



Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission

MINUTES OF MEETING

Date: November 9, 2021

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Location: Zoom Digital Meeting

Members Present: Janis Bobrin, WCPARC Vice President (attending from Ann Arbor, MI); Daniel Ezekiel, WCPARC Secretary/Treasurer (attending from Ann Arbor, MI), Robert Joerg (attending from Delta Township, MI), Robert Marans (attending from Ann Arbor Township, MI), Brenda McKinney (attending from Superior Twp, MI), Ricky Jefferson (attending from Ypsilanti, MI) Jo Ann McCollum (attending from Ypsilanti Township, MI), and Evan Pratt (attending from Scio Twp, MI)

Members Absent: Jason Morgan and Patricia Scribner

Staff Present: Coy Vaughn, Director; Meghan Bonfiglio, Deputy Director; Ginny Leikam, Superintendent of Park Planning and Natural Areas; Jason Brooks, Manager of Finance and Administration; Ann Ziolkowski, Communication Manager; Kira Macyda, Park Planner; Brian Machemer, Park Superintendent, Hannah Cooley, Management Analyst, and Rosie Pahl-Donaldson, Park Planner

Others Present: Sue Shink, County Board of Commissioners

1. Call to Order/Moment of Silence

Ms. Bobrin called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m. with a moment of silence in appreciation of first responders.

2. Roll Call and Announcement of Location

3. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the October 12, 2021 regular meeting were included with the agenda material.

It was moved by Mr. Joerg and seconded by Mr. Marans to approve the minutes of the October 12, 2021 regular meeting. Roll call vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 2 Absent (Scribner and Morgan), the motion was approved.

4. Public Comment

Barry Lonik, resident of Dexter Township, spoke in favor of the Renz property proposal. He explained that the parcel is prime for development and the owners have turned down several offers to sell the property for residential development. He added that the Renz property is a centennial farm and he asked that the Commission approve the proposal.

Communications, Projects & Activities

Ms. Bonfiglio reported on the October communications which were included in the packet. Mr. Marans commented favorably on the expanded parking at the Administrative Office and the Meri Lou Murray Recreation Center. He said that he appreciated the sensitivity of the design and construction to avoid impact to trees.

It was moved by Mr. Marans and seconded by Ms. McKinney to accept and file the Communications, Projects & Activities for the month of October 2021, as submitted. Roll call vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 2 Absent (Scribner and Morgan), the motion was approved.

5. Financial & Recreation Reports – October 2021

A. Financial Reports

Mr. Brooks reported and stated that the total for the claims for the month of October was \$915,984.58. He provided an update on the performance of the special revenue funds for NAPP and B2B.

It was moved by Mr. Pratt and seconded by Mr. Ezekiel to accept and file the Financial Reports for the month of October 2021 as submitted. Roll call vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 2 Absent (Scribner and Morgan), the motion was approved.

B. Recreation Reports

Mr. Brooks reported on recreation reports for the month of October 2021 and highlighted the impact of the pandemic on the attendance of our Park Facilities.

It was moved by Mr. Marans and seconded by Ms. McKinney to accept and file the Recreation Reports for the month of October 2021 as submitted. Roll call vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 2 Absent (Scribner and Morgan), the motion was approved.

6. Old Business

A. Connecting Communities

Ms. Macyda provided some background on the Connecting Communities program and explained that there was \$600,000 to be awarded this year for non-motorized construction or planning/design projects. She presented the four applications that were received from the following communities: City of Dexter, City of Saline, Manchester Township, and Superior Township. In 2021, planning/engineering funding requests totaled \$185,500 and construction funding requests totaled \$850,000.

Ms. Macyda explained that the Projects were reviewed and scored by staff (summary attached) and discussed with applicants to seek additional project information and clarifications. Although the application from the City of Dexter was the highest scoring proposal, it is directly on the planned B2B alignment. Therefore, staff recommends that funding be provided for this important planning/design work through our B2B budget. Ms. Macyda noted that staff recommends that the following Connecting Communities awards:

Applicant	Request	Award Planning (P)	Award Construction (C)
City of Dexter	\$100K (P)	\$0	
City of Saline*	\$500,000 (C) *Submitted application that included park amenities not eligible for funding.		\$200K
Manchester Twp.	\$50K (P), \$350K (C)	\$50K	\$320K
Superior Twp.**	\$35.5K (P) ** Submitted application for re-engineering of portion of pathway already funded through previous CC grant.	\$30K	
Total	\$185,500 (P), \$850,000 (C)	\$80K	\$520K

(P) Planning; (C) Construction

Mr. Marans asked why we received so few applications this year. Ms. Macyda responded that it was mostly due to the COVID19 pandemic. Mr. Ezekiel asked if the Superior Township proposal would eventually connect to local parks and preserves. Ms. McKinney responded that, yes, that was the plan.

It was moved by Mr. Marans and seconded by Ms. McCollum to award \$600,000 in Connecting Communities funding to the City of Saline, Manchester Township, and Superior Township based on the staff recommendation. Roll call vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 2 Absent (Scribner and Morgan), the motion was approved.

B. B2B Trail User Survey/Wayfinding Presentation

Ms. Cooley presented the results of a recent B2B survey that was conducted from March 31st to May 31st to understand the interests, thoughts and experiences of trail users. She explained that 1,102 responses were received for the 19-question survey that focused on demographics, usage data, trail segments, trail activity, and communication and information sharing preferences.

Mr. Marans stated that he was surprised that there was not more trail users coming from the City of Ann Arbor. He asked how the addresses were gathered for the trail users. Ms. Cooley responded that it was based on zip code. Ms. McCollum noted that in Ypsilanti Township many people don't get information from social media – they get it from word of mouth. She said it would be nice to communicate B2B news in the new Ypsilanti Community Guide.

Mr. Sanderson and Ms. Pahl-Donaldson presented the new B2B wayfinding proposal. Mr. Ezekiel commented that the wayfinding plan was well done and much needed. He asked why we don't use lane striping on the trail to help separate traffic. Mr. Sanderson responded that pavement stripes were used in some locations but mostly on segments on HCMA property. Mr. Marans recommended that we seek sponsorship opportunities on the wayfinding signs and orientation nodes to help pay for these amenities.

C. Independence Lake Boardwalk Project Award

Mr. Machemer presented a proposal to reconstruct the boardwalks at Independence Lake County Park. He explained that the boardwalks were built in the 1980s and need reconstruction to replace the aged construction, as well as remedying safety concerns. Staff have been working with ROWE Professional Services Company on the engineering to redesign all three boardwalks including widening and modernizing the supports with helical piles. The alignment and distance of all three boardwalks will remain the same. Boardwalk railings will be replaced with a vinyl coated galvanized wire fencing as seen on our B2B boardwalks. Permits to EGLE and WCWR have been submitted and are being reviewed and/or already approved.

Mr. Machemer explained that construction documents were produced, and RFP #8191 was released in October using the County's standard procurement protocol and advertised by the Purchasing Department. Six contractors attended the mandatory pre-bid meeting on October 12, 2021. One bid was received from LJ Construction. The submitted bid was less than the cost estimate provided by ROWE in August 2021. LJ Construction has worked for WCPARC in the past and has done an outstanding job. In addition, we have confirmed our intention to award with several reference checks.

It was moved by Mr. Ezekiel and seconded by Ms. McKinney to authorize the award a construction contract to LJ Construction in the amount of \$478,843.00, and authorize a 10% contingency (\$47,884.30) for the reconstruction of three boardwalks at Independence Lake County Park. Roll call vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 2 Absent (Scribner and Morgan), the motion was approved.

D. Other Old Business

None.

7. New Business

A. NAPP – Renz Property Contribution

Ms. Leikam explained that Scio Township's Land Preservation Commission received a nomination for an easement on the Renz property and forwarded it to NAPP in 2021 in anticipation of a request for participation. The property was scored and included in ALPAC's 2021 annual prioritization of properties. The Renz property is a surviving tract of farmland in between subdivisions and extraction operations to the east and west, and connected to multiple other protected areas to its north and south. It is also a few hundred feet from to Scio Woods Preserve.

Ms. Leikam noted that a 5-acre building envelope around the existing building area is proposed. Of the original tax parcels, 9.5 acres are being excluded from the easement specifically for purchase by Scio Township, through its general fund, for a new fire station. The Assessment & Prioritization Mapping labeled two of the three easement parcels as medium-high quality and prioritized them based on its proximity to other protected areas (Patch Expansion). It received 67/88 points on ALPAC's scoring system, which was the highest scoring nomination for 2021.

Scio Township is using an estimated fair market value to request funds. An appraisal will be finished in the next couple weeks. The estimated value of the easement purchase is \$3,050,000 and Scio is requesting a 14.17% contribution, not to-exceed \$432,334. The City of Ann Arbor has already

committed their 14.17%. Scio Township applied for and was awarded both an USDA ACEP-ALE grant and an MDARD Farmland Preservation grant.

Ms. Liekam stated that Scio Township also asked that the Commission retract its commitment to the Rosko project, since it is no longer a viable project. The following funding breakdown is proposed:

Scio Township	\$432,334 (14.17%)
Greenbelt	\$432,334 (14.17%)
MDARD Grant	\$825,000 (27%)
ACEP-ALE	\$928,000 (30.42%)
WCPARC	\$432,334 (14.17%)
Est. Value	\$3,050,000 (\$27,727/ac)

It was moved by Mr. Pratt and seconded by Ms. McKinney to partner with Scio Township for the purchase of a conservation easement on the Renz property in Scio Township and contribute 14.7% of the final purchase price, not to exceed \$432,334, toward the purchase, contingent upon attorney review of documents and execution of participation agreement. Further, it is authorized that a \$7,500 contribution be made to the stewardship special revenue fund to cover potential future costs associated with monitoring and enforcement of the conservation easement. Roll call vote: 8 Ayes, 0 Nays, 2 Absent (Scribner and Morgan), the motion was approved.

B. Other Old Business

None.

8. Commissioners/Directors Comments

Mr. Vaughn explained that the plan is to start meeting in person in January for all Commission meetings. He added that arrangements have been made to meet at the LRC building to allow larger meeting spaces more appropriate for social distancing. Ms. Bonfiglio added that the Commission can expect to see proposed facility fee increases in December. She said that the proposal would be sent out in advance of the packet to allow extra review time.

Mr. Ezekiel commented that he attended the recent ceremony at Base Lake Farm. He commented that it was a wonderful celebration and he was proud to represent the Commission.

Ms. Shink stated that she is excited to return to the Commission in 2022 to replace Jason Morgan. She also voiced her support for the Renz property.

9. Adjournment

It was moved by Mr. Marans and seconded by Ms. McCollum to adjourn the meeting. All ayes.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:49 p.m.