

Duncan Park Commission – July 15, 2025; Regular Meeting; 6:00pm
Grand Haven City Hall, Council Chambers, Grand Haven, MI

CALL TO ORDER:

COMMISSIONERS: Joe Middleton, Mike Poort, Georgette Sass, John Williams

CITY LIAISON: Michael England

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Motion to approve agenda made by Poort, second by Williams; passed 4-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT: *Members of the audience may address the Commission on any item, whether on the agenda or not. Those addressing the Commission are asked to provide their name and address and will be limited to three minutes of speaking time. The Commission will hear all comments for future consideration but may not have a response at this time.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion to approve June 17 Draft minutes as submitted made by Poort, second by Middleton; passed 4-0.

AGENDA

NEW BUSINESS:

- A. **Discussion** – The Heart of West Michigan United Way Day of Caring will be on Friday, September 12, 2025. This has been a great opportunity for Duncan Park to benefit from the work of dedicated volunteers. The deadline to submit a project is August 1, 2025. An email communication from Heart of West Michigan United Way can be found on our [Google Drive](#)).

The DPC discussed projects for the Day of Caring. It was agreed that a priority would be addressing the need for signage along the Duncan Park trail system, specifically at points where commissioners identified access should be blocked to preserve critical areas. **Motion** – Commissioners agree to submit a Day of Caring project with volunteers to complete installation of trail closure signage. Motion to approve made by Sass, second William; passed 4-0.

- B. **Discussion** – Melanie Ver Duin and Erica Kelly (from Duneside Discovery Center at Mary A White) have been engaged in initial discussions to consider the sustainability of access to Duncan Park at Wisconsin St. There are several grants that would be relevant to consider as potential opportunities to fund improvements to address and stop the erosion that threatens use of this access point.

The DPC discussed the overall goal and feasibility of improving the trail between Duncan Park and Mary A. White at Wisconsin St. Various options were explored, and it was agreed that action is needed to address the current condition of the trail. The primary objectives are to stabilize the dune structure and enhance accessibility in the most cost-effective manner. It was noted that DPC would need city council approval for any grant application. The Grand Haven Area Community Foundations Aug 4 community grant deadline was decided to be the initial focus of our efforts. **Motion** – Commissioners support grant applications to help defray the cost of improved access to Duncan Park at Wisconsin St. with a match from the Duncan Park Fund in an amount not to exceed 20% of the total cost. Motion to approve made by Sass, second Williams; passed 4-0.

- C. **Discussion** – The health of Duncan Park's old growth forest, especially the hemlocks, continues to be a grave concern. Our previous management plan with West Michigan Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (WMCISMA) now requires additional consideration by the commission given the intense pressure that this invasive disease has in our area as well as the increasing prevalence of an additional invasive disease organism, Elongate Hemlock Scale (EHS).

The ecological complexity of the retreatment phase and ongoing fiscal responsibility it will entail was discussed. Our city liaison (and Director of Public Works, Michael England) requested that the Duncan Park Commission hold a work session with the city to specifically address the status of Hemlock Wolly Adelgid in the park. DPC will determine availability of commissioners for a HWA work session with the city. No motion made at this time.

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OLD BUSINESS:

- A. Potential installation of a gate at the Sheldon Street entrance to Duncan Park has been discussed in previous DPC meetings. Information on the role Grand Haven Public Safety could play in its daily opening and closing as well as whether GHPS could provide aid in monitoring activities in the park are still needed. No motion made at this time.

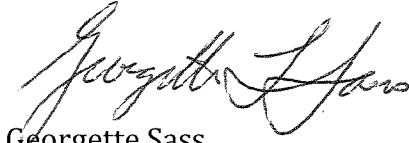
TREASURER REPORT: June financial documents are posted on our [Google Drive](#) and attached to the email sent with this agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

ADJOURNMENT: 7:38PM

NEXT MEETING: August 19, 2025 @6pm

Approved minutes respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Georgette Sass", is written over the printed name.

Georgette Sass

Sent to City Clerk on September 3, 2025