



## For Immediate Release

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### **Parks Board Receives Grants; Plans Civic Center Improvements; Supports New Section of Boardman River Trail**

**Traverse City** – Grand Traverse County Parks and Recreation Commissioners last week unanimously during its regular meeting on Thursday, August 20, approved to support development of Phase III of TART Trails’ Boardman River Trail, which will run through the Natural Education Reserve, a county park.

“We are thrilled to support this phase of the trail,” said Parks Commissioner Alisa Kroupa, who also is a county commissioner and the Parks Commission’s representative serving on the Natural Education Reserve Advisory Board. “TART is an important, long-time partner with County Parks and Recreation, and our collaborative efforts are all about bringing more recreational opportunities to our community.”

Commissioners also unanimously approved a request from the “Friends of Easling Pool” group to apply for a \$5,000 planning grant from Rotary Charities to conduct a financial analysis and create a fundraising plan for the community pool. Parks and Recreation Commissioners agreed to pay \$625 of the required \$1,250 grant match funding, and the Friends will pay \$625. According to Friends representatives, the planning grant will lay the groundwork for the group to apply for a \$100,000 capital grant from Rotary Charities next year for equipment upgrades and other pool improvements.

A location for a new playground and the potential for developing a dog park at the Civic Center also were discussed and supported by commissioners after Kroupa, who chairs the Parks Commission’s Business Development Team, asked them to permit the team to explore and act further on both potential projects. According to Kristine Erickson, Director of County Parks and Recreation, the Business Development Team’s focus this year is on the Civic Center, and “exciting things are in the works for our community’s park.” Erickson explained that the team already has developed business plans for Power Island and Twin Lakes Park, and at the end of 2015, the team will submit a business plan for the Civic Center to the Parks and Recreation Commission. Kroupa asked for permission to explore the potential for the projects before the plan is finished, “to start exploring every possible grant opportunity now.”

In addition to preliminary research for a new playground and dog park, said Erickson, “Parks and Recreation was just awarded two grants from the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians for two long-awaited projects at the Civic Center.” Under the tribe’s “two percent allocation” grant program, Parks and Recreation received a check for \$7,387 for a Civic Center surveillance camera

upgrade. “This upgrade will enhance security in the park and in the Civic Center building,” Erickson explained, “and we are privileged to have the tribe so generously support these efforts.”

A second grant, in the amount of \$6,937, will be used to clean up and develop the area surrounding the Native American Trail Marker Tree located on the north side of the Civic Center property “to give it the honor and esteem it deserves,” said Erickson. “Such marker trees are an important part of our rich history and geography, and we want to make the area around the tree welcoming, educational, and peaceful – a place where community members and visitors can convene, learn, and honor our Native American community and culture.” Erickson says that work on both projects will begin this fall.

Next summer, a concession stand near the ball fields and skate park at the Civic Center also will be opened for business.

According to Erickson, it is estimated that the Civic Center receives at least 700,000 visits by community residents and visitors each year. “Parks and Recreation,” she says, “is looking forward to expanding services and options for family enjoyment at the Civic Center.”

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