

**Chair**  
Chuck Nelson, Citizen Rep.

**Vice-Chair**  
Natalie Elkins, Citizen Rep.

**Secretary**  
Phil Hanses, Drain Commissioner

**Members**  
Dwight Washington, BOC Rep.  
Dave Pohl, BOC Rep.  
Jan Motz, Planning Comm. Rep.  
Kevin Holt, Road Comm. Rep.  
James Graham, Citizen Rep.  
Pat Jackson, Citizen Rep.  
Gary Boersen, Citizen Rep.



**Staff**  
Kyle Thornton  
Parks and Greenspace  
Coordinator

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# MINUTES

## PARKS AND GREENSPACE COMMISSION

Friday, March 3, 2023, AT 8:30 A.M.  
Board of Commissioners Boardroom  
100 East State St.  
St. Johns, MI 48879

### I. Call to Order - Declaration of Quorum

Chair Natalie Elkins declared a quorum present and called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM

Members Present:

- |                   |                 |                      |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 1) Natalie Elkins | 4) James Graham | 7) Dwight Washington |
| 2) Chuck Nelson   | 5) Jan Motz     | 8) Gary Boersen      |
| 3) Dave Pohl      | 6) Phil Hanses  |                      |

Guests Present:

- Kurt Wolf, Clinton Conservation District
- Katie Hafner, Clinton Conservation District
- Nicole Fickes, Victor Township

Staff Present:

- Kyle Thornton

A. Approval of March 3, 2023, Agenda

**Moved by Dwight Washington, seconded by David Pohl, to approve the March 3, 2023, meeting Agenda.** Motion carried.

B. Approval of February 3, 2023, Meeting Minutes

**Moved by Chuck Nelson, seconded by Jan Motz, to approve the February 3, 2023, meeting Minutes.** Motion carried.

## II. Public Comments Non-Agenda Items

- A. Nicole Fickes from Victor Township addressed the commission on aquatic invasive species, specifically Eurasian Watermilfoil. Nicole mentioned there is a need a coordinated and consistent message within Clinton County, specifically Victor Township for Lake Victoria, Round Lake and Sleepy Hollow State Park. Elkins led an additional discussion on the need for a boat washing station at Sleepy Hollow State Park. Kurt Wolf mentioned he is meeting with CISMA and will discuss the need. Dwight Washington reported Park Lake in Bath Township has a vacuum boat cleaning station.
- B. Kurt Wolf from Clinton Conservation District reported the CCD is still waiting to hear back from the 319 grant for the Upper Looking Glass River. K. Wolf mentioned the CCD is working with local food banks and FFA Chapters with the urban/ag implantation grant. The spring tree sale is coming up with orders due by March 13, 2023.
- C. Katie Hafner reported the CCD will be hosting the Forestry Program again this spring on May 11<sup>th</sup> at St. Johns City Park. The Forestry Program is available for landowners with 5-acres or more of woods.

## III. Coordinator's Report – Kyle Thornton

- A. Kyle Thornton reported the Hesse-Earl Youth Fishing Program will be hosted at Motz County Park on May 20, 2023. The event is from 9:00am-12:00pm (noon) for youth ages five to sixteen. More information to come for volunteer options and registration of participants. Thornton reported he attended the Career Fair at MSU and received applications for both the park intern and park rangers. Coordinator Thornton attended the Great Lakes Park Training Institute in Angola, Indiana. He mentioned the educational sessions provided great resources for Clinton County. K. Thornton reported that the Waste Management Department with Clinton County will be hosting the Spring Special Collection Event on April 29<sup>th</sup> at Motz County Park. County residents can reserve a recycling time using the website [www.clinton-county.org](http://www.clinton-county.org). Thornton mentioned the annual Mpark Conference will be hosted in Lansing the week of March 7<sup>th</sup>-March10<sup>th</sup>. Coordinator Thornton reminded everyone the April PGSC Meeting will be the second Friday of April. The meeting will be April 14, 2023 (instead of April 7, 2023).

## IV. Committee Reports

- A. Water Based Recreation/Surface Water Quality – Phil Hanses & Gary Boersen
  - a. Nothing to report.
- B. Non-Motorized Facilities – Chuck Nelson & Dave Pohl
  - County-wide NMF Plan / Trails Advisory Council
  - FMCIS Trail

- a. David Pohl reports from Barry Culham, that he is in talks with a vendor for wood removal from the CIS Trail.
  - b. Chuck Nelson mentioned he is working with Bob Wilson, chair of the Michigan Trails Advisory Council and Tim Novak, Coordinator of State Trails from the MDNR attend a future PGSC meeting together.
- C. Universal Access – Dwight Washington & Pat Jackson
- a. Nothing to report.
- D. Finance Committee – Natalie Elkins
- a. PGSC Chair Elkins mentioned the 2023 YTD budget report was provided and nothing new to report on finance after the first few months of the year.
- E. Grassland Committee – Chuck Nelson, Jim Graham & Jan Motz
- a. Chuck Nelson reported the USDA opened general signups for Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) from February 27<sup>th</sup> to April 7<sup>th</sup> for Agricultural producers and private landowners.
  - b. C. Nelson mentioned the grassland committee had a meeting with members of the Clinton Conservation District and Fish and Wildlife Service about seeding for the 2-acre lot near the barns. The Fish and Wildlife Service agreed to provide the seed for the demonstration site.
- F. Health Committee – Dwight Washington & Pat Jackson
- a. Dwight Washington reported after the shooting at MSU many social service organizations were providing listing of different mental health opportunities in the area and Clinton County Parks was included as free and open to the public to use. Washington mentioned social services are discussing possibilities of providing some 5k run/walk events with in Clinton County Parks.
  - b. Dave Pohl mentioned additional funding was recently approved for Community Mental Health with the suicide rate for youth 3-17 years old on the rise, that connections with the parks is another opportunity to get these kids outside into nature.

## **V. Old Business**

- A. Clinton Lakes Master Plan & Five-Year Plan
- a. Coordinator Thornton has received a few townships Five-Year Plans and is in the process of seeing which townships, villages, and cities have Five-Year Master Plans in place.

**B. Clinton Lakes Dog Beach**

- a. Thornton mentioned the 20-day public comment period has passed on the permit application, which means things are moving forward again with the permit application from EGLE.

**C. Pratt Road Property**

- a. Chair Natalie Elkins mentions a sign-up sheet is going around for PGSC members to sign up for a date to tour the Pratt Road Property.
- b. Kyle Thornton reported that Central Excavating is submitting a response to the questions from the dewatering permit to EGLE.
- c. Thornton mentioned Tetra Tech is planning to be on site for Phase I the week of March 6, 2023 (weather depending).

**D. MDNR Spark Grant**

- a. Coordinator Thornton mention Clinton County was not awarded funds from round one of the Spark Grant and has not received information the new deadline for round two.

**VI. New Business**

**A. Pratt Road Property Tours**

- a. Chair Elkins reminded PGSC members to signup for property tour dates.

**VII. Public Comments – Agenda Items**

- A. No additional public comments

**VIII. Adjournment –Next Meeting:**

Friday, April 14, 2023, at 8:30 am  
Board of Commissioners Boardroom  
100 East State St.  
St. Johns, MI 48879

**Moved by David Pohl, seconded by Chuck Nelson to adjourn the meeting until Friday, April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Motion carried.**  
Meeting adjourned at 9:11 AM.