

Buildings, Lands & Infrastructure Committee

Ed Boettcher

Chuck Johnson, Chairman

Bryan Smith

Minutes March 1, 2016

Members present: Chuck Johnson, Bryan Smith

Members absent: Ed Boettcher

Others present: Laura Stanek, Janet Koch, and Dean Crandall. Jim Peters, Mike Meriwether, Mark Stone, and David Schulz attended a portion of the meeting.

1. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chairman Chuck Johnson.

2. Public Comment

Dean Crandall asked about the recent decision by the Board of Commissioners to dissolve the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. Laurie Stanek said the Board hadn't had direction in a number of years.

3. Building Department Update

Mark Haynes, Building Official, had included a report in the agenda packets. He noted that permits were up in January over the previous year. Mr. Haynes said he was planning to purchase two trucks for the Department.

4. Antrim Conservation District (ACD) Discussion

Jim Peters, board member of the ACD, distributed a document that listed a number of discussion points (**attached pgs. 6-7**). One of the points was a request to the Board of Commissioners to add a millage request of 0.10 mills to the August ballot. Mr. Peters said a number of other counties have millages to fund their ACDs and that millage support would allow the ACD to hire an executive director. The ACD had executive directors in the past, but Mr. Peters felt one of the reasons none had stayed for long was the wages ACD could afford to offer.

Mr. Johnson asked how the ACD would promote the millage to the voters. Mr. Peters said they were working on a plan. He added that a millage would not replace the \$157,000 that the County currently appropriates to the ACD.

5. Soil Erosion Control (SEC) Update

Heidi Shaffer, Soil Erosion Control Officer, had submitted a report with the agenda packets. She introduced Bethany Springsdorf, AmeriCorps Watershed Protection Technician, who is assisting the ACD. Ms. Springsdorf will be the invasive species coordinator. Janet Koch, Associate Planner, said the meeting with County representatives and civil counsel to discuss what is and is not permissible regarding enforcement of the storm water portion of the ordinance was scheduled for March 9. The results of that meeting should be available for the next Committee meeting.

6. Forestry Update

Hawk Lake Bid Notice

Mike Meriwether, County Forester, said much of the timber in the planned cut near Hawk Lake was red pine and that a portion of the property would be clear cut and replanted.

Motion by Bryan Smith, seconded by Chuck Johnson, to approve the bid process for a timber sale on the County-owned Hawk Lake property in the east part of Mancelona Township, with the bids to be opened at the April 5, 2016 BLI Committee meeting.

Motion carried – unanimous.

Prince Easement Purchase

Mr. Meriwether distributed a document with discussion points (**attached pg. 8**) regarding the purchase of an easement to access the property gifted to the County by the Prince family. The easement would be for forestry purposes only; it would not be a public easement.

Motion by Chuck Johnson, seconded by Bryan Smith, to recommend the Finance Committee approve a not-to-exceed amount of \$4,000.00 for the purchase of a permanent forestry easement. Motion carried – unanimous.

Grass River Natural Area (GRNA) Cleanup

Mr. Meriwether told the Committee that he would like to work with the GRNA Board regarding the clearing of trees at GRNA. The Committee felt that was an appropriate direction.

Antrim Conservation District (ACD) Contract Discussion

There are three contracts between the County and the ACD; Forest & Wildlife Management, Household Hazardous Waste Program, and Soil Erosion (currently expired). Mr. Meriwether proposed combining the contracts, adding that he felt he had the best background to put together a proposed document. The Committee and Ms. Stanek said the Board of Commissioners and the ACD Board should have a joint discussion regarding the contracts.

After discussion, it was decided to add an item to the March Board of Commissioner's meeting agenda regarding scheduling a special Board meeting with the ACD Board to discuss the contracts.

Glacial Hills – Hazardous Trees

Mr. Meriwether said there were a number of hazardous trees on the County-owned Glacial Hills property.

Motion by Bryan Smith, seconded by Chuck Johnson, to approve that the County Forester move ahead with the removal of hazardous trees on the County's Glacial Hills property in a manner that keeps in compliance with the Forestry Timber Bid Policy.

Motion carried – unanimous.

7. Parks Update

Eileen Wallick, Parks Manager, asked the Committee to reconsider the campground discount, noting that the previous practice didn't require residents to stay in the campground six days in a row to receive the one day off; it was six days during a calendar year.

Motion by Chuck Johnson, seconded by Bryan Smith, to recommend the Board of Commissioners rescind all previous action regarding the provision of an "Antrim County resident discount" when camping at Barnes Park and approve a Barnes Park camping fee discount of \$14.00 for Antrim County residents after an Antrim County resident has stayed at the campground 6 days in a calendar year, with the discount to be used in that same calendar year. Motion carried – unanimous.

8. Operator of Dams Update

Mark Stone, Operator of Dams, did not appear in front of the Committee.

9. Maintenance Update

1905 Courthouse Flooding

In the agenda packets, Pete Garwood, County Administrator, had included an email sent to the Courthouse staff regarding the actions taken after the flooding that had occurred after the power outage of February 18. Dave Vitale, Maintenance Director, said Northern Emergency Services had performed the cleanup at the Courthouse. The Committee and Mr. Vitale discussed possibilities regarding the prevention of future similar situations.

Mr. Vitale told the Committee that an emergency replacement of one of two return vent control motors at the 1905 Courthouse had been necessary. The replacement cost was approximately \$1,600 and had been done by Temperature Control. The other motor had been replaced approximately 18 months previously.

10. GRNA Update

Haley Breniser, Executive Director of GRNA, updated the Committee on a number of items, including that she'd applied for a United Parcel Service Foundation grant of \$23,000 to conduct a baseline assessment inventory for GRNA. An inventory of this sort could assist with getting other grants. Other upcoming projects are a small mammal inventory, an erosion evaluation, especially at road-stream crossings, and the repair of the old cabin roof. In addition, a summer camp is being planned for 2016. In addition, GRNA will be hiring a new outreach/volunteer coordinator.

Ms. Breniser said she had discussed the removal of the dock and boardwalk shown on the survey included in the agenda packets for the Committee's February meeting. She reported it was the GRNA Board's opinion that both the dock and boardwalk should be removed.

James Dake, GRNA Education Director, will be creating a Field Guide to GRNA. When completed, the guide could be sold to visitors.

Ms. Breniser said she will be working with the County Forester regarding the cleanup of trees at GRNA and that any work done will stay within GRNA's management plan. She also told the Committee that when the boardwalk evaluation is available, it will be uploaded to the GRNA website. The evaluation is being performed by Gosling Czubak.

Ms. Breniser said she'd been approached by the Michigan Parks & Recreation Association regarding a \$34,000 available grant to improve park experiences. \$10,000 is intended for staffing and the remaining amount could be used for items such as signage. This is a pilot program for the association, which had contacted GRNA because they'd heard good reports about the organization.

11. Art Rapids Events

Ms. Koch said 5 sculptures will be moved out of the Elk Rapids Day Park in 2016. She added that she and Mr. Garwood had approved 9 new sculptures in 8 locations after recently meeting with Art Rapids! representatives. After the 2016 sculptures are installed, there will be 29 sculptures in the Park; 30 sculptures are the maximum. Art Rapids! had said that 2 artists have received commissions due to having pieces in the Park and that several have had invitations to display in galleries.

Ms. Koch said part of the 2016 Art Camp's programming included the creation of small sculptures and their temporary placement on the Park grounds.

Motion by Bryan Smith, seconded by Chuck Johnson, to recommend that the Board of Commissioners allow Art Rapids! to schedule the following events at the Elk Rapids Day Park:

- **Art Beat, June 4, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.**
- **Art Camp, July 11-14, 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.**
- **Concert in the Park, evening of July 28**

Motion carried – unanimous.

12. Recycling

The Committee discussed the possibility of putting a millage on the August ballot.

Motion by Bryan Smith, seconded by Chuck Johnson, to recommend the Board of Commissioners approve ballot language for the placement of a millage in the amount of 0.25 mills to fund the current Recycling Program to be submitted to the qualified electors of the County on the August 2, 2016 ballot. Motion carried – unanimous.

After discussion about a Request for Proposal for County-wide recycling, it was decided to add it as an agenda item for the next Finance Committee meeting.

Ms. Koch was directed to review the contract with American Waste regarding a financial audit and will have that information in time for the Finance Committee meeting. Deb Haydell, County Accountant, said it was possible that an audit had already been done for American Waste.

13. Utility Cost Audit

Motion by Chuck Johnson, seconded by Bryan Smith, to approve the concept of entering into an agreement with Tenurgy, LLC to conduct an audit and provide analysis that can be used to activate a cost savings on utility costs. Motion carried – unanimous.

14. Village of Bellaire Easement

Ms. Koch said representatives from the Village of Bellaire had recently met with Pete Garwood, County Administrator, regarding the creation of a utility easement agreement between the Village and the County. The agreement would provide Village access to a sanitary sewer line in order to install a metering device.

David Schulz, Director of Administrative Services for Meadow Brook Medical Care Facility (MCF), said the sanitary sewer line across the County's property was a service line for Meadow Brook and Meadow View Apartments. The service line for the County's Animal Shelter also ties into that line. Mr. Schulz told the Committee that the sewer line and the accompanying equipment from Manhole 68 at Holiday Acres back to the facility buildings is maintained and depreciated by MCF.

The Committee asked for more information about the project before making a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Johnson requested that the Administration Department talk to civil counsel about the issues involved, particularly responsibilities if repairs are needed. A question was raised regarding the Village placing the meter at their existing manhole 68.

15. Various Matters

Antrim Creek Natural Area (ACNA)

Ms. Koch said she will be assembling a Request for Proposal for the improvements at the ACNA boat launch. She hopes to have the bid results at the next Committee meeting.

Glacial Hills

Ms. Koch said she'd received an email from the Glacial Hills Recreation Board regarding a workshop on March 7 to discuss a sustainable direction for the management of the Glacial Hills trail system. She said she would be attending the workshop.

Dean Crandall, President of the Glacial Hills Recreation Board, said they had negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding with the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy. The agreement states that the Recreation Board will maintain the trail and that the Conservancy will provide signage and some volunteer assistance. Mr. Crandall added that the overall goal is to establish a long-term endowment fund that would be similar to the endowment for ACNA. The plan is to achieve that goal in 4-6 years. In the interim, the Recreation Board is raising funds for trail maintenance in a number of ways.

16. Public Comment

None.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:53 a.m.

BLI Committee Meeting

March 1, 2016

Antrim Conservation District

- 1) The Antrim Conservation District was established in 1944 as part of a state mandated program. With 71 years of history in Antrim County we should respect all the past efforts of those involved. From the 4H programs and county fair to what we face now, invasive species impacting our forest, lakes and land, erosion and run-off concerns.
- 2) One challenge that always seems to show up is that state mandated programs which always seem to start by being funded by the state ends up not being funded by the state. When this happens the financial burden falls back on the local community to keep it going. Well, that time is here for the Antrim Conservation District.
- 3) No longer receiving state funds the ACD is at a crossroads of existence. We receive significant funding from the county for a forester, soil erosion officer and funds for general operations. Without these funds the ACD would not exist. We, the district are fortunate to have this support.
- 4) Other funding sources come primarily from grants and activities generated through the efforts of the ACD. Other fund raising activities include the Petosky Stone Festival, Annual Tree Sale and publication of the Antrim County Platt Book.

- 5) The ACD has operated the last several years without enough funds to carry us through the year. To balance this shortfall we end up withdrawing funds out of the forest savings account. The use of this account to fund the ACD is unfortunate but required.
- 6) We have two choices, continue to exist with minimal funding until the ACD can no longer carry on OR develop a plan of growth and sustainability. We, the ACD board of directors are pursuing the path of growth and sustainability.
- 7) To add to the value of what the ACD can deliver we need to secure enough funding to carry us forward. With that in mind we will be seeking approval from Antrim County BOC to add a millage request to the August ballot. The millage request will be +/- 0.10 mills for four years.
- 8) The additional funds will allow us to grow the district capabilities to better serve the people of Antrim County. The ACD serves as a bipartisan unit of local government.

Thank You!

The Antrim Conservation District Board of Directors

Kevin Bargy

RJ Shook

James Peters

Mary Schoenherr

John Marker

PRINCE EASEMENT DISCUSSION

Total Easement Distance = 679.86 feet

Proposed width = 16 feet

Equal to .2497 acres

Warren Family is asking \$ 6,000.00 for an easement that allows for forest management only. This is equal to \$ 8.82 / foot.

As a Comparison – Oil and Gas easement range in value from \$ 3.00 - \$10.00 per foot.

Antrim County charges an average of \$6.35 per foot for oil and gas easement across county owned land. (\$ 100.00 per rod).

Summary –

I believe the Warren family should be paid a fair price for an easement across their property.

An asking price of \$ 6,000.00 is considered high for an easement that does not allow public ingress and egress.

We paid for the survey cost \$ 950.00

The maximum price I would recommend for this easement is \$ 5.00 per foot = to \$ 3,399.30.

I intend to recapture the survey cost and the cost of the easement through an timber harvest as soon as access issues are cleared up.