

CITIZENS COMMITTEE FOR MICHIGAN STATE PARKS

Wednesday, January 31, 2007

Foster Community Center

Lansing, MI

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Murdock Jemerson, Chair
Tom Ferguson, Vice Chair
Tom Bailey
James Bradley
Betsy Clark
Rev. Hurley Coleman, Jr.
Christopher Graham
Robert Hoffmeyer
Kathy Lewand
Michael McDonald
Charles Nelson
Mary Pitcher
Todd Scott

MEMBERS ABSENT

James Hendricks
William Rose
Janet Howard Washington
Sam Washington

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT

Sandra Clark
Duncan Wyeth
Mary Brown

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT

Curtis Hertel
Donna Stine

DNR STAFF PRESENT

Dennis Fedewa, Chief Deputy
Ron Olson, Chief, Parks and Recreation
George Cameron
Harold Herta
Vicki Anthes
Tony Herek
Yolanda Taylor
Paul Yauk
Linda Warren
Paul Curtis

INTRODUCTIONS

Murdock Jemerson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:30 am with roll call and review of the meeting agenda. He also introduced Mary Brown, Natural Resources Commissioner, who will replace Keith Charters as an ex-officio member.

PRD STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE

Paul Curtis, PRD Strategic Planning Coordinator, gave an overview of the strategic planning process, the status, and the timeline for completion. The strategic planning sessions began in November, 2006 with the Citizens Committee for Michigan State Parks (CCMSP) and the Michigan State Waterways Commission (MSWC). Meeting with the districts were then scheduled, with the first one being held in January and continuing through early April. Public input workshops have been scheduled for the months of March and April. A visioning workshop to include stakeholders is scheduled for April 26 and 26, 2007 in Roscommon. All members of the CCMSP have been invited to attend. Paul also gave an overview of the timeline to complete the strategic planning process, proposing to complete the process by November or December, 2007.

Paul presented an assessment of the 6 Vision 2020 goals, listing the strengths, challenges, opportunities, threats and other issues that were raised by this group at their strategic planning session held in November, 2006. He also presented the same assessments of the 4 MSWC goals that were established in 2005, and identified during the MSWC strategic planning session held in November, 2006.

Paul is currently working on the next district meetings, interaction with and input from Department eco-teams, finalizing the scheduling of the public input workshops, developing a list of stakeholders to invite to the April visioning workshop, and setting up a website for the strategic planning process.

Chuck Nelson asked that members of the CCMSP make an effort to attend a public input workshop that is scheduled in their area or region to hear what the public has to say and to make a presence from the CCMSP. He also discussed some portion of this group having more integration and interaction with the MSWC to bridge any gaps.

Vicki Anthes, Planning Section Chief, also asked the members of the CCMSP to submit any recommendations for stakeholders to her as soon as possible.

Tom Bailey commented that he does not see any connection in the department for planning or strategy between forest campgrounds and park campgrounds. He further commented that, as we work to address some of the bigger issues of overall funding and the integration of planning and strategy, we also include these two areas --- state park and forest campgrounds --- in the overall planning process.

Ron Olson responded that this effort will be addressed in the eco-team meetings, but maybe not to the extent that is necessary. Ron agreed that there was some misconception that state park fees were going to be raised again when, in reality, it applies to the proposed state forest campground fee increases. State park fees will remain the same for the 2007 season.

Chuck Nelson further commented that the Conservation Summit will be a prime opportunity to discuss these overlapping issues, namely, the proposed increase in state forest campground fees, the hunting and fishing license fee package increases, as well as the state park campground fees. He agreed that we need to integrate and address all of the fee issues. He further commented that trails are another overlapping link and that we need to make sure we address all issues that cut across lines and build a positive way to integrate all of them.

Tom Bailey agreed that we need to identify and recognize these overlapping areas, integrate them into the strategic planning process and address them along with the long-term funding issues.

Betsy Clark commented that the public's discontent with the hunting and fishing license package is that they are doubling their fees, where the increase in state park fees was a mild increase.

Ron Olson commented that this group will spend some time later today to go over the park systems financial status and give each member an overview/briefing for the Conservation Summit. He further commented that the Summit is going to be an interesting discussion, involving the Departments of Environmental Quality, Natural Resources, Agriculture, and covering all issues associated with hunting, fishing, state forests, state parks, trails, etc. Ron asked that committee members bring some ideas and recommendations to the table if they are able to attend.

The regular meeting of the CCMSP adjourned at 10:30 a.m. so the Subcommittees could breakout into their workgroups to identify work plans, goals and objectives for 2007.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS

The regular meeting of the CCMSP adjourned at 10:30 am so the subcommittees could breakout into their groups to identify work plan goals and objectives for 2007. The subcommittees will report their goals and objectives at the ending of the regular session.

Ron Olson instructed the groups that the thought behind these breakout sessions is to focus on issues they have already been working on, identify what their goals and objectives will be for 2007, to include the strategic planning process. The logic was that if there were elements and items that have emerged out of the strategic planning process that fit within the realm of each subcommittee, that they merge those into their 2007 goals and objectives. A good starting point would be to review the assessments that Paul Curtis provided, and identify and incorporate some of those assessments into each subcommittee's goals and objectives. For example, issues related to financing would most appropriately be addressed by the finance subcommittees, and they may also want to address issues that may or will be brought up at the Summit.

Betsy Clark expressed the confusion that has been created between the workgroups that were formed for the strategic planning process and the CCMSP subcommittees. Vicki Anthes responded that the November strategic planning workgroups were created for that particular

purpose. She feels that each member can go back to their original subcommittees and simply address the 6 Vision 2020 and 4 MSWC goals within their existing groups.

Keith Charters was a member of the Long-Term Finance Subcommittee, so Mary Brown agreed to take his place and participate on that subcommittee.

The members broke out into their subcommittees and will report their recommended goals and objectives for 2007 at the end of the agenda under the topic of “2007 CCMSP Work Plan Development.”

PUBLIC COMMENTARY

The regular meeting of the CCMSP reconvened at 12:55 p.m. There was no public present to comment.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES – September and November, 2006

Chair Jemerson asked for a motion to approve the September and November, 2006 Minutes.

Rev. Hurley Coleman asked that some minor edits be made to the November minutes to include his comments regarding the process of reviewing and approving future management plans. It was agreed that future management plans (the entire report) would be presented to the Stewardship Subcommittee for their initial review, and then reported out to the entire CCMSP (the Executive Summary only) for final review and approval.

Chris Graham also asked that any controversial issues with any management plan be identified and included in a briefing paper to the CCMSP, along with the Executive Recommendation.

Mary Brown motioned to approve the September Minutes, as written, and approve the November Minutes, incorporating the edits requested by Rev. Coleman; **Tom Bailey seconded** the motion; **the motion carried**, and the September and November, 2006 Minutes were approved.

Chair Jemerson motioned that, due to continued, computer-related technical problems resulting in the June, 2006 Minutes still being unavailable, that they be reviewed and approved along with the January, 2007 Minutes; **Rev. Coleman seconded** the motion; and **the motion carried** to approve the June, 2006 Minutes along with the January, 2007 Minutes.

Kathy Lewand commented that she is no longer receiving a meeting packet in the mail. It was agreed that, due to cost of mailing, Yolanda would email the meeting materials and if any CCMSP member is unable to retrieve them, they should contact Yolanda and she will mail the meeting packet to those members.

PROPOSED DNR RECOGNITION POLICIES

Dennis Fedewa, Chief Deputy, gave an overview and presentation on the status of the Department's proposed donor and recognition policies. Dennis pointed out that we are not unique. There are a lot of other states and entities dealing with these same issues of naming and recognition (i.e. school districts, universities, local units of government, etc.). It all comes down to figuring out how to assess the value.

Dennis recently presented the proposed policies to the Natural Resources Commission's Policy Committee on Land Management. They are now being presented to the CCMSP, and will also be presented to the MSWC before receiving public comment. Legislation requires the Department to have a policy in place and report back to the Legislature sometime during the 2007-2008 session. Although a specific deadline was not established, he anticipates they may be able to report to the Legislature by no later than May or June, 2007.

Numerous questions were raised, and discussions ensued, regarding the Department's proposed policies, proposed procedures, partnerships, and comparisons of how other states or entities are dealing with these same issues.

Dennis explained that this is going to be a living, work in process when it comes to developing procedures. Right now, the Department is developing the policies and will later develop specific procedures, on a case-by-case basis, to address each type of recognition or naming proposal received. However, in the policies that were distributed, there are certain terms and conditions that will be established and an analytical review process that will be incorporated into the procedures. The procedures would have to be developed based on each particular request as they are received, and the promotion that the Department would want to do internally. Right now, they are only seeking input on the policies and, after the public has had a chance to comment, will move forward with developing procedures.

Chair Jemerson commented that, as Director of Lansing Parks and Recreation, he also deals with these kinds of issues. In his dealings with these issues, he has noticed there are three main areas of concern, which include more consideration for public input, some type of clause to revoke a naming, and endowments.

Dennis responded that the amount of the donation and what is being asked in return will determine the need for public input. As the value and degree of scalability rises, then the need for public input will be more important, and it will also depend on the type of recognition requested and considering the value of what the Department will be giving up for the naming. Regarding endowments, Dennis commented that they sound good in principle and are good if they are substantial enough, but can be a bad choice if they are miniscule in comparison to the administrative costs.

He further reiterated that this is living, working process. As the Department is solicited, they will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Procedures will be established, or adjusted, to address each scenario, but the policy is broad enough to give the Department the flexibility to consider all solicitations as they come along.

Chuck Nelson commented that requests should be large enough to compensate for the time, resources, effort, life expectancy and maintenance of the gift, and large enough to justify the time and resources that will be involved to initially review and consider the request. It may be possible to process smaller donations through friends groups instead of the Department spending the time and effort to review and consider all requests.

Tom Bailey commented that what is important now is that these policies are being developed, and the Department is only asking at this time for this Committee to endorse the concept. The Department and the NRC will have the final say, but this Committee is the appropriate body to represent the public's interest and that of the citizens.

Chris Graham stated that he does not object, but would like more spelled out (i.e. specific statements and specific examples). Other than a list of criteria, and that a process will be determined as requests are received, he feels that procedures can be established, at least for scenarios that we know will happen. He feels it is important to address the obvious ahead of time and, if necessary, tweak the procedures later to address different scenarios. He further commented that he does not feel this should be placed in metamorphosis mode, but to define the details and procedures ahead of time.

Dennis responded that these types of discussion have taken place, but to get the broad-based policy established is the first step in meeting the statutory requirement. Currently, they would like to get a broad-based policy established and in place, obtain this Committee's and the public's approval, and then move forward with the procedures, to include those obvious scenarios.

Additional questions were raised and discussions continued regarding the policies, comparisons to other organizations or entities that have dealt with these issues, the affect on friends groups, timing, understanding in perpetuity, the amount of public input that may be required, competitive offers, the bidding process, and how the Department intends to develop procedures for every possible scenario, and the next steps.

Dennis' final comments were that this is an overall managerial policy to include the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board, MSWC, the NRC and this Committee's guidance on what is being developed in an attempt to take everybody's interests or concerns into consideration.

Todd Scott asked what, specifically, is this Committee's role in this and at what point does the donation become large enough or involved enough to include the CCMSP.

Dennis responded that the ultimate decision will probably lie with the NRC, but this advisory Committee's role would be to provide input as to whether the Department is proceeding in the right fashion, to identify things that may have lacked consideration, and to represent the public and the citizen's interests.

Chair Jemerson asked what the next steps are. Dennis responded that he does not feel anything will happen in the next 60 days or so, but recommends that if this Committee would like to hold

a separate meeting to specifically address the policies or consider a resolution to endorse this concept, that would be up to this Committee but he would be willing to participate in such a meeting. His role today was simply to present the proposed policies to this Committee for their information and input.

Chair Jemerson asked the Committee what they would like to do at this time. **Mike McDonald motioned** to take no action at this time and table this discussion for a future meeting; **Kathy Lewand seconded the motion**; nobody opposed, so the **motion carried to table this discussion for a future meeting.**

Chair Jemerson thanked Dennis Fedewa for presenting these proposed policies to this Committee. A copy of his presentation was provided to the members.

PARKS AND RECREATION CHIEF UPDATES

Rockport Update

Paul Curtis reported that letters were sent to local units of government to solicit their interest in participating, or nominating someone to participate, in the planning process by serving on an advisory committee workgroup. The next step is to update the citizens on what is happening. The Parks and Recreation Division did receive a grant for the management plan, and a Request for Proposal for a consultant went out and that process is moving forward.

Land Issues Report

Paul Yauk gave an update and report on the status of the boundary reviews and cases completed in 2006, a list of 2007 acquisitions and an overview of properties from Phase I and Phase III. He commented that he has been working on a lot of land exchanges, and the land review team has been moving right along and also has a few new members.

White Pine Trail Donations

Paul Yauk reported that the Friends of the White Pine Trail raised over \$200,000 and presented the Department with a check at the January NRC meeting to match the MDOT grant that was achieved a few years ago to pave the trail. He also commented that there are going to be a lot of land cases processed through the NRC in the next few months.

The Committee asked for an update on the Commerce Township property, based on a recent article in the Detroit Free Press. Ron Olson and Paul Yauk provided an update regarding the discussions that have taken place to-date, and the position of the Department and Commerce Township.

Mary Brown commented that the article represents the ongoing need to educate the public regarding the land consolidation process.

The Committee asked that Paul Yauk pull together a list of success stories resulting from the boundary reviews and the land consolidation process, and also consider making them available to the public to offset all the negative exposure that is received about this process.

DNR Conservation Summit – February 7

Chair Jemerson provided all members with the Agenda for the February 7 Conservation Summit and encouraged all members to attend.

Ron Olson commented that subcommittees may also need to focus in on this effort as part of their 2007 goals and objectives.

MVP Legislation

Harold Herta gave the Committee an update on the passage of the MVP Legislation (SB 924). The passage of this legislation gave the Department three things: 1) moved the sunset to January 1, 2010, which added 3 years to the life of selling the permit; 2) includes a provision to replace lost permits, which was the initial intent; and 3) added the option for the Director or a Department designee to waive the MVP entry fee requirement for special circumstances. Guidelines and procedures will be developed for parks staff regarding this provision.

Harold further reported that we received a request for 2007-08 legislative priorities, and the Parks and Recreation Division requested:

- A change in law enforcement authority for park officers and their authority at public access sites.
- A change in the MCCC crew leader wage law. With the recent increase in the minimum wage requirements, this places crew leader wages well below the minimum wage to the point that they will be received close to or the same pay and crew workers.
- A request to enforce a \$25 penalty for those who had the opportunity to purchase an MVP when entering a state park, but chose not to purchase one.

PARKS AND RECREATION PERFORMANCE REPORT

2007 Campnights

Harold Herta gave reports on the status of campnights reserved, MVP sales, and Gift Certificates sold to-date. He also mentioned that Travel Michigan's forecast for 2007 is that gas prices will peak in the summer.

Mary Brown commented that gas prices usually do not affect behaviors, marketably, until the gas prices get to \$5.

2006 Comment Card Summary

A summary of comments received on the CCMSP Comment Cards was provided to the members for their information and review. Some of the comments received indicate a need to educate our visitors. They are not well informed about where their dollars go, and that their taxes no longer support the state parks and recreation system ... only their purchases.

PARKS AND RECREATION FINANCIAL STATUS REPORTS

Anthony Herek gave a presentation regarding the financial status of the Parks and Recreation Division, to include the status of the Fiscal Year 2007 Budget, the Fiscal Year 2008 and 2009 Forecast, revenues, expenditures, fund balances, and projections, a 2005/2006 National Comparison of Michigan's fees to Other States, and information about the Game and Fish and Forest Development Fund revenues, expenditures, fund balances and projections through Fiscal Year 2009.

Discussions ensued regarding critical infrastructure needs and repairs, the capital outlay budget, and the fact that most of the Department's funds are going to reach a critical point in the next fiscal year, or two.

A copy of his presentation was provided to the members of the Committee, along with optimal budget talking points, to prepare them for the Conservation Summit.

Ron Olson commented that parks staff are being asked to come up with revenue generating and cost-saving ideas again this year.

Jim Bradley commented that he thinks it would be a good idea to post the national comparison slide at state parks and recreation areas to educate the public.

A Resolution to rescind the \$5 registration fee in 2007 (due to numerous customer complaints), and to increase the camping fee by \$2 in 2008 at state parks that have not realized an increase since 2004, was presented to the Committee for their review and support. **Chuck Nelson motioned** to support and adopt the Resolution; **Todd Scott seconded the motion**; there were no objections; **the motion carried and the Resolution was adopted.**

SUBCOMMITTEE WORK PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Each Subcommittee reported out their recommended goals and objectives to be accomplished in 2007, which are attached to these Minutes.

Kathy Lewand commented that she does not understand why there is nobody from the Office of Communications that participates in these meetings or on the subcommittees.

Kathy further commented that there is a real disconnect between parks and recreation and Travel Michigan. Ron responded that he sits in on a newly formed committee called the Cabinet Tourism Committee. The Director and the Office of Communications are also on this Committee.

Rev. Hurley Coleman commented that he sat on a similar committee about 15 years ago and it was the same thing back then. He feels that the Office of Communications could play a vital role on this Committee to assist with a marketing plan.

Tom Ferguson agreed that there is a larger need for them to sit in on these meetings to help with marketing issues.

Kathy further stated that she is asking that somebody from the Office of Communications sit on this committee, or at least the Marketing subcommittee.

Ron Olson responded that there were a few people in the Department that were either temporarily reassigned or left the Department, so we had interim people participating. However, some were never able to attend. Ron said he would follow-up with the Chief Communications Officer to discuss participation at these meetings and continued participation on some of these subcommittees.

MARCH MEETING

The Committee discussed locations for the March, 2007 meeting. Chair Jemerson agreed that, as often as possible, the Committee should visit sites where management plans are being developed and are at a point where they will soon require CCMSP review and approval.

The Committee agreed to hold the March meeting at the Proud Lake Recreation Area in Commerce Township, to include a tour of the recreation area.

NEW BUSINESS

Ron Olson recognized and honored Jim Bradley, on behalf of the Friends of the Porkies, for receiving the 2007 Michigan Recreation and Park Association Conservation Award.

Mike McDonald motioned to nominate Murdock Jemerson as the Chair of this Committee; Betsy Clark seconded the motion; there were no objections; and the motion carried reappointing Murdock Jemerson as the Chair of the Citizens Committee for Michigan State Parks.

Mike McDonald motioned to nominate Tom Ferguson as Vice-Chair of this Committee; Chris Graham seconded the motion; there were no objections; and the motion carried reappointing Tom Ferguson as Vice-Chair of the Citizens Committee for Michigan State Parks.

Chair Jemerson adjourned the meeting at 3:45 pm.

2007 Goals and Objectives

Fee/Short-Term Finance and Long-Term Finance

Chuck Nelson reported on behalf of both subcommittees. However, the written report still needs to be provided.

Marketing and Interpretation

Tom Bailey and Kathy Lewand, Co-Chairs

1. The State Parks Foundation needs to be revitalized.
 - Professional Director employed by the Parks and Recreation Division.
 - Need effective, visible Board with people who care about parks, can give and get money, and will promote parks to the public and the legislative and administrative leadership.
2. Create a strategic marketing and interpretive program.
 - Build from the ground up using new technology to appeal to new, diverse groups and generations.
 - Create an outreach program (technologically based) to reach new groups.
 - Convey to all Michiganders that they are welcome and included with state parks – beyond just personal use.
 - Tap into faith-based reasons to preserve parks and the environment.
 - Emphasize this is a legacy that we all both receive and must leave to our children and future generations.
3. A ballot proposal campaign must be organized.
 - Decide what form it will take (what will sell).
 - Must be lasting solution – not just a “one shot” financial fix.
 - Organize a good campaign.
 - Hire professional consultant.
 - Get good campaign manager.
 - Hire fundraiser.
 - Create a sense of urgency regarding parks.
 - Create marketing campaign that will give people a reason to vote (yes).
 - Enlist traditional stakeholders and reach out to new and diverse stakeholder groups.

Programming and Operations

Betsy Clark, Chair

Operations

1. Improve and Expand PRD Lodging Opportunities
 - Inventory Current Lodging Opportunities
 - Continue Residence Conversions
 - Complete Camper Cabins
 - Add Campsites
 - Reinvigorate Outdoor Centers
 - Investigate Public/Private Lodging Partnerships
2. Improve Universal Access
 - Find Matching Funds for Kellogg Grants
 - Continue ADA and Access Training for Staff
3. Expand Energy Reduction Program
 - Encourage Energy Reduction by Visitors
 - Signage
 - Investigate Coin Operated Showers
 - Fund Energy Saving Building Improvements

Programming

1. Develop Programmatic Strategic Direction
 - Inventory Current Special Event Opportunities
 - Hire an Outdoor Programmer
 - Coordinate and Increase Special Events
2. Encourage Fee-Based Programming
 - Strive to Create “Weather-Proof” Day Use Activities
 - Promote Off-Season Attendance
3. Attract Non-Traditional Users

Stewardship (Planning)

Mike McDonald, Chair

Stewardship

1. Inventory of ... (Complete and Improve/Update)
 - Natural Resources

- Historical/Cultural
2. Geo (Eco) Tourism
 - DNR Website
 - Marketing
 - In Coordination with the Marketing Subcommittee
 - Identify Specific Opportunities Using:
 - Publications
 - Websites
 - Etc.
 - “WOW” Factor (one per month)
 3. Integrate Stewardship into the boating program (water and land).
 - Identify unique features in MRBIS.
 - Information/education (Kiosks, etc.)
 4. Education (publicize) stewardship efforts where they occur ...
 - Put on Website ... highlight problem and solution.

Planning

1. Continue the process of including public input, etc.
 - Accelerate efforts with/for:
 - Equestrian.
 - Mountain Bike.
 - Field Trial
 - Geo-caching
2. Planning for marketable uses/activities.
3. Crusade
 - Partnerships with local partners for increased funding and/or ability to purchase/acquire needed lands. Does not have to be \$\$.
4. Continue to identify/address conflicting and/or incompatible uses in state parks or recreation areas.