



City Council Agenda Item Report

FROM: Ryan Cummins, City Manager

MEETING DATE: March 23, 2026

SUBJECT: Oval Beach Pass Request – Hope College for Saugatuck Harbor Natural Area Research

DESCRIPTION:

In past years, Hope College was provided a free Oval Beach pass for their ongoing coastal dune environment research in the Saugatuck Harbor Natural Area. Associate Professor, Suzanne DeVries-Zimmerman, is requesting a pass this year as well.

The City Council’s 2010 policy states, “[a]ll other complementary Oval Beach parking permits have been discontinued at this time unless otherwise approved by City Council”.

There are public benefits to the research work that is occurring. For anyone interested, Professor DeVries-Zimmerman has provided publications of their work. She also provided a link to a recent Michigan Public Radio piece on their work: <https://www.michiganpublic.org/2025-07-28/fulfilling-a-childhood-dream-studying-michigans-unique-dunes>

LEGAL REVIEW:

N/A at this time.

SAMPLE MOTION:

Motion to approve the Hope College request for one Oval Beach pass for Saugatuck Harbor Natural Area research.