



LAGRANGE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF
PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD
MINUTES

April 28, 2022 7:00PM
Maple Wood Nature Center

PRESENT: John Egli, Eric, Maginn, Ardala Hepler, Paul Yoder, Julia Wolheter, Paul Baker

ALSO PRESENT: Mary Franke, Terry Martin, Emily Wolfe, Richard Muntz

Meeting brought to order 7PM.

MINUTES: Julia Wolheter moved and Ardala Hepler seconded a motion to approve the minutes from the March 24, 2022 meeting. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Mike Metz Fen LWCF Project

The board previously approved bid from Fossil Graphics for Item 8A Interpretive Signs \$2,237.00. Mary Franke turned in the signs for order and some things needed changed from original order. Number of signs changed to include 2@ 2x4 Interpretive signs (Fen and Restoration), and 2 @2x4 Trail Map Signs. The revised quote is \$3,963.00; which, includes the difference in number of signs and design fees by Fossil Graphics to build the production format they require. The amount budgeted for signage was \$6,500 so we are still under budget. Julia Wolheter moved and Eric Maginn seconded to approve the revised quote of \$3,363.00. Motion carried.

B. Delt Pavilion Project

We received plans from Anchor Construction, LLC at 90% completion. The plans are here for viewing after the meeting. Mary Franke and George DeWald are going to schedule a meeting to go over specifics and any changes to the plans before final draft is presented for approval. Paul Yoder offered to be available to attend the meeting as well.

Terry Martin suggested asking the county for ARPA funds to help fund the new pavilion build. The property on Big Long Lake is slowly moving forward to be sold. Terry Martin shared that the county is waiting to hold a meeting with the neighboring property owners to share the plans and seek anyone's interest in purchasing the lot before it is offered to the general public.

C. Drinking Fountains

Mary Franke shared three options with pricing.

1. A double/bi-level drinking fountain \$1,250 + \$300 shipping
 2. A bottle filler unit only \$1395 w/free shipping
 3. A multi-level combo fountain & bottle filler with pet water at bottom \$2,495 w/free shipping
- Delt Church Park would need at least 3 new ADA compliant units. The board discussed and suggested getting prices on a combo fountain & bottle filler unit (without pet option) and add spigots.

D. Ranger Reserve

Since Doug Leslie is already a county employee, he cannot volunteer for the Parks Dept. and perform duties similar to his existing full time position. He would need to be paid from the Park Dept. Seasonal employees fund and/or overtime fund, and any time he works, he would be paid overtime wages. He would only work to help Randy Merrifield during busy holidays, if backup is needed, or to cover time off. A new job description was created for this position. Paul Yoder moved and Paul Baker seconded to approve the new job description for "Assistant Park Ranger". Motion carried.

Paul Yoder moved and Eric Maginn seconded to approve a base wage up to \$11.98 per hour for this position. Motion carried.

E. Summer Employment Update

1. Human Resources is advertising everywhere for Lifeguards and Swim Instructors.
2. Lifeguard: Cali Godlewski is planning to be day camp assistant and become lifeguard certified so the kids can swim during camp. A new job description has been created for this position.
3. Swim Instructor: One applicant so far. May only have one swim session per day, after day camp.
4. Summer Maintenance: Three hires from last summer will be returning for this summer.
5. Gate Attendant: Mary Franke shared that money taken verses money spent doesn't show any benefit to having someone in the gatehouse. The exception would be a week or two around July 4 holiday. Consideration to having an attendant during the holiday week(s) will be discussed.

Eric Maginn moved and Julia Wolheter seconded to approve the new job description "Summer Camp Assistant / Lifeguard Certified". Motion carried.

F. Summer Youth Program at Delt

Mary Franke shared that this event keeps growing – Ben's Pretzels will have free pretzels, a free meal is being provided, Pepsi is providing water and soda, all area police depts, fire depts, state police, conservation officers, REMC, etc. are planning to be present with interactive activities. We still need doorprizes compatible for kids 6th grade and older. Jim Gust is donating a kayak. Event is August 6, 2022 from 10AM – 2 PM.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Community Service

Jim Gust is retiring. His last day is next Wednesday, May 4. The court system is looking for a replacement and is also changing the way community service works. The number of kids has declined for many reasons and this will affect the Parks Dept. Jim Gust shared that community service offered between 100-150 hours of labor to Park Dept projects per week. This is like losing the labor time of 2 full-time employees. Mary Frank shared that according to NRPA, our park department is understaffed based on number of parks and acres maintained. In the near future, the Parks Dept. may need to ask for budget increases to add at least one more full-time maintenance position.

B. New Positions

Martin Franke at Soil & Water Dept. has a part-time employee, Kyle Burchett. Martin asked for the possibility of a shared full-time position for Kyle. Kyle currently works 3 days at the Soil & Water office, so the other two days, he would be available to us for maintenance duties, or to help the Naturalist with programs/events. After discussion, no decision was made at this time.

C. Programs

Leslie Arnold's report shared that the Maple Syrup school tours were record breaking. In 2017, 527 attended the tour program and this year, 1067 kids attended. Teachers had great positive responses.

D. Pine Knob Rental Rate

Last meeting, the daily rental rate of \$200 was approved. The weekend rate needs to be updated as well. Julia Wolheter moved and Eric Maginn seconded to approve the Pine Knob weekend rate of \$400 (Friday 3:30 to Sunday closing). Motion carried.

E. Other

1. Powerwagon – This was damaged beyond repair by fire when starting the equipment. Insurance has already issued a check of \$2,208.93 for replacement. Three quotes shared: County Line Engine \$2519.99; Schmucker Motor Repair \$2999.95; and Kyrders Lawnmower Sales \$2999.99 plus \$105 freight. Paul Yoder moved and Eric Maginn seconded approval to replace powerwagon from County Line Engine.
2. Leslie Arnold’s Car Accident – As Leslie was turning into Maple Wood, a car attempted to pass her and hit the Naturalist car (Chevy Equinox). Leslie was sore for a few days, but had no injuries. The other driver had no injuries and is not insured. The car is currently at Hite’s Body Shop waiting for repair with a damage quote of around \$2000.
3. Disc Golf Course – Maintenance has rearranged the course and started replacing the tee pads -- they look great. Looking forward to seeing it complete. A shade sail will be installed over the old Field Pavilion slab to serve as a meeting/resting station for holes 1, 9, and 18. The shade sail will be about 32 x 23 and is quoted at \$977. Life expectancy is undetermined.
4. Quarterly Financial Report – Mary Franke shared the financial reports of the two park funds. The “Disc Golf Course Supplies” line will be funded by donations received. So far, \$10,000 has been received and will be appropriated to this line to cover expenses.
5. QR Codes – Paul Baker inquired about the use of QR codes yet to help determine how the parks are used. They haven’t been installed yet.

Board members took time at the end of the meeting to view and discuss the plans provided for the proposed new Delt Church Park Pavilion.

Paul Yoder moved and Ardala Hepler seconded a motion to approve April docket claims as presented. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned 8:20PM

Executive Session followed.

Brought to order 8:30PM. Adjourned 8:55PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Emily Wolfe, for Ardala Hepler

EW/ew