



## Park Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 7, 2021  
2:00pm

1900 E. Main Street  
Danville, IN 46122

### **CALL TO ORDER**

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

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

**Board Absent:** None

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

**Guests:** None

### **A. CALENDAR**

#### **A-1. Adopt Agenda**

Hayden proposed to add C-4. Discussion of Electronic Bikes, and D-4. Youth Protection Policy Update to the agenda. **Eisenhart moved to adopt the agenda with the proposed changes; seconded by Emsweller; motion passed unanimously.**

#### **A-2. Approval of Minutes from March 3, 2021, Park Board Meeting**

**Miner moved to approve the minutes; seconded by DuMond; motion passed unanimously.**

## **B. PUBLIC HEARINGS / PRESENTATIONS**

### **B-1. Public Comments**

DuMond reported:

*I wanted to mention – I think you all know, I suspect – that the B&O Trail Association did receive a grant award from the Next Level Trails program for \$4.5 million. And of course, the total grant amount with the 20% match is around \$5.5 million. Part of the money is a match of the land that we already own, but a lot of it is also additional cash. So this is repetition of what you’ve heard, but this allows us to go roughly two miles into Marion County, east, and roughly four miles further west from where the trail currently ends. So we’re real excited about it. We do have some property acquisition issues on the eastern part, chiefly with CSX, and we still have some issues involving property owners around Maplewood, but if we cannot buy those lots, we have a work-around along those county roads. The trail will take us west to 50 West – so about two miles west of Maplewood.*

Lemley found it interesting that Next Level Trails awarded the B&O Trail Association when the land acquisition is not completed. DuMond responded that they’re required have a plan in place, and for the Marion County section, there is a letter on file that says that “if push comes to shove,” the City of Indianapolis will exercise eminent domain. But the B&O Trail Association has access to most of the other property in one way or another. DuMond further stated that when everything is completed, there will be a continuous paved path of over 17 miles that extends all the way into the Haughville neighborhood on the west side of Indianapolis.

Lemley informed the Park Board that he has received a letter from the Next Level Trail Committee, and they are welcoming input over the course of the next several months in preparation for Round 3 of applications.

## **C. NEW BUSINESS**

### **C-1. Vandalia Trail Expansion – Edmondson Purchasing Agreement**

Lemley reported that, at Bob Breneman’s request, attorney Ben Comer – attorney and president of Abstract & Title Company – created a final draft of a purchasing agreement for the Edmondson property along CR 500 S. for the Park Board to review. Mr. Breneman has requested by email that Hendricks County Parks & Recreation (HCP&R) maintain the easement prior to and after installing the trail. Lemley has no problem with that request.

The Park Board reviewed a few copies of a map of CR 500 S. between Amo and Clayton that Holtsclaw prepared and then held some discussion. Lemley explained that if the Edmondson transaction goes through, and the Pringle family and HCP&R can come to an agreement (their property is currently staked where HCP&R would like access), then HCP&R would have full access to extend the Vandalia Trail from Clayton west to CR 250 W. along CR 500 S.

Lemley further stated that the agreed-upon purchase price for the specific portion of the Edmondson property in question is \$16,400, and he feels that amount is reasonable. **Freije moved to move forward with the Ingress-Egress and Utility Easement involving the Edmondson property; seconded by Eisenhart; motion passed unanimously.**

#### C-2. W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park – Grand Opening Proposals

Lemley advised the Park Board that HCP&R is kind of in limbo right now with the shelters coming from Natural Structures in Oregon that are for the new park. He has had considerable difficulty receiving useful communication from Natural Structures about when the shelters and engineer-approved drawings might be coming. The drawings are supposedly “in the mail” but he doesn’t know when the shelters might arrive. Ivie and Lemley explained to the Park Board that the maintenance crew is currently being stretched to its limit and, as such, do not recommend opening the park anytime in the immediate future. Later in the summer would be better. Lemley recommended that the Park Board reassess the situation at their May meeting before setting a Grand Opening date and time for W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park. **By consensus, the Park Board agreed to do that.**

#### C-3. Parks Foundation of Hendricks County – 2021 Grant Funding Requests

Lemley requested permission from the Park Board to use the \$5,616.13 of spendable money from the Gibbs Fund and the \$549.25 from the HCP&R Fund held by the Hendricks County Community Foundation for construction of a bridge and some boardwalks at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park. **Miner moved to approve this request; seconded by Freije; motion passed unanimously.**

Lemley also requested permission from the Park Board to use \$1,291.00 that is being held by the Parks Foundation of Hendricks County (PFOHC) to put toward HCP&R’s contract with Cardno for maintenance of the arboretum at McCloud Nature Park. **Miner moved to approve this request; seconded by DuMond; motion passed unanimously.**

Both requests will now go to the PFOHC Board of Directors for their approval, pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding between that Board and the Park Board.

Lemley reported that Wolf is working on a proposal for \$1,500.00 in grant money available through the PFOHC for HCP&R hosting three (3) Summer Fun Run Series events this summer.

#### C-4. Discussion of Electronic Bicycles

Lemley advised that a Vandalia Trail user has requested that he and his wife be able to ride their Class 2 e-bikes on the trail. After some discussion, **the Park Board, by consensus, agreed to allow Lemley to consider this type of request on a case-by-case basis**, and in this particular case, the trail user’s request is granted.

### **D. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

#### D-1. Vandalia Trail – Update on Request to Purchase Park Board Property

Lemley informed the Board that he has reached out to Aaron Montgomery and his mother twice since the last Park Board meeting about purchasing some property in Coatesville that is owned by the Park Board, but he has heard nothing in return. He reminded the Park Board that the offer expires on May 1.

#### D-2. W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park – Shelter Houses and Concrete Work Update

Lemley advised that John Hall Construction has made some repairs to the concrete weir in the forebay to hopefully stop leaks around each side of the weir. HCP&R is not being charged for those repairs. Otherwise, HCP&R simply continues to wait for word from Natural Structures in Oregon on when the shelters might arrive so that John Hall Construction can assemble them and do the concrete work.

#### D-3. Five-Year Comprehensive Master Plan – Request of Consensus for Submittal

Ivie asked the Park Board if anyone had any input on the proposed final draft of HCP&R's Comprehensive Master Plan for 2021-25. There were no edits or corrections, so Ivie requested the Park Board's consensus to submit the final draft to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources ahead of the April 15, 2021 deadline. **By consensus, the Park Board agreed to have Ivie do that.**

#### D-4. Youth Protection Policy Update

Lemley reported that Hendricks County Attorney Greg Steuerwald sent some suggested edits to Lemley on the Youth Protection Policy, which he and Ivie have added. Lemley read the changes to the Park Board. **By consensus, the Park Board approved the edits to the Youth Protection Policy and the dispersal of the policy to HCP&R staff and volunteers and to the public.**

### **E. PROPERTY UPDATES**

#### E-1. McCloud Nature Park

Lemley informed the Park Board that the prairie burn at McCloud Nature Park last month was a success for the most part. Some patches of the prairie didn't burn particularly well, though, especially on the east side of the entrance road. Lemley discussed it with Turner Forestry, and they viewed the briars that remain as potential habitat.

Lemley stated that the maintenance crew is going to remove some of the volunteer trees that have taken root in the prairie, and then Lemley would like to burn again in 2022 before taking a couple of years off. No one from the Park Board disagreed with Lemley's recommendation.

Maple Syrup Days were a success, and the naturalists were comfortable with the crowd size and the COVID-related precautions that were utilized during the event.

Lemley reported that the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) has put up wayfinding signs to McCloud Nature Park along some major thoroughfares around the park (U.S. Hwy 36, SR 39, SR 236). HCP&R will continue to work with INDOT to install wayfinding signs to W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park as the park gets closer to being opened.

An ecology student at Purdue University, Jonathan Jenkins, experienced some technical difficulties with his research of the Carolina Chickadee at McCloud Nature Park, so he has reinstalled his recording equipment in low-impact areas of the park.

Another Purdue student wants to do a study of hemlock trees at McCloud, and Lemley is in the initial stages of getting details about that project. He anticipates granting her permission to conduct this project.

Lemley reported 2,851 vehicles visiting McCloud Nature Park in March.

#### E-2. Vandalia Trail

Lemley informed the Board that the restrooms at both trailheads are now open to the public, and Kim Cartwright has resumed cleaning them.

Lemley reported that he and Coatesville Town Manager Jerry Decker have had a conversation about joining forces to keep the trail clear of downed trees and limbs, as well as taking down the dead ash trees during the winter months. Jerry helped clear the trail after a recent windstorm and appears interested in continuing to help. Lemley would like to delve into a potential agreement with Jerry in more detail later this year, just ahead of winter.

Lemley advised that 2,249 people were counted on the Vandalia Trail in March.

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

Lemley reported meeting with John “Chub” and Lydia Gibbs within the past few weeks, and Chub indicated that he doesn’t feel that a property fence between park property and their property is necessary anymore. Chub also told Lemley that he and Lydia will be getting an appraisal done on their house soon. Lemley takes both of these comments as positive signs that the Gibbs might be willing to sell the remaining 20 acres and the structures on it to HCP&R in time.

Lemley stated that he anticipates the installation of the fishing dock to occur in mid-June, Fred Freeman has been out to the property to examine where the park sign will go, Boy Scout Troop 307 came out and removed some invasive plants, and the maintenance crew continues working on trails, having already used more than 800 tons of crushed stone so far.

HCP&R will soon begin working on a pamphlet about Gibbs similar to that of McCloud, so Lemley asked the Park Board if they want to mimic the rules of McCloud at Gibbs – specifically relating to a question about allowing mountain bikes on trails. The Park Board instructed Lemley to use McCloud’s rules as a basis for Gibbs’ rules, and then the Park Board will decide on any revisions at a later time.

Lemley reported that HCP&R has ordered some rain garden seed for a section at the front of the property that retains water and stays wet, plus some more prairie grass seed and turf seed for the rest of the park.

Lemley advised the Park Board that Dana Cochran with Hendricks Power has contacted him again recently about donating – in cooperation with CoBank – some money to the park. She wanted to know if the Hendricks Power name could be on the Bluegill Shelter for a \$20,000 donation. Lemley asked the Park Board for their feedback and guidance before pursuing further conversations with Dana. After some discussion, it was determined that Lemley will forward the Park Board’s Naming Rights Policy to Dana and discuss a possible 10-year limit on the naming rights.

**\*\*\*NOTE: Eisenhart left the meeting at 3:42 p.m. to attend to a previously scheduled commitment. The other six Park Board members remained, which retained the quorum and allowed the public meeting to continue.**

## F. REPORTS

### F-1. Superintendent Report

Lemley reported that Stacy Roeder didn’t work out as the Part-Time Administrative Assistant, so Patty Seymour will now fill that position. She will start to work on April 19 and will be present at the next Park Board meeting.

Lemley advised that the 2019 Chevy Equinox was traded in for a 2018 GMC Sierra pick-up truck. Lemley feels that a truck will get a lot more work than the Equinox did and will be very helpful to the maintenance crew. The Ford F250 is now out at McCloud for the naturalists to use.

The Summer 2021 issue of *The Explorer* has arrived and will be distributed later this month.

Lemley showed the Board some disc golf signs that Holtsclaw designed and that long-time volunteer Gene Ardeel has been making over the past few months.

#### F-2. Budget Report

Ivie reported no problems with the 2021 budget so far.

Lemley informed the Park Board that budget hearings for the 2022 budget will be coming up this summer, and the budget is generally due to the County Auditor by June 1 or so. Ivie advised that budget hearings are generally held in late July. Lemley invited the Board to provide input on the budget. Lemley would like to see restrooms installed at Gibbs Park, so that will probably be included in the 2022 budget request. This year, Lemley would like to replace the HVAC unit at the McCloud Nature Center and chip-and-seal the McCloud entrance, but if there isn't enough money to do that this year, he and Ivie will ask for funds for those projects in 2022. Lemley would also like to look at the 5-Year Comprehensive Master Plan to evaluate any other financial needs in 2022.

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

Hayden advised that there isn't much to report, as only a couple of PFOHC committees have met since the last Park Board meeting. Emsweller reported that Katy Cummings is doing well so far as the Foundation's Executive Director. Lemley advised that he and Ivie have met with Katy already and were impressed.

### ADJOURNMENT

**The meeting adjourned at 3:57 p.m.**

**The next Park Board meeting will be held on May 5, 2021, at 2 p.m. at the Hendricks County Government Center, Meeting Rooms 4 and 5.**

Respectfully Submitted,

---

Matt Freije, Secretary