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## CLINTON COUNTY GREEN SPACE COMMISSION

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## GSC COORDINATOR'S REPORT

July 2009

### ACTIVITIES:

#### Motz County Park Development

- Swimming Beach – I inspected the new beach during a recent rain and found that the surface water collection trough was doing its job. Water coming down from the higher elevation where the picnic area will be located was not flowing onto the beach sand. If that were to occur, the sand would be contaminated with clay soils and would also gully. Rather, the water collected at the base of the slope and then flowed to the east end of the beach where it then entered the lake. All areas of previously bare soil have a healthy growth of new grass cover. This helps control erosion, but is also an attractive feeding area for Canada geese.
- Picnic Tables and Grills – R.J. Thomas Manufacturing (Iowa) delivered all picnic table frames and BBQ grills to Central Maintenance on Friday, June 30. Carter Lumber delivered 270 yellow pine boards for table tops and seats to the park maintenance garage on the same day. Sealer and roller application materials have been purchased from Gil-Roy's of St. Johns. The Summer Youth Program workers will begin sealing the lumber on Monday, July 6. Eagle Scout candidate



Clinton County Maintenance Department Director Blaine Stevens is seen loading table frames belonging to Gratiot County Parks and Recreation while Gratiot County employee Scott Parmalee assists. Clinton, Gratiot and Isabella counties jointly bid their picnic table and grill equipment needs to receive favorable purchase pricing and save on shipping costs.

Ethan Malkin has been informed that all materials have arrived so that he can ready his volunteer team for assembly of the picnic tables. Once assembled, the tables will be stored at Central Maintenance until park construction is complete. It is likely that transfer of the tables will be accomplished with the use of Gratiot County Parks and Recreation's large equipment trailer. I have yet to work out how the BBQ grills will be installed this fall, but will find a low cost way to get that task done.

- Phase II (Beach house, pedestrian walkways, utilities, entrance drive, parking lot and preparatory work for group pavilion and shoreline fishing platform, the latter two facilities to be constructed by RESA) – The DNR had denied authorization to proceed with bidding the work based on the county's original plans and specifications. At issue was the size / service capacity of the beach house and a proposed reduction of project scope items. In a nut shell, areas of design/scope disagreement have been resolved and the County Board of Commissioners has approved additional funds to complete the project, as requested by DNR Grants Management. Updated plans and specifications were hand delivered to DNR Grants Management on Wednesday, July 1. A letter of authorization to proceed with bidding Phase II of the project is pending. Once the letter is received, C2AE will immediately bid the project. It is unlikely that construction will begin much before August and will now go into the fall months.
- Group Pavilion / Shoreline Fishing Platform – Once the cost of Phase II is known, I will move forward with purchase of building materials for construction of the pavilion. It is essential to have the materials available when RESA's Construction Trades students return to class in September. Whether the students will have the time to complete the pavilion and fishing platform this fall is questionable. It is my understanding that the students will also be working on other community projects. The fishing platform may be a spring construction project. I will continue to coordinate with RESA Instructor Ross Pope.

### **Summer Youth Employment Program**

On Monday, June 8, Ryan Furlong and Jason Kyle begin their placement with the Green Space Commission. Both young men have demonstrated a willingness to do the work I give them and are completing their assigned tasks in a very acceptable manner. I appreciate the fact that I can leave them with an assignment or two and return to the office knowing that I can depend on them to be self-directing and productive. Both have told me that they like their jobs. Ryan and Jason will be at the July meeting.

### **MSU Intern Eric Dobbrastine**

Eric has been enjoying vacation in the South Pacific but will return to Internship duties, including direct supervision of Ryan and Jason, on July 13. The final five to six weeks of his internship will be very busy; the list of tasks to be completed is significant.

### **Community Forestry Grant Tree Planting Project**

The project has been completed. Within the next week I will prepare a project report for DNR Forestry Unit review and request payment of the \$3,000 federal reimbursement grant. Ryan and Jason are watering the trees, as needed, and will soon have them all mulched with wood chips.

### **Non-Motorized Facilities (NMF) Plan**

I have received an email from the Tri-County Bicycle Association informing the Green Space Commission that the Association's Board has recommended to Dick Allen an award of \$5,000 for the NMF Plan. No word yet from the Capital Region Community Foundation on the \$5,000 grant application for the same project. In total, \$15,000 is needed to contract the development and writing of the plan. This planning initiative has strong county-wide support from local units of government across the width and depth of Clinton County and also from a number of non-profit and private stakeholders. I am hoping the County Board will appropriate funding to make up what I am unable to obtain from outside grant sources. This is a tough economic time for county government, but the potential benefit to county residents that would come from this plan far exceeds its modest cost.

### **Park Maintenance Garage**

With its new concrete interior floor and outside apron, the garage is providing to be a very useful maintenance and material storage facility. A lunch area has been set up for use by Eric, Ryan and Jason. Commission Chair Chuck Nelson donated a small refrigerator for employee use. Ryan and Jason have cleaned up the interior of the red barn to the north of the garage as well as the carport behind the garage. These areas will be used to store bulky items such as trash barrels, snow fence, etc. The garage will provide a work space for rainy and especially hot/humid days and several projects are being readied for those times.

### **Goose Roundup**

A roundup was conducted on Thursday, June 25 and again on Monday, June 29. On June 25 a crew of about 11 volunteers corralled 142 adult and juvenile Canada geese. Mark Melchoir of Nuisance No More, transferred the geese from the park to Pontiac Lake Recreation Area where they were received by the DNR. On June 29, a group of approximately 25 geese were being slowly moved towards the capture corral when one then all of the birds took to flight and left the park. Apparently, we waited too long and the remaining birds regained their flight feathers. 142 birds captured was more than I had expected to get.

The geese were captured and removed from the park to reduce the unsightly fecal matter on the beach and in the picnic area. The presence of large numbers of geese and their droppings may also create human health issues associated with coliform bacteria contamination of the water and the presence of the "swimmer itch" fluke. The

goose roundup is but one of several "tools" that I propose to use to control geese and gulls. I've prepared a Staff Report on this management issue and will include it in the July GSC meeting packet. The park's safety-engineered swimming beach is clean and healthy for human use and we must keep it that way.

### **Park Rules Ordinance**

Jet Speed Printing of St. Johns has completed printing of the ordinance in booklet and poster form. Copies of the booklet will be available at the July GSC meeting.

### **Other Assignments/Activities in Progress**

Listed for general information purposes. Items will be removed once completed.

- Motz County Park Development Project – Phase II (still in planning stage)
- Motz County Park Development Project – Group Pavilion & Fishing Platform
- Motz County Park Development Project – Grant Management & Fiscal Reporting
- Motz County Park – Entrance Gate
- Motz County Park – Fencing Improvement (if funding is available)
- Searles Property Acquisition Grant Application (if necessary, respond to DNR request for additional information)
- Other Motz County Park improvements
  - Fish habitat improvements (January/February 2010)
  - Tree maintenance program (on-going through 2012)
- Parkland and Open Space Acquisition Plan (as time is available)
- Agricultural Preservation Board – Staff liaison (10% - 20% time allocation)
- Intergovernmental CIS Trail Committee – support/advisory role
- DeWitt Township/City/DARA Community Recreation Plan Committee – GSC rep.
- Clinton Conservation District – Upper Maple River Watershed Management Plan) – Advisory role
- Clinton County Non-Motorized Facilities Plan
- Fund Raising – All-Terrain Wheelchairs
- River Access Site Improvements – Vehicle Barriers and Sign
- Community Development – Supervisory Responsibility