



Van Buren County Parks Commission

Location: Administration Conference Room
219 E Paw Paw Street, Suite 303
Paw Paw, MI 49079

Minutes

September 13, 2022

12:00 PM

1. Call to Order & Attendance
 - Present: Mike Chappell, Kurt Doroh, Richard Godfrey, Joe Parman, Ryan Post, John Small
 - Minutes: Cari Elmore
2. Approval of Agenda
 - Motion to approve the agenda by Kurt Doroh, Supported by Ryan Post; Motion: Carried.
3. Approval of Minutes
 - None – first meeting
4. Public Comment
 - None
5. Commission Organization
 - a. Board Term Length
 - Motion by Kurt Doroh, Supported by Richard Godfrey, to make it a 6-year term.
 - Discussion: we need to follow the terms set forth in MCL 46.351 of 2 members with a 1-year term, 2 members with a 2-year term, and 3 members with a 3-year term. From then on, each member shall be appointed for a term of 3 years. Each term shall expire at noon on January 1.
 - Motion to rescind the first motion by Kurt Doroh, Supported by Joe Parman; Motion: Carried.
 - Motion by Kurt Doroh, Supported by Joe Parman, to appoint Ryan Post and John Small to the initial a 1-year term, appoint Mike Chappell and Richard Godfrey (as members of the Board of Commissioners) to the initial 2-year term, and appoint Joe Parman (Drain Commission), Kurt Doroh (Planning Commission) and the representative from the Road Commission to the initial 3-year term. Motion: Carried.
 - b. Compensation
 - Motion by Ryan Post, Supported by John Small, to allow the usual \$55 per diem excluding County salaried employees (Interim Administrator, B&G Director, Drain Commissioner). Motion: Carried.
6. Commission Officer Elections
 - a. Agreement with the Road Commission to wait on Officer Elections until they have appointed a member.
7. Meeting Schedule
 - a. Monthly
 - Motion by Kurt Doroh, Supported by Ryan Post, to schedule the Parks Commission meetings for the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 11:00 AM. Motion: Carried.

8. Kayak Launch Project
 - a. Update
 - Meachum Family Farms has offered a lifelong lease for the property at the launch site.
 - The project is being funded by Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund grant in the amount of \$582,000 with a local match. The township will cover one quarter of the match, and the county will cover the other quarter.
 - Ryan suggested that we need to have a written contract with Meachum and will contact the county attorney.
 - b. Road Commissioner's Survey of the property - Reviewed
9. Materials
 - a. VBC Parks Department Feasibility Study performed by MSU Urban Planning Practicum
 - b. VBC Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plan 2021 adopted by the BOC on 1/26/2021
 - c. MCL 46.351
10. Round Table Discussion
 - Fairgrounds could be used as a campground. The lease for the Fairgrounds is for 50 years. Ryan to review the Fairgrounds lease.
 - The county owns parcels in Syndicate Park.
 - Southwest Michigan Conservancy would like to add a board walk going from South Haven to Covert. Covert does not currently have a Rec Plan, but South Haven does.
 - Suggestions to get the municipalities parks on board as part of the County plan. Some townships are tired of dealing with their parks. Certain types of parks could have fees to help cover maintenance costs.
 - The Parks Commission needs to create a Vision and Mission statement.
 - The Parks Commission could obtain some tax default properties near current parks.
 - James, with St. Joseph County, would be a good resource for information.
11. Adjournment: 12:55 PM