



Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date: June 28, 2023

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Location: Virtual

Roll Call

Attending remotely:

Julie Clark; Grand Traverse, Grand Traverse County

Jim Bradley; Ontonagon, Ontonagon County

Mike McDonald; Meridian Township, Ingham County

Shaun McKeon; Lansing Township, Ingham County

Absent:

Ann Conklin

Mike Foote

Bob Hoffmeyer

Mary Pitcher

Chris Graham

Dave Nyberg

Present for the Department of Natural Resources:

Ron Olson, Chief

Jacklin Blodgett

Vicki McGhee

Kriss Bennett

Nicole Hunt

Deb Jensen

Scott Pratt

Barbara Graves

Opening Comments

Committee member Julie Clark called the meeting to order at 2:09 p.m. Roll call was taken. No quorum was established.

Information Only

Fort Custer Phase 2

Deb Jensen, Park Plan Administrator, gave a presentation of the Fort Custer Phase 2 General Management Plan. The park is over 3,000 acres along the Kalamazoo River with a modern campground, two loops, inland lakes, day use areas, and over 40 miles of trails. Highlights include the negotiations taking place with the federal government to add the former antenna field located in the middle of the park in exchange for a piece in the northern part of the park as well as several ARPA projects taking place, such as the replacement of two shower buildings and electricity in the west campground loop.

ARPA Projects

Kriss Bennett, Unit Manager, presented the progress of ARPA projects. Highlights include the completion of the electrical upgrades at Interlochen, updates to campground roads and completed toilet/shower building at Mitchell, structural repairs and new exhibits at Bay City Visitor Center, upgrades to the bunk house and Chapel buildings at Hartwick Pines, upgrades to toilet/shower building at Straits, and the start of the first seven miles of the White Pine Trail. Committee member Clark told the staff they are doing a phenomenal job on moving and implementing these funds.

Parks and Recreation Update

Chief Ron Olson said there has been no new changes to DNR leadership and that staff are still serving in active roles. He said the 2024 budget is about to be reported out. He also gave status on the July 4 weekend which are just under where 2021 numbers were (the second highest at 95.4% occupancy). Recreation Passport participation is around 40%. Camping and lodging is grossing about \$80M. The Snowmobile fund was flat, and ORV is leveling off.

Ron also shared that the improvements being done to the Kal-Haven Trail and the Black River Bridge replacement have caused some upset with local groups, but discussion and communication has taken place and the project improvements will continue to move along.

He said solicitation for new MSPAC members will begin soon now that final details have been ironed out.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:11 p.m.