

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

Wednesday, May 10, 2017  
2:00pm

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

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 2:05pm

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

**Board Absent:** Doug Moon

**Staff Present:** Jeremy Weber, Superintendent  
Linda Brunner, Administrative Assistant  
Jim Holtsclaw, Parks Manager

**Guests:** Ray Benson  
Lora Steele

**A. CALENDAR**

A-1. Agenda

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

A-2. Approval of Minutes of April 12, 2017 Meeting

Miner advised that the minutes previously emailed to board members had been revised, and the final minutes presented at the meeting contained a date change and a clarification.

**Niemeyer moved to approve the minutes as presented; seconded by Freije, 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. She reported she had received documentation earlier that day that requested transfers had been made into the Board's non-reverting capital fund, and those transfers would be reflected on the June spreadsheet. There were no questions regarding the budget status.

**B. PUBLIC HEARINGS/PRESENTATIONS**

B-1. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

## **C. CONTINUING BUSINESS**

### **C-1. Russell Property Update**

Weber informed the board that upon receiving positive feedback from elected officials regarding their level of support for moving forward with an offer to purchase the Russell property, he had contacted the seller's agent and communicated the major terms of an "unofficial" offer, which the seller has rejected. Weber explained that the proposal the park board had received from the seller was actually a "take it or leave it" offer and not a starting point for negotiations. Weber reported that the seller has instructed her agent to seek out other potential buyers.

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

Weber reported that he, Miner, and tenant farmer, Dan Searcy, had met at the Gibbs property, and Weber had marked off trails. Once Searcy has planted accordingly, Weber said, he will use the GPS on his phone to determine the acreage that is actually being farmed and will adjust the terms of the Lease accordingly. Weber pointed out that several significant trails will remain wet, and he will need to figure out what to do about those. Miner pointed out that the property is also infested with invasive plants, and that issue will need to be dealt with. The board discussed the well and the tree stands that had been discovered, which Gibbs said his grandson had constructed. Hayden advised that he had discussed the tree stands with Gibbs and advised that they would have to be removed, per the board's earlier discussions. There was discussion about the area on the north side which had been maintained by a neighbor, and Hayden said that Gibbs thought it a good idea to fence it off now. Weber stated that Banning's sponsorship level with the Parks Foundation included \$3,500 in in-kind services, and he would contact him to inquire about getting the survey in the works, install a fence, and allow the area to return to its natural state. Hayden pointed out the board needs to keep in mind that Mr. and Mrs. Gibbs still own 20 acres.

### **C-3. Vandalia Trail Update**

Weber explained that problems had developed with the construction of the Vandalia Trail as the result of recent severe storms, and that property owners were unhappy because of drainage issues. He added that several residents are claiming that promises were made to them verbally several years ago which were not included in the final trail design. He advised that he would be meeting with Holtsclaw and county engineer John Ayers the following day to discuss possible causes and remedies, including grading changes. Weber requested that Hayden also become involved, as the current problems were complex, and decisions would soon need to be made regarding options available to remedy the issues and the costs associated with them. Weber then discussed the drainage issues in detail and offered photographic evidence of some the storm's aftermath. Weber informed the board that INDOT had recently approached Holtsclaw and him to offer funds to cover eighty percent (80%) of the construction inspection firm's fees. He advised that this would free up funds previously earmarked for construction inspection to offset trail repair and possible redesign costs.

### **C-4. McCloud Nature Park Update**

Weber reported on a few problems resulting from recent flooding in the new wetland mitigation area, and added that he was working with American Structurepoint to address them. He stated that the wetland was totally submerged, but that the barbs were working as intended. He added that Jim's staff is still installing willow stakes, which needs to be finished soon in order to ensure the viability of the

remaining stakes, and that the trails and boardwalk still need to be completed.

Weber stated the weather had delayed the well contractors from completing their work, but that they should be finished soon and then the trails could be constructed and the arboretum could be finished. He stated, in connection with the construction of the stone pillars for the fountain in the arboretum, he would like to have the stone pillars in other areas of the park repaired. He said he will get cost estimates and bring them to the board for approval.

Weber reported that the water fountain outside the Nature Center will be completely installed by the following week and will be a welcome addition for park patrons.

#### C-5. Sodalis Nature Park Update

Weber reported that he and Miner had met with representatives of the Town of Plainfield, and that they will likely end up with ownership of the Conservation Area, although there is still some due diligence to complete. He said they talked in general terms about working in cooperation, beginning with monthly meetings to discuss long-term management of the area. The first meeting is scheduled May 30<sup>th</sup> at 2:00pm, and Weber requested Switzer and Emsweller join in the discussions. Plainfield has acknowledged that it does not have the expertise or capability to manage large natural areas and would need HCP&R's help. Freije expressed interest in expanding Sodalis and there was discussion about the possibility of using bicentennial grant funds for that purpose.

Weber informed the board that one of the interpretive signs at Sodalis had been vandalized, will need to be replaced, and that he is awaiting the cost estimate from the sign company.

Weber also reported that emergency responders were called for a suicide intervention at Sodalis, cutting locks to gain access. He said he plans to work with first responders, first to map out the parks and determine who has jurisdiction over which areas, and then to conduct exercises at our parks. He reported an ongoing problem with airport police, fire departments, and others, not knowing who's in charge, and the need to get agreements regarding which agency is responsible for what. Such a plan would help with the department's emergency management plans, currently a work in progress.

### **D. NEW BUSINESS**

#### D-1. 2017 HCCF Annual Disbursements

Weber advised that the annual disbursement checks had been received from the Hendricks County Community Foundation: \$11,869 from the Glen L. & Mildred M. Harlos Endowment Fund, and \$448 from the HCP&R Agency Endowment Fund. There was discussion of whether to reinvest the funds into those endowment accounts, or dedicate them to a specific project, yet to be identified. No decision was reached, and the matter will be revisited at a future meeting.

### **E. REPORTS**

#### E-1. Superintendent Report

Weber advised that he is beginning work on the 2018 budget, and requested Miner and Emsweller join him on a budget committee to work on a strategy and prioritization of plans for 2018. He will schedule a meeting in the near future.

Miner reported that he and Weber will be meeting with an ad hoc finance committee comprised of Greg Guerrettaz, Tom Baker, and Dennis Dawes to look at avenues to secure major funding sources, and then present those recommendations to the council and commissioners. The board discussed the recent misunderstanding by the commissioners, who thought the park board had made an official offer to purchase the Russell property and questioned its authority to do so. Commissioner Whetstone had indicated his desire

to make the park board an advisory board only, and place the department under the control of county government. Steuerwald advised the commissioners that the Park Board had been created by the County Council, which other officials had not been aware of. There was discussion of continuing to improve communications with the Commissioners.

#### E-2. Youth Advisory Board

Lora Steele informed the board that she was stepping down from the YAB due to other responsibilities, and that she has enjoyed working with this group. Freije advised that the last meeting of this school year is scheduled for Saturday, May 13<sup>th</sup>, where YAB members would be presented with Certificates of Appreciation, and Freije said he would deliver certificates to schools for those members who were unable to attend. Freije advised that he would be fine-tuning the program this summer, as the youth want more involvement. He said there was a good balance this year, and thanked Steele for all her work.

#### E-3. Committee Reports

Miner went through a draft of the proposed Land Acquisition policy that the Policy Committee had been working on. Following a brief discussion, Freije moved to adopt the draft policy. Hayden stated he would like to review it more carefully and Emsweller agreed. Emsweller and Switzer stated they would like to see what other park boards have. Freije withdrew his motion and the board agreed by consensus to table the vote until next month while additional research was conducted.

#### E-4. Foundation Report

Weber advised that the PFOHC has now posted the development assistant position vacated last November. They are receiving applications, and will be scheduling interviews. He stated that the Foundation is also talking to potential new members, and that Duke Energy and Pros Consulting had expressed interest.

Weber reported on the results of the Native Plant Sale held April 22<sup>nd</sup> at Sodalis Nature Park. He said that while online sales were adequate, inclement weather led to low turnout and there were many plants left over. Weber advised that he donated the remaining plants to various organizations who were grateful to have them, and that the Foundation's net income from the sale was approximately \$800. Niemeyer suggested that future plant sales should be scheduled on a day that did not conflict with the Master Gardeners annual event as it did this year. Weber agreed, and said he has additional ideas for improving the sale in the future.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Prior to adjournment, Hayden expressed frustration with the timing of announcements of special meetings, which had occurred twice in the past month. Weber apologized and explained that matters had come up quickly and that he had tried to provide as much as notice as possible under the circumstances.

Hayden moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:53pm, seconded by Niemeyer, but the meeting was reconvened to discuss an additional topic.

Weber advised that a construction company wanted to park a "field office" trailer at McCloud, beginning May 18<sup>th</sup>, while working on nearby roads. He said the company would need internet and electric service, and would have a couple trucks coming in and out of the park. Following a brief

discussion, the board agreed by consensus that this would not be acceptable in the main park area, but possibly on the north side, provided there was a contract, proof of insurance, an agreement to reseed any disturbed areas, and an understanding that they would be responsible for obtaining their own electricity. Weber said he would communicate the board's decision to the construction company.

**The meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Matthew Freije, Secretary