

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

Wednesday, April 12, 2017
2:00pm

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

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:02pm

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

Board Absent: Doug Moon
Beth Switzer

Staff Present: Jeremy Weber, Superintendent
Linda Brunner, Administrative Assistant

Guests: Greg Midgley

A. CALENDAR

A-1. Agenda

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

A-2. Approval of Minutes of March 8, 2017 Meeting

Freije moved to approve the minutes; seconded by Niemeyer, the motion passed unanimously.

A-3. Review 2017 Budget Status

Brunner distributed a spreadsheet setting out the current budget status and stated there were no concerns at this time. There were no questions regarding the budget status.

B. PUBLIC HEARINGS/PRESENTATIONS

B-1. Public Comments

Greg Midgley was welcomed to the meeting.

C. CONTINUING BUSINESS

C-1. Russell Property Update

Weber distributed a copy of the offer from Beverly Russell, as communicated by her agent, Jack Lawson, for the sale of her property, located on S. Co Rd 200 E, Clayton, IN 46118, to the Hendricks County Parks and Recreation Board. Weber informed the Board that he had attended the April 4th

meeting of the Hendricks County Council to discuss the offer and to gauge the Council's approval of and support for the Board's potential acquisition of the property. Weber added that following his presentation, the Council agreed to lend its support of Weber's plan to proceed with an affordable counteroffer, and there was consensus that there would be support for future operating costs. Weber went on to say that HCP&R's Executive Committee would be meeting that evening to work out the details of the counteroffer. Following a discussion of some of the terms of the counteroffer, the Board instructed Weber to proceed and to communicate that counteroffer, contingent on Council approval, to the Seller's agent.

C-2. W. S. Gibbs Memorial Park Update

Weber reported on his visit to the Gibbs property to search for the uncovered well that Dennis Gibbs had advised the Board of. Weber said that he believes he found the well, but that it is filled in. He also reported he found foundations of a couple buildings formerly located on the property, and a couple tree stands that look fairly new. Hayden stated that he would confirm the location of the well with the landowner, John Gibbs, and would also ascertain whether he gave permission to anyone to hunt there.

Weber informed the Board that he had met with Dan Searcy, the farm lease tenant, and discussed with him the requests the Board had made in exchange for Searcy's requested reduced per-acre rental rate. He said Searcy had agreed to the offset of land where the future trails would be located, and could use his equipment to seed the trails. He also had no problem giving up the acreage Weber had requested for planting trees. Weber said he will be meeting Searcy at the property the following week to mark off the trails and determine how much acreage will need to be offset.

Weber told the Board that he had met with a neighbor who had contacted him regarding a couple dead trees on Gibbs Park property, one of which he was concerned could potentially fall and damage his residence. This neighbor told Weber that he has, for the past 27 years, been maintaining, with the knowledge and consent of John Gibbs, a section of what is now park property. The Board discussed the matter, and determined that when staff cuts down the trees, a fence should be constructed to delineate the property line. They also suggested that Weber contact the county attorney to talk about whether a cease and desist letter would be in order. The Board then agreed by consensus that Weber should contact the neighbor and talk with him about the Board's concerns regarding future liability and the need to fence off the property. The Board directed Weber to get an estimate for a survey and fence, and suggested that Banning Engineering might do the survey for a reduced fee.

Weber advised that he had met with an Avon Town Council member about a possible partnership between the Town of Avon and the Hendricks County Park Board to develop Gibbs Memorial Park. The council member said that the full council may not have received all pertinent information and that he would personally discuss the matter with the Director of Public Works.

C-3. Vandalia Trail Update

Weber reported on a construction progress meeting he had held with the construction inspector and contractor, necessitated by the contractor hitting a sewer line twice in the past week. Weber stated there were discussions last fall regarding whether or not the trail needed to be widened, and that the current design apparently did not incorporate the results of those discussions. Weber talked about the possibility of a redesign, but the designer was on vacation and unavailable to attend the meeting. Weber told the Board that any work stoppage resulting from the redesign would not be covered by the INDOT grant,

and HCPR would be responsible for 100% of the potential \$3,500/day stoppage. Weber advised that he had met with the construction inspector that morning to talk about potential solutions, and explained several possible options to correct the problem. Midgley suggested closing the equestrian trail at an earlier point for now to allow time to work on a creative solution. Weber will talk to the county attorney about the broken sewer line and who's responsible for payment, and will talk to John Ayers regarding the necessity to probe. Weber advised he would be meeting with the designer and construction inspector the following day.

Midgley talked to the Board about the NRHT donation to the Park Board of a certain pocket park on the Vandalia Trail at the corner of SR 75 and Main St. in Coatesville, which had been acquired by NRHT through a grant, and has been maintained by HCP&R staff. Weber had previously taken an informal vote by email and all Board members who responded were in favor of accepting the donation. Midgley advised the Board that as soon as the grant associated with the property is closed out, the Board will receive a Warranty Deed transferring ownership.

Freije moved to accept the donation from NRHT of the pocket park on the Vandalia Trail at the corner of SR 75 and Main St. in Coatesville; seconded by Niemeyer, the motion passed unanimously.

C-4. Withdrawal of Previous Vandalia Trail Offer to Purchase

Weber reminded the Board that it still has an offer pending for right-of-way on a parcel owned by Buck Arnold that should be withdrawn to start over with that landowner, as discussed in a previous meeting.

Freije moved to withdraw the offer; seconded by Niemeyer, the motion passed unanimously.

C-5. McCloud Nature Park Update

Weber reported that the wetland project at McCloud is nearing completion and that he will meet with Ben Harvey to go over the final punch list and cost adjustments. He stated that Holtsclaw and his staff had done a nice job completing a small boardwalk, and still had the larger boardwalk to construct, and 150 trees and 2,000 willow stakes to plant.

Weber told the Board that the well that had been dug ended up flowing at 1-gallon per minute, and it has been capped for now. A second well has been drilled, running at 10-gallons per minute, behind the pond. Electricity will need to be run, and the fountain may need to be placed in an offset location rather than in the center of the arboretum as originally planned. Weber said the arboretum would be finished this summer.

C-6. Sodalís Nature Park Update

Weber informed the Board that he had a meeting scheduled with Eric Anderson of IAA on Thursday, April 13th, to discuss the status of the additional 2,000 acres. He stated that Miner and Emsweller would be attending with him, and that he had also invited Switzer but she had not yet replied.

Niemeyer reported that he would be joining a group from INPAWS, led by Tom Hohmann, removing invasive garlic mustard at Sodalís Park on April 18th.

C-7. HCP&R Gains Made

Miner reported to the Board on several incremental gains made as a result of recent conversations with potential partners, including the following:

Matt Howrey, President of the North Salem State Bank, will allow HCP&R to run tag lines from time to time in its customers' statements.

The Town of North Salem is creating a new page on their website featuring the history of the town and McCloud Park, and linking their website to HCP&R's.

Hendricks Power will be including HCP&R information in its newsletter and on its website.

The County Commissioners have agreed to encourage financial advisor Greg Guerrettaz to offer financing recommendations to HCP&R (who has agreed to do so at no cost). Miner has provided a list of financing ideas to Guerrettaz, who has agreed to respond to our questions.

At a recent B & O Trail meeting, Miner and Weber asked what could be done to link the B & O Trail with McCloud Nature Park.

The publisher of the Hendricks County ICON contacted Weber recently to discuss the possibility of including *The Explorer* as an insert in its publication, which reaches 35,000 homes. He added that in a readership survey, nearly 90% of respondents indicated an interest in parks.

Weber added that the County Council meeting had been very positive, not only due to their support of the Russell property, but they also invited Weber to submit a proposal detailing his request for additional department staffing.

Weber reported that Meghan Stritar, former HCP&R staffer, is volunteering with him on developing ideas for a nature playground, and that he has a funding source in mind.

D. REPORTS

D-1. Superintendent Report

Weber advised that he had met with William Rodehamel of the Hendricks County Community Foundation regarding endowment accounts. He said the Harlos Fund has a potential payable amount this year of approximately \$11,000. Rodehamel is researching possible uses for the funds, such as connecting the north side of the park to the B & O Trail, construction of a pavilion in conjunction with a trailhead, or possibly for a woodland staircase. Weber stated that the HCCF is providing grants for professional development, which could be used for staff training or possibly for funding for the PFOHC open position.

Weber reported on changes in HCP&R staff: Lucas McNabb resigned from the maintenance team and his position has been filled by Steve Miller; Chelsea McGinnis resigned as Assistant Naturalist, and Joe Lembo has filled her position; Stephanie Burdsall will be returning this summer as a seasonal Assistant Naturalist; and Joy Fulk has been hired as a seasonal Assistant Naturalist.

Weber also advised that the department is purchasing a utility vehicle, utility trailer, and a snow plow for the new maintenance truck.

Weber spoke briefly about his Leadership Hendricks County capstone project, Nature Therapy and Outdoor Wellness, a collaborative project with other LHC members and Hendricks Regional Health.

Weber reported on the numerous and assertive marketing and communications efforts by Eric Ivie to engage the community in the past month, and his plans for developing the photo contest calendar for 2018.

D-2. Youth Advisory Board

Freije informed that Lora Steele, his volunteer assistant with the YAB, has advised him that she will have to step down at the end of the school year due to the many other activities in which she is involved. He added that, having served as chair of the YAB for the past couple years, he is ready to

step down and allow another board member to work with the youth. He encouraged the members present to volunteer, and advised that he will assist the new chairperson in getting up to speed. He added that the YAB will be volunteering at the upcoming Native Plant Sale on April 22nd, and their year-end meeting will likely be a pizza party in May.

D-3. Committee Reports

There was no formal committee report, but Miner noted that several policies were nearly completed and ready to present to the Board, and that a meeting would be scheduled to finalize those policies.

D-4. Foundation Report

Weber reported that the Foundation was scheduled to meet the following day to discuss the Agenda items remaining from their last meeting. He said the Pancake Breakfast fundraiser had netted \$4,729.49. Niemeyer noted the contributions of volunteer Gene Ardeel at the Pancake Breakfast fundraiser and over the years and recommended that he be recognized in some way. There was also a brief discussion about Eli Lilly's upcoming Day of Service, and what projects might be available for them to work on.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:06 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Freije, Secretary