

The regular meeting of the Calhoun County Parks Trustees Board was held on Wednesday, September 3, 2008 at 6:12 p.m. in their office located at 13300 Fifteen Mile Road, Marshall, Michigan.

Present: Commissioner Eric J. Tobin, Chairman
Commissioner Hugh T. Coward, Vice Chairman
Commissioner Charles E. Monaweck, Member
Commissioner Chester E. Travis, Member
Kevin Henning, Managing Director
Angela Kline, Assistant County Highway Engineer
Mary Jo Crumpton, Deputy Board Clerk

Absent: Commissioner Scott A. Brown, Chairman - Excused

Also Present: General Public

Chairman Eric Tobin called the regular meeting of the Calhoun County Parks Trustees Board to order at 6:12 p.m.

Moved by Commissioner Travis and supported by Commissioner Coward to approve the August 6, 2008 regular meeting minutes of the Calhoun County Parks Trustees Board. Voice vote: motion carried.

SUPERVISORS, PUBLIC OFFICIALS AND CITIZENS COMMENTS REGARDING AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

Mr. Gardy Berezonsky, Marengo Township resident, asked why the Board would even consider the proposed park in Burlington Township, since Parks has no funds available to maintain their current parks. Chairman Tobin clarified that we were approached by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and this is only a fact-finding mission at this time.

COMMUNICATIONS

- a) Received a memo from Kevin Henning, Managing Director, regarding a proposed park in Burlington Township

MANAGING DIRECTOR REPORT

Mr. Henning explained that earlier this summer he received a phone call from Paul Yak with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources in regards to our interest in developing a County Park in Burlington Township. Mr. Yak had been in contact with Ms. Nancy Mitchell who owns approximately 19 acres, partially bound by Turtle Lake, as well as a small island in Turtle Lake. Her property is land locked by property owned by Roland Baldwin. Mr. Henning stated that he contacted Ms. Mitchell and discussed her interest in donating property to establish a County Park. He also spoke with Mr. Baldwin about access to Ms. Mitchell's property. Included in the Board packet was a memorandum from Mr. Henning, as well as photographs of the area in question.

The discussions held with Mr. Yak from the DNR originally included obtaining this two track access from Mr. Baldwin and creating a small parking area and boat ramp to allow public access. The property consists of slight rolling hills with cat tails and undisturbed wildlife. The DNR is interested in the creation of a public access at this location, but does not have the resources for maintenance of such. The DNR has agreed to assist the county with a grant application to the State of Michigan should the County be interested in pursuing development and maintenance of the park. Mr. Henning further explained the logistics with the parties involved.

Mr. Henning pointed out that parks require maintenance and operation. Even if grant funds were received from the State for property acquisition and park construction, the park would potentially still become the property of the Calhoun County Parks System. County funding for parks has been minimal in the past.

Prior to moving this concept further, Mr. Henning stated that he would contact Mr. Yak at the DNR to explore funding options, maintenance, and ownership of the proposed park. He would like to learn more about long-term maintenance and liability costs for this type of park operation, as we currently do not operate or maintain any posted fishing access sites. At this time, Mr. Henning estimates that property acquisition and park construction would exceed \$200,000.

Commissioner Travis commented that there is no harm in exploring this park development, but would like to see another organization fund and maintain it.

Commissioner Tobin reiterated that the DNR approached us regarding this proposed park.

Commissioner Coward asked if Turtle Lake currently had a public access. Mr. Henning replied that there is not a public access. Commissioner Coward noted that while the DNR may want a public access on Turtle Lake, the opinions of the lake residents need to be considered, as their support for a public access would be critical. Commissioner Tobin stated that he has asked Mr. Henning to speak to the stakeholders involved, as well as the County Board.

SUPERVISORS, PUBLIC OFFICIALS, AND CITIZENS TIME

Mr. Berezonsky asked how much money was received from the Silver Leaf Renaissance Faire. Mr. Henning responded that we have not received any funds, and will not until they are finished with their audit in October. Mr. Berezonsky asked if the funds went back into Kimball Pines. Mr. Henning replied that the funds received go toward parks, which include maintenance. Mr. Berezonsky stated that he believes the funds should go back into Kimball Pines and not parks maintenance, as CCRC maintains the parks anyway. Mr. Henning clarified that there is very little maintenance done in the parks due to lack of funding, and clarified that funds received from Silver Leaf are not specifically designated for Kimball Pines.

Mr. Vern Mesler announced that he will be doing a presentation on the restoration of the historic riveted truss bridges in Bridge Park on Monday, October 6, 2008 at 7 pm at the Willard Library meeting room in Battle Creek. Flyers regarding this presentation were provided.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioner Tobin stated that last year we received just over \$11,000 for parks, although we submitted a budget for \$86,000. He noted that recently, he has approached the County Board with suggestions to increase funding for our parks. Commissioner Tobin informed everyone that the Boy Scouts are considering doing Eagle Scout projects at the Ott Preserve.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next regular meeting of the Calhoun County Parks Trustees Board will be held on Wednesday, October 1, 2008, following the 5:30 p.m. regular meeting of the Board of Calhoun County Road Commissioners.

There being no additional business before the Parks Trustees Board, Chairman Tobin adjourned the meeting at 6:32 p.m.

Submitted by:

Mary Jo Crumpton, Deputy Board Clerk

Eric J. Tobin, Chairman