

Allegan County Parks Advisory Board



Allegan County Parks, Recreation &
Tourism
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Chairperson: Pam Brown
Vice Chairperson: John Clark III

PARKS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING – Minutes

Tuesday, October 4, 2022 @ 8:30am

County Services Building – Board Room – 3283 122nd Ave, Allegan MI 49010

Pam Brown
616-490-1627
Allegan

John Clark III
269-274-2736
Allegan

**Mark
DeYoung**
616-318-9612
Dorr

**Kevin
Formsma**
616-886-7030
Hamilton

Jaelyn Hulst
616-834-2436
Zeeland

Jackie Metz
269-521-6524
Allegan

CALL TO ORDER: Brown called to order at 8:32am

ROLL CALL:

Present: Brown, Clark, DeYoung, Formsma, Hulst, Metz

Absent: None

Also Present: Brandy Gildea; Heather Bausick, Dan Wedge, Lissa Garrett, Lynn Kirkaldy, Carol Josefowicz, Mike Morphey

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion made by Formsma, seconded by Clark to approve the April 5, 2022 minutes as presented. The motion carried.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None

ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS: Littlejohn Proposal

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Motion made by DeYoung, seconded by Formsma to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried.

PARK ADMINISTRATION UPDATES: Gildea went through the written administrative update that she sent out to the parks board.

- Littlejohn had homeless staying in the bathroom and started a fire on the floor in the bathroom. The staff is getting quotes for a repair. If greater than \$1000(our deductible), Parks will use insurance to cover damage repair.
- Hulst asked why bathrooms are not locked at night to which Gildea replied there is no available staff to travel to every park each evening and lock the doors.
- Brown asked if vandalism is down. Gildea replied there is less destructive vandalism but spray painting vandalism is worse this year.
- Parks bathrooms will close on October 30th.

REVIEW ITEMS:

1. **Financial Statements** – Gildea went over the expenditure and revenue statements located in the agenda packet. Gildea then went over the quarterly revenues comparisons
 - Down for the year (2022) at boat launches and campsites
 - Down this year compared to 2021 and 2020 but the year is not complete yet.

- Numbers have reverted back to pre-Covid numbers
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RECOMMENDATION/ACTION ITEMS: NONE

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. West Side Park Beach Access Plan

- Gildea discussed and showed both Option A and Option B to those present and stated there were around 20 people in attendance at the public input meeting on September 20, 2022.
- Lissa Garrod residing at 2126 Lakeshore Dr
 - i. Spoke about the proposed changes to the park. She grew up next to the park and has concerns about how this will impact the community and how this will be maintained in the long term.
 - ii. Handicapped stairway was wonderful but doesn't feel like the plan was ever fulfilled to completion so how will this be different?
 - iii. Long-term term needs to be thought about including changes to the environment, trees, root system, long term erosion. Ganges Township is not in a critical dunes area, but she believes moving everything will harm the dunes long term.
 - iv. Understands the need for a road, but believes the only thing holding the beach together are the trees that are suggested to be removed for the road. Suggested we speak to Ganges Twp about how they achieve beach access for emergencies.
 - v. Stated she spoke with Janelle from EGLE and suggested the importance of a geological survey and a soil erosion plan.
 - vi. Suggested a gravel roadway and that we look into alternatives to asphalt. i.e. Mobile Mat
 - vii. Where is the money going to come from in the long term if the Parks do not even have the money for this plan to be built now?
 - viii. She believes that if money is to be spent, it should be spent to enhance what is currently there – trees trimmed, gazebo maintained, benches added to gazebo, grills updated, etc.
- Lynn Kirkaldy residing at 2402 Lakeshore Dr
 - i. She has resided at her home since 1992. Planted sea grass in 1996 and it has been completely wiped out since then. For the last 15 years she has allowed trees to grow freely and thrown millions of acorns down the bluff to create a strong rooting system.
 - ii. Her neighbors have completely cleared their bluffs for a view and the dunes have been effected. She had to put rock in on the north end of her bluff because neighbors were developing bluff which was damaging hers.

- iii. She is adamant that the trees and vegetation stay along the park bluff or else the dunes will be compromised and in turn cause erosion where the structure will sit next to Lissa's property.
 - iv. She suggested the lake levels are due to rise again in 2029 and this structure will be harmed, if not wiped out once again.
 - v. She would like to see a Phase 3 study for soil/structure probe so contractors and engineers know exactly what they are working with.
 - vi. She would like to see native plantings
 - vii. Final statement asking for the Parks to be good neighbors and put this project in the center of the park to reduce erosion concerns along neighboring properties.
- Carol Josefowicz residing at 2334 Lakeshore Dr
 - i. She has resided here since 1994
 - ii. Suggested that anything that is built will not be sustainable as the lake is ever changing. Referenced two paths that have been built north of the park which have both failed.
 - iii. Suggested the parks trim trees, put in a tennis court, and to add to the park instead of changing the paths and the beach and to use money wisely and make nicer amenities but don't disturb the bluff.
- Mike from Abonmarche spoke to concerns and questions
 - i. He states there is no perfect solution, but the goal of reconstruction is ADA accessibility. They will try to minimize the water effects but the lake will in fact continue to erode the shoreline.
 - ii. He stated the path has to be done at the south end of the park due to elevation and grading levels which are required for ADA accessibility
 - iii. Stated the soil erosion study will come later after the concepts are developed.
- DeYoung stated he is also concerned about erosion and how the roadway will be blocked for people who shouldn't use it but make it easily accessible for staff and emergency vehicles that need to use it. He personally knows how important it is for ADA access as he was there when the first one was opened to the public and saw the public reaction.
- Gildea stated that ADA access is the first priority over any other development at the park.
- Formsma asked if we removed the need for vehicle access and focus on ADA, will that make the overall plan simpler? Gildea answered yes, but removable sections will still need to be removed and how will we access the bottom of the pathway without vehicle access?
- Clark asked Mike if there were different way to develop smaller removable sections so they were easier for staff to move and store if needed. Mike said smaller portions can be made, but there will still be a need for a rigid structure piece to hold the sections.
- Lissa suggested we contact EGLE for guidance and direction on structure and pathway.

- Lynn agreed with DeYoung on ADA access to the bluff but maybe it is not necessarily needed all the way down to the beach. Just provide areas for stopping and views of the water, sunset, etc.
 - Gildea stated this topic will be put back on the agenda for December.
 - i. There will be a Spark Grant opening and she would like to apply for the funds. The Spark Grant will not have a cap on funds and the parks does not have to match funding.
 - ii. Trimming trees can be looked into as it would need to be hired out. Stated the gazebo was designed as a wedding gazebo and not a sitting gazebo. Gildea also discussed that the remaining walking trails have not been developed because only Phase 1 of the West Side Park Master Plan has been completed.
2. Land Donation in Overisel Township
- 50 acres along 147th Ave have been offered to the parks by the land owners as a donation to turn into a future park.
 - Gildea stated her concerns are there is no water source at the location, funding for staffing and development, only meets three of the Recreation Plan’s goals and objectives, and it is in an area with current park options
 - Hulst stated it may be hard to find water in that particular area and this property is down from the landfill which may cause issues with groundwater in the future.
 - Formsma asked if we could obtain the property and hold it for future use but doesn’t currently see any particular draw to this exact parcel.
 - Brown asked if we could obtain the property and then rent out acreage for farming until it was ready to be developed into a park. If it could be written in the clause to use as walking trails and not be developed until we are fiscally ready.
 - Wedge stated the current owners lease out the land for crop farming. He does not believe the county would be able to lease the land. Once the county receives money, it is considered revenue and then property would revert back to a taxable parcel.
 - Clark suggested we could allow 4-H clubs to use for projects and boy scouts to use for projects

A motion was made by Formsma, seconded by DeYoung to deny the acceptance of the land donation in Overisel Township. The motion carried by majority vote. Yes - 4, No -2

Brown – Yes	Formsma - Yes
Clark – No	Hulst - No
DeYoung – Yes	Metz - Yes

NOTICE OF PARK ADVISORY BOARD APPOINTMENTS:

- **Vacancy: term expires 12/22**
- **Vacancy: term expires 12/22**
- **Vacancy: term expires 12/24**

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Property lines at Littlejohn Park to be properly marked
 - Clark has located the four corners but stated signage was needed along the property line adjoining the state game area for hunting boundaries
 - Gildea will reach out to the DNR to find out how other properties are marked and how to proceed with signage.

ROUND TABLE:

Clark: Loves working in Littlejohn in the woods.

Formsma: None

Brown: Silver Creek was beautiful last weekend. Damaged trees have been removed. Park is looking good.

DeYoung: None

Hulst: Appreciates the opportunity to be part of the board.

Bausick: None

Gildea: None

ADJOURNMENT: Next Meeting –Tuesday, December 6, 2022 @ 8:30 am in Board Conference Room – 3283 122nd Ave Allegan, MI 49010

A motion was made by Hulst, seconded by Clark to adjourn the meeting at 11:11am. The motion carried.