

MINUTES
Newwaygo Community Recreational Authority
Newwaygo County, Michigan
June 12, 2008

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM in Graves Lodge located at the County Sports Park/Complex whose address is 4684 Evergreen, Newwaygo MI 49337.

Present: Rich Blachford (City of Newwaygo), Jane Parsley (City of Newwaygo), Chris Haynor (Brooks Twp), Nancy Kinniburgh (Garfield Twp)

Absent: Erik Larsen (Garfield Twp), Les Salacina (Brooks Twp), Rich Kooistra (Newwaygo County)

Guest: Ron Welton (Newwaygo County Parks Director), Harry Burkholder (LIAA)

MINUTES

Motion by Haynor, support by Kinniburgh to approve meeting minutes from 04/10/08. AIF/MC

Motion by Kinniburgh, support by Parsley to amend the agenda and add to appoint a new board member to NCRA under Old Business. AIF/MC

PUBLIC COMMENTS

OLD BUSINESS

Motion by Parsley, support by Haynor to appoint Ron Welton to NCRA Board. AIF/MC

NEW BUSINESS

Blachford reviewed the improvements at Henning Park, Graves Lodge and the County Sports Park. He stated that the brush had been cleared from behind the lodge so there is now a view of the lake; still need to clean out the sledding hill in hopes to have a toboggan run and possibly ice skating. The soccer fields next to the City's cemetery are almost complete, baseball field dugouts on Evergreen have been repainted and a grant has been put in for a new skateboard park in the City.

The board discussed the M-37 Trailway and reviewed the original plan to run it from White Cloud to Newwaygo. The second idea was to run it through the woods from Newwaygo to the County Sports Park and the third idea was to make it a wider, harder surfaced trail from the County Sports Park to Newwaygo along M-37; this is currently being surveyed to see if it is feasible. The board is continuing to explore options including the use of the railroad right-of-way. NCRA will make sure the trailway is safe when constructed.

Blachford reviewed the NCRA budget. The paving of the County Sports Park went over budget and will need to be covered with General Fund money and the Henning/Shaw Park/Graves Lodge projects are approximately \$3,000 over budget.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Bob VanBelzen (County Commissioner) stated that some people do not want a trailway running by their property and asked for an alternate route. He questioned whether the cost of the trail maintenance has been calculated and wanted to know how it will be paid for. VanBelzen had some questions on the quantity of survey respondents and wanted to know the dates and times the trail would be open.

Barbara Barber, Evergreen Drive, wanted to know if the township board members get paid for their meetings.

Tobi Lake, County Administrator, stated he had contacted MDOT, the Drain Commission and the Fremont Area Community Foundation and was disappointed that NCRA had failed to get permits in a timely manner for work at the County Sports Park. He agreed with the trailway concept but did not want it in front of his property. He asked if residents can be notified by mail and if the trail could possibly go down Basswood? Lake stated that the current trail plan will have to cross the COLA sewer plant. Questions Lake asked were, who has final authority to approve the trail? Chairman Blachford responded that NCRA does. Lake stated he did not want to hear from Blachford, but the rest of the board. How wide will the trail be? He was told at least 8' wide. Will the M-37 trail and NCT (North Country Trail) connect at some point? The response was that it was possible. Lake then asked where the additional baseball fields would be built. He was told possibly behind Klub Sports Family Fun Center located between Newaygo and Grant.

Pat Aishe stated that the COLA plant smells and there were several other comments made by the audience regarding the trail and sports park.

VanBelzen commended the NCRA Board on what they have accomplished so far but reiterated again that some residents don't want a trail along M-37.

Lake stated that the board needs to look into the liability of the trailway and asked if there can be an e-mail list to update citizens on the progress of the project.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Blachford told the audience that the regularly scheduled NCRA meetings are held the second Thursday of the month at 8:00 am at the County Sports Park.

Haynor stated that those that can't make the meetings can always stop by the township hall and pick up a copy of the meetings minutes. She noted that this board is looking at any and all options for the trailway.

Kinniburgh noted that the property values of land next to a trailway tend to go up.

Next meeting is scheduled for July 10, 2008 at 8:00 am at the Winter Sports Park building.

Motion by Haynor, support by Parsley to adjourn meeting. Meeting adjourned at 8:08 PM.

Jon Schneider, NCRA Secretary