



**CLERK**

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**CONTROLLER/ADMINISTRATOR**

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## MANISTEE COUNTY RECREATION COMMISSION

Monday, June 5, 2023  
6:15 P.M.

Manistee County Board of Commissioner's Room  
and via Zoom

### MINUTES

Members Present: Wayne Beldo, Chair; Margaret Batzer, Vice Chair; Gary Schwaiger, Secretary; Linda Cudney; Devin Wegner; Eleanor DeYoung; Robert Schulke; Bob DeYoung; Jeff Lawrence;

Members Absent: Bryan Dunlop;

Others Present: Kristyn Malkowski, Recording Secretary; Katie Mehl, Manistee County Zoning Administrator/Planner I; Mike Szokola, Manistee County Planning Director

Mr. Beldo called the meeting to order at 6:15 PM, roll call was taken.

Approval of the June 5, 2023, meeting agenda.

**There was a motion by Ms. DeYoung, supported by Mr. Lawrence, to approve the June 5, 2023, meeting agenda. All in favor, motion carried.**

Approval of the May 1, 2023, meeting minutes.

**There was a motion by Mr. Schulke, supported by Ms. Batzer to approve the May 1, 2023, meeting minutes. All in favor, motion carried.**

Public Comment: No public present.

Trail Champions: No update at the time.

Staff Reports: Mr. Szokola did not have an update besides the items under "Old Business".

Friends of Smart Trails Report: Ms. Cudney referenced the May 8, 2023, Friends of SMARTrails meeting minutes and the June 12, 2023, meeting agenda (Appendix A). At the next Friends of SMARTrails they will be discussing fundraising ideas to reach a possible goal of \$15,000 towards costs of the preliminary engineering studies for the Thompsonville to Kaleva Trail. There is hopeful

collaboration with the MDNR and the county grant writer. Ms. Batzer stated the Recreation Commission will apply for grants on behalf of the Friends of SMARTrails group. Mr. Szokola agreed and wanted to remind the commission to base their projects/plans around the Recreation Plan.

Mr. Beldo requested that members of the commission should consider volunteering at the Manistee County Summer Festivals. Ms. Cudney will disburse a summer festival calendar for the commission to review the dates (Appendix B).

Ms. Cudney asked the commission if they were aware of the state regulations or how they enforce the rules for the use of E-Bikes. Mr. Schwaiger reminded the commission that he provided reference material at the October 4, 2022, recreation Commission meeting. His material came from [www.michigan.gov/dnr/things-to-do/hike-and-bike/ebikes](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/things-to-do/hike-and-bike/ebikes).

The commission had questions/concerns regarding the allowed uses on the Chief to Kaleva trail. Attention was brought to equestrian and motorized use (including E-Bikes). Mr. Szokola would like the commission to research what uses are allowed within the EDA grant. Once the Snowbirds complete their improvements, the maintenance will be turned over to the state and the enforcement will be turned over to the MDNR.

Old Business:

Minger Grant Update: Mr. Szokola stated that the contract between the Manistee County Planning Department and the City of Manistee was not renewed, leaving more time in the office to staff the recreation manager position. The position will not be filled until September so the commission will have to apply for funds at a later date. Mr. Szokola suggested to the commission that the Minger Grant funds can go towards county recreation projects that are based around the already established Recreation Plan.

Railroad Relocation Update: The Manistee County Grant writer was able to secure a second grant in the amount of \$426,000. The funds will be used to move the Railroad Relocation project forward. Mr. Szokola will keep the commission updated with future movements.

Parks & Recreation Manager Update: Ms. Mehl will now be the Parks & Recreation Manager, putting a hold on asking to fund the position. 50% of her time will be to help the Recreation Commission.

County ORV Map: No update at this time.

Dam Update: There was discussion at the last dam meeting regarding the economic repercussions that Manistee County felt would be possible if the dams were removed. Mr. Szokola presented the ideas and the letter in opposition to the removal and Tippy and Hodenpyl Dam. Ms. Batzer felt that Manistee County's opposition should be known on the state and federal levels.

**There was a motion by Ms. Batzer and supported Mr. Lawrence, to send the opposition letter of the removal of the Tippy and Hodenpyl Dams, to the following: Governor, State Representatives, State Senate, US Representatives, US Senate; Department of Energy; the National Department of Interior; Chamber of Commerce; and the E.P.A Director.**

**All in favor, motion carried.**

New Business: Spark Grant: Ms. Mehl informed the committee that the deadline for the second round of the SPARKS grant is due June 26, 2023. The Planning Commission will not apply for the second round but hopes to apply for round three. Ms. Mehl suggested that the commission consider projects that are based around any existing infrastructure on land that is already owned by local municipalities. Ms. Mehl referenced the Spark Scoring Guidance and will provide information to the commission (Appendix C). Dates for the third round have not been released.

Oak Hill Park Revitalization - Letter of Support: Mr. Szokola is requesting a motion to approve a letter of support for the Oak Hill Park Revitalization project. The Spark grant deadline is June 26<sup>th</sup>.

**There was a motion by Ms. Batzer, supported by Ms. Wagner, to send a letter of support to the Oak Hill Park Revitalization project. All in favor, motion carried.**

Spirit of the Woods – Letter of Support: Ms. Wegner would like to create a letter of support for the new infrastructure at the Spirit of the Woods in Dickson Township.

**There was a motion by Ms. Batzer and supported by Mr. Schulke, to create a letter of support for the new infrastructure at the Spirit of the Woods in Dickson Township. All in favor, motion carried.**

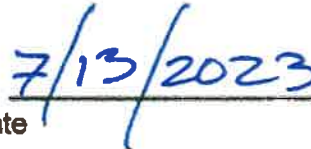
Other Items from Committee Members: Mr. Szokola wanted the commission to be aware of other trail funding opportunities (Appendix D).

Mr. Beldo adjourned the meeting at 7:12 PM. Next meeting will be on July 11, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Gary Schwaiger, Recreation Commission

Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date