

NEW BUSINESS

Policy to Revoke Camping Rights

The Director noted she spoke with many other Park Directors at a regional meeting regarding their camping policies. After speaking with Nick Smith of Newaygo County regarding their policy to revoke camping rights, the Director worked with the County's legal team and would like to move forward adding in a policy as there is not currently one in place. The Director reviewed the new policy with the Parks Commission. If approved by the Parks and Recreation Commission, this policy will go in front of the Board of County Commissioners for approval.

It was moved (Busch/Engler) to approve the adoption of the new policy to revoke camping rights as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Watercraft Permit and Fee Changes

Director Hansen discussed the issues that were being had at the parks regarding watercraft permits. After speaking with Park Staff on ways to curb confusion and streamline the watercraft permit process, the following changes were discussed. There will no longer be a Daily Watercraft Permit, instead, there will be a Trailer Watercraft Annual Permit that will be \$10.00 and the pass will be good for the entire year. This pass will have two portions to it, one that will be affixed to the watercraft and the second matching portion will be affixed to the trailer that the watercraft is associated with. With this pass, all owner information will be collected at the time of purchase including name, address, MC number, trailer license plate number and pass number. The other watercraft permit will be a Basic Watercraft Annual Permit which will be \$5.00 and a singular sticker to go on the watercraft.

It was moved (Engler/Barrett) to approve the revision of the watercraft fees as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

2025 Meeting Schedule

The 2025 meeting schedule was presented. **It was moved (Bruursema/Engler) to approve the 2025 Meeting Schedule as presented. Motion carried unanimously.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Commissioner Engler noted that the bond for the County Building has been delayed. The County Board of Commissioners is still looking at utilizing two floors of the County Building and the outer ring of the jail. Commissioner Engler stated the new County Administrator, Brian Smith, will start soon. Commissioner Engler noted the Board Chairman is not planning to seek reelection.

Commissioner Busch stated that this is his last meeting as a member of the Road Commission and that he has really enjoyed being part of the Road Commission and the Parks Commission.

Commissioner Willoughby noted that the Drain Commission has three projects coming up.

The next Parks and Recreation Board Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 5, 2025 at Isabella County Road Commission Building – 6:00pm.

ADJOURNMENT: It was moved to adjourn (Willoughby/Clingan) at 7:23pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Craig Clingan, Secretary