Members Present: President Joe Krapohl, Vice President Jim Washington, Cloyce Dickerson, Commissioners Keeler, Madore, Wright, Nolden, Lynch

Members Absent: Secretary Bill Lucas and Commissioner Nealy are absent.

Staff Present: Amy McMillan, Director; Barry June, Deputy Director; Leisa Gagne, Finance Officer; Danielle Fulcher, Marketing Specialist; Nancy Edwards, Program Specialist/Grants, Deborah Wilkes, Secretary; Patrick Linihan, Administrative Intern

Others Present: Jessica Myers, 4237 Lapeer St. Columbiaville, MI; Tom Kehoe, 4304 E Stanley Rd, Genesee MI; Ray Malaski, 3458 Michael Dr. Columbiaville MI

1) Call to Order. President Krapohl presided and called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. President Krapohl noted that we have Secretary Lucas with us via telephone to hear discussions but until legal counsel advises us otherwise, he will not be able to vote via telephone.

2) Opportunity for members of the public to address the commission. Tom Kehoe, E. Stanley Rd stated that he hasn’t seen any documents showing a payment for hazardous waste disposal from an oil spill last fall on the railroad trestle construction site. He’d like to see something that shows it was disposed of properly. He also noted that his daughter has been accepted at Columbia University.

3) Consent Agenda. President Krapohl asked commissioners if there are any items they wish to remove from the consent agenda for discussion. No items were removed from the consent agenda.

Action Taken:
Motion by Commissioner Keeler
Supported by Commissioner Dickerson

Motion and support for approval of consent agenda items A through C, as listed.

Roll Call
Nay: None
Absent: Secretary Lucas and Commissioner Nealy are absent.

MOTION CARRIED  8-0

4. Director’s Report
Budget Line Item Transfers. The new accounting software (CGI) that the County is using necessitates some changes that are different than the existing (GEMS) system which is running side by side. We’ve always managed our budget by fund department because we are a revenue-based budget, and there are no general county funds involved. About half of our budget is millage and the rest is revenue from our income-producing locations.

Normally we save money from revenues earned during busy seasons by putting it into the fund balance to then pre-fund many of our projects. We then move those dollars between funds as needed to pay for projects, either in the current year or the following year. We put dollars into the fund balance with the intention of drawing them out and assigning it to projects as needed. The new system will not allow entries in that way any longer. The new system uses line items. So we can’t move dollars around within a fund any longer. This year, in order to make those expenses on an ongoing basis, rather than journal entries at the end of the year we need to make transfers now.
We have a request in front of you to assign funds of 1,567,066.00 to the projects that are in progress now that started in October when we began the year before the new line-item system for the County came online, and to those that will be ongoing throughout this fiscal year. Some of the projects that we had already started, because we knew we would be making those journal entries at year end, and others that we have budgeted for, now the funds need to be put in the line items for those projects. We need your approval today to actually make the transfers now as they are being expended over the course of the rest of this fiscal year.

Krapohl: Basically this is to match the County’s new accounting system.

Madore: Stepping Stone Falls Design Engineering. Is that just a follow up payment on that, since that project is already finished?

McMillan: Yes, that is the other one of the constantly moving pieces, many of our grants go through a couple fiscal years by the time they are fully expended and the rest of the revenue is brought in from those grants. Most grants from public sources are reimbursement type grants so we make the expenditure then the revenue comes back to us. Then there is also, typically at the end of every project, approximately 10% retainage that the expense is made but the revenue doesn’t come from the state or feds until the project is formally closed out.

Nolden: So the Parks have never done the line item budget prior?

McMillan: We have line items, but we manage the budget within funds. So if the railroad’s fund has a million bucks in it, they can spend a million dollars, they cannot spend a million and one, but we don’t care which line item it comes from. They may have had to hire extra people for a particular project and move funds from another line item that they didn’t have to spend fully.

Nolden: So this will make it easier?

Krapohl: Or a little harder? If your electric bill goes over the line item, you’d have to amend that line item?

McMillan: We wouldn’t say more difficult overall...just a new process and getting used to doing it a new way.

Overall Leisa is very excited about the new software. There are a lot of things that will change that require different procedures we must follow, but it will be good.

**Action Taken:**
Motion by Commissioner Wright
Supported by Commissioner Washington

**Motion and support to approval staff recommendations for fund transfers as submitted.**

**Yeas:** Wright, Nolden, Lynch, Dickerson, Krapohl, Madore, Washington, Keeler

**Nays:** None

**Absent:** Secretary Lucas and Commissioner Nealy are absent.

**MOTION CARRIED 8-0**

**Other Updates:** It is starting to get very busy. We are still looking for good seasonal staff. If you know of anyone looking for summer employment send them our way to apply. We’ve been able to have the sledding hills open for a couple days lately. Hopefully we’ve seen the last snowstorms of the
season and clearly we are beyond that. You’ll also see some CRMs going out in the next several days looking for support of our grant applications for Hegel Road and the trail project from here to Irish Rd.

Washington: Does the Parks Commission participate in the big job fair through the Chamber? Career Edge is April 22, 2016. That is for the more mature individuals. He is facilitating those sessions and the job fair is on Friday, April 22. Those that complete the Career Edge portion of training are invited to participate in the job fair.

McMillan: We are involved in the April 23rd SYI job fair. We are not aware of the Career Edge job fair. We are also working with Green for All that does a lot of work researching and promoting green jobs for low income communities. We have a conference call with those folks next week and we are looking at that as an opportunity to do some additional job programing within the parks.

5) New Business - There is no new business.

6) Opportunity for Commissioners to address the Commission.
Lucas: He is just trying to get himself stronger to get back to the commission. He just has to get his legs moving.

Krapohl: We look forward to seeing you back in your normal spot.

Keeler: There has been some talk about the possibility of building a treehouse project. Where would that be located?

McMillan: On the other side of the creek from the Nature Center Building at ForMar. This is not a done deal, but they are visiting ForMar this Sunday.

Edwards: We’ve been talking about wanting a treehouse for a couple of years and we actually reached out and submitted an application to the television show Treehouse Masters. We got a call and they will scout our location on Sunday. We are very, very excited because we think we can make a really good case. There are two opportunities, one would be that Pete Nelson from Nelson Treehouse Supply (the Treehouse Master) could just decide to do a build with us, and then there is the possibility of doing the build and being on the tv show. Keep your fingers crossed.

Keeler: Would this be adjacent to a tree, using props underneath, or in the tree? As much as they pay for those things, if we get a windstorm and this blows out of the tree... When everybody was young, you either had a treehouse, or wanted one.

Krapohl: Have you seen the program? They built one on the coast in Oregon that gets a lot of ocean winds that was rated for hurricane strength winds. It is exciting to think we could possibly get some national exposure from this as well. If we have a treehouse out there, we will have a meeting out there.

Wright: He saw a beautiful eagle circling the building this morning when he came into the parking lot.

Madore: Back to the trail to Irish Road; the property that you were scoping it on is the City of Flint property that the Parks has a lease agreement. Do you think this should be brought to their attention or they should sign off on because once that grant is awarded and it permanently changes that property, they couldn’t develop it or sell it. Once you take those grant funds it is in perpetuity that you can’t do anything. We had property that Consumer’s wanted to put a substation on and it wasn’t going to be allowed because grant money was involved with the property. He wondered if the City understands the perpetuity. He’d hate to see us move forward and them find out after the fact. Can we get a copy of that lease agreement?
On that same thing, he knows there are limits to the developmental grants and Mr. Keeler mentioned going around the river and wet areas. It seems that there is a lot of support for the Iron Belle project to connect. It would be a great idea to cross over the river and go into the old campground. It is probably going to make the cost higher but it would be a beautiful thing and they may be in support of that. There might be some narrower areas to cross. If it crossed by Irish Rd., it might make further parts of the trail easier.

McMillan: Our agreement with the City of Flint gives us the authority to develop property within those zones for recreational purposes, like for example when we built Walleye Pike Boat Launch. So we don’t have an additional level of scrutiny or authority that is required with that, but we can reach out to Brian Larkin and the Community Development Department. Yes they understand the perpetuity issue.

We love to build bridges, but we don’t know if even the Flushing Park bridge is that wide. Ultimately we would love to, and as dollars become available, we hope to do trails on both sides of the river so they converge and meet in Columbiaville. We specifically chose to start on this side because there are fewer water crossings, making it more affordable. We can take a look at the route, it is a work in progress.

We can get a copy of the lease agreement for you.

Krapohl: That was 99-year lease?

McMillan: 100 year, with about 60 years left.

Madore: It is getting to be budget time, when do we start that?

McMillan: Last year it was around July when we started budget committee.

Krapohl: We have two students from Spring Arbor University here observing government in action for class credit, one student happens to be President Krapohl’s granddaughter. We are pleased to have them here.

7) Opportunity for the public to address the commission
Ray Malaksi lives right next door to the Mt Morris Rd property. What is the situation with that property? What will the parks do with it? It is all boarded up. He is trying to sell the acre right next to it and he lives next to it and his dad lives next to him.

Krapohl: We will have the director answer your questions after the meeting. During Public Comments it is not a two-way conversation. She will be happy to answer any questions for you and give you the background on that.

Kehoe: About the hazardous waste, he’d like an answer at the next meeting.

Krapohl: If you don’t want to wait until the next meeting, you are more than welcome to call the director at her office any day of the week.

Kehoe: I’d like that answered out in public so if you can get that answer.

Krapohl: We’ll try to get that answer for you at the next meeting.

8) Adjournment. Hearing no objections, the meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.