

6:00 p.m., Monday
January 3, 2022

MANISTEE BOARD OF COMMISSIONER'S
415 Third St.
Manistee, Michigan

RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES

The Recreation Commission is operating remotely and electronically by Zoom under PA 254 of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

- ❖ Call to Order and Roll Call.
- ❖ Mr. Wayne Beldo, Commission Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Recreation Commission Members Present: Wayne Beldo, Margaret Batzer, Erin Secord, Linda Cudney – via Zoom, Devin Wegner – via Zoom, Gary Schwaiger, Robert Schulke, and Bryan Dunlop

Recreation Commission Members Absent: Eleanor DeYoung

Others: Douglas Barry - Michigan DNR, Katie Mehl - Manistee County Planning Department, Mark Coe – Benzie Manistee Snowbirds, and Jim Russel-Manistee County Road Commission

- ❖ Approval of the Agenda
Mr. Beldo pointed out that the date on the agenda mistakenly said "2021" when the date should actually read "2022."
Ms. Batzer moved, seconded by Dr. Dunlop to approve the January 3, 2022 agenda as amended.

Voting yes: Mr. Beldo, Ms. Batzer, Ms. Secord, Mr. Schwaiger, Mr. Schulke, and Dr. Dunlop

- ❖ Approval of the Minutes
Dr. Dunlop moved, seconded by Mr. Schwaiger to approve the November 1, 2021 minutes as presented.

Voting yes: Mr. Beldo, Ms. Batzer, Ms. Secord, Mr. Schwaiger, Mr. Schulke, and Dr. Dunlop

- ❖ Public Comment
 - None
- ❖ Staff Updates
 - Katie Mehl provided a staff update on behalf of the Manistee County Planning department. She stated that the county wide recreation plan was approved by the



County Commission. All local units also approved the plan. Networks Northwest is still waiting for approved minutes and resolutions from a few communities. Katie asked the group to help spread the word for the following: Marilla, Norman, Arcadia, Kaleva, and Copemish. Zach Vega of Networks Northwest and Katie are also following up with these communities to collect the documentation. Ms. Batzer asked for clarification on whether the minutes had to be approved. Katie explained that Networks Northwest does not need approved minutes and that draft minutes will suffice, but the DNR will require copies of approved minutes.

❖ Old Business

- Friends of SMART Trails: Linda Cudney provided a summary of recent activities of the group which included the following:
 - The group applied for a grant through the MCCF to cover the match for the EDA grant application that is under review.
 - The group is working on insurance updates.
 - The EDA grant application for the section from Thompsonville to Kaleva including a bridge over Bear Creek has been submitted.
 - The group will continue to work with Tamara Buswinka on a strategic plan
- Ms. Batzer asked what the meeting schedule would be for 2022. Ms. Cudney replied that meetings would be on the second Monday of each month at 6:00pm at the Maple Grove Town Hall.

❖ New Business

- Doug Barry shared information regarding a grant application for the group to consider. Doug's wife applied for a DNR trust fund grant last year to build a bridge on the trail route, but it was not awarded. Doug asked if the group would like for his wife to submit this application once again.
- Mark Coe wondered if this bridge was included in the EDA grant as the bridge will be located along the section of trail running from Thompsonville to Kaleva. Mr. Beldo did not think the bridge is included in the EDA grant, but Ms. Secord remembered the bridge as being part of the EDA grant application and recalled the article in the Manistee News Advocate reporting this was the case. Mr. Beldo shared that Rob Carson did not indicate the bridge was included in the EDA grant at the most recent meeting of the Friends Group. It was decided that clarification was needed for the group.
- Doug Barry stated that it is possible to be successful in more than one grant for a project and then select which grant to use. He is under the impression that there is no disadvantage to being awarded the DNR grant and the EDA grant and simply declining the DNR grant if it is not needed. Mr. Beldo clarified that this DNR grant would be an application for a duplicate purpose if the bridge is covered by the EDA grant.
- Ms. Batzer asked for clarification on who would apply for and manage the DNR grant. Doug Barry said that is a good question: he also asked who the Project Manager would be. His wife is willing to help, but not entirely manage the grant. Ms. Batzer



followed up by asking if staff time would be needed. Doug Barry replied yes, staff time would be needed, or the grant would also have to include an allotment to hire and individual to manage it.

- Mark Coe offered that in previous applications that Springdale Township was directed to request the grant, but the Township was not the applicant. This made him unsure on who the applicant should be in this case, but he recommended the Recreation Commission would be a good prospect for this opportunity as a new organization that is learning this process. Mr. Beldo agreed that this would be a good thing to see happen for the Recreation Commission but expressed concern about the Commission's resources currently.
- Ms. Batzer asked when the grant deadline is. Doug Barry replied April 1, 2022. He added that there is quite a bit of work to be completed in this time frame including a public meeting with support. He advised that a decision of whether to apply for the grant should be made during this meeting.
- Ms. Batzer shared an update from the County Commissioner's meeting, specifically how the Manistee County's ARPA funds will be used. This is a different pot of money than the EDA grant Networks Northwest is applying for. The county is scheduled to receive \$4.78MM in ARPA funds. Some of the spending has already been decided upon. In the January board meeting the Commission will be discussing in more depth how the remainder of the funds should be spent. Whatever projects are decided upon, the Commission has two ways to administer the funds; an outside consultant or hiring a grant writer (which is in the county budget). Ms. Batzer's personal hope is that a grant writer is hired, but this will not likely happen by April 1, 2022.
- Mr. Beldo stated that if we already have a grant application dedicated to the bridge over Bear Creek, it may not be wise to committing the currently limited county resources to a duplicate application with the DNR at this time.
- Each Recreation Commission member was asked for their opinion and a vote as to whether we should apply for the DNR grant. All members voted "no" to duplicate grant efforts citing the current timeline and resources.

❖ Other Business

- Ms. Secord pointed out that the Recreation Commission has not yet held an election of Officers for the 2022 calendar year. This is something that would have been done at the December meeting, but that meeting was cancelled. Mr. Beldo stated he would add it to the February agenda.
- Dr. Dunlop asked if the Recreation Commission had an annual work plan. The Commission currently does not. Dr. Dunlop asked if there was value in doing so. Ms. Batzer pointed out that the newly approved Recreation Plan should provide some guidance for annual goals. Dr. Dunlop recommended that we look at the Recreation plan closely and form an annual work plan in a future meeting or work session.
- Ms. Batzer expressed that she was pleased the grant writer position is still part of the discussion among the County Commission. She also thanked Katie Mehl for being present and providing staff support.
- Mr. Beldo updated the group that the Village of Kaleva has capped the trail corridor



within the village limits.

- Mr. Schulke made a comment that vehicles are still driving on the recently capped section of trail from Kaleva to Chief and asked that barricades be installed. Mark Coe commented that the Benzie Manistee Snowbirds have a trail proposal for that segment to get the segments on the DNR map. This proposal has allocation for six gates for roadways and bollards would be installed along the sides. During the closure of the snowmobile season (Dec. 1 – Mar. 31) the gates would be closed, and locked, and non-motorized access would be allowed through the bollards.
- Mr. Beldo shared that news of the completion of the trail is spreading by word of mouth and there have been many positive comments through the community.
- Mark Coe added that he noticed questions regarding signing. He informed the group that the trail has been signed on each end as being non-motorized, and signs along the trail that say, "stay on trail."
- Ms. Batzer wanted to share that the state requirements for the Opens Meetings Act stipulate that while members of the public and members of the commission are allowed to participate via Zoom, commission members must attend in person to be counted for attendance and vote.

❖ Adjourn

Mr. Schwaiger moved, seconded by Ms. Batzer to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 6:31 p.m.

Voting yes: Mr. Beldo, Ms. Batzer, Ms. Secord, Mr. Schwaiger, Mr. Schulke, and Dr. Dunlop

The next meeting will be held February 7, 2022 in the County Commissioner's room at 6 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin Secord, Recreation Commission Secretary

Date: January 3, 2022