

# MANISTEE COUNTY RECREATION COMMISSION

Draft

November 7, 2024  
6:15 P.M.

Manistee County Planning Department Conference Room  
and via Zoom

## MINUTES

Members Present: Wayne Beldo, Chair; Margaret Batzer, Vice Chair; Gary Schwaiger, Secretary; Linda Cudney (Via Zoom); Eleanor DeYoung; Robert Schulke; Devin Wegner

Members Absent: Tom Williams; Jeff Lawrence

Others Present: David Jarvi, Manistee County Planner; Sally Trisch, Dickson Township; Claire Richards; SMARTrails (Via Zoom); Sara Herberger, Manistee County Community Foundation

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

### **Approval of the November 4, 2024, meeting agenda.**

Mr. Jarvi asked to add the Benzie - Manistee Snowbirds Update to the Agenda.

**There was a motion by Ms. Batzer, supported by Ms. Wegner to approve the November 4, 2024, meeting agenda. All in Favor, motion carried.**

### **Approval of the October 7, 2024, meeting minutes.**

Ms. Batzer asked to amend minutes, add Mike Szokola's organization he is speaking on behalf of, which would be the Chamber of Commerce Leadership Group.

Mr. Jarvi noticed that the lifejacket grant deadline read "April 2024" and would correct it to April 2025.

**There was a motion by Mr. Schwaiger, supported by Ms. Batzer to approve the October 7, 2024, meeting minutes as amended. All In Favor, motion Carried.**

**Public Comment:** No Public Comment.

Friends of SMARTrails Update: Ms. Cudney gave an update on behalf of the Friends of SMARTrails.

- At the last meeting, Rob Carson gave an EDA update. The DNR is currently investigating two easements that were not previously identified. Hopefully construction will start in the spring.
- SMARTrails attended the Snowbirds informational meeting on 10/10/24. Linda said it was a very good meeting.
- SMARTrails is currently compiling information for their flip chart.
- Claire outlined what she would like to do with SMARTrails social media and website. The group is going to have a bigger presence on social media.

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- Still trying to remedy problems with website domain.
- SMARTrails has created an updated list of members phone numbers and emails.

Mr. Jarvi proceeded with giving an update on behalf of the Planning Department.

- Mr. Jarvi informed the Recreation Commission that funding was not approved for the MCCF grant applied for in September for the Kaleva Trailhead and Bathroom Facility. Planning department staff will keep working to secure grants for the Trailhead and Bathroom Facility.
- Mr. Jarvi states that staff hopes to get some more estimates in the future that will have a lower cost for construction of the facility.
- Timeline for completion of the facility is pushed back.
- Mr. Jarvi hope we can reapply in Spring 2025.

Ms. Herberger from MCCF relayed the organizations thoughts on grant funding decision for facility.

- Funding is more of a “Not yet” then a “no.”
- MCCFs board was unable to see all the parts of the project, as the engineer for the project is still working on preliminary engineering and design. Was not a finished project.
- There were questions about the budget. The board did not know what the total project cost will be. With a stated cost of \$700,000 but hopes that it could be lowered to around \$500,000. Missing match.
- There was a willingness by the board to reconsider the application, when the additional information desired is obtained. The board is willing to reconsider outside of the grant cycle.

Discussion ensued about cost of Trailhead and Bathroom Facility and need to secure more bids for the facility at lower costs.

- Mr. Jarvi stated that the engineering firm has some more work to complete on their end before the project can be released for bids, but it is in the works.
- Ms. Batzer asked if we could release plans for bids that include dimensions and needs of site.
- Ms. Batzer asked Mr. Jarvi to check in with other organizations who have done trail projects to get recommendations on how to keep costs down.
- Discussion about community support and vision for the trailhead project.
- Mr. Jarvi let the commission know that Scott Slavin from the MDNR will attend the December meeting either via zoom or in person.
- Mr. Jarvi let the commission know that he is still working on the Economic Development Brochure.

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## Old Business:

Parking/Street Design Document:

Edits commission members had for the document were discussed.

- Ms. Batzer shared a helpful article about parking reduction in Jacksonville and how it helps businesses.
- Pre-automobile towns- Rephrase section to make it more relatable.
- Mr. Jarvi detailed Ms. Herberger's proposed edits to the parking document. Focus on Hart-Montague trail and base statistics on smaller towns.
- Ms. Batzer talked about downtown Buelah, great for bikers, businesses do well.
- Mr. Jarvi will get brochure with updated edits to commission for next month.
- Add graphics, less text.

## New Business:

- Discussion ensued about what to do about absent recreation commissioner.

**Other Items Before the Board:** None.

Mr. Beldo requested a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:42 P.M.

**There was a motion by Mr. Schwaiger, supported by Mr. Schulke, to adjourn the meeting.  
All in favor, motion carried.**

Next meeting will be on December 2, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

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Gary Schwaiger, Recreation Commission

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Date