



Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission

MINUTES OF MEETING

Date: October 11, 2023

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Location: Rolling Hills County Park, Lodge Building, 7660 Stony Creek Rd, Ypsilanti, MI 48197

Members Present: Patricia Scribner, WCPARC President; Janis Bobrin, Vice President; Dan Ezekiel, WCPARC Secretary, Robert Joerg, Robert Marans, JoAnn McCollum, Evan Pratt, Yousef Rabhi, and Katie Scott

Members Absent: Brenda McKinney

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, Communications Manager; Rhonda Bouma, Superintendent of Rolling Hills; Jeff Miller, Park Manager; Nick Sekerak, Park & Facility Supervisor; Brian Klender, Golf Course Superintendent; Peter Sanderson, Project Manager; Kira Macyda, Park Planner.

Others Present: Bob Grese

1. Call to Order

Ms. Scribner called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the September 11, 2023 regular meeting were included with the agenda material.

It was moved by Ms. McCollum seconded by Mr. Pratt, to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2023; regular meeting as amended. All ayes, the motion was approved.

4. Public Comment

None.

5. Communications, Projects & Activities

Mr. Vaughn reported on the communications, projects, and activities for the month of September 2023. Mr. Sanderson provided an update on a variety of B2B projects, including the Barton-Bandemer Tunnel, MDOT/Amtrak, and MDOT fencing.

It was moved by Mr. Marans, seconded by Ms. McCollum, to receive and file the Communications, Projects & Activities for the month of September 2023, as submitted. All ayes, the motion was approved.

A. Resolution of Appreciation – Bob Grese

Staff provided background on Bob Grese's 12 years of service to NATAC. He began his tenure on NATAC in 2011 to share his expertise in landscape architecture and planning. With his leadership, an additional 5,000 acres have been purchased as nature preserves or preserved through the purchase of conservation easements through Washtenaw County and its partners.

It was moved by Marans, seconded by Pratt, to approve the resolution recognizing Bob Grese for his years of volunteer service to NATAC. Roll call vote, 9 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (McKinney), the motion was approved.

6. Financial & Recreation Reports – September 2023

A. Claims Report

Mr. Brooks reported on the financials and stated that the total for the claims for the month of September 2023 was \$1,255,254.88.

It was moved by Mr. Ezekiel, seconded by Mr. Rabhi, to approve the claims for the month of September 2023 as submitted. Roll call vote, 9 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (McKinney), the motion was approved.

B. Fund Balance Reports

Mr. Brooks provided an update on the Parks fund and Natural Areas Funds along with the fund balance status for each through September 30, 2023.

It was moved by Mr. Marans, seconded by Ms. Bobrin, to receive and file the financial reports for September 2023 as submitted. All ayes, 1 absent (McKinney), the motion was approved.

C. Recreation Reports

Mr. Brooks presented the Recreation Reports for the month of September 2023. He also provided a comparison of revenue received through September 30 for both 2022 and 2023.

It was moved by Mr. Pratt, seconded by Mr. Ezekiel, to receive and file the Recreation Reports for the month of September 2023. All ayes, 1 absent (McKinney), the motion was approved.

7. Old Business

A. NAPP – Russell Property Final Approval

Ms. Leikam was happy to present the recommendation to purchase the J. Russell Property located in Scio Township. Staff have been working to acquire this property since it was originally nominated in 2016. The 12.5-acre property contains forests, prairies, and wetlands and has views of nearly a half-mile along the Huron River on Barton Pond.

It also has the potential to be accessed by a future segment of the Border-to-Border Trail, running parallel to the railroad corridor. This section is in preliminary concept phase to explore possible alignments and environmental assessments are underway. This portion of the property will be purchased with Parks funds, as previously done with other acquisitions.

In 2021 a survey and Phase I environmental site assessment report was completed, noting no Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs). The City of Ann Arbor has committed 50% purchase price towards the purchase.

It was moved by Mr. Ezekiel, seconded by Mr. Joerg, to authorize the fee simple purchase of the John Russell property in the amount of \$460,000, with \$40,480 (1.1 acres) from the Parks funds and \$189,520 from NAPP funds and with anticipated reimbursement of \$230,000 from the City of Ann Arbor Greenbelt, contingent upon attorney review of final closing documents; including an additional \$6,000 contribution to the stewardship special revenue fund. Roll call vote, 9 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (McKinney), the motion was approved.

B. Other Old Business

None.

8. New Business

A. NAPP – VanBuhler Property

Ms. Leikam presented the 12-acre VanBuhler property currently which is adjacent to the existing Whitmore Lake Preserve. The VanBuhler property includes additional marshes and open water habitat that extend the extensive wetland system currently protected in Whitmore Lake Preserve. The pond on the VanBuhler property includes a rich diversity of native wetland plant species, with NATAC members noting plants indicating of bog habitat. A conservation easement across this property will protect this pond from future development that would be detrimental to these communities.

The property was appraised in August 2023 and identified a conservation easement value of \$89,000. Ms. Leikam shared that NATAC reviewed the appraisal at their October 2, 2023, meeting and recommended moving forward with the preservation of the property, due to its adjacency to existing preserve, and quality of the land mentioned above.

Mr. Rabhi raised the question about preserving old farm fields and if that is the highest quality land for NAPP to focus efforts. He expressed his interest in a future update on the current NAPP outreach strategy at a future commission meeting.

It was moved by Mr. Rabhi, seconded by Ms. Scott, to authorize a sales contract for the purchase of a conservation easement on the VanBuhler property in the amount of \$89,000, contingent upon completion of all necessary due diligence investigation and final approval of the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission. All ayes, 1 absent (McKinney), the motion was approved.

B. Plunge Peak

Mr. Miller, Park & Facility Manager at Rolling Hills County Park, provided an overview of the maintenance and repair work needed for the Plunge Peak water slides. Originally installed in 2013, the Plunge Peak slides have seen 10 years of use, with over 1 million riders. The industry standard for applying new gel coating is once every 10 years. He shared that several fiberglass defects were identified during a recent annual inspection by the State of Michigan that require repair. Additional repairs include recaulking to keep the seams from leaking and corroding. The gel coating, fiberglass repair and caulking of the seams is best done all at the same time and will ensure another 10 years of use for Plunge Peak.

On August 26, 2023, the Washtenaw County Purchasing Division, on behalf of Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation, issued RFP #8495 and received three bids for this project. Mr. Miller shared that staff was recommending Slide Guys Restoration based on their past experience working at Rolling Hills Waterpark, recommendations from past projects and proximity to the park.

It was moved by Mr. Marans, seconded by Mr. Rabhi, to award a contract for RFP 8495 to Slide Guys Restoration in the amount of \$88,032. Roll call vote, 9 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (McKinney), the motion was approved.

C. Waterworks Replacement

Ms. Bouma, Rolling Hill County Park Superintendent, explained that the Water Works feature adjacent to the wave pool, originally installed in 1991, has a leak in the 6" underground line that feeds this feature. Due to the leak, this feature has not been in operation since 2020. She stated that during start-up of 2021, a major leak was discovered in the feed line, rendering the feature unusable. Sonic leak detection was used to narrow down the approximate location of the leak.

Additionally, Ms. Bouma explained that the base of the Water Works feature has been submerged in chlorinated water during operation, causing continuous flaking and rusting. Over the years, this feature has been refurbished numerous times and will ultimately become structurally compromised due to thinning of materials. She explained that the Water Works feature is proposed to be replaced with a large mushroom dome from Aquatix, which is the same manufacturer of the recently installed Sprayground features.

On August 26, 2023, the Washtenaw County Purchasing Division, on behalf of Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation, issued RFP #8494 and received two bids for this project. Ms. Bouma shared that staff is recommending the low bidder, Building Fun (MRC). She added that staff have had positive past experiences with MRC during the construction and installation of the water park's dry playground and Sprayground.

It was moved by Mr. Joerg, seconded by Mr. Rabhi, to award the contract for RFP 8494 to Building Fun (MRC) in the amount of \$80,685 which includes a 10% contingency. Roll call vote, 9 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (McKinney), the motion was approved.

D. Golf Cart Purchase

Mr. Klender, Pierce Lake Golf Course Superintendent, explained that after four years of service the current fleet of 65 electric E-Z-Go lithium elite carts have reached the end of their warranty period. Staff is recommending the purchase of 72 lithium elite carts to replace the current fleet and ensure that the whole fleet is powered by the lithium batteries.

Mr. Klender shared that the current fleet also has the highest trade in value that E-Z-Go will provide (\$3,050 per cart) and that each year we wait to replace the fleet we would get less trade in value per cart. The purchase of the new fleet of carts will be through a Washtenaw County approved purchase program which has been competitively bid and is in alignment with Washtenaw County procurement procedures. Delivery of the carts will take place prior to March 31, 2024. He explained that the total cost for a fleet of 72 golf carts is \$379,550 which includes a \$21,600 rebate and a \$198,250 trade-in value of the current 65 cart fleet.

It was moved by Mr. Ezekiel, seconded by Mr. Marans, to authorize purchase of seventy-two (72) E-Z-GO RXV lithium golf carts at a price of \$379,550 and to amend the 2024 Parks Fund Budget to account for the purchase. Roll call vote, 9 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (McKinney), the motion was approved.

E. Connecting Communities – Initial Overview

Ms. Macyda presented the applications that were received for the 2024 round of Connecting Communities funding. She added that there is typically \$600,000 allocated to the program each year; \$100,000 for planning and engineering and \$500,000 for construction. This year, there is \$98,640 available for planning and engineering and \$500,000 for construction. She explained that applications were received from four submittals, with a total ask of \$71,000 for planning and engineering and \$800,000 for construction projects. The applications will be placed on the November Commission agenda for final action and allocation of the funds.

F. Millage Updates

Mr. Vaughn provided a brief overview of the Road and Trails Millage. He explained the allocation of funds for trail projects and what projects were completed in the last four years. He presented a resolution of support for the Board of Commissioners to place the millage on the ballot for renew and restore.

It was moved by Mr. Ezekiel, seconded by Ms. McCollum, to approve the resolution to place the 2025-2028 Road and Non-Motorized millage on the ballot for 2024. 9 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (McKinney), the motion was approved.

G. Other New Business

None.

9. Commissioners / Directors Comments

None.

10. Adjournment

It was moved by Mr. Rabhi, seconded by Ms. Scott, to adjourn. All ayes, the motion was approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:18 PM.