

MINUTES

Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee

Wednesday, June 8, 2022

2:00 p.m.

Microsoft Teams Meeting / (248) 509-0316 | ID: 788 279 779#

PRESENT FOR THE MSPAC

Attending remotely:

Ann Conklin; Canton, Wayne County, Michigan
Julie Clark; Traverse City, Grand Traverse County, Michigan
Shaun McKeon; Lansing Township, Ingham County, Michigan
Chris Graham; Barton Hills Village, Washtenaw County, Michigan
Bob Hoffmeyer; Clarkston, Oakland County, Michigan
Mike McDonald; Lansing, Ingham County, Michigan
Mike Foote; Ada, Kent County, Michigan

ABSENT

Jim Bradley
Mary Pitcher
Dave Nyberg

PRD STAFF PRESENT

Ron Olson, Chief
Michael Desnoyer
Vicki McGhee
Jason Fleming
Nicole Hunt
Kris Bennett
Scott Pratt
Nicole Hill
Barbara Graves

OPENING COMMENTS

Committee member Ann Conklin called the meeting to order at 2:18 p.m. and asked for a roll call. A quorum was established at 3:15 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Committee member Conklin motioned for approval of the April 13, 2022 minutes. The motion was moved by **Julie Clark**, supported by **Mike Foote**, and passed unanimously.

INFORMATION ONLY

Flint State Park Update (Ron Olson, Chief)

The land consists of about 300 acres with a lot of existing trail infrastructure. The \$32M will be used to upgrade existing structures, create access to trails and water, and modest maintenance improvements. The funds will have to be obligated by 2024. The Mott Foundation has pledged \$18M in an endowment fund that will yield \$1M per year for operations. The park will be run in partnership with Genesee County Parks. A concept plan is done, and cost estimates are being reviewed to put out for bid.

Land Use Orders (Nicole Hunt, Regulatory Unit Manager)

No. 2 of 2022 - Proposes to expand the open hours of the state parks where a designated, signed, dark sky preserve is located.

No. 3 of 2022 - Clarifications on prohibited acts relating to operational requirements at North Higgins Lake State Park, consistent with those at South Higgins Lake State Park, as well as beach utilization at the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center by requiring to be a register guest or by receiving permission from the manager at the facility.

No. 4 of 2022 Focuses on equestrian campgrounds in state parks and addresses safety concerns with non-equestrian campers. Provides clarification on operational requirements relating to camping in a state park equestrian campground and a requirement to have at least one horse per campsite.

No. 5 of 2022 Focuses on operations at boating access sites relating to activities allowed and prohibited.

Staffing Updates and STW Pay Increase (Michael Desnoyer, Administrative Services Chief)

Filled 66 positions since start of the calendar year. There are 67 vacancies, of which 37 are rangers. Starting January 27, hiring rates increased for STWs to \$15/hour, up from \$10.20, \$11.20, and \$12.00 depending on region and experience. A supplemental was submitted to cover the increase, however, is still in the legislative process. Therefore, funding was moved around to cover the increase. There were 626 STWs on board at the beginning of May, compared to 908 in 2019. At the end of May, less than 1,000 are on board, compared to 1,031 in 2019; 1,022 at the end of May and now at 1,032; about 30 positions behind since 2021. Received significant interest since the increase in the wage, but still having trouble filling positions in remote locations. The plan is to implement tiered rates again in 2023.

Scott Pratt, Southern Field Operations Chief, PRD, introduced Nicole Hill, the new Summer Youth Engagement and Employment Coordinator for PRD. Nicole has over 20 years of experience in workforce development programming with youth in the city of Detroit and surrounding areas, and they are excited to have her on board.

Belle Isle Annual Report Overview (Scott Pratt, Southern Field Operations Chief)

An overview was given of the Belle Isle Annual report that was shared with the Detroit City Council as a requirement of the lease. Highlights include park staffing levels, LED efforts, public safety breakdown, park attendance, capital improvement funding, and planning highlights, including the old zoo planning.

Federal ARPA Projects (Kriss Bennett, Development Unit Manager)

Shovel-ready project programming went out first with successful implementation. Round two projects consist of 24 groups, equaling about 62 projects. The rest of the projects are of projects awaiting more information (financing, needing more one-on-one with project teams to clear hurdles). A geographic map will be posted on the website so the public and staff can view the status of projects.

Keith J Charters Traverse City State Park Partnership Opportunity (Julie Clark)

Julie Clark was asked by East Bay Township to bring attention to a potential partnership for the replacement of a new pedestrian bridge connecting the Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park across US 31. The Township is interested in working with the DNR and other partners (private and public) to pursue a new ADA accessible bridge as part of a larger redevelopment effort adjacent to the park.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

Next regular meeting:
August 10, 2022

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:42 p.m.