

**KALAMAZOO COUNTY PARKS DEPARTMENT  
PARK COMMISSION MEETING**

**March 5, 2020**

**Members Present:** Toni Thompson, Debra Scott, Marion Hill, Sandy Bliesener, Pat Crowley  
Thomas Matteson, Roger Tuinier, Robert Moore, Larry Stehouwer, Cory King

**Members Absent:**

**Discover Kalamazoo Liaison:** Greg Ayers

**Staff Present:** David Rachowicz, Lisa Conley, Lisa Henthorn

**Citizens:** Commissioner Michael Seals, Iris Potter, Tom Duffield, Tammy Hibnea

1. **Call to Order** – The meeting was held at the Kalamazoo County Expo Center and was called to order at 3:05 p.m. By Chairperson, Thomas Matteson.
2. **Roll Call** – Roll was taken and a quorum was established. **Motion:** Matteson made a motion to excuse members not present. Seconded by Hill. Motion carried by voice vote.
3. **Approval of Minutes – February 6, 2020 Meeting** – Members reviewed the minutes. **Motion:** Moore moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Seconded by Thompson. Motion carried by voice vote.
4. **Citizen’s Time** – None
5. **Communications** – None
6. **Old Business**
  - a. **Camp Rota-Kiwan Update- Information Only-** Rachowicz informed members that he was moving forward in exploration of the possibility of purchasing Camp Rota-Kiwan as a Kalamazoo County Park. He held an informational meeting this past Tuesday with community and business leaders to gauge the level of interest and/or support for the purchase of the Camp. Rachowicz toured the Camp on Monday and gave members a brief overview of the property. He is currently exploring funding opportunities.
  - b. **Expo Center Capital Projects- Information Only-** Rachowicz reported that the Expo Center currently has 2 projects out for bid for construction projects at the Expo Center. An RFP for Paving Engineering and an RFP for Fencing Installation. The completed contracts should be available at the April meeting for review and projects should be completed this summer.
  - c. **KRV Trail-Information Only-** Rachowicz reported that the expansion project is still in the MDOT letting process and will have more to share at the April meeting.

**King entered the meeting at 3:30 p.m.**

**7. New Business**

- a. **Park Activity Report** – Members reviewed the report included in their meeting packet.

**3:30 p.m. Motion:** Stehouwer moved to enter into Public Hearing. Seconded by Tuinier. Motion carried by voice vote.

**b. 3:30 p.m. Public Hearing-** Amendments to the Kalamazoo County Parks Department’s Rules & Regulations. Rachowicz read aloud each line of the proposed amendments to the Kalamazoo County Parks Department’s Rules and Regulations. Matteson invited public comments. Iris Potter, founding member of Kalamazoo Remembers spoke in support of the new rules and regulations and thanked the Commission for their work and support of protection and preservation of our Parks. County Commissioner Michael Seals spoke in support of preserving and protecting our Parks. Deputy Administrator Lisa Henthorn read a prepared statement from County Commissioner Tracy Hall. Commissioner Hall thanked Director Rachowicz and the Park Commission for their commitment to our Parks and ensuring that our Parks remain the crown jewels of the County. Tammy Hibnea said that she was grateful for the new rules and regulations and would like to see all rules and regulations posted to our website for more transparency. Rachowicz read public comments that were received via email or voice messages. Kathy Schoen emailed her thanks for all the time spent on the plan and that it is important to protect what has been set aside for all to enjoy. Julie Dye sent an email that she and her daughter support the ordinance and that we need to protect spaces for future generations to enjoy. Andrew DeGraw, County resident and frequent visitor of our Parks, supports the new ordinances. Kathryn Surgis left a voice message stating that she supports the new policy and that the Park is there to protect the environment. Tina Prouty left a voice message stating that she is very interested in keeping everything the way that it is and supports the ordinance to keep green space. **Motion:** Moore moved to move out of the Public Hearing @ 4:05 p.m. Seconded by Stehouwer. Motion carried by voice vote.

**c. Amendments to the Kalamazoo County Parks Department’s Rules & Regulations- Motion to approve & recommend approval by the Board of Commissioners- Motion:** Hill moved to approve and recommend the Amendments to the Kalamazoo County Parks Department’s Rules Regulations as submitted to the Board of Commissioners. Seconded by Moore. Motion carried by voice vote. **Motion:** Crowley moved to amend the ordinance to include policies. Motion failed by lack of support.

**d. Kalamazoo County Parks Endowment Funds Quarterly Report-Motion to approve-**Members reviewed the report received in their meeting packet. **Motion:** Stehouwer moved to accept the report as submitted. Seconded by Moore. Motion carried by voice vote.

**e. 2020 Power Club Agreement-Scotts Mill-Motion to approve-**Members reviewed the 2020 contract received in their meeting packet. **Motion:** Moore moved to approve the 2020 contract as submitted. Seconded by Stehouwer. Motion carried by voice vote.

**f. 2020 Park Special Event Requests- Motion to approve-** Members reviewed the requests received in their meeting packets. **Motion:** Stehouwer moved to approve all the events as submitted. Seconded by Thompson. Motion carried by voice vote. Approved events:

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|--|---------------------------------|--|
| • <b>Your Turn Triathlon Training</b>  | <b>Prairie View County Park</b> | <b>May 20-August 18, 2020<br/>(Tuesdays &amp; Sundays)</b> |
| • <b>Seahorse Triathlon</b>            | <b>Cold Brook County Park</b>   | <b>May 27, 2020</b>  |
| • <b>Kalamazoo Ultimate Frisbee</b>    | <b>River Oaks County Park</b>   | <b>June 6, 2020</b>  |
| • <b>Comstock Memorial Fundraiser</b>  | <b>RO/Wenke Softball Field</b>  | <b>June 13, 2020</b>                                       |
| • <b>SuperMan/SuperWoman Triathlon</b> | <b>Prairie View County Park</b> | <b>August 22-23, 2020</b>                                  |

**g. Comstock Township Wenke Softball Field Contract – Motion to recommend to BOC-**Members reviewed the contract included in their meeting packet. The 5 year contract will run through December 31, 2024. **Motion:** Stehouwer moved to recommend to the BOC as submitted for approval. Seconded by Tuinier. Motion carried by voice vote.

- h. Expo Center Barn & Arena Pricing – Motion to approve-** Members reviewed the proposed fees included in their meeting packet. Rachowicz explained that the requests for Livestock only events have increased and the current rental fees are not adequate for stand-alone events. The higher fees will compensate for the expense of a stand-alone event. **Motion:** Moore moved to approve as submitted. Seconded by Stehouwer. Motion carried by voice vote.
- i. Kalamazoo County Fair Update-Marion Hill –** No report.
- j. Park Foundation Update- Toni Thompson-** Thompson reported that the Golf Outing is set for Monday, September 21, 2020. Also reported a good standing audit report.

## **8. Director’s Report**

- a. Budget report –**Members reviewed the report included in their meeting packet.
- b. February Update-** Rachowicz reported that the open Park Manager position was recently filled by the department’s Park Maintenance person. We now have a Park Maintenance position available as well as several summer seasonal positions.

**9. Sales Report -** Members received a copy of the report in their meeting packet.

**10. Members’ Time –** Bliesener asked Rachowicz about the outcome of the recent Public Hearing regarding the Fruitbelt Trail in Oshtemo Township. Rachowicz reported that the 2 mile stretch was approved for special use.

**11. Adjournment-** The meeting was adjourned @ 4:50 p.m.

**Minutes approved at the September 3, 2020 Meeting**