

MINUTES

NATURAL RESOURCE COMMISSION

Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee

June 8, 2017

Michigan Technological University
Memorial Union Building Ballroom
1400 Townsend Drive
Houghton, MI 49931

PRESENT FOR THE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

Commissioner Louise Klarr, Chair
Commissioner Christine Crumbaugh, Co-Chair

PRESENT FOR THE MSPAC

Mike McDonald
Jim Bradley
Julie Clark
Jim Hendricks
Tom Bailey
Mary Pitcher
Bob Hoffmeyer

ABSENT

Ann Conklin
Mike Foote
Jefferson Gray
Chris Graham
Chris Tracy

OTHERS PRESENT

DNR Management and Staff
Ron Olson
Jacklin Blodgett
Vicki Anthes
Anna Sylvester

MICHIGAN STATES PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MSPAC)

OPENING COMMENTS

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. by **Commissioner Louise Klarr**. Commissioner Klarr welcomed everyone and made introductions.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes were approved for the April 13, 2017 meeting. Commissioner Klarr motioned for approval of the minutes with **Mike McDonald** and **Christine Crumbaugh** seconding that motion. Motion to accept minutes passed unanimously.

INFORMATIONAL

The next committee workshop is scheduled for July 19, 2017, from 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT

James L. De Clerck, spoke about McLain SP and stated the DNR needs to make sure we are considering best and worst case scenario's when looking at investing in the park as it may be falling into the water in a few years.

Chauncy Moran, spoke about various ORV issues – damages requested in grants, then when grant received, damages to late by the time we can fix. Consider delegating authority to policies already in place and utilize the system.

Dick Zook, spoke about what all would be sacrificing if we don't increase rates to support state parks, these risk factors should be noted.

Warren Suchovsky, spoke about the sanitation of recreation vehicles and equipment. Suggesting non-resident travelers should be required to sanitize as they may be carrying plants/seeds and other invasive species.

GENERAL UPDATES

Finance Subcommittee

Camping Fees/Lodging/Reservation Modifications: **Jacklin Blodgett** reviewed a proposal for the revision of camping and lodging fees. There will also be modifications to the fees for reservations that are modified or cancelled. Approximately 50% of the Parks and Recreation revenue is derived from camping fees. The new fees would be based on occupancy rates, with higher occupancy campgrounds seeing the larger increases. Rustic campgrounds, state forest campgrounds, and equestrian campgrounds would also see increases.

Other forms of lodging such as cabins, tepees and yurts would see fee increases as well. These additional fees would generate up to approximately \$2.2 million.

The proposal also looks to increase fees/penalties for campers who cancel or modify their reservation thus providing more opportunities for all campers. This action will help to discourage people from booking multiple camping dates and then using only one of those dates, thus cancelling all the other dates at the last minute.

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF: Committee member **Mary Pitcher** asked for a motion of support for approval of Resolution No. 05-2017-06. The motion was seconded by **Christine Crumbaugh**. The vote carried unanimously.

PA 288 Update

Ron Olson updated the committee on the process for implementing Public Act 288. This act requires the DNR to map state forest roads and mark the roads that are closed. This legislation requires the roads in northern Lower Michigan to be mapped by the end of 2017. **Anna Sylvester** provided some additional input on this topic. Committee members shared their views on unfunded mandates, signage, other trail users such as equestrians, and questioned if this will be an enforcement problem. Public meetings are scheduled to be held to gather input on the proposal.

Trails Update

Ron Olson shared the emerging issue of E-bikes; the department is currently reviewing policies, other park models, and ADA accommodation requirements in relation to this new recreation trend. E-bikes are an electric assist bike with motors. Concerns about motorized bikes on mountain bike trails, rail trails etc. are just some of the issues. We are looking for an effective, balanced approach that makes sense.

Ron Olson briefly outlined the non-motorized trail funding. Describing it as “bucket” funding, ORV and snowmobile pay a fee, non-motorized does not. Currently talking with other groups about a voluntary fee model where money would go into the appropriate fund for maintenance and operations for non-motorized trails.

ACTION ITEMS

PRD Strategic Plan Update

Vicki McGhee presented an update to the committee on the status of the Parks and Recreation Division five-year strategic plan. The draft plan was released in May for public comment; with review done by multiple communities and stakeholders. Revisions were made to the plan based on feedback from these sessions. The final plan will be presented to the Resource Bureau in July 2017 and then finalized.

This plan is intended to guide the Parks and Recreation Division through 2022. After the presentation and discussion it was agreed that the committee would support the plan.

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF: Committee member **Tom Baily** asked for a motion of support for approval of Resolution No. 05-2017-07. The motion was seconded by **Julie Clark**. The vote carried unanimously.

OTHER

Ron Olson departed from the agenda to share the success of the Grand Prix auto race on Belle Isle. The Grand Prixmiere event raised \$700,000 to assist the Belle Isle Conservancy with their mission at the park.

Ron Olson also noted that there is a proposal to change the name of the Bay City Recreation Area to Bay City State Park. The land area will continue to be managed as it has been in the past. The community is eager to have it renamed as a state park. More information regarding this will be forthcoming at a future meeting.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.