

Allegan County Parks Advisory Board



Allegan County Parks, Recreation &
Tourism
3283 122nd Ave
Allegan, MI 49010
269-686-9088
parks@allegancounty.org
<http://www.allegancounty.org>

Chairperson: Pam Brown
Vice Chairperson: Joshua Driscoll

PARKS ADVISORY BOARD MEETING – MINUTES

Pam Brown
616-490-1627
Allegan

Tuesday, April 2, 2024@ 8:30am
County Service Building – Board Room -3283 122nd Ave, Allegan, MI 49010
Virtual Option: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84173397008>

John Clark III
269-274-2736
Allegan

CALL TO ORDER: Brown called to order at 8:33.

**Daniel
Caywood**
616-291-1214
Dorr

ROLL CALL:

Present: Pam Brown, John Clark, Mark DeYoung, Joshua Driscoll, Kevin Formsma, Jaclyn Hulst, Tom Jessup

Absent: Daniel Caywood, Jackie Metz

Also Present: Brandy Gildea, Dan Wedge, Jesse Lechner

**Mark
DeYoung**
616-318-9612
Dorr

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion made by Driscoll, seconded by Brown to approve the February 6, 2024 minutes. The motion carried.

**Joshua
Driscoll**
616-218-5797
Hamilton

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None

ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS: None.

**Kevin
Formsma**
616-886-7030
Hamilton

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: A motion was made by DeYoung, seconded by Driscoll to approve the agenda. The motion carried.

PRESENTATIONS: None.

Jaclyn Hulst
616-834-2436
Zeeland

PARK ADMINISTRATION UPDATES:

- Gildea discussed staff returning for seasonal work, and two rangers hired to fill empty positions. Events at Silver Creek from the first weekend in May into June.
- Gildea stated parks fees will not be changed to bring in more revenue currently but there are plans for this in the future. Wedge discussed the process fee revenues, and the how and why of changing costs.
- Gildea discussed how the Allegan County Parks is in the process of developing a long-term forest management plan for its county parklands. Park Staff met and toured the Allegan County Parks with Michigan Forestry Company. The Michigan Forestry Company is now in the process of developing a quote and looking into available forestry grants to fund and develop the forest management plan. Once the agreement and funding are in place the Michigan Forestry Company will start developing a plan for each property working with the parks staff and other stakeholders such as the Disc Golf group and the Equestrian users. Once that plan is developed it will be presented to the Parks Advisory Board and once they are satisfied with the plan will make a

Tom Jessup
269-637-3374
South Haven

Jackie Metz
269-521-6524
Allegan

recommendation to the Board of Commissioners to approve the plan and move forward with it. It was discussed that we would not rush to complete this and make sure it is done in a way that best meets the parks and its users. The board agreed this was a good approach.

REVIEW ITEMS:

1. Financial Statements – Gildea reviewed 1st Quarter Revenues. Littlejohn saw a larger increase in pavilion rentals in this quarter, compared to last year. Everything is on track for 1st quarter revenues.

RECOMMENDATION/ACTION ITEMS:

1. None

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. 2025-2029 Recreation Plan – Public Input.

Inputs session was open at 8:45 am.

Doug Wine – Allegan County Resident (also a Parks Ranger): Wine states that his main focus for joining the meeting is to see about re-establishing hiking trails around Ely Lake, Pine Point, and Littlejohn Lake areas. Ideally, he would like to find a group that is similar to FACETS that would support that area’s trail maintenance. He states that many hikers said they would be interested in joining that group if it was created, mostly just maintaining the brush on the trails. DNR does not currently have funding to maintain those trails. Possibly also work with Boy Scout troops, and provide maps for the trails. Discussed with the DNR who is on board with utilizing volunteers. Maps of these trails were provided to board members.

Keith Manigold – Allegan Resident: Manigold voices his concerns with the Lake Allegan Overlook not being maintained well and having an obvious lack of presence. Voices his opinion that ranger presence at parks would help lower issues with vandalism and other issues. He discusses downed trees blocking paths he has helped remove. He requests dogs be allowed on county park beaches. Mentions boating at Dumont Park and having no boat docking options near the beach, suggests placing some, outside of the swimming area.

Brian Talsma – Executive Director for Allegan Conservation District: Moving forward we are looking at a lot of ways to increase volunteers and citizen science efforts. Looking for more opportunities to get people outside and support the parks. They are interested in tracking invasive species. Looking for more opportunities to get people outside on a more regular basis. Looking for opportunities to support the parks. Tree and habitat identification opportunities are possible at the parks.

The board thanks everyone for all their input. The input session was closed at 09:10 am.

2. 2025-2029 Recreation Plan – [2020-2024 Recreation Plan](#)
 - a. Review Recreation Plan Survey Results
 - b. Review/Update Sections: 1-7
 - c. Set future joint meetings with Parks Advisory Board and Tourist to review/update the Recreation Plan and impact on tourism.

Gildea reviewed sections 1-6 of the recreation plan, going over the changes that also included information from the previous meeting discussions. A deeper discussion occurred on each of the following subsections found in section 7:

- Starts with an overview
- List of our past completed projects
- Needs/wants for overall parks system
- Needs/want specific parks
- Needs and want of for county, not parks specific
- Overview of 2021 recreation plan review
- Priorities for 2025-2029 recreation plan

Section 7, along with the rest of the plan will be sent to the parks board for review to finalize at the June meeting.

Gildea requested that the Parks Advisory Board meet with the Tourist Council to discuss the Recreation Plan and its impact on tourism. It was determined the Parks Board would attend the May 21, 2024, Tourist Council meeting.

3. Gun Lake Tribe Playground Donation

The Gun Lake Tribe offered a donation of playground equipment that includes a multi-component piece. Park staff went and checked it out and determined it was in great shape and worth accepting and would fit great at Ely Lake Campground. Adding a playground to Ely has already been determined as a priority project too. Staff then reached out to Playtime, the company that it was originally purchased from to determine the initial cost or what it would be if we were to buy that same equipment today and to get a quote to uninstall, haul to, and reinstall. To purchase today that equipment would be over \$100,000 not including installation. The tribe would like to see the equipment moved by the end of 2024 but might work with us to see it moved in 2025. Discussions occurred on donations, and any additional funding needed not on the quote, except this one over completing other projects Hulst asks that we look into an additional quote, and will be gathering more information for us on that. Jessup clarifies that this is one of our top goals identified for Ely Lake. Brown asks where would this leave us with other items. Gildea states with current funding we would not be able to fund other projects. Finance is working with Gildea to see if the funding is available for this project. DeYoung discusses Board of Commissioners involvement. Gildea states projects that have already been approved will not be affected.

A motion was made by Jessup, seconded by Clark to proceed with bringing this to the for board of commissioners to move forward with this project. The motion carried.

NOTICE OF PARK ADVISORY BOARD APPOINTMENTS:

Vacancy: None

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: None.

ROUND TABLE:

Clark: Thankful for assistance and help with the disc golf course.

Jessup: None.

Brown: None.

DeYoung: None.

Driscoll: None.

Hulst: Looking into grants, learning about federal grants, and we are not applicable. Would like to explore state grants and will share information with other parks board members if they are interested in that.

ADJOURNMENT:

Next Meetings:

- Meeting with Tourism board on May 21st 2024 at 10 am in County Service Building – Board Room -3283 122nd Ave, Allegan, MI 49010
- Regularly Schedule Parks Meeting: June 4, @ 8:30 am in County Service Building – Board Room -3283 122nd Ave, Allegan, MI 49010

A motion was made by Brown, seconded by Hulst to adjourn the meeting at 10:40 am. The motion carried.