

# Parks and Lands Committee

*Ed Boettcher*

***Bernie Blackmore,***  
***Chairman***

*Gene Dawson*

## MINUTES

February 4, 2014

Members Present: Bernard Blackmore, Eugene Dawson

Members Absent: Ed Boettcher

Staff Present: James Dake, Haley Breniser, Eileen Wallick, Jim Rossiter, Janet Koch, Mike Crawford, Dean Crandall and Mike Meriwether

### **1. Meeting called to order at 1:00 p.m by Bernie Blackmore.**

### **2. Public Comment**

None.

### **3. Grass River Natural Area (GRNA) Update**

Haley Breniser, GRNA Director, introduced James Dake, GRNA's new Educational Director. Mr. Dake replaces Melynda Bagley, who retired at the end of 2013. Ms. Breniser added that GRNA will be hiring a part time office manager whose hours will be 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Ms. Breniser asked the Committee for permission to sell fieldstones found on the GRNA property for a fundraising effort. The stones were found near Alden Highway and will be sold as "tribute stones."

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernard Blackmore, to allow the GRNA to use the piled fieldstones found near Alden Highway for a GRNA fundraiser.**

**Motion carried – unanimous.**

### **4. Forestry/Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Update**

Mike Meriwether, County Forester, submitted a forestry report. **(See attachment pg 1.)** Mr. Meriwether also submitted a 2014 Annual Plan of Work for the Antrim County Forestry Program. **(See attachment pg 2-4.)** He said if the committee would like to see anything else done to let him know.

Mr. Meriwether also said he was updating the Parks and Recreation Sites section of the Antrim County website. He was working on the Forest Area page.

### **5. Cedar River Natural Area Trail Update**

Mr. Meriwether said the Cedar River trail needs work. He would like to replace the 4 or 5 existing bridges with box culverts. One of the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grants through the DNR could be suitable for the work.

Adding to the Barnes Park trail system, Mr. Meriwether said, is also a potential grant target. He said the Barnes Park trails get more use than all the other Antrim County trails combined.

Ms. Berniser noted that GRNA is considering a DNR grant application for improving their boardwalks.

**The Committee would like the Board of Commissioner's to discuss potential DNR grant applications at the next Board meeting.**

Janet Koch, Associate Planner, asked Mr. Meriwether for details regarding a recently awarded DEQ permit for the Cedar River trails. He said it was for trail maintenance.

#### **6. Parks and Rec Advisory Board Recommendations**

##### **Bike Trail**

Mr. Meriwether and Gene Dawson told the committee about a proposed bike trail connecting the Traverse Area Recreation and Transportation Trail system to the Charlevoix trail. Much of the trail through Antrim County will be inside the US 31 right-of-way.

##### **Antrim Creek Natural Area Boat Launch**

Mr. Meriwether said there might be grant monies available for an Antrim Creek Natural Area boat launch. He said will be do some research, including contacting the Army Corps of Engineers and Christie Bayus, the region's Grant Coordinator for the DNR.

#### **7. White Birch Lane Road Maintenance**

Ms. Koch reported on the request for payment of a portion of the White Birch Lane road maintenance costs. She said it's her understanding that the County has agreed to pay a prorated portion of the costs since White Birch Lane is a private road and the County's Willow Day Park is on White Birch Lane. Until recently, Willow Day Park was a part of GRNA and the County was not responsible for it.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, to approve the payment of \$300 for maintenance of White Birch Lane. Motion carried – unanimous.**

#### **8. Willow Day Park Commercial Use**

Jim Rossiter, Civil Counsel to Antrim County, told the Committee that requiring a permit for the commercial use of the Willow Day Park public access site would necessitate that permits for any commercial use of a public access site be required. He said that if overuse of the site becomes a problem, that the issue can be readdressed at a later time.

**The committee took no action on the issue.**

#### **9. Parks Update**

Eileen Wallick, Parks Manager, asked the Committee for permission to go ahead with placing a public notice for retiling showers at Barnes Park.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, to proceed with the Barnes Park bathroom repairs. Motion carried – unanimous.**

#### **10. Elk Rapids Day Park Pavilion Update**

Ms. Koch told the Committee that the construction contract had been signed by all parties. The contractor, Eckler Building Solutions, has ordered the materials. Some of the materials will take a number of weeks to be delivered. Due to the material delivery dates and the extreme weather conditions, construction is likely to begin in March.

## **11. Timber Cut Bid Opening**

Chairman Blackmore opened the single bid submitted in response to the public notices placed in the *Antrim Review* and the *Elk Rapids News* on January 23rd and 30th. (See attachment pg 5.) The notice was seeking a lump sum bid for a timber cut on a 100 acre parcel near Ritt Road.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, to recommend that the Board of Commissioner's accept the bid of \$5,000.00 from Eklund Forestry.**

**Motion carried – unanimous.**

## **12. Various Matters**

### Glacial Hills Update

Dean Crandall, Forest Home Township Trustee, told the Committee that the group loosely titled as "Friends of Glacial Hills" will be meeting on Thursday afternoon at the Forest Home Township Hall. Gene Dawson will be attending as a representative of the County.

Mr. Crandall said a downstate bike group has asked to have a bicycle race in August at Glacial Hills. Mr. Crandall said the race is likely to have 150 to 200 racers. The tentative route for the race begins at Richardi Park, goes through downtown Bellaire, back north to Glacial Hills, and will end at the Bellaire High School. The Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC) is working with the bike group to facilitate the race.

GTRLC and others are still working with the private property owner to enable a connection between Glacial Hills and the Village streets.

Mr. Crandall said they expect to build five miles of trail this spring. GTRLC will be responsible for funding that trail building. He added that the AmeriCorps NCCC volunteers might be working on trails at Glacial Hills again this summer. Mr. Crandall said there may be a request to the County for funding some of the living expenses of the volunteers.

Mr. Meriwether said ash trees that are infected by the emerald ash borer should be removed if they're near the trails. Mr. Crandall agreed, and the two will work together to remove the diseased trees.

Mr. Crandall asked to have Glacial Hills update as a regular agenda item for the Parks and Lands Committee.

### Johnson Septic Easement Request

At the December Parks and Lands Committee meeting, Bob Johnson of 7855 Green Street, Helena Township, asked the County to consider his request for a septic easement across a parcel of County-owned property. Mr. Meriwether had said there is a County policy against granting easements unless there is an advantage to the County.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, to recommend that the Board of Commissioner's deny the easement request. Motion carried – unanimous.**

### Art Rapids

Ms. Koch told the Committee that she'd received an email from Kris Elbert, president of Art Rapids. The email noted that, pursuant to the memorandum of Understanding between Antrim County and Art Rapids, a statement to the County was required regarding the use of funds from the sale of sculptures in the Walk of Art in the previous year. The email went on to say that in the 2013 calendar year, no Walk of Art sculptures were sold.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

# Parks and Lands Committee

*Ed Boettcher*

***Bernie Blackmore,***  
***Chairman***

*Gene Dawson*

## MINUTES March 4, 2014

Members Present: Bernard Blackmore, Eugene Dawson

Members Absent: Ed Boettcher

Staff Present: Janet Koch, Mike Meriwether, Eileen Wallick, James Dake, Haley Breniser,  
Harry Burkholder, Megan Olds, Dean Crandall

### **1. Meeting called to order at 1:00 p.m by Bernie Blackmore.**

### **2. Public Comment**

None.

### **3. Water Trail Presentation**

Megan Olds, Associate Director of the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC), and Harry Burkholder from the Land Information Access Association (LIAA) gave a presentation on water trails. **(See attachment pg. 1)**

Ms. Olds told the Committee that a water trail connects access points and it can be motorized or non-motorized. She said other states (e.g., Iowa) have formalized procedures for establishing water trails but that Michigan does not yet have a formal process.

Ms. Olds said the GTRLC had recently received a Coastal Zone Management grant to develop a water trail plan for the Chain of Lakes and East Grand Traverse Bay. Ms. Olds displayed photo images of water trail signage and mentioned their stewardship and educational efforts. The GTRLC is working with a company to develop signage design.

Maps of the water trail are available at the GTRLC website:  
[http://www.gtrlc.org/preserves/trails/water\\_trail](http://www.gtrlc.org/preserves/trails/water_trail). GTRLC is also collecting data via the same webpage. Forms are available for anyone to fill in information about an access point and any portion of the water trail. Ms. Olds said the data will be validated with local units of government. She also provided a copy of a resolution the Helena Township Board had passed regarding public access sites shown on the water trail map.

Harry Burkholder said he'd been working on water trails around the state for 18 months. Currently there are 20 water trails in Michigan, most of which were created by local groups.

Mr. Burkholder spoke about the Lake Michigan Water Trail. When complete, the Trail will be one continuous loop around the lake. He spoke about Trail Towns **(see attachment pg. 2)**, which are towns adjacent to trails of all types that are making efforts to persuade people to get off the trail and spend time in their towns. He mentioned an article from the TART Trails newsletter regarding the economic impact of the Leelanau Trail on Suttons Bay **(see attachment pg. 3)**. St. Clair County was mentioned as a local unit of government that is making concerted efforts to connecting their water trail to their towns.

#### **4. Glacial Hills Update**

Dean Crandall said he'd been working with the GTRLC on a management plan for Glacial Hills and they hope to present a draft to the County soon.

Ms. Olds provided a handout detailing the GTRLC efforts regarding fundraising. (See attachment pg. 4)

#### **5. Grass River Natural Area (GRNA) Update**

Haley Breniser, GRNA Director, said she will be providing GRNA's financial statement at the Finance Committee's upcoming meeting. Ms. Breniser said that James Dake, GRNA's Educational Director, has been working on GRNA's spring programming. Bernie Blackmore asked about school programming; Mr. Dake said they would be targeting school groups for spring and fall field trips.

Ms. Breniser also said she was working toward establishing GRNA as a Lepidoptera survey training site, adding that gathering data on butterflies and moths would be educational.

Gene Dawson asked about GRNA as a water trail access point. Ms. Breniser said a GRNA board member is working on that. Design, permitting, and funding issues all have to be worked out.

Mr. Dake asked about the possibility of tapping 5-7 maple trees and cooking maple syrup for educational purposes. The Committee didn't have any problems with the proposed program.

#### **6. Forestry Update**

Mike Meriwether said the Vandermark Road contract was not extended even though it wasn't complete. He added that there is a lot of ash in Glacial Hills. He is considering methods of removing diseased trees.

Mr. Meriwether told the Committee that the Ritt Road project is complete. He added there has been no action on the Draper easement and that he will contact an adjacent property owner to attempt an easement negotiation.

The annual forestry report has been submitted to the Clerk's office. Mr. Meriwether said he's currently working on obtaining a self-certified forest designation, which could result in increased revenues from timber sales.

#### **7. Parks Update**

Eileen Wallick, Parks Director, said the specifications for the Barnes Park shower retiling were ready to send out for bid. The bids will be opened at the next committee meeting.

#### **8. Elk Rapids Day Park**

Pavilion Update

Ms. Koch, Associate Planner, informed the Committee that the Wentworth family had sent the promised donation to the County for construction of the pavilion. She noted that the pavilion's construction is expected to start sometime in March, but she didn't yet have a firm date.

## **9. Various Matters**

### Concert in Day Park

Ms. Koch said she'd received an email the previous day from Sherri DeCamp of Art Rapids! Ms. DeCamp was requesting that the County allow the male a cappella vocal group named "The Overtones" to perform at the Elk Rapids Day Park on August 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, to recommend that the Board of Commissioner's allow the August 7<sup>th</sup> concert to take place in the Elk Rapid Day Park. Motion carried – unanimous.**

### Traverse City to Elk Rapids Trail

Ms. Koch presented notes from the February 12, 2014 meeting regarding the Traverse City to Charlevoix Trail Project.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:12 p.m.

# Parks and Lands Committee

Ed Boettcher

Bernie Blackmore, Chairman

Gene Dawson

## Minutes April 1, 2014

Members present: Gene Dawson, Ed Boettcher

Members absent: Bernie Blackmore

Staff/Others present: Brad Gerlach, Dean Crandall, Jim Rossiter, Eileen Wallick, Mike Meriwether, Jim Rossiter, Janet Koch, and Haley Breniser (who left at 1:20).

### **1. Call to Order**

In the absence of the Committee Chairman, Gene Dawson called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

### **2. Public Comment**

None

### **3. Glacial Hills**

Brad Gerlach presented a draft version of a partnership agreement between Antrim County, Forest Home Township, the Village of Bellaire, and the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy.

Ed Boettcher asked what would happen if the parties don't agree on an issue. Mr. Gerlach said the owner of the land would have the final say. Jim Rossiter, Civil Counsel, asked about termination. Mr. Gerlach said any party can opt out.

Mike Meriwether, Antrim County Forester, wanted to ensure the identity of the county-owned Walter Kirkpatrick Forest. Mr. Meriwether also wanted all parties to be aware that there is ongoing forest management in the Kirkpatrick forest. Mr. Gerlach said the Kirkpatrick forest is noted on the trailhead maps. Language regarding timber harvests is on page one of the document.

Mr. Boettcher asked whether the document, if approved, would avoid the situation from last fall involved an unbudgeted expenditure. Mr. Gerlach said the document details regular meetings with all the entities during the trail building years of 2014 and 2015. During these meetings, a budget and work plan will be developed.

Mr. Rossiter said he would work with Mr. Gerlach on some changes to the document.

### **4. Grass River Natural Area (GRNA) Update**

Haley Breniser, GRNA Director, said they had recently received a capacity building grant from the Rotary. This grant will pay for board development and a funding development plan.

Ms. Breniser handed out copies of the 2014 Classes and Events schedule. She said it would be going out to donors and to area schools, including some new school contacts in Traverse City.

In addition, Ms. Breniser has been working with the Equalization Department on new trail signage design, which will be similar to the trail signs at Glacial Hills. GRNA plans to install the new signs this summer. They are considering adding some interpretive signage.

The GRNA website is being revamped. When completed, it should be easier to sign up for classes and to make donations.

Ms. Breniser told the Committee that she has interviewed an intern. The new Office Manager's hours are Monday - Friday from 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.. This will make it easier for people to call with questions and to sign up for classes.

## **5. Forestry Update**

Mr. Meriwether presented the March Forestry Report (see attachment pgs. X - X). He told the Committee that he would like to apply for multiple grants that would benefit the Cedar River Natural Area (CRNA). He distributed an updated resource management document for CRNA that included an acquisition history, and recommendations for wildlife management and trail improvement. Mr. Meriwether said many of the grant applications that he's considering won't be due until next April, but one is due this June and requires a resolution from the Board of Commissioners as part of the application materials.

The Committee instructed the Administration Department and Mr. Meriwether to craft a resolution for approval at the upcoming Board of Commissioner's meeting.

### **Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Update**

Mr. Meriwether said Al Hurd had resigned as a Parks and Recreation Advisory Board member. Mr. Meriwether said the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board is asking the Parks and Lands Committee to look into the creation of a Parks Director position for Antrim County. Mr. Meriwether also said he was willing to put together a proposal regarding the position.

The Committee agreed that Mr. Meriwether could create a proposal regarding a Parks Director. Mr. Boettcher recommended that Mr. Meriwether detail the financial benefits.

## **6. Parks Update**

Eileen Wallick, Parks Manager, said she would need to hire a replacement seasonal worker for the 4:00 p.m. – midnight shift. Janet Koch, Associate Planner, confirmed with Pete Garwood, County Administrator, that hiring a replacement worker could be done with the approval of Mr. Garwood and the Chair of the Administration Committee.

Ms. Wallick added that the previous day was the first day to take reservations and 50 reservations have already been made.

## **7. Elk Rapids Day Park Pavilion Update**

Ms. Koch said she had received no notification that the pavilion's construction has been scheduled.

## **8. Barnes Park Shower Retiling Bid Opening**

Two bids for the shower retiling project had been received by the Clerk's Office. The bids were opened by Mr. Dawson. Northern Floor and Tile from Traverse City bid \$6,461.00 with an additional \$480 if they furnish any needed heat. Bartlett's Home Interiors from Charlevoix bid \$7,416.00.

**Motion by Ed Boettcher, seconded by Gene Dawson, that the Board of Commissioner's accept the low bid of \$6,461.00 from Northern Floor and Tile. Motion carried – unanimous.**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

# Parks and Lands Committee

Ed Boettcher

Bernie Blackmore, Chairman

Gene Dawson

## Minutes: April 29, 2014

Members present: Bernie Blackmore, Gene Dawson  
Members absent: Ed Boettcher  
Staff/Others present: Dean Crandall, Mike Crawford, Eileen Wallick, Mike Meriwether,  
and Janet Koch

### **1. Call to Order**

Bernie Blackmore called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

### **2. Public Comment**

None

### **3. Glacial Hills Update**

Dean Crandall said the 2014 trail building on Antrim County's Kirkpatrick Forest is expected to be two small loops totaling less than two miles of trail. He said the trail building will be funded by the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC).

Mr. Crandall said the GTRLC is working on gaining two new easements for Glacial Hills. One of the easements, if obtained, will help provide access to paved roads inside Bellaire's village limits.

The Committee discussed the Glacial Hills partnership agreement. This agreement will be between Forest Home Township, Antrim County, Village of Bellaire, and the GTRLC and will outline roles and responsibilities for the involved parties.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, to recommend that the Board of Commissioners nominate Ed Boettcher to a Glacial Hills Partnership Agreement advisory board. Motion carried - unanimous.**

Mr. Crandall noted that a local Eagle Scout is building 15 benches for placement on the trail system. He added that there is a need for portable toilets at the Vandemark and Orchard Hill parking lots and hoped that the Committee would consider funding this at their next meeting.

Janet Koch, Associate Planner, said she would bring information on the County's Glacial Hills accounts to the next meeting, along with the costs for the portable toilets.

Mr. Crandall told the Committee that Forest Home Township has been presented with a site plan for a distillery on Bellaire Highway west of the cemetery. Mr. Crandall said the distillery's owner was interested in the site for its location near Short's Brewing Company and Glacial Hills.

### **4. Grass River Natural Area (GRNA) Update**

Haley Breniser, GRNA Director, did not attend the meeting, but did provide the Committee with a GRNA financial report for the first quarter. (See attachment page 1)

## **5. Forestry Update**

Mike Meriwether, Antrim County Forester, described the forestry activities in the County. In addition, he told the Committee that he had been working with Jim Rossiter, Civil Counsel, on the process for cleaning up deed issues. Mr. Meriwether said the Michigan Department of Natural Resources has provided him with their process for resolving similar deed issues.

## **6. Parks Update**

Eileen Wallick reported they are clearing the trails and campsites in Barnes Park of debris from the winter and preparing the entire park for the summer season. She said the application deadline for the seasonal position is May 2 and that interviews will be conducted soon after that date.

Ms. Wallick also told the Committee that Barnes Park has been nominated for Traverse Magazine's Red Hot Best award for campgrounds. **(See attachment page 2)** Three nominations are made for each category; the winner will be notified at the end of May.

The Petoskey Stone Festival will be on Saturday, May 24.

## **7. Elk Rapids Day Park Pavilion Update**

Ms. Koch told the Committee that Ms. Wallick had been working with Eckler Building Solutions, the contractor for the pavilion, on the details of construction. Tree removal was scheduled for that week, with materials to be delivered on May 6. Though the contractor will be making every effort to complete construction before Memorial weekend, weather could be a factor.

Installation of the new Walk of Art sculptures has been scheduled on a number of dates in May. Ms. Koch and Ms. Wallick are working to ensure that the installations go smoothly. Ms. Koch said pictures of the sculptures are at [http://www.artrapid.org/Art\\_Rapids%21/walk-of-art/](http://www.artrapid.org/Art_Rapids%21/walk-of-art/)

## **8. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Grant Strategy**

Ms. Koch asked the Committee for some guidance regarding strategies for the pursuit of the different DNR grants. The Committee said the County's recreation plan should provide that kind of guidance.

Mike Crawford, Chair of the Board of Commissioners, said the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board could work on that kind of project, along with looking into grants that could provide funding for a boat launch at the Antrim Creek Natural Area.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, to recommend that the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board look into DNR grant funding possibilities for a launch site/harbor of refuge at the Antrim Creek Natural Area. Motion carried - unanimous.**

Mr. Crawford recommended contacting the Michigan Association of Counties Service Corporation for assistance with grant writing.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, to recommend that the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board create a plan for the formation of an Antrim County Parks Department. Motion carried - unanimous.**

Mr. Crawford recommended researching other counties regarding their parks departments.

## **9. Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Introduction**

Ms. Koch presented the latest draft version of the CIP to the Committee. Mr. Meriwether provided copies of his CIP submission. Since capital improvement projects, by definition in the draft CIP, cost in excess of \$10,000, Mr. Meriwether's requests for multiple year expenditures of less than that amount would not be part of the CIP.

Mr. Meriwether asked about accessing the forestry account for projects at the Cedar River Natural Area (CRNA).

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, to recommend that the Board of Commissioners approve \$7,500 from the Forestry Fund and apply it to the bridges, trail, and habitat improvements at CRNA.**

Mr. Meriwether said the Conservation District will try to raise a matching \$7,500 for the project so there would be no need to find a source for grant funding. He told the Committee that the Conservation District is holding a fundraising event from 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 26, at the Banks Township Hall.

There was a discussion of forestry access via a private property owner. Mr. Crawford asked Dean Crandall, a trustee for Forest Home Township, about a possible collaboration for the purchase of an easement.

## **10. Various Matters**

Ms. Koch distributed copies of notes recently provided by the Conservation Resource Alliance from a March meeting regarding the proposed Chestonia Bridge, the bridge over the Jordan River on Old State Road (**See attachment pages 3-5**). Ms. Koch had attended the meeting. She told the Committee that a preliminary design for the bridge had been produced, but it was her understanding that there was currently no funding in place for construction of the bridge.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

# **Parks and Lands Committee**

*Ed Boettcher*

*Bernie Blackmore, Chairman*

*Gene Dawson*

## **Minutes June 3, 2014**

Members present: Bernie Blackmore, Ed Boettcher, and Gene Dawson

Members absent: None

Staff/Others present: Mike Meriwether, Eileen Wallick, Janet Koch, and Haley Breniser (left at 2:30 p.m.)

### **1. Call to Order**

Chairman Bernie Blackmore called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

### **2. Public Comment**

None.

### **3. Glacial Hills Update**

Dean Crandall, Forest Home Township Trustee, did not attend the meeting.

At the previous meeting, Janet Koch, Associate Planner, had been asked to bring information on the County's Glacial Hills accounts to the next meeting, along with the costs for portable toilets.

On June 3, 2014, the cash control account for the Glacial Hills fund contained \$16,311.76. The portable toilets from Gmoser's Septic Service, the company currently providing portable toilets for Antrim County parks, are \$95 monthly, with weekly re-stocking and cleaning. Handicapped portable toilets are \$150 monthly. However, Ms. Koch pointed out that the 2009 Memorandum of Understanding between the County and the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy states that the fund "shall be used to make initial necessary improvements for public access including parking areas, signage and trails."

At the May 8, 2014 Board of Commissioners meeting, Ed Boettcher was appointed to the Glacial Hills Partnership Agreement Advisory Board. He said he would bring ongoing agreement details to the Committee for discussion and direction.

### **4. Grass River Natural Area (GRNA) Update**

Haley Breniser, GRNA Director, told the Committee that there was a length of missing chain link fence at the rail trail bridge over Cold Creek. The fencing itself was rolled up and left in the woods. The fence had been installed many years ago for safety reasons – there is a significant drop from the bridge – but the year of installation was unknown.

Eileen Wallick, Parks Manager, noted that the trail fencing in Petoskey was attractive. Mr. Blackmore asked Ms. Wallick to visit the GRNA site, evaluate the situation, and bring the information back to the Committee.

Ms. Breniser said that GRNA was installing new trail maps this year that show the entire trail system and "You are here" notations. Ms. Breniser asked about County ordinance signs. The existing signs are old and in some cases unreadable. The Committee thought one sign at the parking lot would suffice. Mike Meriwether, County Forester, said that signage was the responsibility of the GRNA.

The school programs, Ms. Breniser said, are going well.

## **5. Forestry Update**

Mr. Meriwether presented a Forestry Report (attachment pg. 1). He told the Committee that he is marking trees for timber sales in the Kirkpatrick Forest. He would like to pursue a forestry easement to procure permanent access to Antrim County forestry property instead of relying on one-time usage arrangements. A \$15,000 price for the easement was discussed.

The Committee asked Mr. Meriwether to make arrangements with the property owner for a one-time usage fee instead of an outright \$15,000 easement purchase.

Mr. Blackmore asked to see results of conversations with other property owners who might be able to provide a forestry easement.

Mr. Meriwether said he'd inspected the Glacial Hills trails that are on County land. He will contact the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy to ensure that the new trails don't impact the County's logging practices.

Other ongoing forestry projects include assisting landowners with private timber harvesting. Mr. Meriwether said the Antrim Conservation District had a good tree selling season. Mr. Boettcher asked about the impoundment grant mentioned in the forestry report. Mr. Meriwether said it was for an inventory of all the dams in the County, public and private.

## **6. Parks Update**

Ms. Wallick said last year's replacement of two speed bumps at Barnes Park is working fine. She would like to replace three more. She has three bids for the project, which is budgeted.

**Motion by Ed Boettcher, seconded by Gene Dawson, to recommend that the Finance Committee accept the low bid for the Barnes Park speed bump project.**

**Motion carried – unanimous.**

Ms. Wallick told the Committee that the Wetzel Lake Park needs repair and had received a bid of \$415 for 10 cubic yards of Afton stone. As this item is under \$1,000 and is budgeted, no committee action was necessary. Ms. Wallick will obtain a purchase order from the County's purchasing agent and proceed with the work.

Road repairs at the Antrim Creek Natural Area (ACNA) were discussed. Ms. Koch said that the ACNA Commission had authorized a gravel purchase the previous fall.

Ms. Wallick said the fence at the Elk Rapids Day Park is in need of repair. She will get repair quotes and bring the information back to the Committee.

## **7. Elk Rapids Day Park**

### Walk of Art Update

Ms. Koch told the Committee that the Walk of Art sculptures have been installed for 2014 along with the temporary banner. Mr. Boettcher said he had attended a recent Village of Elk Rapids council meeting and will be attending the upcoming Village Parks & Recreation Commission meeting to talk about the Walk of Art and answer any questions.

### Event Requests

Art Rapids had requested the use of the Park on a number of dates throughout the summer (attachment pgs. 2-3).

**Motion by Ed Boettcher, seconded by Gene Dawson, to allow Art Rapids to hold the proposed workshops as long as the dates don't conflict with previously scheduled events at the pavilion. Motion carried – unanimous.**

### Pavilion Update

Ms. Wallick showed the Committee photos of the partially constructed pavilion. She spoke of her concerns regarding future maintenance at the pavilion. Ms. Koch said there would be a site meeting on Wednesday, June 4 with the architect and the contractor.

### **8. Health Department Beach Water Testing Letter**

A letter of April 24, 1014 from the Health Department (attachment pg. 4) states that 10 weeks of beach water quality testing for any beach on the Great Lakes will cost \$1,000 for each beach. Previously, the testing had been done at no cost to the County.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Ed Boettcher, to recommend that the Finance Committee and the Board of Commissioner's authorize \$1,000 for beach testing at Barnes Park. Motion carried – unanimous.**

### **9. Antrim Creek Natural Area Boat Launch Update**

Mr. Meriwether said the Lake Michigan water levels are currently higher than they've been in some time and that minor improvements to the ACNA boat launch could be made to allow for small craft to be launched more easily. Mr. Meriwether recommended that the Board of Commissioners make a site visit to evaluate the situation.

The Parks & Land Committee will hold a special meeting at the ACNA at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 17. The members of the ACNA Commission will be notified of the meeting.

### **10. Proposed Parks Department Plan Update**

Ms. Koch communicated the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board discussion regarding a Parks Department and a Parks Director. She told the Committee that Mr. Meriwether had told the Advisory Board that he will put together something on paper regarding the issues.

### **11. Various Matters**

#### Foreclosure Properties

Ms. Koch told the Committee that she'd reviewed each of the upcoming foreclosure properties. Sherry Comben, County Treasurer, had provided her with the listings. Ms. Koch presented the Committee with one potential property for purchase. This property could provide a future link to the Mancelona Business Park.

The Committee took no action on the property.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

# Parks and Lands Committee

Ed Boettcher

Bernie Blackmore, Chairman

Gene Dawson

## Special Meeting Minutes June 17, 2014

Members present: Bernie Blackmore, Ed Boettcher, Gene Dawson  
Members absent: None  
Staff present: Eileen Wallick & Janet Koch  
Others present: Jacob Veenstra, Donna Heeres & Dean Crandall

### **1. Call to Order**

The Committee met in the parking lot of the Antrim Creek Natural Area's north entrance. Chairman Bernie Blackmore called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

### **2. Public Comment**

None.

### **3. Boat Launch Site Evaluation**

Janet Koch, Associate Planner, told the Committee she'd attended a recent Waterways Program Grant workshop by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR). She had asked Paul Petersen, the Waterways Grants Program Manager, the definition of the term "Harbor of Refuge." Mr. Peterson told her that the term wasn't clearly defined and that the term wasn't significant for Waterways Grant applications.

Ms. Koch added that Waterways grants are a 50/50 match. She said Mr. Peterson had mentioned that Waterways grants are available for preliminary engineering.

Donna Heeres, Banks Township Clerk, and Jacob Veenstra, Antrim Creek Natural Area (ACNA) Commission member, gave the Committee some background on the ACNA. They said that the rocks bordering the north and south sides of the launch turnaround were put in place to restrict the driving of vehicles up and down the beach.

A suggestion was made to move the rocks further apart. This would increase the size of the turnaround area and allow for easier trailer maneuvering. Ms. Heeres said having a dredged boat access was never the intent.

Mr. Blackmore noted that changing the existing site to enable the launching of larger boats would be a problem due to the narrow road entrance and the limited parking, whose size is restricted by wetlands.

**Motion by Ed Boettcher, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, that the Parks and Lands Committee only work toward improving the ACNA boat launch if the ACNA Commission asks for progress on the launch. Motion carried as follows: Yes – Blackmore, Boettcher; No – Gene Dawson.**

Mr. Dawson said he would like to have further discussion on the topic.

### **4. Various Matters**

None.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

# Parks and Lands Committee

Ed Boettcher

*Bernie Blackmore, Chairman*

Gene Dawson

## Minutes July 1, 2014

Members present: Gene Dawson and Ed Boettcher

Members absent: Bernie Blackmore

Staff/others present: Mike Crawford, Mike Meriwether, Eileen Wallick, Haley Breniser, Janet Koch, and Jim Peters.

### 1. Call to Order

In the absence of the Committee's Chairman, Ed Boettcher called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

### 2. Public Comment

None.

### 3. Glacial Hills

Dean Crandall, Forest Home Township Trustee, said they are building the last trails in Antrim County's Kirkpatrick Forest, approximately 2.5 miles. Mr. Crandall told the Committee that he has been discussing the agreement regarding Glacial Hills with Dave Reck from Civil Counsel.

The Committee, Mr. Crandall, and Mike Meriwether, County Forester, discussed the possibility of using a portion of the tree harvest proceeds from the Kirkpatrick Forest to fund trail maintenance at Glacial Hills. Mr. Boettcher said a specific Parks Fund for Glacial Hills should be established.

Mr. Crandall requested that the Committee fund the placement of a portable toilet at the Vandermark Road parking lot for the rest of the season, until November 1. Janet Koch, Associate Planner, told the Committee that the 2009 Memorandum of Understanding between the County and the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC) places some limitations on the Glacial Hills fund #238. Ms. Koch said she would discuss the issue with the GTRLC before the upcoming Board of Commissioner's meeting.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Ed Boettcher, to recommend that the Board of Commissioner's approve payment for placing a portable toilet at the Vandermark Road parking lot until November 1, 2014. Motion carried – unanimous.**

Mr. Crandall said plans are in place for the first bike race at Glacial Hills on Sunday, August 3. Tailwind Racing is the race organizer and they estimate 300 racers.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Ed Boettcher, to recommend that the Board of Commissioners allow the GTRLC to host the Tailwind race at Glacial Hills on August 3, 2014 as long as the appropriate insurance is in place to the satisfaction of the County's Civil Counsel. Motion carried – unanimous.**

#### **4. Grass River Natural Area (GRNA) Update**

Haley Breniser, GRNA Director, told the Committee that some new signage is in place, including trail numbering. Boardwalk repair is also taking place. Ms. Breniser told the Committee that the fundraising dance event on June 28 at the Alden depot was a success.

Ms. Breniser said she's spoken to a donor regarding the possibility of a kayak landing structure. After some discussion, Ms. Breniser was asked to submit a plan with drawings at a future Parks & Lands meeting.

There was a discussion of the Cold Creek rail trail bridge. The Committee asked Ms. Breniser to investigate the ownership of the properties involved and bring back a recommendation to the Committee. Mike Crawford, Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, said Antrim County's safety officer should look into the issue. The current safety officer, Carl Goeman, is retiring next week. Mr. Boettcher asked the Administration Committee to clarify the safety officer question.

#### **5. Forestry Update**

Mr. Meriwether said he was marking trees in the Kirkpatrick Forest. He has also scheduled an appointment with a property owner on Honey Hollow Road and will be discussing both a temporary and a permanent easement. Mr. Meriwether encouraged the Committee to purchase a permanent easement which would guarantee County access.

Mr. Meriwether said they are starting bridge repair at the Cedar River Natural Area.

#### **6. Parks Update**

Eileen Wallick, Parks Manager, suggested that the bidding process be revised to include bidder's references.

Ms. Wallick said she'd contacted the Administration Department about the need for an employee's Hepatitis B vaccination. She said that Pete Garwood, County Administrator, is working on a County-wide policy regarding the issue.

##### Elk Rapids Day Park Pavilion

Ms. Wallick said her crew has spent numerous hours repairing and cleaning the pavilion's construction site. She also said the construction project wasn't complete and spoke of some concern regarding the cutting of the rafter tails. Ms. Koch told the Committee that she'd contacted Ben Eckler, representative of Eckler Building Solutions. He'd stated it would be complete no later than July 3rd.

##### Barnes Park Ordinance

Ms. Wallick told the Committee that in 2013, then-Civil Counsel Charlie Koop had recommended changes to the Park Ordinance regarding firearms. These changes have not yet been adopted. Ms. Wallick suggested that additional changes be made to ordinance sections 2.01.10 and 2.01.19 regarding noise and fireworks. The Committee asked that the proposed changes be forwarded to Civil Counsel for legal review.

#### **7. Antrim County Parks Water Trail Map**

Ms. Koch presented a memo to the Committee (**see attached pg. 1**) and said that Megan Olds of GTRLC had asked the County to consider evaluating their park assets and to pass a resolution regarding sites that could be added to the East Bay and Chain of Lakes water trail maps. The GTRLC had been awarded a MDNR Trust Fund Waterways Grant to complete the maps.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Ed Boettcher, to support the resolution and to have the Board of Commissioner's approve the resolution. Motion carried – unanimous.**

## **8. Traverse City to Charlevoix Trail Update**

Mr. Dawson said he'd attended a trail meeting with Emily Meyerson, Top of Michigan Trails Council, and Barbara Nelson-Jameson from the National Park Service, to discuss a proposed route through Antrim County. Ms. Wallick and Ms. Koch also attended that meeting. Current plans include approximately three miles of trail adjacent to Lake Michigan in Charlevoix County through Fisherman's Island State Park. This will connect to public roads near Norwood and then travel south into Antrim County along Old Dixie Highway.

At this point, there are no plans to widen Old Dixie Highway or to create a trail adjacent to the roadway. There are hopes to connect south to Barnes Park without traveling onto US 31, but that plan will involve at least one property owner. Ms. Meyerson and Ms. Nelson-James will investigate that possibility, along with other options. It is most likely that much of the trail through Antrim County will be a trail inside the US 31 right-of-way that is separate from the roadway.

## **9. Oil & Gas Well Proposals**

At the June 5, 2014 Administration and County Services Committee meeting, David Peterson, a resident of Antrim County, asked the Committee to review each of the plans submitted by the gas and oil companies. Mr. Peterson had been informed that the Parks and Lands Committee would take up the issue.

The Committee agreed that the County has no authority regarding oil and gas wells on private property. It is the County's process for oil and gas contracts that involve the County to present the contracts to the Parks & Lands Committee. The contracts are subsequently reviewed by the County's Civil Counsel.

Jim Peters, representing O.I.L. Energy, said the Michigan Department of Equality's website has information on well permitting. He said the website allows people to sign up for automatic informational updates. He also mentioned another website, fracfocus.org, a chemical disclosure registry. Mr. Peters indicated that local government has limited control over some oil and gas well surface structures through zoning ordinances.

## **10. Various Matters**

Mr. Crawford described some improvements at Antrim Creek Natural Area (ACNA) that could be done that might be amenable to the ACNA Commission. A breakwall was mentioned, as well as a parking lot near Old Dixie Highway.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

# Parks and Lands Committee

Ed Boettcher

*Bernie Blackmore, Chairman*

Gene Dawson

## Minutes August 5, 2014

Members present: Bernie Blackmore, Gene Dawson and Ed Boettcher

Members absent: None

Staff/others present: Mike Meriwether, Eileen Wallick, Jake Veenstra, and Janet Koch. Barbara Nelson-Jameson and Emily Meyerson were present through agenda item 2.

### **1. Call to Order**

Chairman Bernie Blackmore called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

### **2. Public Comment**

None.

### **3. TC to Charlevoix Trail Update**

Emily Meyerson, Top of Michigan Trails Council, and Barbara Nelson-Jameson from the National Park Service gave the Committee an update of the planning process for the trail. They said the intent is to plan for a primarily non-motorized trail that connects recreational assets. The effort started about seven years ago when the Village of Elk Rapids starting working toward a connection with the Traverse City trail system. Approximately 18 months ago, MDOT got involved. Ms. Nelson-Jameson said they've met with Banks Township, Torch Lake Township, Milton Township, Elk Rapids Village, and Antrim County officials regarding the plans.

Ms. Meyerson said the goal is to have an off-road pathway, however, she said it may not be possible for the entire route due to right-of-way limitations. Currently, the City of Charlevoix has a plan to get the trail through town to Fisherman's Island State Park. South of the Park, the trail will move onto existing public roads, heading south along Old Dixie Highway. If arrangements can be made regarding one private property owner, the trail could continue south into Barnes Park.

Due to the limited number of public north-south roads in Torch Lake Township, the trail would, by necessity, run adjacent to US-31. The route through Milton Township, Elk Rapids Township, and the Village of Elk Rapids is still under consideration. The route from Traverse City north is also still under consideration.

Management of the trail was discussed. Ms. Meyerson said every regional trail is different. Some have one management unit, some have several. She added that the management agreement can be a stumbling block to the creation of a trail, which is why they're starting discussions with the County so early in the planning process.

### **4. Sheneman Offer**

Haley Breniser, Grass River Natural Area (GRNA) Director, gave a history of the Sheneman property acquisition, which was part of a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant award in 2008. She noted that three structures remain on the property, which, according to the grant agreement, should already have been removed.

Mr. Andrew Sheneman has requested the County's permission to remove two of the three buildings; the garage and the log cabin (**see attached pgs. 1-2**). Ms. Breniser said a GRNA board member is looking into the cost of trailer removal.

The Committee agreed that the removal of the two structures proposed by Mr. Sheneman would be a benefit to the County.

**Motion by Ed Boettcher, seconded by Gene Dawson, to recommend that the Board of Commissioner's approve the negotiation of an agreement by Civil Counsel with Mr. Sheneman for the removal of the property's garage and log cabin that will leave the property underneath the structures in a natural state. Motion carried – unanimous.**

**5. Art Rapids! Event Request**

Representatives from Art Rapids! have requested the use of the Elk Rapids Day Park pavilion on the evening of Monday, October 6, for an event that they expect will be attended by 10 – 15 children.

**Motion by Ed Boettcher, seconded by Gene Dawson, to allow Art Rapids! to host a “Big Draw” event at the Day Park pavilion on the evening of October 6, 2014.**

**Motion carried – unanimous.**

**6. Elk Rapids Day Park Sign Request**

Janet Koch, Associate Planner, said the Art Rapids! representatives had asked about the status of signage on US-31 directing people to the Day Park. Ms. Koch said she'd reviewed the meeting minutes and she'd found only that the topic was discussed in October 2013. Ms. Koch and Eileen Wallick, Parks Manager, reviewed the Day Park's budget with the Committee, GL 101000-757. Ms. Wallick said she had a 2013 estimate from MDOT that was slightly over \$1000.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Ed Boettcher, to request that the Finance Committee approve the purchase of two MDOT signs for the Elk Rapids Day Park.**

**Motion carried – unanimous.**

Ms. Wallick said she'd try to have a current sign estimate for the Finance Committee before their meeting on Monday, August 11.

**7. Antrim Creek Natural Area (ACNA) Boat Launch**

The Board of Commissioners, at their July meeting, had asked the Parks & Land Committee to look into a cost assessment for improvements to the boat launch at Antrim Creek. Mike Meriwether, County Forester, said he'd like to see the ACNA with the ability to launch a 16 to 17' boat.

Mr. Boettcher said a preliminary engineering study could be a valuable tool. Ms. Koch said she'd bring details on a preliminary engineering grant, which would be a Waterways Program Grant, to the next meeting.

Mr. Boettcher said providing a boat launch would be a benefit to visitors and residents. Mr. Dawson mentioned the possibility of a boat launch at Lore Road.

Mr. Blackmore left the meeting at 2:05 p.m.

## **8. Glacial Hills Update**

Ms. Koch told the Committee that Civil Counsel had been working on the management agreement between the property owners of Glacial Hills and the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC). At this point, the proposal is to have a trail easement across the 30 acres of Glacial Hills that is owned by the Village of Bellaire. Ms. Koch said she would be attending the next Village council meeting to make that proposal.

## **9. Grass River Natural Area (GRNA) Update**

The quarterly GRNA report had been included in the Committee's packets (see attached pg.3). Ms. Breniser said their maintenance staff has looked at the Cold Creek rail trail fence and is checking the cost of approximately 90 feet of fence replacement. She will bring that cost back to the Committee and will also contact Leslie Meyers, Emergency Services Coordinator, regarding safety issues.

Ms. Breniser also told the Committee that GRNA was awarded a Grainger Foundation grant for \$6000, which is to be used for stewardship and tools.

[Note: after the meeting, Ms. Breniser told Ms. Koch that GRNA recently received a donation of a relatively new club car 1500 XRT, an all-terrain vehicle that can seat four and has a bed with dumping abilities.]

## **10. Forestry Update**

Mr. Meriwether presented his July report (see attached pgs. 4-5). He said he was working with a property owner regarding a logging easement and will bring the amount to a future meeting. Mr. Meriwether told the Committee the trail development at Glacial Hills is more intensive in certain areas of the Kirkpatrick forest than he'd been led to expect.

Mr. Meriwether said he'd been approached by the owner of a 150 acre parcel that is a quarter of a mile away from the Cedar River Natural Area. The property owner is interested in donating the property, which Mr. Meriwether said is primarily cedar swamp. The Cedar River runs through a portion of the property. Mr. Meriwether said he didn't think it could be logged, but that it is wetlands that protects the Cedar River. Mr. Dawson asked about mineral rights. Mr. Meriwether said the Antrim Conservation District might be interested in acquiring the property.

## **11. Parks Update**

Eileen Wallick, Parks Manager, said the campground has been busy, that on weekends they're running over 100 units. She told the Committee the blue 1994 truck needs a transmission repair.

**Motion by Ed Boettcher, seconded by Gene Dawson, to approve the expenditure of \$2400 to repair the blue 1994 park vehicle. Motion carried – unanimous.**

Ms. Wallick told the Committee that she needed to purchase new can lights at the cabin to correct problems with gaps between the existing fixture and the ceiling. She said the cost should be under \$500. She also said that Barnes Park was running low on the t-shirts and sweatshirts that Barnes Park offers for sale and that she'd like to order more.

**Motion by Ed Boettcher, seconded by Gene Dawson, to approve the purchase of more sweatshirts and t-shirts at an amount not to exceed \$1000. Motion carried – unanimous.**

Meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

# Parks and Lands Committee

Ed Boettcher

**Bernie Blackmore, Chairman**

Gene Dawson

## Minutes September 2, 2014

Members present: Bernie Blackmore, Gene Dawson and Ed Boettcher  
Members absent: None  
Staff/others present: Haley Breniser, Mike Crawford, Deb Haydell, Kristy Mortham, Mike Meriwether, Eileen Wallick, Pete Garwood and Janet Koch

### **1. Call to Order**

Chairman Bernie Blackmore called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

### **2. Public Comment**

Gordie Schaffer, owner of the Dockside Restaurant, would like the County to consider making improvements that would provide a public swimming space to an existing Torch Lake access site. Mr. Schaffer said the property is currently owned by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and is located in Torch Lake Township at Barnes Road, near A-ga-ming. He added that he is willing to support the project financially and can provide some preliminary numbers regarding the cost of improvements.

Mr. Blackmore asked to have the item placed on the next month's agenda.

### **3. Antrim County Fair Appropriation**

Crystal Swain, a member of the Antrim County Fair Board, said they'd raised almost \$9,000 at the 2014 fair (**see attached pg. 1**). The Fair Board is asking for an appropriation of \$12,000 for 2015, which is a \$2,000 increase from the 2014 appropriation of \$10,000. The additional \$2,000 will help pay for electrical upgrades that will improve concession options, lighting, and provide electricity to vendors.

**Motion by Ed Boettcher, seconded by Gene Dawson, to approve an appropriation of \$12,000 for the Antrim County Fair (#101000-966-956.010) for submittal to the Finance Committee. Motion carried – unanimous.**

### **4. Watershed Center Appropriation**

Christine Crissman, Executive Director of the Watershed Center, requested an appropriation of \$1,000. She said they will be working on a sub-watershed plan for the Chain of Lakes in 2015, as well as their ongoing projects of phragmites control.

**Motion by Ed Boettcher, seconded by Gene Dawson, to approve the appropriation of \$1,000 to the Watershed Center (101000-966-956.019) for submittal to the Finance Committee. Motion carried – unanimous.**

**5. Conservation Resource Alliance (CRA) Appropriation**

Amy Beyer, director of the CRA, requested a 2015 appropriation of \$1,000. She said it will be used to continue stream improvement work on the Jordan River and will provide local matching funds for grant opportunities.

**Motion by Ed Boettcher, seconded by Gene Dawson, to approve the 2015 appropriation request of \$1,000 for the CRA (101000-966-956.018) for submittal to the Finance Committee. Motion carried – unanimous. (Note: Mr. Blackmore left the meeting temporarily and was not present for the vote on this agenda item.)**

**6. Michigan State University Extension (MSUE) Budget**

Patrick Cudney has been named the Associate Director for Operations of MSUE and is leaving his position as District Coordinator. Jennifer Berkey will be working as the Interim District Coordinator. The budget Mr. Cudney presented included a 5% increase in the MSUE assessment, small line item adjustments, and an additional cost of \$30,698.00 which would allow the 4-H Program Coordinator's position to be full time. This request for a full time 4-H Program Coordinator was made in 2013 but was not approved; they'd been told to bring it back in 2014. The 2014 budget request was \$151,166; the total request for 2015 is \$182,214. Mr. Cudney said that the counties that have full time 4-H Program Coordinators are experiencing growth in the programs.

**Motion by Ed Boettcher, seconded by Gene Dawson, to approve the MSUE 2015 budget request (101000-261) that reflects a full-time 4-H Program Coordinator for submittal to the Finance Committee. Motion carried – unanimous.**

**7. Grass River Natural Area (GRNA) Appropriation**

Haley Breniser, GRNA Director, presented GRNA's appropriation request for 2015 for \$50,150, which is the same as the request for 2014. Ms. Breniser said GRNA is working on creative ways to realize their full potential, including grant applications.

Mike Crawford mentioned the agreement regarding County appropriations to GRNA, which involve a step-down appropriation.

There was a discussion of the repairs necessary at the Cold Creek bridge and fencing (**see attached pg. 2**).

**Motion by Ed Boettcher, seconded by Gene Dawson, to approve the 2015 GRNA appropriation (101000-966-956.223) of \$50,150 with the understanding that GRNA will attempt to repair the fence and bridge if the cost is within their resources. Motion carried – unanimous.**

The committee discussed future boardwalk improvements. Currently, GRNA is replacing damaged boards on an as-needed basis.

**8. GRNA/Update Kayak dock**

Ms. Breniser presented photos and a detail of the proposed single kayak dock. A donor is willing to pay for the kayak dock, new seating, and a small kayak rack (**see attached pg. 3-4**).

**Motion by Ed Boettcher, seconded by Gene Dawson, to recommend approval of the kayak improvements. Motion carried – unanimous.**

## **9. Sheneman/GRNA Property**

Janet Koch, Associate Planner, reviewed the minutes from the last Committee meeting regarding the property. A motion had been sent to the Board of Commissioners, but had not been approved. The Board sent the topic back to Committee to consider the Knapp's proposal.

Gary and Sue Knapp told the Committee that they are willing to donate money to GRNA for the removal of the trailer on the Sheneman property, if they would be allowed to keep the use of the garage. Mr. Knapp said Mark Randolph, former GRNA Director, had approved that use.

Mr. Crawford said that since the property was owned by the County, that Mr. Randolph hadn't had the authority to allow the Knapp's use of the garage. The Committee discussed requirements of the trust fund grant, one of which was to remove all structures from the property. Mr. Crawford suggested bidding out the removal of the trailer and the log cabin for this fall and removal of the garage in early 2015.

The Committee asked that Andrew Sheneman be contacted regarding removal of the trailer in addition to removing the other two structures on the property. If an agreement can't be reached, the Committee will consider putting removal of all three structures out for bid in early 2015.

## **10. Antrim Conservation District (ACD) / Forestry Appropriations**

Kristy Mortham, Executive Director of the ACD, said their office receives over 30 phone calls a day May through August, primarily regarding soil erosion. Ms. Mortham presented the 2015 appropriation request of \$19,000 which is an increase from the 2014 request of \$18,000. Ms. Mortham said they are working toward accountability and reducing draws on their fund balance to \$0 within three years.

Mike Meriwether, County Forester, distributed a budget request summary for 2015 (**see attached pgs. 5-6**). Mr. Meriwether said he anticipated \$100,000 in 2015 revenue from timber cuts. (Mr. Boettcher left the meeting at 3:05 p.m.)

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, to approve the 2015 appropriation requests of \$19,000 for the ACD (101000-966-956.001) and \$78,750 for the Forestry program (101000-966-956.008). Motion carried – unanimous.**

Deb Haydell, County Accountant, presented the 2015 budget report for the forestry fund #230000. Mr. Meriwether was requesting \$2,000 from the fund regarding purchase of a logging easement. On April 29, 2014, the Committee had approved \$7,500 from the fund #230000 to be used for repairs and improvements at the Cedar River Natural Area (CRNA). Only \$2,639.79, however, was expensed in 2014. As a result, the 2015 #230000 budget includes a \$5,000 transfer for repairs and improvements at the CRNA.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, to approve the 2015 Forestry Fund #230000 budget. Motion carried – unanimous.**

## **11. Forestry Update**

Mr. Meriwether distributed a Notice of Timber for Sale and a map showing the 100-acre sale area in the Kirkpatrick Forest. Mr. Meriwether would like to have the logging done in one year, but will allow a two-year bid. Mr. Meriwether also said that the Glacial Hills trails in the cut area will be closed during time of logging, and that the contract will state that the successful bidder will not be responsible for damage to the trails at Glacial Hills.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, to recommend that the timber bid go to the Administration office for public notice. Motion carried – unanimous.**

Mr. Meriwether told the Committee that a written proposal would be coming from a private individual regarding the donation of a parcel near the Cedar River.

## **12. Parks Update**

Eileen Wallick, Parks Manager, told the Committee that the 1969 pump house had another leak and was repaired. The invoice will be coming. She has also been dealing with vandalism issues. The Labor Day weekend events, she said, were a success.

Ms. Wallick distributed a chart of the rates at area campgrounds (**see attached pg. 7**) and asked the Committee to approve a \$1 increase in Barnes Park camping rates. This would increase the park's annual revenue by approximately \$5,000.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, to raise the camping fees at Barnes Park by \$1. Motion was not carried.**

Ms. Wallick said \$700 for campground registration cards will need to be purchased for 2015. She also asked the Committee to consider a wage increase for the long-term park employees. Pete Garwood, County Administrator, said the employees get unemployment in the off season. The Committee requested more information from Ms. Wallick.

Ms. Koch said she'd had an email from the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC) regarding acquisition of a parcel adjacent to Barnes Park. She told the Committee that the GTRLC would like to know if the County has any interest in owning the parcel as an addition to the Park. It was the consensus of the Committee was that staff should pursue talks with the GTRLC regarding the addition of the parcel to Barnes Park.

## **13. Parks Budget**

Ms. Wallick presented the 2015 budget request for Barnes Park. Line item #101000-756-901.000 was reduced by \$400.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, to approve the 2015 Barnes Park budget request (#101000-756) for submittal to the Finance Committee.  
Motion carried – unanimous.**

### Barnes Park Capital Outlay

This capital outlay purchase is to replace the water heater in the 1969 bath house.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, to approve the 2015 Barnes Park capital outlay request (#101000-901-980-456) for submittal to the Finance Committee.  
Motion carried – unanimous.**

### Elk Rapids Day Park

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, to approve the 2015 Elk Rapid Day Park budget request (#101000-757) for submittal to the Finance Committee.  
Motion carried – unanimous.**

#### **14. Assorted Park Budgets**

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, to approve the 2015 ACNA budget request (fund #234000) for submittal to the Finance Committee.**

**Motion carried – unanimous.**

The Committee reviewed the budget submitted for the Petoskey Stone Festival. They removed the \$1,000 County appropriation in view of the fund balance, which was over \$3,000.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, to approve the 2015 Petoskey Stone Festival budget request (fund #235000) for submittal to the Finance Committee.**

**Motion carried – unanimous.**

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, to approve the 2015 Parks and Recreation Advisory Board budget request (#101000-752) for submittal to the Finance Committee. Motion carried – unanimous.**

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, to approve the 2015 Cedar River Natural Area, Mohrmann Park and Murphy Park budget request (#101000-754) for submittal to the Finance Committee. Motion carried – unanimous.**

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, to approve the 2015 Notewares, Wetzel, and Willow Day budget request (#101000-755) for submittal to the Finance Committee. Motion carried – unanimous.**

The Committee reviewed the budget for Glacial Hills. Up until this point, there has been no budget for Glacial Hills. The monies in this fund is the remainder of \$25,000 appropriations from both the GTRLC and Antrim County. The line item for travel at \$2,000 was reduced to \$1,000, and the requested appropriation amount from the general fund was reduced by \$1,000 to \$2,050.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, to approve the 2015 Glacial Hills budget request (fund #238000) for submittal to the Finance Committee.**

**Motion carried – unanimous.**

#### **15. Glacial Hills Budget / Update**

Ms. Koch said Sue Mahan, the Clerk of Forest Home Township, had recently faxed an invoice for \$208.00. This invoice covers 80% of the Village of Bellaire's Craven Park camping fees for the volunteers who worked on the Glacial Hills trails through most of August. The Village waived half of the camping costs. (See attached pg. 8)

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, to recommend a budget amendment from fund #238000 for \$208.00 and payment of the invoice.**

**Motion carried – unanimous.**

#### **16. GRNA Fund #223000**

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Bernie Blackmore, to approve the 2015 GRNA budget request (fund #223000) for submittal to the Finance Committee pending the Finance Committee's approval of the GRNA budget. Motion carried – unanimous.**

**17. Elk Rapids Day Park**

Ms. Koch presented the request from Art Rapids! to install banners at the pavilion (**see attached pgs. 9-10**). The banners would be made from the temporary banner that is currently installed on the Day Park's fence. The Committee discussed concerns regarding maintenance and the general atmosphere of the Park.

There was no support for the proposal.

**18. Waterways Grant**

At the last meeting, Ms. Koch had been asked to bring back details regarding a preliminary engineering grant. This type of grant would be a 50% match (**see attached pg. 11**).

Meeting adjourned at 5:25 p.m.

# Parks and Lands Committee

*Ed Boettcher*

*Bernie Blackmore, Chairman*

*Gene Dawson*

## Minutes September 5, 2014

Members present: Gene Dawson and Ed Boettcher

Members absent: Bernie Blackmore

Staff/others present: Mike Crawford, Janet Koch, Jim Rossiter, Dave Reck, Dean Crandall, Lori Luckett, David Schulz, Matt McDonough, Steve Lagerquist, Jake Bournay, and Nate Richardson.

### **1. Call to Order**

Ed Boettcher called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

### **2. Public Comment**

None.

### **3. Glacial Hills Management Agreement**

Matt McDonough, representing the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC), gave a brief history of the Glacial Hills project.

Mike Crawford, Chairman of the County Commissioners, asked about the role of GTRLC at Glacial Hills now that the trail system is essentially in place. Mr. McDonough said they can manage the Friends of Glacial Hills group, oversee maintenance operations, assist with obtaining grants, work on fundraising, and other tasks.

There was a discussion regarding the overall vision of Glacial Hills. Dave Schulz, President of the Village of Bellaire, said it's already a destination for people from outside the area.

Mr. McDonough said GTRLC isn't expecting to get paid for their efforts at Glacial Hill, adding that GTRLC is committed to the project.

There was a discussion regarding trail maintenance. Steve Lagerquist of GTRLC said the Americorp volunteers typically won't be used for trail maintenance, that they'll primarily be used for trail building. Nate Richardson, GTRLC, said a Friends of Glacial Hills group is currently maintaining the trail. The Friends communicate trail needs through the use of an email group. It was noted that it would likely be beneficial to have representatives from the Friends be a part of future management discussions.

There was a discussion of priorities and points of discussion for future meetings. The creation of a management agreement and the development of a management plan were considered to be the top priorities.

Thursday, October 2 at 10:00 a.m. will be the next meeting date.

Meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

# Parks and Lands Committee

Ed Boettcher

Bernie Blackmore, Chairman

Gene Dawson

## Minutes September 30, 2014

Members present: Gene Dawson and Ed Boettcher  
Members absent: Bernie Blackmore  
Staff/others present: Dean Crandall, Mike Crawford, Janet Koch, Mike Meriwether, and Eileen Wallick

### **1. Call to Order**

In the absence of Chairman Bernie Blackmore, Ed Boettcher called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

### **2. Public Comment**

None.

### **3. Glacial Hills Update**

Dean Crandall, Forest Home Township trustee, said the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy would likely present a management proposal at the Thursday special Parks and Lands Committee meeting. The Committee discussed items they'd like to see in the agreement.

### **4. Torch Lake Access Site Improvements**

Gordy Schafer more precisely described the property he would like the County to consider as a possible location for a public swimming beach. The parcel, tax ID 05-14-006-011-00, is listed on the tax rolls as owned by the "Michigan Department of Treasury, Finance and Acct Div - PILT." Signs posted on the property state that the property is "Administered by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Parks and Recreation Division." The parcel is 200 wide at the roadway. (See attached pg. 1.)

Mr. Schafer told the Committee that he will get quotes for installing a fence on the south property line. He envisions a picnic pavilion, a gravel parking area adjacent to the road, and perhaps a basketball court. He said small improvements could be made at the water's edge to make it a better swimming area, adding that he would be willing to partially fund the project.

Mr. Crandall said Forest Home Township has worked with the DNR with regards to leasing DNR lakeshore properties. The County's lease agreement with the DNR regarding Wetzell Lake was discussed. Mike Crawford, Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, said the DNR held a public hearing regarding the construction of a boat launch on the property a number of years ago and had met a large amount of resistance.

The Committee will wait for more information from Mr. Schafer regarding the project.

### **5. Forestry Update**

#### **Cedar River Natural Area (CRNA) Tree Removal Update**

Mike Meriwether, County Forester, said the CRNA trail had been cleared of trees that had fallen or been damaged in the September 5th storm. The trees had been poplar and Mr. Meriwether had been given emergency approval by Pete Garwood, County Administrator, to engage a contractor to remove the trees and for the County to receive any payment for cut cords.

### Private Property Road Access

Mr. Meriwether provided a photo of a wash-out at an access road on a parcel of County property off Skinkle Road. Mr. Meriwether said he felt that the repairs could be completed with some grading work.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Ed Boettcher, to repair the access road to a County property off Skinkle Road at a not-to-exceed amount of \$1000, with the monies to be provided from the Forestry Fund #230. Motion carried – unanimous.**

### **6. Grass River Natural Area (GRNA) Update**

Haley Breniser, GRNA Director, told the Committee that she has been working on building relationships with contributors and foundations. She noted that the club car, a donation, had been received and was being used.

Ms. Breniser said that they are waiting for Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) permitting approval to put in the kayak dock and that safety improvements are being made to the rail trail bridge.

### **7. Parks Update**

Eileen Wallick, Barnes Park Manager, asked for permission to purchase replacement uniforms for the park's crew. The committee's consensus was for her to go ahead with the purchase, which will be under \$1000.

Ms. Wallick said she had solicited quotes for pumping the Barnes Park septic system from five vendors and the only one who responded was Gmoser's Septic Service, for \$2,160.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Ed Boettcher, to hire Gmoser's Septic Service for \$2,160 to pump the Barnes Park septic system this fall. Motion carried – unanimous.**

Ms. Wallick told the Committee that she had contacted four tree removal contractors to do trimming at Barnes Park and the Elk Rapids Day Park. One contractor did not respond and one said they can't do it until spring. The two responses were from Top View (\$1000 per park) and Unlimited Outdoors (\$2600 for Barnes Park, \$1350 for the Day Park).

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Ed Boettcher, to hire Top View to do the fall tree trimming at Barnes Park and the Elk Rapids Day Park. Motion carried – unanimous.**

Ed Boettcher asked if Mr. Meriwether and Ms. Wallick consult with each other on tree removal. They said that they do.

Ms. Wallick said she'd attended a workshop on upcoming changes in the Type II well regulations. There is an effective date of 2016 for the new regulations, but Ms. Wallick is working toward compliance in 2015.

### Camping Fees

At the previous meeting, Bernie Blackmore had asked Ms. Wallick about camping fees at the Otsego County campground. She told the Committee that their camping fees are \$25 per night for residents and \$26 for non-residents. In addition, a motor vehicle park permit is required; a day pass is \$4. A season pass is \$15 for residents and non-residents alike. A senior pass is \$7.

Janet Koch, Associate Planner, said the Art Rapids group might bring more details to the Committee in the spring regarding how they would like to hang the Walk of Art banner in the pavilion. The banner had been placed on the fence through the summer.

#### **8. Trail Connection in Barnes Park Update**

Ms. Koch said she is working with the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC) regarding either acquisition or an easement across a parcel adjacent to Barnes Park. GTRLC will be contacting the property owners regarding their interest levels for both options.

#### **9. Elk Rapids Dam Beach Restroom Proposal**

Ms. Koch said she had been approached by the chair of the Elk Rapids Village Parks and Recreation Commission regarding the construction of a public restroom at the Dam Beach and Fishing Park. (See attached pgs. 2-4) The property is owned by the County, but is being leased on a long-term basis to the Village of Elk Rapids.

>>The Committee requested that the Board of Commissioner's review the proposal. <<

#### **10. Right of Way Abandonment Request**

The Committee and Mr. Crawford discussed the Road Commission's request regarding abandonment of a portion of road right-of-way. The Committee asked that civil counsel provides them with a legal opinion regarding the County's ability to refuse the Road Commission's abandonment request. In addition, the Committee wishes civil counsel to provide a legal opinion on monetary compensation for a reversion of a right-of-way.

#### **11. Timber Sale Bid Opening**

One bid was received in the Clerk's office before the deadline as stated on the bid documents; one was received after the deadline.

**Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Ed Boettcher, that Mike Meriwether contact the sole bidder and that a final decision regarding the bid be made at the October Board of Commissioner's meeting. Motion carried – unanimous.**

#### **12. Various Matters**

##### GRNA – Sheneman Property

Ms. Koch said she'd tried to contact Andrew Sheneman regarding his previous interest in the structures on the property, but had not heard back.

##### Antrim Creek Natural Area (ACNA) Boat Launch

Mr. Crawford said the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board had recently met and that they would like to see small improvements at the existing ACNA boat launch such as adding Afton stone to the access road and moving the large rocks back. Mr. Crawford also thought the Army Corps of Engineers should also be contacted regarding what improvements are possible at and around the launch site.

It was the consensus of the Committee that staff should contact the Army Corps of Engineers and the Antrim County Soil Erosion Control Officer regarding ACNA boat launch improvements.

Meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

# Parks and Lands Committee

Ed Boettcher

Bernie Blackmore, Chairman

Gene Dawson

## Minutes – Special Meeting

October 2, 2014

### Held at the Forest Home Township Hall

Members present: Gene Dawson and Ed Boettcher

Members absent: Bernie Blackmore

Staff/others present: Mike Crawford, Janet Koch, Jim Rossiter, Dean Crandall, Terry Smith, Paul Trumble, Lori Luckett, David Schulz, Glen Chown, Matt McDonough, Jennifer Jay, Steve Lagerquist, Jake Bournay, Nate Richardson & Matt Drake

#### **1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m.

#### **2. Public Comment**

None.

#### **3. Glacial Hills Management Agreement**

Matt McDonough, from the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC), distributed copies of a draft partnership agreement. Glen Chown, Executive Director of GTRLC, said that having an agreement in place is a need for all the stakeholders. Terry Smith, Forest Home Township Supervisor, said that assurance for the continued maintenance of the trail needs to be part of the agreement.

The draft agreement includes the formation of a steering committee, which would be comprised of appointed representatives from the County, Township, Village, Conservancy, and others with an interest in the long-term future of Glacial Hills. The group discussed the composition of the steering committee. David Schulz, President of the Village of Bellaire, said the steering committee should include someone with experience in marketing.

Matt Drake, from Short's Brewing Company, said Short's is contributing \$30,000 to the trail and hopes their donation will demonstrate the depth of their commitment to and interest in the trail. There was a discussion of how the network of Antrim Country trails might expand east toward Shanty Creek, to the Jordan River Valley, and beyond. Mr. Chown said Glacial Hills is already getting national attention.

Lori Luckett, Village of Bellaire Clerk, asked about the cost of trail maintenance. Mr. McDonough said GTRLC has someone working on the trail two days per week. If creation of signage and other staff time was included, GTRLC's annual investment in Glacial Hills is \$50,000 to \$75,000.

Referring to the final agreement, Mr. McDonough noted that the County's and the Township's responsibilities could be the same. He also asked that the composition of the steering committee be decided soon, and that the steering committee work toward creating a management plan within a year. He noted that having a plan in place can aid in grant awards.

Monday, October 27 at 10:00 a.m. will be the next meeting for all the stakeholders.

Meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

# **Parks and Lands Committee**

*Ed Boettcher*

*Bernie Blackmore, Chairman*

*Gene Dawson*

## **Minutes – Special Meeting**

**October 7, 2014**

**Held at the Forest Home Township Hall**

Members present: Gene Dawson

Members absent: Ed Boettcher, Bernie Blackmore

Staff/others present: Mike Crawford, Janet Koch, Jim Rossiter, Dean Crandall, Terry Smith, Lori Luckett, David Schulz, Brad Gerlach

### **1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m.

### **2. Public Comment**

None.

### **3. Glacial Hills Management Agreement**

Due to a lack of a quorum, no motions were made.

Dean Crandall, Forest Home Township trustee, said he thought there were three possibilities regarding a management agreement for Glacial Hills. One possibility would be no agreement, a second would be to sign a revised version of the agreement that the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC) had proposed, and a third would be that a Glacial Hills steering committee create a new agreement that would include the hiring of a manager for Glacial Hills.

David Schulz, President of the Village of Bellaire, said that the agreement currently proposed by GTRLC didn't make any mention of maintaining the integrity of any trail easements across the village property. Terry Smith, Forest Home Township trustee, spoke on the necessity of a viable maintenance plan.

Brad Gerlach presented a one-year work plan/budget. He said that maintaining the current 31-mile trail system and maintaining a leadership role with the Friends of Glacial Hills would take approximately 20 hours per week.

In response to a comment from Mr. Schulz about potential revenue, Mr. Gerlach said that Glacial Hills events could be a revenue stream. He said 4 events could be held at Glacial Hills without saturation, adding that a mountain bike race can bring in \$10,000 to \$15,000, a "fat tire" winter bike race can bring in \$5,000 and a running race could bring in \$20,000 to \$25,000. He said that 60% of the attendees at the August mountain bike race were from out of the area.

A discussion ensued regarding possible details of the agreement.

Meeting adjourned at 12:15 a.m.