

**Hendricks County Parks and Recreation
Park Board Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, November 1, 2017
2:00pm

Parks & Recreation Office
955 East Main Street
Danville, IN 46122

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:18pm.

Board Present: Paul Miner, President
Matt Freije, Vice President
Gary Emsweller
Mike Hayden

Board Absent: Bill Harrington, Secretary
Doug Moon
Beth Switzer

Staff Present: Jeremy Weber, Superintendent
Linda Brunner, Administrative Assistant
Eric Ivie, Marketing & Communications
Sarah Wolf, Park Naturalist

Guests: Ray Benson
Bob Niemeyer
Meghan Stritar, Parks Foundation of Hendricks County
Andrew Klinger, Plainfield Town Manager
Todd McCormack, Hendricks County Administrator

A. CALENDAR

A-1. Agenda

Freije moved to adopt the amended agenda; seconded by Hayden, the motion passed unanimously.

A-2. Approval of Minutes of October 11, 2017 Meeting

Emsweller moved to approve the minutes as presented; seconded by Hayden, the motion passed unanimously.

A-3. Review Current Budget Status

B. PUBLIC HEARINGS/PRESENTATIONS

B-1. Public Comments

Niemeyer commended Weber on his presentation at the Bartlett Chapel on October 24th. He stated that it was an excellent presentation and was very well-received. He also commended Miner on the article he had written on the opening of Gibbs Memorial Park which had appeared in the Hendricks County

Flyer.

C. CONTINUING BUSINESS

C-1. Vandalia Trail Update

Weber informed board members that the restrooms had now been set at the trailheads in Coatesville and Amo, and that construction is nearing completion. Work on the punch list is being done now, and substantial completion will occur in early December. Weber noted the contractor did get an extension of time due to INDOT's delay in sending out its notice to proceed. Weber advised that the contractor has filed a claim for delays caused by the wash-out earlier in the summer on the basis that the drainage design was inadequate. Weber stated he had been talking to the INDOT engineer, and that INDOT was of the mind that the claim would be denied. Weber advised that he expects the contractor to appeal a denial. The Board then discussed the next phase of the trail, including the need to begin the process of initiating "kitchen table" talks with landowners.

D. NEW BUSINESS

D-1. Town of Plainfield/Sodalis

Andrew Klinger, representing the Town of Plainfield ("TOP"), talked to the Board about Plainfield's pending purchase agreement to acquire approximately 1,800 acres in Hendricks County, now owned by the Indianapolis Airport Authority, including 1,600 acres of bat habitat, surrounding and including Sodalis Nature Park, in addition to some non-protected areas. He advised that the TOP hoped to close the deal, which they had been working on for approximately 2 years, in January or February of 2018, at which time the TOP would take over IAA's place on the License Agreement previously entered into between the IAA and HCP&R for Sodalis Nature Park. He stated that the Plainfield Town Council wants to provide additional recreational opportunities, and that they are currently piecing together a master plan for the entire area. He added that the TOP was working with USF&W to negotiate taking over some bat habitat and to define what "improvements" could and could not be done. Klinger talked about the TOP's desire to negotiate a new lease to expand the park, and stated that Plainfield did not have the personnel or expertise to manage a natural area and would want HCP&R to continue to manage the property.

Klinger stated the TOP's first priority is closing the deal with IAA, but added that part of the overall long-term strategy would be to improve the infrastructure, which would include straightening out roads and making connections from I-70 and SR 267 to move traffic around the bat habitat, to create new TIF districts, and to explore partnerships to create a new Education Center on the property.

There was discussion of the TOP's long-term vision of making the area a regional attraction, including looking at ways to close the gaps on the Vandalia Trail. Weber and the park board members talked about the need for further negotiation regarding HCP&R's operational costs and protecting its investment down the road. Emsweller asked if the TOP planned to take over Sodalis and absorb it into the Plainfield Parks system, and Klinger admitted that some TOP council members want that.

Klinger and Weber agreed to continue monthly meetings as needed between the TOP and HCP&R. McCormack suggested meeting with Klinger, and Miner requested that they keep the park board advised of those discussions.

Weber advised the Board that in connection with the pending purchase by the TOP, the IAA has asked the Park Board to sign an Estoppel Certificate verifying the terms of its lease with IAA, which has 12 years remaining. Following discussion of some of the terms of that lease, the Park Board agreed by consensus that Weber send the certificate to the County Attorney for review, and that Miner was authorized to sign on behalf of the Board pending the County Attorney's approval.

D-2. Maintenance Equipment Purchase

Weber talked about the need for an offset slope mower to attach to the tractor to enable the crew to mow areas they were unable to reach, along the Vandalia Trail and at McCloud, with their current equipment. He and Holtsclaw discussed several options for which Holtsclaw had received quotes, and requested that the Board authorize the expenditure.

Hayden moved that the Board approve the expenditure, not to exceed \$12,000, for the purchase of the offset slope mower and modifications to the tractor combined; seconded by Freije, the motion passed unanimously.

D-3. 2018 Fee Schedule

The proposed 2018 Fee Schedule was presented to the Board, as follows:

Cultural Programs	Year-round	No Fee
Indiana Astronomical Society Programs	April - October	No Fee
Library Outreach	Year-round	No Fee
School Field Trips (Includes Home School Groups)	April – May; August - October	No Fee
School Outreach	November - February	No Fee (in-county) \$50 (out of county)
Summer Fun Run	June - September	No Fee
Family Programs	Year-round	\$0 Base Environmental Ed \$2-\$4 Enhanced Environmental Ed. \$25 Next Level – Adult themed \$30 per tent site (up to 6 family members per site)
Group Field Trips	Year-round	\$40: 0 – 20ppl \$80: 21 – 40ppl \$120: 41-60ppl
Group Outreach (incl. schools if programs not on the list of offerings are desired)	Year-round	\$60: 1 or 2-Hour Program
Scout Programs	Year-round	\$10 Per Participant Scout Sundays (chaperones free) \$30 Per Participant Scout Overnight Camp; \$7 per chaperone
Kids Camp Series	Spring Break and June - July	\$12 - Two Hour Camp (parent and child) \$25 - Four Hour Camp
Pavilion Rental - McCloud	Year-round	\$75 HC Resident \$100 Non-resident
Pavilion Rental – Sodalis	Year-round	\$100 HC Resident \$125 HC Non-resident

Emsweller moved to approve the 2018 Fee Schedule as presented; seconded by Freije, the motion passed unanimously.

E. REPORTS

E-1. Superintendent Report

Weber reported that he was working with Pros Consulting on an RFP and initial cost estimates based on the plan submitted by the Gibbs Task Force earlier in the year. He provided a map showing the location of the amenities in the Phase 1 development plan.

Weber advised that he had been contacted by a graduate student doing archeological work who wants to test equipment at Gibbs to obtain an image of the subsurface. He stated that no digging would be involved and the student would provide images and reports if the Board desired. Hayden said he would advise Mr. and Mrs. Gibbs that the student would be conducting the work.

Weber reported that he had met at Sodalis with Joy O’Keefe and that ISU plans to put up new types of bat boxes at Sodalis in 2019. Weber further advised that he could reach out to USF&W regarding the upcoming plans.

Weber told Board members that the Fall Colors Festival had been a great event, and that while the official car count had not yet been downloaded, expectations were that visitation may have broken a record, with at least 500-600 participants.

E-2. Youth Advisory Board

Freije reported that there had been a good turnout of YAB members at the Fall Colors Festival, with a new member also signing up to serve. He said students would be working on painting signs for Maple Syrup Days at their November meeting.

E-3. Committee Reports

Miner encouraged the newly-formed committees to begin scheduling meetings.

E-4. Foundation Report

Stritar reported on the Foundation’s Fall Colors Run. Even with registration opening late, there were 115-120 runners. She received positive feedback from many of the attendees, reported on proceeds from the run, the hayrides and s’mores. Stritar added that she has ideas for improving the event and is looking forward to 2018.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:12 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

William O. Harrington, Secretary