



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

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### **MINUTES OF MEETING**

**Date:** April 9, 2024

**Time:** 2:00 p.m.

**Location:** Independence Lake County Park, Whitmore Lake, MI 48188

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

**Members Absent:** JoAnn McCollum

**Staff Present:** Coy Vaughn, Director; Meghan Bonfiglio, Deputy Director; Ginny Leikam, Superintendent of Planning and NAPP; Jason Brooks, Manager of Finance and Administration; Karen Harris, Parks Administration Analyst; Julie Sigda, Independence Lake Superintendent; Scott Linn, Park & Aquatic Facility Supervisor; Julie Shoner, Park & Facility Manager; Ashley Wilson, Park & Facility Supervisor; David Ries, Project Manager; Ann Ziolkowski, Communications Manager; and Kyle Jasper, Communications Specialist.

**Others Present:** Tyler Sprague, James Renaud, Robert Yang and Max Gillington

#### **1. Call to Order**

Ms. Scribner called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m.

#### **2. Pledge of Allegiance**

#### **3. Approval of the Minutes**

The minutes of the March 12, 2024 regular meeting were included with the packet materials.

***It was moved by Mr. Pratt, seconded by Ms. Scott, to approve the minutes of the March 12, 2024 regular meeting. All ayes, the motion was approved.***

#### **4. Public Comment**

None.

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

Mr. Vaughn turned the floor over to Ms. Sigda to introduce staff at Independence Lake County Park. Ms. Sigda thanked Ms. Shoner and Ms. Wilson for their hard work in recruiting seasonal staff for the upcoming season.

Mr. Vaughn provided an overview of the communications for the month of March.

Ms. Ziolkowski gave an update on communications and marketing followed by introducing Mr. Jasper as the new Communications Specialist for WCPARC. She reported that a few initiatives for Mr. Jasper will include e-newsletters, marketing projects and working with central County staff on behalf of County Parks for the upcoming website update.

Ms. Ziolkowski noted that invites had been sent out for the Title IX Opening which is coming up in June. She also briefed the Commission on press inquiries, stressing that instead of an on the spot response, a deadline for a statement can be requested to ensure that the best information is being shared. She also provided an update on a summer visibility campaign which coincides with the timing of the August election.

Mr. Joerg requested the start date for the upcoming campaign. Ms. Ziolkowski replied that it would likely kick off around May 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Marans asked if the Friends group would be utilized again this year. Mr. Vaughn indicated that it would.

Ms. McKinney asked about using the summer programs to share information with communities. Ms. Ziolkowski confirmed that discussions are taking place on providing particulars to camp families. Mr. Pratt expressed that community newsletters could be a good source to share the visibility campaign along with farmers markets.

Mr. Vaughn introduced Robert Yang and Max Gillington of the Ross School of Business to present on plan they put together which would be in alignment with the Resilient Washtenaw Plan adopted by the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Yang and Mr. Gillington reported that after discussions with WCPARC staff, recommendations include:

1. Develop and Maintain energy efficient infrastructure
2. Reduce and divert current waste output
3. Introduce water cognizant management practices
4. Explore clean energy solutions
5. Measure progress via analytics and metrics
6. Promote sustainable values in our community

Ms. Bobrin asked about the estimated cost to achieve the recommendations provided in this report. Mr. Yang that cost estimates were not calculated. Mr. Marans wanted to preview the goals and wanted to switch the order of recommendations order #5 & 6. Mr. Ezekiel thanked them for work already done or in progress which includes planting trees and work on the Border-to-Border Trail. Mr. Joerg asked which facility should be prioritized in this report to maximize impact. Mr. Yang replied to start with Rolling Hills or the Meri Lou Murray Recreation Center HVAC system. Mr. Rabhi mentioned that it would be nice to do a carbon analysis on the areas we already have and fields that we're restoring. Mr. Yang offered to share his contact information along for any updates, or suggestions.

***It was moved by Mr. Joerg , seconded by Ms. Scribner, to receive and file the Communications, Projects & Activities for the month of March 2024, as submitted. All ayes, the motion was approved.***

## **6. Financial Reports – March 2024**

### **A. Claims Report**

Mr. Brooks reported that the total for the claims for the month of March 2024 was \$1,010,925.16.

***It was moved by Ms. Scribner, seconded by Mr. Joerg, to approve the claims for the month of March 2024 as submitted. Roll call vote, 9 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent, the motion was approved.***

## **B. Fund Balance Reports**

Mr. Brooks provided an update on the fund balance reports through March. He reported that the duplicated Phinney expenditure that showed up after the Treasurer wired funds had been corrected by that office.

***It was moved by Mr. Joerg, seconded by Ms. Rabhi, to receive and file the fund balance reports for March 2024 as submitted. All ayes, the motion was approved.***

## **C. Revenue Reports**

Mr. Joerg commented about the day camp revenue increase and suggested that it may be due to daycare costs. He asked if consideration had been given to scaling up capacity for the facilities offering day camps. Ms. Bonfiglio mentioned that it is in the works as some facilities have extended the number of weeks being offered.

Mr. Marans pointed out that it may be beneficial to determine the origin of non-residents to build on those numbers.

***It was moved by Ms. McKinney, seconded by Mr. Ezekiel, to receive and file the Revenue Reports for the month of March. All ayes, the motion was approved.***

## **7. Old Business**

### **A. Director's Comments**

Mr. Vaughn commented on the Barton-Bandemer tunnel project and the status of reviews from MDOT and Amtrak. He announced the good news that we received the letter of no exception from Amtrak and that it will allow us to put the project out to bid.

Mr. Vaughn reported that there have been difficulties in recruiting at the Sheriff's Office (WCSO) and that the PSO's that typically patrol for WCPARC during peak season have been scaled back. He stated that this summer we will be working with a private security company to supplement the PSO program. We plan to have the private security focus more on the Rolling Hills waterpark and the beach at Independence Lake.

Mr. Vaughn stated that the Fees Subcommittee is scheduled to meet on April 17<sup>th</sup> and that he anticipates reporting back to the full Commission next month.

Mr. Vaughn reported that he does not have much of an update on the proposed Eastside Recreation Center at this time but that he is meeting with Mr. Dill on the topic next week.

Mr. Rabhi asked about membership fee increases at Pierce Lake Golf Course (PLGC). Mr. Vaughn confirmed that the fees were increased to more closely align with the number of rounds that were being played. He added that while the fees are higher, patrons are still getting a significant discount by purchasing a membership instead of paying for individual rounds.

Mr. Rabhi stated that he is concerned that WCSO cannot support Parks in this summer at the same level as previous years. Ms. McKinney asked for details on how a private security firm would operate as it relates to law enforcement. Ms. Bonfiglio said that Rolling Hills and Independence Lake require the most time from WCSO and that a security company would primarily be utilized on weekends and would ideally collaborate with WCSO. She added that staff is working to find the best services we can in the short timeframe we were given. Mr. Joerg asked if commissioners could review the private security proposal and approve the terms of the contract language. Mr. Vaughn responded that the contract is

within limits for discretionary spending and does not require Commission approval. However, Commissioners are welcome to review the contract if they wish.

Mr. Pratt asked if Ypsilanti Community Schools had accepted an offer on the proposed site for the Eastside Recreation Center. Mr. Vaughn responded that an offer had been accepted.

Ms. Bonfiglio provided an update on the Master Plan process and added that there would be a comprehensive session on the plan in June which may have a working session prior to the regular June meeting.

## **B. Other Old Business**

None.

## **8. New Business**

### **A. Maintenance and Beach Center Renovation Plan Overview**

Mr. Ries introduced Tyler Sprague and James Renaud as the design team for the proposed renovations. He explained that the consultant team analyzed the existing conditions of both project areas and provided schematic designs and opinion of cost.

Mr. Renaud provided an overview of the schematic designs and explained how the proposed improvements and repairs were prioritized. Mr. Joerg asked if the carports would be used year-round and if they could be fully enclosed? Ms. McKinney asked if the proposed building will be able to contain the equipment we have stored outside now. Mr. Renaud answered that the carports will be used year-round and that they will be designed to store all existing equipment. We can provide an alternative design with a fully enclosed structure.

Mr. James and Mr. Sprague presented the plans for the Beach Center. Generally, the Beach Center is not in a bad condition compared to the maintenance building but could use additional program space, storage, and offices. We would also like to expand the concessions service area.

Mr. Pratt commented on the potential to take advantage of the lake views with more windows and the need for window treatments and shading of the window areas. Mr. Rabhi commented on the massing of the proposed roof and thought it would be more aesthetically pleasing if the roof line was broken up. Ms. Scott mentioned integrating green design and considering solar and geothermal for all new projects.

### **B. Independence Lake Maintenance Facility Replacement**

Mr. Ries described the existing 3,000-square foot maintenance facility and yard that is located near the park entrance at Jennings Road. The maintenance yard includes outdoor storage of equipment and is located near a designated wetland. The maintenance building was originally constructed in 1979 and was expanded in the early 2000's to create space for staff and storage of equipment. Since then, storage space has become a premium due to the expansion of the park's activities and programs, as well as the building itself needing major repairs. This maintenance facility and crew not only serve the needs of Independence Lake County Park but also covers the northern tier of the County, including Park Lyndon.

Mr. Ries explained that staff has worked closely with consultants from JFR Architects in developing a Facility Condition Assessment (FCA) report for the building and have developed schematic designs for a new maintenance facility and associated site plan. The schematic design reflected both current and anticipated staff needs and addressed the items identified in the FCA report.

Due to their intimate knowledge of the project, Staff requested that the JFR Team submit a letter proposal including fee for advancing the project to the next phase to develop complete Bid/Permit documents along with Construction Administration. The team submitted their proposal on March 15, 2024 in the amount of \$135,992. This fee adheres to their approved hourly rates and includes all scope of services required to complete Bid/Permit documents as well as Construction Administration for the replacement of the Maintenance Facility at Independence Lake.

***It was moved by Ms. Bobrin, seconded by Mr. Joerg to award a contract in the amount of \$135,992 to the JFR Architects to develop complete bid/permit documents along with conduct contract administration for the replacement of the Independence Lake Maintenance Facility, and include an additional 10% (\$13,600) of the Proposal fee for potential change orders. Roll call vote, 9 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (McCollum), the motion was approved.***

#### **C. NAPP – Randall Trust Conservation Easement**

Ms. Leikam reported that ALPAC funds have not been used in Bridgewater Township in the past and stated that this was an exciting opportunity. The 61-acre farm is in proximity to other farmland already protected by Legacy Land Conservancy and contains high quality farmland based on the GIS assessment previously completed.

The Randall Trust farm was identified by ALPAC as a high priority in Round 22 and was slated for potential USDA - RCPP funding. Since the RCPP funding agreement has not yet been finalized an appraisal of the property was commissioned. The farm is currently in active agricultural production and contains 99% prime agricultural soils. Based on the ALPAC scoring system, the property scored 55 points, for the percentage of prime soils, adjacency to active farmland, historical features (Centennial Farm), and proximity to other protected land.

An appraisal was completed in December 2023. The appraised value for the conservation easement was determined to be \$429,000 (\$7,000/acre).

***It was moved by Mr. Rabhi, seconded by Ms. Scott that the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission authorize a sales contract for the purchase of a conservation easement on the Randall Trust property as identified in the amount of \$429,000, or \$7,000 / acre contingent upon completion of all necessary due diligence investigation and final approval of the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission. Roll call vote, 9 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (McCollum), the motion was approved.***

#### **D. NAPP – Ritchie Trust Conservation Easement**

Ms. Leikam reported the subject property is in Lima Township about a mile east of Trinkle Nature Preserve. The 79-acre farm is in proximity to another farmland easement held by Scio Township.

The farm was identified by ALPAC as a high priority in Round 23. The farm is currently in active agricultural production and the current landowners are looking to sell the farm to another farm family. The property contains 92% prime agricultural soils. Based on the ALPAC scoring system, the property scored 70 points, for the percentage of prime soils, adjacency to active farmland, and proximity to other protected land.

Ms. Leikam explained that there is an approximate 6.5 acre building exclusion around the current home and farm buildings. An appraisal was completed in December 2023. The appraised value for the conservation easement was determined to be \$539,544 (\$7,490/acre) for 72 acres encumbered by the conservation easement.

***It was moved by Mr. Ezekiel, seconded by Mr. Pratt, that the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission authorize a sales contract for the purchase of a conservation easement on the Ritchie Trust property in the amount of \$539,544, or \$7,490 / acre contingent upon completion of all***

*necessary due diligence investigation and final approval of the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission. Roll call vote, 9 ayes, 0 nays, 1 absent (McCollum), the motion was approved.*

**E. Other New Business**

None.

**9. Commissioners Comments**

None.

**10. Adjournment**

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

The meeting adjourned at 4:36 p.m.