

COBB-HIGHLAND RECREATION COMMISSION

Minutes from June 18, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT: Al Linscheid, John Kreul, Gail Richgels, Laura Anderson, Bret Barr, Tom Jenks, and Steve Holmes

MEMBERS ABSENT: Al Kosharek, Dan Baker and Ryan Shemak

ALSO PRESENT: Tom Michek, Park Manager
Morgan Shemak, Assistant Park Manager
Don Leix, Iowa County Board Representative
Lisa Riley, Bookkeeper

Meeting was called to order by Bret Barr at 6:30 p.m.

Meeting notice was legally posted on Monday, June 16, 2025. This meeting was postponed from June 11th, due to lack of quorum.

Public Input - None

Board Member/Manager Discussion – Not for Action

Al Linscheid thanked Tom and Morgan for putting a basket together for Levi's golf outing memorial. Levi was a past employee at Blackhawk Lake.

Tom Michek informed the Commission that the seal coating has been delayed this year, due to other small projects needing attention.

Tom has contacted the DNR for permission to help control the raccoon population. We have had issues causing damage for some campers.

Review and Approve Minutes – Minutes from the May 14, 2025 meeting were reviewed. A motion was made by Laura Anderson, seconded by Al Linscheid to approve the meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Treasurer's Report – Reviewed financial reports. A motion was made by Laura Anderson, seconded by John Kreul to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Discuss/Approve Tractor Quotes – Tom presented a quote from Ritchie's for a 60h 4wd tractor with bucket, forks, end loader and 8' rear blade for \$47,000. No other requested quotes were received. Steve Holmes asked if the new tractor included a roll bar (yes) and a cab (no). This would replace the current 45h 4wd tractor. A trade-in offer of \$5,000 was received from Ritchie's, but Tom knows he can get more than \$5,000 by selling on auction or marketplace. He had checked into leasing also but the interest rate at this time is 6 ¼% for a Kubota and we would end up paying too much in interest alone. A motion was made by Al Linscheid, seconded by Steve Holmes to allow Tom Michek to move ahead on purchasing a tractor, if needed. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Discussion on staffing and staffing issues – Discussion about ongoing issues with staffing. The last ten years, high school kids have been filling the positions. The camping season ran from Memorial Day to Labor Day and kids' schedules allowed for availability of filling these positions. Now the season stretches from mid-April to end of October and the current staff are not available for the entire season, let alone daily availability during the peak season. Holiday weekends such as Memorial Day (kids are not out of school yet/high school graduation weekend) and Labor Day (kids are back in school, fall sports season has already begun, and Iowa County Fair) are a huge challenge due to the shortness of staff numbers. Tom and Morgan also expressed challenges with staffing around high school kids schedules, due to constant sports conflicts all summer, especially last minute games/tournaments.

Morgan is receiving multiple daily texts from staff that are not able to work his/her scheduled time, due to a last minute conflict. This is creating havoc with getting jobs done such as bundling wood, daily bathroom checks, cleaning fire pits, etc. The maintenance staff does not mow grass, as a couple of retired individuals take care of this task, unlike years ago. Many days/weekends, Morgan has been the complete maintenance staff due to lack of available workers. Discussion regarding expanding the number of people that have been hired to try and fill the hours, but the challenge just keeps getting bigger. Tom and Morgan presented the idea of potentially hiring Camp Hosts as a trial use this fall, especially Labor Day until the end of camping season. Tom stated that Morgan has done a lot of research on the process of Camp Host hiring and things would definitely be done differently from the past experience years ago. A specific job description, close oversight by both the Manager and Assistant Park Manager, signed contract, and background check will be done. A couple of suggestions for another possibility may be interns from UW-Platteville or Southwest Tech pursuing an outdoor recreational degree. Community Service workers was also mentioned. Also discussed hiring a Limited Term Employment employee, such as an adult, but the potential for paying unemployment compensation was also a possible cost issue. A comment was also made that Governor Dodge is struggling to have someone as Camp Hosts. Morgan explained the minimal cost of a Camp Host, basically setting aside one campsite for the duration (\$2,500) in comparison to hiring additional staff at an hourly rate for approximately \$7,500.

A motion was made by John Kreul, seconded by Gail Richgels to move ahead with hiring a Camp Host starting in August until the season end. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Maintenance/Equipment –

- Tom reported the bank shaping project is complete and looks great. The total cost of the project was \$14,900 for Kevin Wienkes Construction, as he kindly took off \$3,000 as Tom helped haul dirt for the project.
- The electrical remodel will be started soon. Alliant Energy has already been paid, but we will owe Pilling Electric about \$10,000 to complete the project.
- A new walk bridge will be installed by the bank job
- Tom and Morgan have been reviewing insurance costs, due to the large premium increase over the last few years. Tri-Cor Insurance has provided a quote, which would be all coverage through West Bend Insurance, potentially being more cost effective. There are a few differences in reviewing specific coverage. Property deductible is a flat \$5,000 amount, the lowest they can go with our current coverage being \$1,000. We could potentially save approximately \$8,000 from our current premium, but have some additional coverages we should be looking at (i.e. \$500,000 business income clause for \$850/year which would cover revenues lost if the business shuts down due to COVID, tornado, etc.) and \$1,500 additional cyber security coverage (due to the recent hack at Iowa County). Question arose if situations such as the bat issue would be covered. Even with the additional coverages, we could potentially save approximately \$5,000. We would need to check on renewal dates and reach out to Steve Lendosky to provide an opportunity to review.
- Tom and Morgan provided information for the Access Ability Wisconsin upcoming event on September 13th. People will use the provided chairs to access trails or other areas of the park. They currently have 30 chairs all over. For the event here at Blackhawk Lake, they will have a food truck and are seeking a beer only license. This is a fundraiser for the organization and hope to create an opportunity with Blackhawk Lake for a future partnership to have a trailer/chair here on premise. The current contract price is \$1,500/year and they handle all reservations and liability. Advertising for the event has already begun. Blackhawk Lake will be listed as additional insured on their liability insurance for the event. They plan to have 12-15 chairs available to use on September 13th. Gail Richgels questioned bathroom accessibility for the event. Tom and Morgan stated these issues are being handled by the organization.

Next Meeting Date – The next meeting date will be July 9, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.

Adjournment - A motion was made by Al Linscheid, seconded by Gail Richgels, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

X

Commission Secretary

X

Commission Clerk

Posted by County Clerk's Office on 7/7/2025, Barbara Weinbrenner