

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

Wednesday, Oct. 2, 2019  
2:00pm

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

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 2:01 p.m.

**Board Present:** Paul Miner, President  
Matt Freije, Vice President  
Brad Eisenhart  
Gary Emsweller  
Doug Moon

**Board Absent:** Mike Hayden, Secretary  
Jeff Pell

**Staff Present:** Ryan Lemley, Superintendent  
Eric Ivie, Assistant Superintendent  
Jim Holtsclaw, Park Manager

**Guests:** Carrie Alward  
Ray Benson

**A. CALENDAR**

A-1. Agenda

**Eisenhart moved to adopt the agenda; seconded by Moon; motion passed unanimously.**

A-2. Approval of Minutes of August 7, 2019, Meeting

**Freije moved to approve the minutes; seconded by Moon; motion passed unanimously.**

**B. PUBLIC HEARINGS/PRESENTATIONS**

B-1. Public Comments

Lemley introduced the Park Board to Carrie Alward, who just finished her contract with the department as a part-time seasonal naturalist. She is now volunteering for the department, and she's in graduate school. As part of her schooling, she's taking a grant-writing class, and she will be writing a grant application requesting money for disc golf baskets for W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park. Alward has already met with Lemley and Ivie to discuss this project. The Park Board expressed their appreciation for Alward pursuing this grant.

## **C. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **C-1. Rocky Turner Barn**

Lemley recommended to the Park Board that they respectfully decline the donation offer on the Rocky Turner Barn in Avon, based on the projected \$100,000 cost to dismantle, relocate, and reassemble the barn to park property. That cost is comparable to what it would cost to build a new barn on the W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park property, and Lemley would prefer to spend that kind of money on a new barn that is customized to best serve the needs of the department's maintenance crew. **Freije moved to graciously decline the offer on the Rocky Turner Barn; seconded by Emsweller; motion passed unanimously.**

### **C-2. Vandalia Trail – Vacant Lot Update & Interest**

Lemley advised that he consulted with Hendricks County Attorney Greg Steuerwald, National Road Heritage Trail advocate Greg Midgley, and Coatesville Town Manager Jerry Decker about the small lot near the Vandalia Trail that a citizen is interested in purchasing. The lot was originally Town of Coatesville property and was donated to Midgley, who in turn donated it to the department years ago. Lemley advised that neither Midgley or Decker are interested in having the lot returned to them, and Steuerwald has advised that the cost of the proceedings that must be followed to legally sell the land would be higher than the land is worth. Steuerwald reached out to Lemley earlier this week with an alternative option, but Lemley hasn't been able to contact Steuerwald since then to discuss the matter in more depth, so Lemley recommends that the Park Board table this matter for now. The Park Board's consensus was to table this matter for further discussion at a later date.

## **D. NEW BUSINESS**

### **D-1. McCloud Nature Park – Possible Expansion**

Lemley informed the Park Board about an opportunity to purchase some land on the north side of McCloud Nature Park; however, access to the property is rather limited, and the landowner is opposed to providing an easement out to County Line Road. Holtsclaw advised that to access that land, the maintenance crew would have to drive all the way up to North Salem (because the bridge on County Line Road is closed indefinitely), down County Line Road, and through the north portion of park property – a trip of about 6-7 miles. Lemley reviewed a couple of maps of the area with the Park Board in detail and answered several of their questions. The consensus of the Park Board is that they're interested in learning more specifics about this possibility, including a possible site visit, for further discussion. Lemley advised that he will gather that information for them and try to schedule a site visit before the next Park Board meeting.

### **D-2. Vandalia Trees – Dead Trees**

Lemley advised that the maintenance crew marked over 700 dead trees – mostly ash trees – along the Vandalia Trail, and they need to come down before they become a safety hazard. Lemley is working on a couple different options for disposing of those trees, but first, he'd like the Park Board to declare the trees to be of no value, since they are a County-owned asset. **Emsweller moved to declare the dead trees along the Vandalia Trail to be of no value; seconded by Eisenhart; motion passed unanimously.**

### **D-3. Signatory Privileges for Ryan Lemley**

Ivie informed the Park Board that he is the only current employee with signatory privileges on the department's pass-through bank account at North Salem State Bank (NSSB). Ivie explained that the

bank account is where program fees and property rental fees that are collected online are deposited, and then each month, Ivie prepares a Report of Collections and writes a check to the Hendricks County Treasurer that zeroes out the account. So there is never any substantial amount of money in the account, but it still makes Ivie uncomfortable to be the only signatory on the account due to the appearance of impropriety and the lack of a checks-and-balances system in place. When making a cash deposit at the bank recently, Ivie asked NSSB employees how to get Lemley on the account, and among the required documentation is a copy of board minutes giving Lemley permission to be a signatory, so that is what Ivie is requesting. **Eisenhart moved to remove Jeremy Weber as a signatory on the NSSB bank account and to add Ryan Lemley as a signatory; seconded by Emsweller; motion passed unanimously.**

#### D-4. Brownsburg Community School Corporation – Agreement Review

Lemley presented a tentative agreement between our department and the Brownsburg Community School Corporation (BCSC) for BCSC to take a large portion of the soil that will be excavated from the pond at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park. BCSC is planning to use the clay for a construction project of their own, and this agreement will save the parks department money and save BCSC money. Lemley advised that Jessica Hartman with Civil Engineering Consultants, Inc. (CECON) is reviewing the document to make sure this is a feasible plan, since CECON is HCP&R's contracted engineering firm for Phase I of the Gibbs project. Lemley also asked the Park Board to give president Paul Miner authority to sign the final draft of the agreement. **Emsweller moved to allow the parks department to move forward on finalizing an agreement with BCSC and to allow Paul Miner to sign the final draft of the agreement; seconded by Moon; motion passed unanimously.**

### E. CONTINUING BUSINESS

#### E-1. McCloud Nature Park Update

Lemley referred the Park Board to his Superintendent Report for information about McCloud Nature Park. He advised that the quartz epoxy flooring has been installed in the McCloud Nature Center and looks good. Lemley expressed his appreciation to the Parks Foundation of Hendricks County (PFOHC) for funding that project.

Lemley informed the Park Board that FOX59 ran a story about the McCloud Prairie Maze including photos and video that were taken by Dave Novak with his drone, and it was good publicity for the maze.

Lemley advised that the Family Campout at McCloud was a success last weekend. He said that one of the grills at McCloud is being replaced next week.

Outside of his Superintendent Report, Lemley advised the Park Board that he and Ivie met with Meghan Stritar from the PFOHC recently, and she wants the parks department to run the Pancake Breakfast. She'll be there just to collect donations, which would involve HCP&R paying an administrative fee. Lemley and Ivie expressed concern about this proposal, detailing a case study of a federal parks superintendent who was investigated and fired for doing exactly what Stritar is suggesting that HCP&R do. The federal employee was fired because of ethical issues and ghost employment, so our staff is very leery about having anything to do with the Pancake Breakfast. Emsweller and Eisenhart both stated that

the PFOHC is interested in continuing the Pancake Breakfast as it has been done in past years, and there will be no administrative fee. Emsweller and Eisenhart agreed that the parks staff has enough to do for Maple Syrup Days, and they don't expect staff to help with the Pancake Breakfast. The entire Park Board agreed that there is a legitimate ethical concern with staff working the breakfast, and that everyone needs to be cognizant of issues like these on all projects and events. With that issue resolved, the Pancake Breakfast will go on as it has for years, and HCP&R has what it needs to publicize the event in the Winter/Spring 2020 issue of *The Explorer* magazine.

#### E-2. Vandalia Trail Update

Lemley informed the Park Board that he and Holtsclaw did a final walk-through of the drainage project at the wastewater treatment facility just east of Coatesville, and that Hendricks County Commissioner Bob Gentry was also there at Lemley's invitation. Lemley reported that the project looks good. Butler, Fairman & Seufert (BF&S) is arguing some of the costs involved with the project – namely \$35,000+ in vastly underestimated backfill requirements in BF&S's engineering plans that the contractor, Conexco, caught even before bids were opened. To do the job right, Conexco had to use 650+ cubic yards more backfill (and a different backfill material) than the plans called for. There's also a contested issue on how much of the area was seeded after construction, resulting in more grass seed being used than was originally planned. The cost of the entire job is up around \$230,000 now, but BF&S doesn't want to pay half of that amount because they feel that the extra expense was outside of the engineering plans and is, therefore, not their responsibility. Lemley reported that he continues to work with BF&S and Conexco to get this issue resolved.

Lemley advised that Ivie has been working with the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) to resolve financial transactions between INDOT, the parks department, BF&S, and Beaty Construction involving Change Order #11 on the paving of the Vandalia Trail. That has all been figured out now, so Ivie is in the process of executing those transactions and getting this issue closed out.

Lemley reported that the federal highway award through INDOT has expired, so there is no more money to be had there. The Park Board, Lemley, Ivie, and Holtsclaw discussed how to proceed with investigating the possibility of land acquisition for extension of the Vandalia Trail in the future, now that we don't have federal money to pay for 80% of those costs.

Lemley stated that he and Ivie will get the department's application for a Next Level Trails grant completed and submitted next week ahead of the Nov. 1, 2019 deadline for the second round of grant applications. This grant request would fund extension of the Vandalia Trail between Amo and Clayton.

#### E-3. W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park Update

Lemley outlined the Avon Junior Day of Caring at the Gibbs property recently and the progress that was made there. The department plans to continue with Avon Junior Days of Caring in the future.

Lemley reported that the maintenance crew continues to regularly work at the Gibbs property to clear invasives and undesirable trees and brush at the park and to process the debris. The crew may rent another forestry mulcher at a later date once they get the first area cleaned up.

Lemley said that he and Ivie will be meeting with CECOM and Green 3 to get a conceptual drawing of Phase I within the next couple of weeks.

**NOTE: Moon left the meeting at 3:05 p.m. due to another obligation. A quorum of Park Board members remained.**

## **F. REPORTS**

### **F-1. Superintendent Report**

Lemley submitted a written Superintendent Report prior to the board meeting.

In addition to what had already been discussed in this meeting, Lemley provided the Park Board with an update on the Active Council of Recreation Needs (ACORN) program that Assistant Park Naturalist Joe Lembo designed. Lemley reports that nine (9) applications were received, and the first ACORN meeting is scheduled for Oct. 12, 2019, at the McCloud Nature Center. The students from all around the area will meet monthly through April of 2020 in this interactive program that introduces high schoolers to careers in parks & recreation and involves them in planning and executing the Junior Environment Excursion Program (JEEP) – an end-of-year outdoors experience.

Lemley informed the Park Board that the naturalists are creating loaner backpacks for park guests to utilize that include handheld GPS units, compasses, field guides, and other goodies to help them enjoy their visit.

Lemley reported that plans for the upcoming Fall Colors Festival on Oct. 19, 2019, are coming along nicely.

Lemley asked the Policy Committee to meet soon to discuss the naming rights policy. The committee agreed to meet on Oct. 22, 2019, at noon at the parks department's main office.

Lemley advised that the staff will be completing Stop the Bleed training soon, and that the maintenance crew is at a maintenance conference hosted by the Indiana Parks & Recreation Association (IPRA) today.

### **F-2. Budget Report**

Ivie submitted a written budget report prior to the board meeting. He advised that there are no areas of the budget that concern him and that he, Lemley, Holtsclaw, and Park Naturalist Sarah Wolf remain in constant communication about budget lines as the end of the fiscal year approaches. Ivie reported that he needs invoices in-hand by Nov. 22, 2019, to pay them from the 2019 budget. Any invoices submitted after that date will come out of the 2020 budget. Anything that can be used in the construction of Gibbs Park will be encumbered from 2019 to 2020.

Ivie expects no problems in the transition between budget years due to the excellent communication among pertinent staff members. He stated that the transition from 2018 to 2019 went very smoothly because of this excellent communication, and he expects this transition to be no different.

Ivie further advised the Park Board that everything appears on track for funding Phase I construction of W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park.

#### F-3. Parks Foundation of Hendricks County Report

Eisenhart reported that the PFOHC Board approved the expenditure of \$1,800 by the naturalists for an exhibit out at the Nature Center.

Eisenhart reported that the parks department has about \$53,600 in unrestricted funds available to it through the PFOHC. Additionally, there are restricted assets that include about \$16,700 for a nature playground at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park, about \$6,700 for the McCloud Arboretum, about \$9,000 for the Vandalia Trail, and about \$2,000 for the McCloud boardwalk. The PFOHC is keeping about \$58,000 for their own operations costs for the next two years. Eisenhart stated that the PFOHC will provide HCP&R with a detailed financial report on a regular basis moving forward.

Emsweller advised that the PFOHC's vision is that any money from them is to be used for something tangible, rather than the parks department's operations expenses.

Ivie expressed confusion about why so much money in the PFOHC's budget is being kept by the Foundation when people donated the money for Hendricks County Parks & Recreation. Eisenhart explained that some donors (often corporate donors) give money to the PFOHC with no restrictions. From those donations, the PFOHC split the money 50-50 with the parks department, and that's the money that they're using for their operations costs. When money is donated to the PFOHC and specifically designated to HCP&R, the department receives 100% of that money. That explanation cleared up Ivie's confusion, and he expressed his appreciation for the constructive discussion and information. Lemley and Holtsclaw did the same.

Eisenhart further reported the total amounts and spendable amounts of the funds through the Hendricks County Community Foundation.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**The meeting adjourned at 3:51 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Mike Hayden, Secretary