

ESCANABA RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD
February Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 10, 2015

The Escanaba Recreation Advisory Board met in regular session on Tuesday, February 10, 2015. Meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Jonathan Harris, Randy Kleiman, Todd Maki,
Karen Moore

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Maggie Murphy-Pomeroy

OTHERS PRESENT: Tom Penegor, Recreation Director
Cheryl Syers, Recreation Office Assistant
Bill Farrell, City Department of Public Works
Terry Flower, City Engineering Department

PUBLIC PRESENT: Randy Scott, C2AE
Christine Williams, Bay College
Joe Kaplan
Dave Anthony, Hannahville Indian Community
Susan Anthony
Jim Yoder, US Department of Agriculture
Vincent Bevins, Michigan Dept of Transportation
Rory Mattson, Delta Conservation District

Approval/Correction of the December 9, 2014 Regular Meeting Minutes

The Recreation Advisory Board reviewed the regular meeting minutes from Tuesday, December 9, 2014. Randy Kleiman motioned to approve the minutes as written. Todd Maki seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Adjustments to the Agenda

None.

Conflict of Interest Declarations

None.

Welcome

Karen Moore opened the meeting by welcoming all guests in attendance.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. **Non-Motorized Bike Path Update.** Mr. Penegor informed the purpose of tonight's meeting is to have an informal discussion on various options to connect our bike path with the City of Gladstone's proposed bike path project along the lake shore and through P Road. He advised the discussion will include various route options, estimates of cost, and funding sources.

Board chair, Karen Moore, gave an overview of project discussions as follows:

- The goals of the project are to connect Gladstone to Escanaba, Escanaba to Ludington Park, and develop safe accessibility to Bay College.
- State Representative Tom Casperson has informed there may be possible grant funding through the USDA.
- The Escanaba River clean-up project by the Delta County Conservation District will take place in the summer of 2015.
- Hannahville Indian Community owns property in Wells Township for possible future development which currently does not have water/sewer availability.
- Wells Township may want to provide water/sewer utilities to additional areas of the township when MDOT constructs a new bridge over the Escanaba River in 2017.
- Canadian National has been contacted to discuss the option of creating a pedestrian/bike tunnel under the railroad overpass located by Kentucky Fried Chicken.
- The City of Escanaba Department of Public Works has created several maps with proposed routes.

Rory Mattson, Representative of the Delta County Conservation District, made the following comments:

- The Road Commission signed on as owner of the old bridge structure in order to receive funds to perform the Escanaba River clean-up project. It took the Army Corp of Engineers three years to permit the clean-up project.
- The Delta County Conservation District has no interest in developing a new non-motorized bridge across the Escanaba River. The District is however willing to assist with applications and permitting.
- The Road Commission will be transferring ownership of easements along the Escanaba River. If appropriate steps are not taken, these easements could be given to homeowners along the river which may hinder future bike path development in these areas.
- If the bike path is developed along P Road, the MDEQ and Army Corp of Engineers will need to be involved because of wetlands issues.
- The governor of Michigan has recently signed legislation (Iron Bell) creating funding availability for the development of bike paths across Michigan during the next four years.
- There are safety concerns with vehicles pulling campers when exiting Pioneer Trail Park onto the highway.

Vincent Bevins, MDOT Planner, made the following comments:

- The Escanaba River Bridge replacement project in 2017 will include 10' wide pedestrian/bike lane on the south side with barrier separation from the road.
- The road and train viaduct will be elevated 7' creating a more gradual crest with better visibility.
- The viaduct under train bridge by the Grain N' Grape already has a 6' shoulder.
- P Road is recommended for bike path development due to the low volume of traffic and scenic value.
- Third Street is the best pickup point to access Bay College.
- Mr. Bevins recommended contacting Carol Flusher of the Marquette Recreation Authority who has been instrumental in Marquette's bike path development.

Board member, Todd Maki suggested a box culvert under the Escanaba River Bridge creating safe bike access to New Page (Verso) for the many employees who ride bikes to the mill. Mr. Bevins indicated a box culvert would add more cost to the project, but he would present the idea to MDOT engineers.

Christine Williams, Bay College representative, made the following comments:

- The facility (Bay) is not just a college. The college is also host to other events such as soccer.
- Bay desires to create access to the college that is safe for both pedestrians and bicycles.
- The train viaduct by Kentucky Fried Chicken is extremely dangerous, as there is no shoulder for pedestrians/bicycles.
- Access to the college from the east side of US 41 is dangerous requiring the crossing of four lanes of traffic.
- North 30th Street provides access; however, this roadway carries a heavy volume of traffic which includes logging trucks and crosses several sets of railroad tracks.
- Several workshops will be necessary to gain public input for proposed routes.

David Anthony, Hannahville Indian Community, made the following comments:

- Creating access to Bay College is a high priority.
- Biking is very important in our culture and we need to construct bike paths that are safe, away from dangerous highways.
- The state initiative (Iron Bell) project is a source of funding that will last for only a short period of time.
- Hannahville is interested in collaborating with MDOT to provide water and sewer utilities to additional areas of Wells Township.
- Hannahville is often able to get better financing for funding of projects.

Robert Scott, C2AE representative, made the following comments:

- Governmental entities may seek to form an authority for ownership to make application and receive funds.
- The Wells Township Recreation Plan will expire in 2015.
- Sharing of easements with utilities is ideal in the creation of bike paths.

Jim Yoder, USDA Representative, made the following comments:

- The City of Escanaba, City of Gladstone, Hannahville Indian Community, and Wells Township should form an authority for the collection and payment of funds.
- Legal counsel should be sought regarding easements.

PUBLIC HEARING

None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Capital Improvement Plan. Mr. Penegor requested the board's input with regard to the development of a Capital Improvement Plan for the Recreation Department for fiscal years 2015-2020. Board member Jonathan Harris recommended installing nine (9) 10'x4' pitching slabs for the disc golf course located in Ludington Park. Mr. Penegor requested any other suggestions be submitted via e-mail by February 18, 2015.

2. Hannahville 2% Grant. Mr. Penegor advised the City will again apply for a grant to purchase a generator for the Civic Center which is designated as an emergency shelter facility. The City will also submit a second grant request for improvements to Al Ness Field to include repairs to the backstop, dugouts, press box, and a handicap accessible area.

3. Civic Center Activity Report/Upcoming Events. 5th grade boys' basketball will end this week with the final games played Friday evening.

5th grade girls' basketball will begin on Saturday, February 21st and end on March 28, 2015. Player assessments for Upper Elementary participants were held on Monday, February 9th and there will be a total of six teams participating.

A new 6th grade girl's volleyball program began in January with 25 participants. The girls will play in a tournament held in Rapid River on Thursday, February 26, 2015.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Penegor announced his retirement as Recreation Director in 2015.

MISCELLANEOUS

Mr. Penegor informed the Delta-Menominee District Health Department has received a grant in the amount of \$35,000 for building healthy communities.

Adjournment. With no further business, Randy Kleiman motioned to adjourn the meeting and Todd Maki seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:28 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Penegor
Recreation Director

Karen Moore, Chairperson

Date