

ESCANABA RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 14, 2017

The Escanaba Recreation Advisory Board met in regular session on Tuesday, November 14, 2017. Meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. at the Delta County Airport, Escanaba, MI 49829.

BOARDMEMBERS PRESENT: Chairperson Karen Moore, Boardmembers Valarie Norman, Joe Kaplan and Patty Woerpel

OTHERS PRESENT: Kim Peterson, Recreation Director; Ralph Blasier, City Council Liaison

BOARDMEMBERS ABSENT: Boardmember Barb Chenier

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

APPROVAL/CORRECTION(S) TO MINUTES - REGULAR MEETING OF OCTOBER 10, 2017

A motion was made by Boardmember Patty Woerpel, seconded by Joe Kaplan, to approve the meeting minutes of October 10, 2017. Motion was approved unanimously.

APPROVAL/ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA

None.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Appointment of a New Vice Chairperson

Recreation Director Peterson stated Vice Chairperson Kleiman's term on the board has expired effective June 1, 2017.

A motion was made by Valarie Norman, seconded by Patty Woerpel, to appoint Joe Kaplan as Vice Chairperson. Motion was approved unanimously.

Non-Motorized Pathway System

Recreation Director Peterson stated she has met with MDOT and Canadian National Railroad Representatives. The light at North Lincoln Road and Danforth Road needs to be included in the cost estimates of the non-motorized pathway. MDOT will provide construction specifications and cost estimates. There are numerous lights

that are being replaced in Michigan and this particular light is not on the list. So funds for the upgraded light will be included when seeking grant funds.

Canadian National Railroad discussions included cost estimates for railroad ties and flag personnel for safety at the two crossings of tracks on Sheridan Road. These cost estimates will also be included in the funds being sought through grants. Since grant money will be used, the material is considered under American Buy and the cost increases significantly. Railroad personnel will be doing the work on the tracks and reimbursed through grant funds. There is currently an agreement in place for both sets of tracks with the City of Escanaba and since the non-motorized pathway will be within 15' of the current agreement, the same agreement will stay in place and a new one will not be created nor needed.

Received \$8,500 from Hannahville 2% grant money for the non-motorized pathway. There are three more cycles that funds can be applied for prior to the potential project starting.

West Side Ski Park Discussion

Recreation Director Peterson stated the west side ski park area has over 5,000 acres with approximately 3,300 acres available for potential use. Discussions have taken place over the years on sludge trails, unsecured access to the area, dumping of garbage, shooting range, creating additional trails, hunting and hunting blinds, etc.

Mike Segorski of Escanaba read a statement into the record. See below:

Hello, my name is Michael Segorski. I've written my comments for tonight's meeting in an attempt to stay on message. Please indulge me as I meander through them.

I've had the privilege of speaking in past board meetings, promoting the development and use of the area most commonly known as the North 30th Ski Trails, or West Side Park and Trails. As a volunteer I'm helping in the maintenance of this area and as such I'm of course, there a lot. While I'm busy out there, I'm frequently approached by residents, who are expressing their worry over conditions there. The odor, the dark, blackish color to the trees, bushes and trails, also the intense shooting in the ski hill area. And I'm not talking about the Great Lakes Sportsman Club. Truthfully, I'm struck speechless. However I attempt to put on a happy face while trying to explain that what they are seeing or hearing isn't really a concern and to convince them that these intrusions on their outings will improve soon. Well, it isn't and they aren't !

Which is why I'm here again, to promote the "designated" use of the area as recreational. Not, spraying sewage or shooting of guns. Let me ask you. What would happen if the waste water people were to send their trucks to Ludington Park and spray the toxic sewage into the enclosure of Harbor Hideout? Think about that for a moment. One more thought for you to consider, how about the concentrated shooting being held by the beach house during swim lessons? You all might think that I'm being a sensationalist or just ludicrous. So, let me challenge each of you to join me for a walk on a nice summer or fall afternoon and we will hike those beautiful wooded trails. It's quite likely that one or both of those, what ifs, will become a reality to you. And now that I've warned you of the possibilities I'd be willing to wager that you'd be shocked, scared and most likely repulsed. Same as those folks who've complained to me.

In a 1991 Department of Natural Resources grant for properties in the Walch Estate, project number 90-365 and in the 10/16/2013 Public Outdoor Recreation Grant, Post-Completion Self-Certification Report. Project Number TF90-365. On page 2 of this self-reporting document in the section headed, Site Quality, Question #2 **Are the facilities and the site being properly maintained?** Box "Yes" is checked. Question #3; **Are there any features near the site which would detract from the use and enjoyment of the site or would pose a health or safety problem?** Box "NO" is checked in response to that declaration I will submit two immediate health or safety problems.

First; The spraying of sewage on the site. Which renders the area contaminated and toxic for 30 days per application. Second; The locating of a police shooting range, adjacent and backing up to loop #2. Both of these conditions have caused some citizens to avoid using these trails. Under the General section of the Self-Certification Declaration, in the question, **What are the hours or availability of the site?** And the written declaration is. "Available all year and all day weather permitting."

It's my contention that those DNR funds were meant to enhance the approximately 7.5 miles of trails and the contiguous 5,500 acres of woodlands, not just the 2600 feet pertaining to crossing the Walch acreage.

As a resident of Escanaba and a city volunteer who's concerned for his own personal safety and the safety of others, I'm asking that you evaluate the activities outlined above and return the park to its intended use. Please support the West Side Park and support the land use designation at the heart of that grant.

Respectfully, Mike Segorski

Discussions were held on the location of the sludge dumping and hunting with discharging of weapons.

A motion was made by Patty Woerpel, seconded by Valarie Norman, to recommend administration look at how the parcels of property were obtained for the ski hill area and if there were restrictions for recreational use only on the deeds or agreements. Also, to have administration review the current sludge dumping trail to determine cost effectiveness of moving the trail, locating another area to dump, etc. Motion was approved unanimously.

A motion was made by Valarie Norman, seconded by Patty Woerpel, to have administration, along with the Escanaba Public Safety Department, determine the City's Ordinance for hunting or discharging of weapons within City limits, especially the ski hill area. Motion was approved unanimously.

Dog Park Location Discussion

Two potential sites for a dog park were looked at that is on property owned and operated by the Delta County Airport and Delta County. More discussions and a selection of a site will be at upcoming meetings.

Recreation Director Kim Peterson read into the record and e-mail by Brooke Tuyls. See below:

Good Morning,

I love so much that talks of a dog park is in the works. I have lived in Wisconsin for about 11 years and there was always so many dog parks. One thing that I loved is when they had it separated for little dogs. For example the dog park in Kenosha, WI had two huge fenced in areas that were connected, one side there was a size limit and the dogs had to be under a certain size, and the other size allowed all sizes, big and small. The size that allowed all dogs was double in size. I liked this because I have two dogs one is big and one is small, but when I would take my small dog in with all the big dogs she would get very scared as they were so much bigger than her. So it was nice that I had a place to take her with other dogs like her, but it also gave me the option to take her in the big dog area if I had too, due to my other dog. They had benches and picnic tables to sit on, but not a ton of stuff other than trees and some normal scenery stuff. Some dog parks I have been to have some agility setups for dogs, which I thought was also pretty neat. I am very enthusiastic about this and would love to help in any way possible.

Thank you,
Brooke

Sandy Dagenais from Escanaba also contacted the Recreation Department and is in favor of a dog park and will offer her help when needed.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

None

NEW BUSINESS

None

MISCELLANEOUS

None

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kim Peterson
Recreation Director

Karen Moore, Chairperson

Date