



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

### **MINUTES OF MEETING**

**Date:** April 12, 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 Evan Pratt.

**Members Absent:** JoAnn McCollum and Ricky Jefferson

**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 (attending remotely); Hannah Cooley, Management Analyst; Rosie Pahl Donaldson, Park Planner (attending remotely); Peter Sanderson, Project Manager.

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

Ms. Scribner called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m. with a moment of silence.

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

The minutes of the March 15, 2022 regular meeting were included with the agenda material.

*It was moved by Mr. Ezekiel and seconded by Ms. Bobrin to approve the minutes of the March 15, 2022, regular meeting. All ayes, the motion was approved.*

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

Jason Aric Jones thanked the commission and Peter Sanderson for working with PMBA to connect mountain bike trails between the Poto, Waterloo Recreation Area and DTE. DNR went through a long approval process. Feedback we are getting from our 700 members is incredible support. Very happy that the Commission is willing to entertain idea of connection and use a portion of Lyndon south.

Carl Loomis, president of Poto Mountain Bike Association, also thanked the Commission to allow a small use of Lyndon trail connection. This has been a long time coming. This will give us a legitimate connector and will help keep bikers off other trails. We have a long-standing relationship with Sharon Mills, and Rolling Hills that we have been maintaining the trails. Thank you for allowing this to come to fruition.

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

Mr. Vaughn reported on the March communications which were included in the packet and provided a presentation summarizing the projects, programs, and events for the month.

***It was moved by Mr. Marans and seconded by Ms. McKinney to accept and file the Communications, Projects & Activities for the month of March 2022, as submitted. All ayes, the motion was approved.***

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

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

Mr. Brooks reported on the financials and stated that the total for the claims for the month of January was \$423,725.75. It was noted that Risk Management will be covering roughly \$86,000 of the Draper Houston boardwalk reconstruction under NAPP, due to an insurance claim from a flooding event that caused the damage. The expenditures will increase in the coming months with the hiring of seasonal staff and peak construction season.

Mr. Ezekiel asked for a report back in the fall regarding the pumps at Independence Lake.

Mr. Marans noted the first slide of overview was excellent and asked to please continue to include in presentation.

***It was moved by Ms. McKinney and seconded by Ms. Shink to accept and file the Financial Reports for the month of March 2022 as submitted. All ayes, the motion was approved.***

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

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

Mr. Marans asked if the 2022 MLM numbers are expected to exceed the 2019 numbers and if the fee increase as affected participation?

Mr. Brooks noted it is not expected that that the numbers at MLM to bounce back to pre-pandemic numbers. However, trends are looking more encouraging than 2021.

***It was moved by Ms. McKinney and seconded by Ms. Shink to accept and file the Recreation Reports for the month of March 2022 as submitted. All ayes, the motion was approved.***

#### **6. Old Business**

##### **A. B2B – Dexter Chelsea (CD2) Change Order**

Mr. Sanderson presented background on the existing contract for segment CD2 between Dexter and Chelsea. Work is currently ongoing for the segment down to Wylie Road. Staff is asking the Commission to approve modification to contract to continue project about 3,000 feet to east. Contractor will honor 2021 contract pricing. The total contract amendment is equal to \$359,343.

Mr. Ezekiel asked to clarify if the Commission does not approve this, the project would not move forward at this time and would have to rebid with next year prices. Staff confirmed that would be the case.

*It was moved by Ms. Bobrin, seconded by Mr. Ezekiel to authorize a contract amendment to Erie Construction for the B2B Trail Segment CD2 in the amount of \$359,343. All ayes, the motion was approved.*

**B. NAPP – Scully et all Properties, Final Approval**

Ms. Pahl Donaldson provided an overview of the contiguous 4 properties located at the south end of the Village of Manchester. The project has been in the works since 2018. WCPARC will own and manage the property. The parking area will be located across the street and cross walk will be installed. The collective purchase price is \$626,000.

Moved by Ms. Shink, seconded by Ms. McKinney to authorize the fee simple purchases of the Gregerson, Lehr, Milkey, and Scully properties in the amounts of \$23,000, \$60,000, \$75,000, and \$468,000 respectively, contingent upon attorney approval of final documents. I further recommend that \$30,000 be contributed to the stewardship special revenue fund for the future maintenance and management of the land. Roll call vote, 8 ayes, 0 nays, 2 absent (McCollum & Jefferson). Motion was approved.

**C. NAPP – Botsford Trust Property, Final Approval**

Ms. Leikam presented an overview of the property on Miller Road in Scio Township. The original nomination came to NAPP in Round 1, in 2001. In 2008, the Township and City of Ann Arbor purchased a conservation easement on 10 acres of the Botsford Trust property. In 2017, WCPARC purchased the 19-acre Pringle property, adjacent to the west. The entire 20-acre Botsford Trust property was nominated again to NAPP in 2015 as a potential partnership with the City of Ann Arbor and Scio Township for fee purchase, but an agreement with the Trust was not made at the time. Then in 2020, a private landowner submitted an offer to the Botsford Trust for the purchase of the property, which triggered the City of Ann Arbor's Right of First Refusal. The City made a counteroffer to the Trust to exercise its Right of First Refusal. The County will ultimately own and manage the property as the Botsford Preserve, along with the adjoining 19-acre property already owned by NAPP.

Moved by Mr. Ezekiel, seconded by Mr. Joerg to partner with the Ann Arbor Greenbelt program for the fee purchase of the Botsford Trust property in Scio Township, as identified in the attached map and contribute \$175,000 toward the purchase, contingent upon attorney review of final closing documents and execution of participation agreement. I further recommend that an additional \$10,000 be contributed to the stewardship special revenue funds for the future maintenance and management of the property. Roll call vote, 8 ayes, 0 nays, 2 absent (McCollum and Jefferson). Motion was approved.

**D. Other Old Business**

None.

**7. New Business**

**A. NAPP – Maisel Buy-Protect-Sell Easement, Partnership**

Ms. Pahl Donaldson provided an overview of the project, which is a slightly different structure than previous farmland easements. To address farmland ownership, succession, and inequity challenges, conservation groups have been working to ensure that land stays in the hands of farmers through

Buy-Protect-Sell (BPS) transactions that help directly facilitate affordable farmland access opportunities in their communities. Michigan State University Extension has surveyed southeast Michigan farmland-seekers and found that there is overwhelming demand for affordable farmland in Washtenaw County area, and that ownership is the preferred model over long-term lease agreements.

The City of Ann Arbor Greenbelt received a nomination in 2021 for fee simple purchase of farmland in Northfield Township that met their parameters for a desirable BPS project. In February 2022, the Agricultural Lands Technical Advisory Committee (ALPAC) reviewed a contribution request from the Greenbelt towards the conservation easement value of the property.

Ms. Shink noted she lives close to Maisel property and the area is becoming an enclave of small farms. She is excited that this will contribute to the area and close to markets.

**Moved by Ms. Shink, seconded by Ms. McKinney to partner with the City of Ann Arbor Greenbelt for the purchase of a conservation easement on the Maisel BPS property in Northfield Township, as identified in the attached maps, and contribute 50% of the final easement purchase price, not to exceed \$190,000, toward the purchase, contingent upon attorney review of documents and execution of participation agreement. I further recommend that \$7,500 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 (McCollum and Jefferson). Motion was approved.**

#### **B. Skatepark Lighting Project**

Mr. Vaughn provided background on the role of WCPARC in the Ann Arbor Skatepark. Grassroots efforts to get skatepark started. The City had \$1M budget for the project. AA Community Foundation worked with grassroots efforts to support private fundraising projects. In 2010, the City of Ann Arbor came to WCPARC to participate in the project and seek funding. WCPARC set up \$400K matching grant. 2013 construction started and the construction finished in 2014. This is the first time City is coming back to WCPARC asking for capital improvement.

Hillary Hanzel, Park Planner for the City of Ann Arbor presented details of the proposed lighting project. The City is requesting \$35,000 from WCPARC.

Mr. Marans asked if the lighting will only be operational during the park hours. Can someone push button to allow 1 hour use, but would not be possible after certain hours? He also asked if neighbors have expressed any concern. Ms. Hanzel noted that the lighting is similar to the use at the ball fields, so no major concerns have been expressed. Mr. Marans also asked that WCPARC be recognized as partner on the overall and promote WCPARC. Ms. Hanzel noted that the City will work with Coy to identify ways to promote both organizations.

Mr. Joerg noted that as a practice he does not like awarding when 1 bid was received but understands current conditions. Ms. Hanzel noted that City went through their procurement procedure. This was the last project that was competitively bid in end of 2021. Bids were due back in Jan. 2022. The City is moving away from construction bidding. No longer required to go with lowest bid.

**Moved by Ms. McKinney, seconded by Mr. Ezekiel to authorize a contribution of \$35,000 to the City of Ann Arbor for installation of lighting as proposed. All ayes, 0 nays. Motion was approved.**

### **C. Park Lyndon DNR Trail Connection**

Mr. Sanderson provided an overview of the project and recognized Chuck Dennison, DNR Pinckney. The Potawatami chapter of the Michigan Mountain Bike Association and DNR have been leading the process. From DNR's perspective spent a lot of time considering the implications. Important to use Embury Rd. to N. Territorial. Ebikes are not permitted on the trail, but open to mountain bike.

Mr. Ezekiel noted as a boy scout he hiked these trails and notes that birding in these areas and have mountain biked area as well. Embury Road in Lyndon are beloved areas for birders. He asked that the County and DNR acknowledge in signage that they are sensitive to birds. DNR has been a wonderful partner for County Parks. Preserving Silver Lake. Support project but point out potential conflict. DNR: no problem advising bikers that portion of the trail is being used by birders.

Mr. Marans also asked about the current crossing of N. Territorial Rd. Pete has initiated conversation with WCRC. This portion of North Territorial is less busy than others.

Mr. Marans also asked who is responsible for signage? The PMBA has ordered some basic signs that indicates what is allowed and not and way finding. WCPARC would be updating in our facility.

### **D. Other New Business**

None.

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

### **9. Adjournment**

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

The meeting was adjourned at 3:42 p.m.