



Park Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, July 1, 2020
2:00pm

355 S. Washington Street
Danville, IN 46122

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:03 p.m.

Board Present: Mike Hayden, President
Brad Eisenhart, Vice President
Bill DuMond
Gary Emsweller
Paul Miner
Jeff Pell

Board Absent: Matt Freije, Secretary

Staff Present: Ryan Lemley, Superintendent
Eric Ivie, Assistant Superintendent
Jim Holtsclaw, Park Manager
Sarah Wolf, Park Naturalist
Bailey Duncan, Part-Time Seasonal Naturalist
Terrence DeWeese, Part-Time Seasonal Naturalist

Guests: Dan Slattery, Clayton Town Manager
Bill and Olga Walton

A. CALENDAR

A-1. Adopt Agenda

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

A-2. Approval of Minutes from June 3, 2020, Park Board Meeting

DuMond requested some edits to the minutes. **Emsweller moved to approve the minutes with DuMond's edits; seconded by Pell; motion passed unanimously.**

B. PUBLIC HEARINGS / PRESENTATIONS

B-1. Public Comments

Clayton Town Manager Dan Slattery gave an overview of a project that Cascade High School (CHS) is undertaking to deal with a failing sewage treatment plant at the school. They are trying to install a forced sewage main or two from the school to the Town of Clayton, and they'd like a 20-foot easement north of the right-of-way along County Road 500 South that would go through the property that the Park Board recently purchased from Glen "Buck" Arnold. About 100 residents would also hook into the forced sewage main. Joe Tierney from GRW Engineering was originally going to attend the meeting and be a part of the presentation, but one of his coworkers is sick with COVID-19, so Tierney did not want to risk passing any germs along to the Park Board.

Slattery advised that CHS needs to move pretty quickly because of the failing sewage treatment plant. CHS has determined that running a forced main into Clayton would cost about as much as rebuilding the treatment plant, but they'd like to stop operating a treatment plant, so they're interested in the option involving the forced sewage main. Slattery further advised that CHS will pay the Town of Clayton a monthly fee for the waste that is pumped into town. He estimated that amount to be about \$31,000 per year.

The Town of Clayton is working on developing an inter-regional agreement with the Mill Creek Community School Corporation where CHS pays to install the forced main, and the Town of Clayton will maintain it. The two parties are attempting to obtain voluntary easements from property owners along CR 500 S.

Lemley informed the Park Board that granting an easement would negatively affect the department's cash crop lease with Eric George, but it would not affect extension of the Vandalia Trail west of Clayton toward Amo.

After answering a number of questions from the Park Board, Slattery said that he'll come to the next meeting with Tierney, who would be able to answer questions in more detail.

C. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

C-1. Vandalia Trail Right-of-Way Progress

Lemley reported that he has received the full packet for the perpetual easement through the property of Edward and Janet Moore at 4160 W. CR 500 S. Lemley reports that Ryan Buckley from Beam, Longest & Neff (BLN) put the packet together in the same manner that he does for other County government offices. Lemley would like to have DuMond look at the packet and then forward it to County Attorney Greg Steuerwald for his review and approval.

The Park Board came to a consensus to have Lemley forward the packet to DuMond for his review and then to Steuerwald for his review.

Lemley advised that Buckley is working on new legal descriptions for the Edmondson property along CR 500 S. That process will take approximately 60 days before Buckley can approach the Edmondson family about purchasing a similar easement on their property.

C-2. W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park – Phase I Progress

Lemley reported that he and Holtsclaw attended a pre-construction meeting with Town of Avon officials in June. He advised that it was a rather informal meeting and that the Town of Avon will not waive inspection fees on the project.

Lemley informed the Park Board that Jessica Hartman of Civil Engineering Consultants, Inc. (CECON) – the department’s contracted engineering firm – has taken over as primary point-of-contact with Jon Payne of John Hall Construction – the construction company on this project – which relieves Lemley of that time-consuming responsibility. Lemley gave a broad overview of the work that has been done on the property so far, both by the department’s maintenance crew and by John Hall Construction, and he advised that he is very happy with how things are coming along.

Lemley hand-delivered invitations to the Park Board members for the ceremonial groundbreaking that will be held on July 15 at 9 a.m. Lemley reported that he also hand-delivered invitations to each member of the Hendricks County Commissioners, and he’ll do the same for the Hendricks County Council at their meeting on July 7. A total of 58 invitations have been either hand-delivered or mailed out.

C-3. Five-Year Comprehensive Master Plan Update

Ivie reported that he hasn’t made much progress on the 5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan since the last Park Board meeting because much of his time has been consumed with other projects. However, he did speak with Tammy at Sycamore Printing & Business Solutions yesterday, and she is actively working on designing the postcards that will be mailed out to approximately 2,500 Hendricks County residents for the random survey sample.

Ivie reminded the Park Board of the Comprehensive Master Plan Workshop scheduled for July 16 at 2 p.m. at the department’s main office.

D. NEW BUSINESS

D-1. William “Bill” and Olga Walton – Introduction and Property Overview

Lemley introduced the Park Board to William “Bill” Walton and his wife, Olga Walton, who both reside on Cartersburg Road and who have contacted Hendricks County Parks & Recreation (HCP&R) about donating or selling some of their land to the department to be turned into a park.

Lemley described the 27 acres of woods and 1.5 miles of trails within them, along with the home, barn, covered bridge, and cabin on the property. Lemley, Holtsclaw, and Ivie conducted a site visit recently, and it is a very well-maintained property. Lemley gave an overview of the conversations that he has had with the Waltons about the property and HCP&R’s ability to maintain it. Lemley provided the Waltons with copies of HCP&R’s land acquisition policy and naming rights policy, and he has discussed the multitude of options available for HCP&R acquiring the land from them.

Mr. Walton asked if the County has in-house appraisers available to assess the value of their property. Lemley explained that HCP&R would hire independent appraisers if the Park Board desires to pursue a purchase of the property.

Mr. Walton also asked how taxes on the property would work, since HCP&R is tax-exempt and the land has been a Classified Forest since the 1980s. Mr. Walton is concerned about having to pay back taxes if

the land is no longer a Classified Forest. The Park Board referred Mr. Walton to the Purdue Forestry Administrator for answers to his tax questions.

Lemley asked Mr. Walton if they are leaning more toward donating or selling the land. Mr. Walton responded by asking if there is a minimum endowment required for naming rights.

Emsweller explained how the property acquisition worked when McCloud Nature Park came into existence and how the property owners basically donated the land to the Park Board in exchange for tax incentives. The Park Board didn't pay anything for that property, and the property owners didn't receive anything for it, but over time, the tax incentives that they received in exchange made up for the cost of the property.

Lemley recommended that the next step in the process would be for the Park Board to tour the property. Mr. Walton welcomed that.

After the Waltons left the meeting, the Park Board discussed acquisition options in further detail, and DuMond explained how conservation easements work. Lemley asked DuMond to explain that option to the Waltons when the Park Board goes to tour the property.

D-2. Tom O'Neal – Request for Dead Trees at McCloud Nature Park

Lemley reported that Wolf received a request from Tom O'Neal's son to harvest downed trees from McCloud Nature Park for his sawmill. The O'Neal family borders the park to the north. In exchange for this privilege, the O'Neals would donate any lumber to HCP&R that was created from the downed trees. Holtsclaw has advised Lemley that HCP&R already has quite a bit of lumber and does not have a need for more. Additionally, Eisenhart has a Wood Mizer that he has used in the past to cut lumber for HCP&R. Lemley is also concerned about opening Pandora's Box by allowing one person to harvest trees. His recommendation is to decline the request.

The Park Board discussed the pros and cons of allowing the O'Neal family access to the park for this endeavor. **Emsweller moved to decline the request; seconded by DuMond; motion passed unanimously.**

E. PROPERTY UPDATES

E-1. McCloud Nature Park

Lemley advised that Summer Nature Day Camps resumed at McCloud Nature Park yesterday, and the theme for the McCloud Prairie Maze this fall has been selected (a snake). The naturalists have also developed a plan of action to deal with any COVID-19 flare-ups and safety protocols in general.

Lemley reported that the Active Council on Recreation Needs (ACORN) teen program had a successful end-of-year celebration at McCloud in June.

Lemley has received a request from Jake Crippin to fly a drone at McCloud Nature Park one time and then provide HCP&R with the aerial footage. Lemley intends to approve the request unless the Park Board objects. No objections noted.

Lemley informed the Park Board that a park guest complained to naturalists about another park guest smoking in the park. Nothing prohibits people from smoking at the park, but the park guest was rather vocal about it. Lemley hasn't heard anything more since the initial complaint, but he wanted to make the Park Board aware of it.

E-2. Vandalia Trail

Lemley advised that HCP&R has a couple of benches that are ready to be installed along the Vandalia Trail, so when time permits, the maintenance crew will pour the concrete slabs and get them installed in between State Road 75 and the wastewater treatment facility.

Lemley said that the speed limit on State Road 75 through Coatesville has been reduced, but now as some motorists slow down to abide by the new speed limit, other motorists pass them at high speeds. Lemley has spoken with the Hendricks County Sheriff about increasing patrols along that stretch of the road, and the Sheriff will make that happen.

Counters along the Vandalia Trail documented 3,655 trail users from June 1-23.

E-3. W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park

Lemley advised that he had a performance review with the Hendricks County Commissioners yesterday, and during that conversation, the Commissioners told him that HCP&R will likely need to relocate within the next year or so to make way for the new Hendricks County Jail. Lemley, then, feels like land acquisition efforts and finances should be focused on finding a new main office.

Lemley and Holtsclaw continue working with Tim Dombrosky, Nick Dombrosky, Tim Barnes, and Gary Vandagriff on developing a disc golf course, and the plans are coming together nicely. HCP&R has purchased the native grass seed for the area, and the maintenance crew will be picking it up as soon as it arrives.

Triggered by a conversation between Holtsclaw and Nick Dombrosky, Hendricks Power Cooperative has expressed an interest in financing all or part of the nature playground and fishing pier. Lemley has engaged in very preliminary discussions about this, but nothing has been agreed upon yet. Eisenhart expressed concern that a family (Ray & Mary Benson) has already donated \$17,000 toward a playground through the Parks Foundation of Hendricks County (PFOHC), and he doesn't want to offend that family. The playground will cost about \$47,000, though, and the PFOHC has reported that their fundraising efforts have been at a standstill lately because of the COVID-19 pandemic, so Lemley feels that he needs to explore all options to keep Phase I construction moving along. Hayden suggested that Lemley have a conversation with the donor to see if they'd be willing to sponsor some other park feature with their donation if the Hendricks Power Cooperative donation comes to fruition.

Lemley reported visiting with John "Chub" and Lydia Gibbs recently to personally invite them to the groundbreaking ceremony, and he briefly discussed the possibility of HCP&R acquiring the final 20 acres of their property.

F. REPORTS

F-1. Superintendent Report

Lemley advised that the County Auditor's Office forgot to forward the 2021 budget materials to HCP&R, and it wasn't until Ivie contacted them that it was discovered that the budget request was due three (3) days prior. As a result of the oversight, Ivie stopped work on all other projects and put the 2021 budget request together in three (3) hours, and it has now been submitted. HCP&R has requested a budget hearing with the County Council for later this month.

Lemley reported that all staff performance reviews have been completed.

Lemley gave an overview of a discussion that he had with the County Commissioners yesterday about County-owned vehicles used by HCP&R. One of the maintenance trucks is nearing the end of its life span, and the Equinox, which is primarily used by the naturalists, is not getting driven enough. So, when the Equinox is due to be exchanged through the County's agreement with Enterprise, it will be replaced with a ¾-ton pickup truck that be shared by the naturalists and the maintenance crew. When the current maintenance truck is no longer operational, the new truck will go to the maintenance crew. All pertinent staff members have been informed of this.

Lemley reported that he has been working with Human Resources to advertise for the Administrative Assistant position at the main office.

Lemley advised that he has decided not to purchase any handheld radios at this time, as the cost outweighs the current need for them.

Lemley reported attending a Workers Compensation meeting with Human Resources and other department heads. Since 2017, HCP&R's Workers Compensation claims have totaled \$25,501.02. One specific claim from 2018 encompasses \$22,811.76 of that total.

Lemley informed the Park Board that HCP&R spent about \$5,300 in the past month on repairs to the Bobcat, which has been heavily utilized at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park.

F-2. Budget Report

Ivie reported no problems with the 2020 budget. HCP&R has reached the midpoint of the budget year, and spending in all budget lines is on target. Ivie has maintained communication with Holtsclaw and Wolf about this, so everyone is on the same page. Ivie also reported that the Gibbs Park construction invoices are starting to come in, so there will be a lot of spending done over the final six months of the year.

Ivie advised that the 2021 budget request is about \$1.2 million, down from about \$1.3 million in 2020. HCP&R will be printing fewer copies of *The Explorer* magazine from now on, since the department will no longer deliver them to schools, so that lowers the budget request. And the request for Park Improvements monies is decreased in 2021 with Phase I construction of Gibbs Park winding down after 2020. Ivie did, however, budget for all of the amenities in Phase I in 2021 so that those amenities can be installed, regardless of any fundraising that is done by any entity along the way.

F-3. Parks Foundation of Hendricks County Report
Eisenhart advised that there is nothing to report.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:51 p.m.

The next Park Board meeting will be held on August 5, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Hayden, President