March 9, 2026

IOSCO COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MINUTES

Board-In Person

Commissioners Present: Jane Hayward, Bob Leslie, Jim McArdle, Brian Loeffler, Sue Reilly, Jerry Smith, Gary Blaser, Benjamin Brewer, Jennifer Riggs.

Absent: Fred Strauer.

Vacant: None.

Also Present: Kathleen Murphy, Board Secretary/Housing Director; **Jamie Carruthers-Soboleski**, County Controller/Finance Director; **Dan Piorkowski**, Groomer

The regular meeting was called to order by Board Secretary/Housing Director, Kathleen Murphy, at 3:00 p.m.

Approval of the Agenda

Brewer motions to approve the agenda with the deletion of election of officers and Hayward seconds. All ayes; motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: **February 9, 2026**

McArdle motions to approve February 9, 2026, minutes with corrections and Hayward seconds. All ayes. Motion carried.

Public Matters and Concerns:

None.

Unfinished Business:

None.

New Business:

Gary Blaser, Chairperson – Increase Compensation Rates to Independent Contractors

The board believed that the compensation rates would increase to follow Michigan State minimum wage rates. As the groomers are independent contractors, the board does not have to follow the state minimum wage rates. The board discussed the difference between independent contractors and employees. Jamie Carruthers-Soboleski, County Controller/Finance Director, will email the labor attorney to discuss whether the groomers should be employees or independent contractors. The Iosco County Board of Commissioners would have to approve the creation of any new positions if the labor attorney believes that the groomers should be considered employees.

Loeffler motions to have Carruthers-Soboleski research this matter and come back to the board with the labor attorney's decision and Hayward seconds.

Carried on the following roll call: Ayes: Leslie, McArdle, Smith, Hayward, Brewer, Reilly, Loeffler, Riggs, Blaser. Nays: None. Absent: Strauer. Vacant: None.

Kathleen Murphy, Board Secretary/Housing Director, requests that the board decide if they wish to move forward with increasing the independent contractor rates to $13.73 per hour and if that rate should be retroactive to January 1, 2026.

Blaser motions to increase the independent contractor rates to $13.73 per hour retroactive to January 1, 2026, and Hayward seconds.

Carried on the following roll call: Ayes: Leslie, McArdle, Smith, Hayward, Brewer, Reilly, Loeffler, Riggs, Blaser. Nays: None. Absent: Strauer. Vacant: None.

Committee Reports:

Bike/Hiking Trails

McArdle – Meeting next week for the bike path. Meeting with the Byway Committee regarding the historic bridge.

Snowmobile/ORV Trails

Blaser – Groomer Workshop – Grant holders not happy. 62 groups were supposed to attend. Only 40 actually attended. Not enough money. 900 snowmobile permits were purchased in Iosco County this year. Snowmobile permit prices will increase next year.

Carruthers-Soboleski – Currently a $7,500.00 deficit in the 274 fund.

Park Development

Carruthers-Soboleski – Oscoda Township – Community Grant Request. Benches are ordered. Will let Parks and Recreation Commission know when they have been installed. Letter of Support resolution at the next Iosco County Board of Commissioners meeting for the extension of the bike path.

McArdle motions to inform the Iosco County Board of Commissioners that the Iosco County Parks and Recreation Commission supports Oscoda Township's grant request and Hayward seconds. All ayes; motion carried.

Dam Prosperity Committee

McArdle – AI news is questionable.

Carruthers-Soboleski – No major changes since the last update.

Hayward – Question regarding dock fees.

Public Comments and Concerns:

Leslie – City of Whittemore – Exclusive park. DTE grant. Veteran Memorial stone in the park. Ron Whitney, Veterans' Affairs Director, is looking for grants for this project.

Payment of Bills and Per Diems:

Brewer motions to pay the bills and per diems for the month of March and Leslie seconds. All ayes. Motion carried.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m. until 3:00 p.m. Monday, April 13, 2026. Motioned by Brewer and seconded by Leslie. All ayes; motion carried.

Respectfully:

Kathleen Murphy, Board Secretary/Housing Director
Iosco County Board of Commissioners

Community	Date Requested	Date Completed	Project	Amount
Plainfield	23-Dec	23-Jul	Pavilion	$25,000.00
Iosco Ag. Society	22-Dec	23-Sep	Campground/Grandstand	$25,000.00
Whittemore	23-Oct	23-Oct	Playground	$25,000.00
Whittemore	24-Oct	24-Oct	Playground Equipment	$25,000.00
Alabaster	24-Sep	24-Dec	Porta Potty Enclosure	$4,744.00
Iosco Ag. Society	24-Sep	25-Jul	Bathroom Livestock Building	$24,700.00
Plainfield	24-Dec	25-Nov	Pickleball	$25,000.00
AuSable	24-Dec	25-Jan	Bike Path	$25,000.00
City of East Tawas	25-Mar	26-Jan	Dog Park	$15,867.72
City of Tawas City	25-May		Music Park	$25,000.00
Oscoda	25-May		Benches for Beach Park	$25,000.00
Baldwin Township	Jun-25	Oct-25	Sidewalk to the Point	$25,000.00
Whittemore	Jul-25	25-Nov	Park Cameras and Fencing	$25,000.00