

**CASS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING**

June 22, 2023

Chair Jones called the special meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. in Commission Chambers on Thursday, June 22, 2023. Chair Jones led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Clerk/Register Monica McMichael called roll:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Ryan Laylin, Jeremiah Jones, Mary Howie, Samuel Barrera, Roseann Marchetti and RJ Lee.

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: James Lawrence and Joyce Locke.

STAFF PRESENT: Administrator Matthew Newton and Finance Director Jennifer Rentfrow.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Marchetti moved, seconded by Vice-Chair Laylin, to approve the June 22, 2023, Cass County Special Meeting Agenda. Motion to approve the agenda carried by voice vote.

RECOGNITIONS

None.

PRESENTATIONS

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

R-89-23

Vice-Chair Laylin moved, seconded by Commissioner Marchetti, to approve the following resolution:

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF SPARK GRANT APPLICATION FOR DR. LAWLESS INTERNATIONAL DARK SKY PARK NATURE CENTER / OBSERVATORY DEVELOPMENT

WHEREAS, the Cass County Board of Commissioners and the Cass County Parks and Recreation Commission support the purpose of Spark Grant funding to create and redevelop public outdoor recreation opportunities for residents and visitors, especially those who were hardest hit, economically, by the Covid-19 pandemic;

WHEREAS, the Cass County Board of Commissioners and the Cass County Parks and Recreation Commission are dedicated to the improvement of parks, tourism, and recreation facilities in Cass County;

WHEREAS, Dr. Lawless International Dark Sky Park has shown great potential for recreation development in Cass County throughout its existence;

WHEREAS, recent dark sky designation has reinforced the mission of leading by example as stewards of the land, water and sky;

WHEREAS, dark sky designation along with the development of a proposed nature center and star gazing observatory along with restroom access improvements, will encourage growth and revenue potential through year-round use from diverse user groups within Cass County and beyond; and

WHEREAS, if the grant is awarded, the Cass County Board of Commissioners hereby commits a local match of \$202,000, donated by the Charles Bombardie Trust specifically for nature center development within Dr. Lawless International Dark Sky Park.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Cass County Board of Commissioners, in a cooperative effort with the Cass County Parks and Recreation Commission, pledge their support in the funding effort for the Dr. Lawless International Dark Sky Park Nature Center / Observatory Development Project.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Cass County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes submission of a Spark Grant Application to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for \$998,000, and further resolves to make available a local match through financial commitment of \$202,000 (20%) of the total \$1,200,000 project cost during the 2024-2025 fiscal year or when grant funding becomes available.

The Chair instructed the Clerk to call roll:

Yes (6): Commissioners Laylin, Lawrence, Locke, Jones, Howie, Barrera, Marchetti and Lee.

No (0): None.

Absent (2): Commissioners Lawrence and Locke.

Resolution R-89-23 carried by roll call vote.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Jones adjourned the meeting at 4:33 p.m.

Approved: _____
Date

Chair Jeremiah Jones

Monica McMichael, Clerk/Register