

**ISABELLA COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, August 6, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Vasold at 6:03 pm.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Ann Silker, Bob Busch, Bill Hauck, Craig Clingan, Jeremy Murphy, Jordan Bruursema, Randy Vasold, Ruth Barrett and Steven Weber.

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT

N/A

OTHERS PRESENT

Director Alexis Hansen, Parks Supervisor Kurt Burnia, Assistant Parks Supervisor Emma Vanacker, Administrative Assistant Nichole Manley, seasonal park staff member Kathy Vanderkolk, Mike Lownsbery in place of Bob Willoughby and park intern Leo Mazey.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Agenda was accepted as presented (Murphy/Clingan).

INTRODUCTIONS

Parks Intern Leo Mazey, Mike Lownsbery from the Isabella County Drain Commission Office

MINUTES

The June 4, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes were reviewed. **It was moved (Murphy/Silker) to approve the June 4, 2025 Meeting Minutes. Motion carried unanimously.**

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

N/A

FINANCIAL REPORTS

The Director presented the invoices for June and July 2025. **It was moved (Clingan/Bruursema) to approve the Financial Summary Report for June and July 2025.**

CAMPGROUND SUMMARY REPORT

Director Hansen gave an update on the Campground Summary Report for June and July 2025.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Employee/Volunteers

The Director noted that seasonal staff are putting together their end of season schedules and signing their return-to-work forms.

Director Hansen will be reviewing the job description in preparation to fill the Office Clerk position.

The plan is to have this position work in the Parks Main Office and sub as a Gate Attendant if needed.

Nichole will start maternity leave in November.

Professional Development

Two more year-round part-time employees will attend chainsaw certification training this year. Once completed, all year-round part-time employees will be certified.

Parks

Once the last sign for the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail is received, that project will be complete.

Herrick is in its last month of operation for the season as the campground is closing September 1, 2025 in preparation for the bathhouse project to begin.

The buildings at Coldwater Lake Family Park have been repainted and the project is officially complete. This includes the pavilions, cabins, pit toilets and gatehouse. The Director gave a special mention to Park Ranger Ed on all of his hard work painting all of the buildings.

A land survey is going to be done to mark out the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail property after it was brought to the Director's attention that a property owner along the rail-trail had cut down trees and brush on park property. There is now a portion along the rail-trail without any tree coverage.

Accidents/Incidents

The Director noted that there has been a high rate of incidents this year at the parks, specifically Herrick Recreation Area. Director Hansen noted that there are a few possibilities that play into the influx this year as the Night Ranger position was never filled and it is the first season without the patrol of the Isabella County Sheriff's Department. The Director is looking at ideas from the board on how to curb this behavior. Current ideas have ranged from looking into hiring STT Security, updating fee structure and seeing if any local Police Departments would be open to contracting with the County Parks to patrol the park areas. After discussion by the board, the Director is going to first pursue the route of contacting a local Police Department in regards to contracting with them. Further discussion will take place at the next meeting on this topic.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Department of Natural Resources Spark Grant

The bonds and insurance paperwork have been received and permits can now be applied for. Isabella Corp. is currently working on getting submittals ready for the park staff to look over.

NEW BUSINESS

Campground fees were briefly discussed in the Director's Report. No action was taken on fee changes at this time.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Drain Commission did not have any updates.

Commissioner Hauck gave an update on projects. So far this season the Road Commission has done roughly 37.5 miles of gravel and have saved money by laying the gravel themselves vs. contracting with other local vendors. 10 miles of chip seal have been done so far and there are a few more projects yet this season.

Commissioner Weber noted that the budget for the upcoming fiscal year is in its final stages. The jail project is now 100% complete and there is a Nottawa Township Board Meeting being held at Beal City High School to discuss the sewer project.

Commissioner Silker did not have an updated, stating the Planning Commission meets quarterly.

The next Parks and Recreation Board Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 3, 2025 at Deerfield Nature Park in the Pond Overlook Pavilion.

ADJOURNMENT: It was moved to adjourn (Murphy/Clingan) at 7:30 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Craig Clingan, Secretary