

Antrim County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

January 28, 2014

Minutes

Members Present: Al Hurd, Linda Gallagher (left at 10:30 a.m.), Don Schuiteman, Stan Moore and Mike Meriwether
Members Absent: Jerry Dobrzelewski, Mike Crawford
Staff Present: Janet Koch
Others: Gene Dawson

1. Call to Order

Janet Koch, Associate Planner, called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m.

2. Organization Meeting

Ms. Koch opened the floor for nominations for Chair.

Stan Moore nominated Al Hurd for Chair.

Motion by Stan Moore, seconded by Don Schuiteman, to elect Al Hurd as Chair. Motion carried – unanimous.

Motion by Stan Moore, seconded by Al Hurd, to elect Linda Gallagher as Vice-Chair. Motion carried – unanimous.

Ms. Koch turned the meeting over to Mr. Hurd.

There was a discussion regarding meeting dates and times for the Advisory Board.

Motion by Linda Gallagher, seconded by Stan Moore, to set the meeting dates and times for 2014 as the 4th Thursday of March, May, July, and September at 1:00 p.m. in the Board of Commissioner's Room. Motion carried – unanimous.

3. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Stan Moore, seconded by Don Schuiteman, to approve the minutes of July 23, 2013 as presented. Motion carried – unanimous.

4. Various Matters

Bike Trail

Gene Dawson, Antrim County Commissioner, told the Board about the bike trail that is being planned on the west side of Antrim County. This proposed trail will connect 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.

Mr. Dawson said Kristy Mortham, Executive Director of the Antrim Conservation District, is attending a Department of Natural Resources (DNR) workshop for grant applications. Ms. Mortham will pass on information about DNR grants; especially grant opportunities concerning bike trails.

Mr. Schuiteman said the Advisory Board should be behind a bike trail.

Motion by Don Schuiteman, seconded by Linda Gallagher, that Antrim County support a bike trail through the County and support any trail grant possibilities. Motion carried – unanimous.

Water Trail

The Board discussed the efforts of the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC) to establish a waterways trail through the Chain of Lakes. Ms. Gallagher said that Short's Brewing Company is partnering with GTRLC regarding the water trail.

Also discussed were local efforts to initiate a summer paddling event. Ms. Koch was asked to contact the County's previous Associate Planner and the local chambers of commerce with regards to the status of the event.

Ms. Gallagher said that Antrim County has a great future with bike and water trails, but that private property owners need to be kept in mind.

Petoskey Stone Festival

Ms. Gallagher said that Kristy Mortham has been asked by the Board of Commissioner's to coordinate the Petoskey Stone Festival. Ms. Gallagher said that preparations are in good shape and they look to be on their way to another successful festival.

Boat Launch at Antrim Creek Natural Area (ACNA)

Mr. Dawson said that Mike Crawford, Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, has spoken about a Safe Harbor program from the United States Coast Guard. Mike Meriwether said there is no safe harbor for small craft between Elk Rapids and Charlevoix. Al Hurd said that putting a road into ACNA would be a major undertaking. Mr. Dawson, Mr. Meriwether, and Mr. Moore agreed that ACNA is a natural harbor and is well-suited for a launch site.

Mr. Hurd asked about parking. Mr. Moore said it could be made more functional and added that the Army Corps of Engineers said any location for a boat launch would mean dredging.

Motion by Don Schuiteman, seconded by Stan Moore, to recommend that the Parks and Lands Committee pursue a boat launch at the Antrim Creek Natural Area. Motion carried – unanimous.

Mr. Dawson said that young families need recreational access and that it's up to the people who have time to attend meetings to make sure it happens.

5. Public Comment

None.

Meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

Antrim County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

March 27, 2014
Minutes

Members Present: Mike Crawford, Don Schuiteman, Mike Meriwether, Jerome Dobrzelewski
Members Absent: Stan Moore, Linda Gallagher
Staff Present: Janet Koch
Others Present: Gene Dawson, Kristy Mortham

1. Call to Order

In the absence of a Chair or a Vice-Chair, the meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m. by Janet Koch, Associate Planner.

Al Hurd, elected as Chair at the January meeting, resigned on March 3, 2014. Linda Gallagher, who had been elected as Vice Chair at the January meeting, will be the Board's Chair.

Don Schuiteman nominated Mike Meriwether for Vice Chair.

Motion by Don Schuiteman, seconded by Jerome Dobrzelewski, to elect Mike Meriwether as Vice Chair. Motion carried – unanimous.

At this point, Mr. Meriwether began presiding over the meeting.

2. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Don Schuiteman, seconded by Jerome Dobrzelewski, to approve the minutes of January 28, 2014 as presented. Motion carried – unanimous.

3. Advisory Board Member Update

The Board read the resignation letter from former Board Chair Al Hurd. A discussion ensued regarding the vacant Board seat. Gene Dawson said he would be interested in serving as a member of the Board when his term as an Antrim County Board of Commissioner is over in November.

4. Petoskey Stone Festival (PSF) Update

Kristy Mortham, Executive Director of the Antrim Conservation District, told the Board they have already received some sponsorships for the PSF. She listed Alden State Bank, Shanty Creek Resorts, and Dewey Insurance. She added that vendor applications have also been coming in.

Ms. Mortham told the Board that the PSF website is now being updated by Corey Hoeksema of Mission Computers in Central Lake. Mr. Hoeksema is making updates to the website in exchange for a Festival sponsorship. There was a discussion regarding ownership of the web address www.petoskeystonefestival.com and the possibility of the County obtaining ownership of the address.

Ms. Mortham mentioned that a number of the entertainers have been scheduled, including Wings of Wonder and the Native American Dancers. The trout pond is expected to be a part of the PSF again this year.

Mike Crawford asked about the possibility of a 3-on-3 youth basketball tournament. Mr. Meriwether said he'd look into it and suggested a 5th and 6th grade tournament.

The Board discussed the 5K run, trail clearing, and the sales of tee-shirts.

The next Petoskey Stone Festival meeting is scheduled for 2:00 p.m. on April 15th at the Conservation District.

Various Matters

The Board discussed the position of an Antrim County Parks Director. Mr. Meriwether said it was mentioned in the County's Recreation Plan.

Motion by Don Schuiteman, seconded by Jerome Dobrzelewski, to request that the Parks and Land Committee consider directing the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to look into the benefits of having an Antrim County Parks Director position.

Motion carried – unanimous.

Glacial Hills Agreement

Ms. Koch told the Board that a draft version of a partnership agreement between Forest Home Township, Antrim County, the Village of Bellaire, and the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy would be presented to the Parks and Land Committee at their next meeting.

Mr. Meriwether said there was some confusion on whether or not snowmobiles were allowed at Glacial Hills.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:16 p.m.

Antrim County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

May 22, 2014
Minutes

Members Present: Linda Gallagher, Mike Meriwether, Jerome Dobrzelewski
Members Absent: Mike Crawford, Stan Moore, Don Schuiteman
Staff Present: Janet Koch
Others Present: Gene Dawson, Kristy Mortham

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m. by Linda Gallagher, Chair of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board.

2. Public Comment

None.

3. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Mike Meriwether, seconded by Gene Dawson, to approve the minutes of March 27, 2014 as presented.

4. Petoskey Stone Festival Update

Ms. Gallagher informed the Advisory Board that 31 vendors are registered to attend the festival, a number that is down from previous years. She said this is probably due partly to economic hardships, partly to the changing demographics of their vendors, and partly due to the continued unseasonably cool weather.

She added that food vendors have been lined up and that the entertainment would be the same as the previous year and that newspapers across northern Michigan will be carrying advertisements for the festival.

5. Recommendations from Parks and Lands Committee

There was a short discussion about the action of the Board of Commissioners regarding the Parks & Lands Committee recommendations. Janet Koch, Associate Planner, said the draft minutes from the most recent Board meeting had included no motion from the Commissioners regarding the Committee's recommendations.

Parks Department

The motion from the Parks & Lands Committee meeting on April 29, 2014 was as follows:

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.

Mike Meriwether, Antrim County Forester and Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Member, said he doesn't see the County having the funds to create a true Parks Department. Gene Dawson, County Commissioner, said that it would be beneficial to plan for the future. Mr. Meriwether said the Antrim Conservation District should be considered for managing the Antrim County parks.

Ms. Koch asked if the Board of Commissioners would agree to have non-county employees in charge of the County parks. Mr. Meriwether said much of that work is already contracted out or being done by the Conservation District.

Ms. Koch asked Mr. Meriwether about a proposal regarding a Parks Director position that he'd told the Parks & Lands Committee he would put together. Mr. Meriwether said after some preliminary calculations, he discovered that it was likely that the current financial set up is probably less expensive for the County. He told the Advisory Board that he would try and put something on paper.

Antrim Creek Natural Area (ACNA) Boat Launch Grant Funding

The motion from the Parks & Lands Committee meeting on April 29, 2014 was as follows:

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. Dawson said he'd attended the recent ACNA Commission meeting and the Commission didn't appear to be in favor of any large changes at the ACNA. It was the opinion of the Advisory Board that in order to research grant possibilities, they needed more details about what exactly was being proposed. There was a discussion regarding other locations for boat launches and Harbors of Refuge. Ms. Gallagher asked the Advisory Board in which direction they wished to go.

Ms. Koch said she would research what requirements there might be for creating a Harbor of Refuge and bring the results back to the Advisory Board.

6. Various Matters

Bike Trail

Mr. Dawson told the Advisory Board that he'd attended a bike trail meeting regarding the Traverse City to Charlevoix bike trail. He said plans for the trail from Acme to Elk Rapids were almost complete, as were trail plans from Eastport north to Charlevoix County. The most likely connection between Elk Rapids and Eastport will be the US 31 right-of-way, but there are no solid plans at this point.

Antrim Conservation District

Kristy Mortham, Executive Director of the Antrim Conservation District along with Mike Meriwether, told the Advisory Board that tickets for the Conservation District's fundraising event are now on sale. "All Things Local" will be held at the Banks Township Hall on Thursday, June 26, 2014 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

Antrim County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

**July 24, 2014
Minutes**

Members Present: Linda Gallagher, Mike Crawford, Cherie Hogan, Don Schuiteman, Mike Spence, Gene Dawson
Members Absent: Stan Moore, Jerome Dobrzelewski, Mike Meriwether
Staff Present: Janet Koch, Eileen Wallick (arrived late)
Others Present: Kathy Peterson, Diane Richter, Dean Crandall

1. Call to Order

The meeting, held at the Elk Rapids Day Park Pavilion, was called to order at 1:20 p.m. by Linda Gallagher, Chair of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board.

2. Public Comment

Cherie Hogan and Mike Spence were welcomed as new members of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and introductions were made.

3. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Linda Gallagher, to approve the minutes of May 22, 2014 as presented. Motion carried - unanimous.

4. Parks Director Proposal

At the last meeting, Mike Meriwether, County Forester, had told the Advisory Board that he would try to put something on paper regarding a Parks Director. Mr. Meriwether was absent from the meeting and had not sent any proposal to be included with the agendas.

Ms. Gallagher said having a Parks Director would be a good idea for the future. Dean Crandall said he hoped any recommendations from the Advisory Board for a Parks Director would include an expansion of the Antrim County parks system's role in the recreation of the County.

5. Harbor of Refuge - Grant Information

Janet Koch, Associate Planner, told the Advisory Board what she'd learned at a recent waterways grant workshop in Gaylord. One of the presenters was Paul Petersen, Waterways Grants Program Manager for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Ms. Koch asked Mr. Peterson about Harbors of Refuge, and he said the DNR had no official designation for the term "Harbor of Refuge" and that the term didn't have any special significance for grant applications.

Ms. Koch said that during the workshop, it was mentioned that preliminary engineering grants are available. However, it was also said that unless the legislature changes the funding mechanism for the waterways grants soon, there won't be much grant money available in two years. Mike Crawford said working toward a preliminary engineering grant might be the best way to approach improvements at Antrim Creek Natural Area.

6. Water Trail Maps - Antrim County Parks

Ms. Koch told the Advisory Board that the County Board of Commissioners had approved the inclusion of five Antrim County parks on the water trails map being assembled by the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC). The parks are Notewares Landing and Willow Day Park on Lake Bellaire, plus the Elk Rapids Day Park, Barnes Park, and Antrim Creek Natural Area on East Bay.

7. TC to Charlevoix Trail Update

Gene Dawson and Ms. Koch updated the Board on plans for a trail that would connect the Traverse City TART trail to the Little Traverse Wheelway, which currently ends near Charlevoix. Ms. Koch had met that morning with Emily Meyerson, Top of Michigan Trails Council, Barbara Nelson-Jameson from the National Park Service, and three officials from Torch Lake Township; Alan Martel, Supervisor, Kathy Windiate, Clerk, and Josh Vey, Zoning Administrator. At that meeting, Ms. Meyerson and Ms. Nelson-Jameson had explained that the best location for a trail through the majority of Torch Lake Township would be inside the US 31 right-of-way and separate from the roadway.

Mr. Dawson spoke on the many benefits regarding trails, including financial benefits. Ms. Koch said the creation of an overall trail plan connecting Traverse City and Charlevoix would be considered a regional trail plan, something that is often a benefit to grant applications. Ms. Meyerson and Ms. Nelson-Jameson said construction of the trail could take many years and would most likely be done in sections.

8. Elk Rapids Day Park Pavilion Update

Ms. Koch said the pavilion was almost complete. A few small finishing details are all that remain. She told the Advisory Board that the architect's fees, which included design, construction documents, bidding and construction administration, were \$7,650 and the contractor's bid for the project was \$40,000, a cost that was partially offset by a private donation of \$23,000. The Advisory Board agreed that the pavilion was a positive addition to the County parks system.

9. Glacial Hills Update

Dean Crandall, Forest Home Township Trustee, distributed current copies of the Glacial Hills Natural Area and Pathway trail system. There are currently approximately 30 miles of hiking and biking trails. Mr. Crandall gave a short history of the project, which started as a brainstorm in 2002. He and Terry Smith, Forest Home Township Supervisor, talked to the GTRLC and Antrim County about a collaborative project in 2003. A DNR Land Trust grant was obtained and trail building began four years ago. The first trails were built by hand with volunteer labor but they quickly switched over to building by machine. There has also been assistance from Americorps NCCC volunteers.

Mr. Crandall commended Antrim County for entering into this kind of productive partnership. He added that their best estimates show an average of 100 people per day use the trail system. Glacial Hill's first bike race is scheduled for Sunday, August 3. Mr. Crandall noted that for every racer who attends the event, it is estimated that a family of three also attends and spends an average of \$342 per day.

10. Various Matters

The meeting place for the next Parks & Lands Advisory Board was discussed. Both Willow Day and Antrim Creek Natural Area were suggested.

Motion by Gene Dawson, seconded by Linda Gallagher, to hold the next meeting at the Antrim Creek Natural Area. Motion carried as follows: Yes - Linda Gallagher, Cherie Hogan, Mike Spence, Gene Dawson; No - Don Schuiteman.

11. Public/Member Comment

None.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

Antrim County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

September 25, 2014
Minutes

Members Present: Linda Gallagher, Mike Crawford, Jerome Dobrzelewski, Don Schuiteman,
Mike Spence
Members Absent: Cherie Hogan, Stan Moore, Mike Meriwether
Staff Present: Janet Koch
Others Present: Art Brown, Gene Dawson, Kristy Mortham

1. Call to Order

The meeting, held at the Antrim Creek Natural Area, was called to order at 1:15 pm by Linda Gallagher, Chair of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board.

2. Public Comment

Jerry Dobrzelewski asked about having a safe harbor at Antrim Creek Natural Area (ACNA). Don Schuiteman said he thought Antrim County should go as far as they can regarding a safe harbor. Art Brown said the economic development of Antrim County depends on using the water in a big way. He added that a safe harbor was needed.

3. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Don Schuiteman, seconded by Mike Spence, to approve the minutes of July 24, 2014 as presented. Motion carried - unanimous.

4. Parks Director Proposal

Mike Meriwether was absent from the meeting and had not provided any proposal regarding a Parks Director. Linda Gallagher said the County needs a Parks Director, but that it's a matter of money. Mr. Dobrzelewski suggested that revenues from the Forestry Fund be earmarked to fund a Parks Director.

Mike Spence told the Advisory Board that the grants they'd recently received in Elk Rapids had been for marina dredging. Mr. Spence pointed out the large size of the Elk Rapids marina parking lot, which is at maximum use for eight weeks out of the year.

The Advisory Board discussed possible improvements at the ACNA boat launch. Ms. Gallagher said getting the opinion of Heidi Shaffer would be valuable. Mike Crawford, Chair of the Board of Commissioners, said the Army Corps of Engineers should be consulted. It was agreed that small improvements could be made at relatively low cost.

5. 2015 Budget

Janet Koch, Associate Planner, said the Advisory Board's 2015 budget included a \$1000 line item for contractual services.

6. November meeting date

Ms. Koch said that though there were funds in the budget to meet again in 2014 that the Advisory Board was scheduled to meet four times a year and this was their fourth meeting. Mr. Crawford said that if the Parks and Lands Committee is directing the Advisory Board to complete a task, that the Board should continue to meet. The Committee will hold their next meeting on Friday, December 5 at 10:00 am at the County building.

7. Various Matters

Ms. Gallagher proposed that the Advisory Board receive future agendas via email. The Board agreed.

8. Public/Member Comment

Gene Dawson mentioned a recent article in the Traverse City *Record-Eagle* about the economic benefits of trail systems.

Art Brown said it might be a benefit to do a survey of schoolchildren regarding their level of interest in learning about water-oriented activities.

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

Antrim County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

**December 5, 2014
Minutes**

Members Present: Linda Gallagher, Mike Crawford, Jerome Dobrzelewski, Stan Moore, Don Schuiteman, Mike Spence
Members Absent: Cherie Hogan, Mike Meriwether
Staff Present: Janet Koch

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 am by Linda Gallagher, Chair of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board.

2. Public Comment

None.

3. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Jerome Dobrzelewski, seconded by Mike Spence, to approve the minutes of September 25, 2014 as presented. Motion carried - unanimous.

4. Parks Director Proposal

Janet Koch, Associate Planner, said the previous day's Administration Committee meeting had discussed the issue and that Ed Boettcher, County Commissioner, had said he didn't like the title of "Parks Director Proposal," that it was more a study regarding the reorganization of the current parks system. Ms. Koch added that Laura Stanek, County Commissioner, had said all the Commissioners should discuss the issue before such a study is commissioned to clarify exactly what the scope of work should be.

Don Schuiteman said it would be worthwhile to bring Mike Meriwether, County Forester, into the conversation. Linda Gallagher suggested a work group to work on the document and report to the Buildings, Lands & Infrastructure Committee. The Parks & Recreation Advisory Board agreed that they would be willing to take on such a task.

There was a discussion regarding the public bidding for the study project.

5. Glacial Hills Management Plan

Ms. Gallagher said both the Village of Bellaire and Forest Home Township had passed the resolution regarding Glacial Hills. The resolution named an appointee from each of the three units of government that own property at Glacial Hills to work together to form a joint venture agreement regarding the trail system. David Schulz was appointed from the Village and Dean Crandall was appointed from Forest Home Township. The County Board of Commissioners will vote on the resolution at their next meeting.

There was a discussion regarding hunting on the Glacial Hills properties.

6. Petoskey Stone Festival Update

Kristy Mortham, Executive Director of the Antrim Conservation District (ACD), had sent Ms. Koch an email that said she couldn't attend the meeting. In the email, however, she included an update about the Petoskey Stone Festival that included the following items:

- Next meeting will be held at ACD's Office on January 6th at 1 p.m.
- There will be 2 meetings in January; the second meeting will be a button making potluck.
- She is collecting the button machine, t-shirts, signs, etc. from Barnes Park.
- Linda Hoogerhyde is going to take over vendor mapping, notifications, and be the point of contact.
- In January we will start soliciting sponsorships.

Mike Crawford, Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, said he has already been talking to potential sponsors.

7. Forestry Update

Mr. Meriwether was not present at the meeting.

8. Various Matters

Mr. Schuiteman asked about progress on the Antrim Creek Natural Area (ACNA) boat launch. Ms. Koch said she'd visited the site with Heidi Shaffer, Antrim County Soil Erosion Control Officer, and had learned that virtually any improvement of any sort to the boat launch area would require permissions from both the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and the Army Corps of Engineers. She said she will continue to work on learning more about small boat launch improvements at ACNA.

Mr. Dobrzelewski said ACNA has a number of issues that are hard to solve with regard to a boat launch, the narrow entrance road being only one of them. He spoke in favor of the construction of a boat launch at Barnes Park. Stan Moore said both sites would require annual dredging.

Mr. Dobrzelewski said if the County has the finances, that they should move ahead on the project, adding that the objective should be to follow through with the project's recommendations.

Ms. Gallagher said it's a matter of how much the County wants to develop its parks. She saw a need for small improvements at the ANCA boat launch that would allow an easier launch for small craft, but that Barnes Park was the best location for a larger scale boat launch.

Mike Spence said projected use figures are critical to be able to provide the correct amount of parking.

9. Public/Member Comment

The next meeting will be an organizational meeting. A date of Friday, January 23 at 10:00 am was selected by consensus.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 p.m.