

Tuscola County Parks and Recreation Commission

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday January 28, 2025, 8:00 AM

Tuscola County Purdy Building Conference Room

125 West Lincoln Street, Caro, MI 48723

Call to Order:

At 8:00 A.M., Vice-Chair Michael Clinesmith called the meeting to order.

Michael Clinesmith elevated Rick Boylan, Dara Hood & Julie Matuszak as voting members.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Michael Clinesmith led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call:

Members Present: Michael Clinesmith [Vice-Chair], Kim Vaughan Commissioner Representative], and Nancy Barrios & Mark Putnam newly appointed members.

Members Absent: Paul Newby & Donovan Norman & Vacant.

Ex-Officio Present: Rick Boylan [Planning Commission], Dara Hood [Drain Commission] & Julie Matuszak [Road Commission].

Ex-Officio Absent: None.

Also Present: Gene Suoppi.

Approval of Agenda:

Nancy Barrios, seconded by Kim Vaughan, moved approve the January 28, 2025, agenda without amendments.

Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes:

Rick Boylan, seconded by Julie Matuszak, moved to approve October 15, 2024, Minutes as written.

Motion carried.

Nancy Barrios, seconded by Kim Vaughan, moved to approve December 17, 2024, Minutes as written.

Motion carried.

Public Comment:

Gene Suuppi discussed the need for a boat launch at the Parcels, outlining its potential cost and emphasizing the natural beauty of this stretch of the Cass River. He highlighted how a launch would boost both tourism and local recreation. Over the past decade, the Cass River Greenway has made noteworthy progress in cleaning the river, removing tires and debris—including a Model A Ford—resulting in much clearer waters.

Nancy Barrios and Kim Vaughan offered responses. Nancy shared that Dave Marr suggested reaching out to Tonya Moore at Spicer about creating a site drawing for the launch and completing a grant application. The drawing may cost around \$10,000. Grants with a 25% matching requirement are available. Spicer Engineering, having designed seven of the launches on the Cass River Water Trail, is well-versed in such projects. Coupled with the Cass River Greenway Master Plan, this expertise increases the likelihood of securing grant funding for the construction of a launch at the Parcels. Nancy also noted that the Tuscola County Community Foundation’s grant applications are due on March 1st and October 1st, offering a potential funding opportunity for park-related projects.

Election of Officers

Nancy Barrios, seconded by Kim Vaughan, nominated Michael Clinesmith to be Chair of the Tuscola County Parks and Recreation Commission. Michael Clinesmith asked two more times for additional nominations without a reply.

Motion carried.

Nancy Barrios, seconded by Julie Matuszak, nominated Mark Putnam as Secretary. Micheal Clinesmith, now the Chair, asked two more times for additional nominations without a reply. Rick Boylan, seconded by Nancy Barrios, moved to close nominations and approve him by unanimous support.

Motion carried.

Michael Clinesmith, seconded by Julie Matuszak, nominated Nancy Barrios as Vice-Chair. The current Chair asked two more times for nominations without a reply. Kim Vaughan, seconded by Dara Hood, moved to close the nominations, and approve her by unanimous support.

Motion Carried.

Acceptance of Financial Reports:

We reviewed and discussed the financial reports. Mark Putnam, seconded by Dara Hood, moved to accept the two reports: the Revenue & Expenditure Reports for the year-ending 2024 and month-ending January 31-2025. Discussion followed.

Motion carried.

2025 Budget Amended:

Rick Boylan, seconded by Kim Vaughan, moved to approve the 2025 Budget as amended that will go before the Tuscola County Board of Commissioners for adoption.

Motion carried.

The approved budget was as follows:

	<i>Description</i>	<i>2025 Amended Budget</i>
<i>Revenues</i>	Vanderbilt Dump Station	\$100.00
	Vanderbilt Park Camping Fees	\$20,000.00
	Vanderbilt Park - Parking Fees	\$2,000.00
	Total	\$22,100.00
<i>Expenditures</i>	Parks Commission Per Diems	\$2,500.00
	FICA	\$200.00
	Retirement	\$10.00
	POB In Lieu of Retirement	\$30.00
	Vanderbilt Park – Supplies	\$1,000.00
	Cont. SVCS Vanderbilt Park	\$5,000.00
	Tree Trimming/Removal	\$2,500.00
	Cellular Phone	\$545.00
	Travel	\$700.00
	Utilities Vanderbilt Park	\$10,000.00
	Grounds Care/Maintain Vanderbilt	\$1,500.00
	Vanderbilt Park Renovations	\$12,000.00
	Total	\$35,985.00

2025 Meeting Schedule Amended:

Julie Matuszak, seconded by Dara Hood, moved to approve a change in the meeting schedule with the address for meetings in 2025 to be “Tuscola County Purdy Building Conference Room located at 125 W. Lincoln Street, Caro, MI 48723.”

Motion carried.

Master Plan Amended:

The Tuscola County Parks & Recreation Commission reviewed amendments to the 2023-2027 Master Plan that incorporated park handicap ratings and descriptions, the names of the current Commission members along with the others who previously worked on the plan, and other key

updates. Kim Vaughan, seconded by Rick Boylan, made a motion to approve the amendments and recommend to the Tuscola County Board of Commissioners that it adopt the amendments.

Motion carried.

This commission gave special recognition to Nancy Barrios and Michael Clinesmith for their significant efforts in completing this task.

Caro Dam Discussion:

Mark Putnam delivered a presentation on the Caro Dam, emphasizing its historical significance as the site of an Indigenous village and the foundation of the City of Caro. He shared his vision for transforming this historic location into a community park called Chippewa Village, celebrating the area's rich history while attracting tourists and kayakers.

As part of his vision, Mark proposed a Welcome Center designed as a large geodesic dome, blending architectural innovation with artistic elements to resemble a traditional native wigwam. This center would highlight the community's past, present, and future, offering immersive experiences for visitors. Additionally, it would provide canoe and kayak rentals, as well as small provisions for those navigating the Cass River. Mark emphasized that Chippewa Village could become a cherished destination, enhancing the enjoyment and recreational opportunities within the local park system.

Adjournment:

Rick Boylan, seconded by Kim Vaughan, moved to adjourn.

Motion carried.

This Tuscola County Parks & Recreation Commission adjourned the meeting at 9:00 A.M.

The next scheduled meeting will be on April 15, 2025, at 8 A.M. at Tuscola County Purdy Building Conference Room located at 125 West Lincoln Street, Caro, MI 48723.

Mark Putnam, Secretary, respectfully, submits the minutes: _____.