



Park Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, June 2, 2021
2:00pm

355 S. Washington Street
Danville, IN 46122

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:07 p.m.

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

Board Absent: Brad Eisenhart, Vice President
Matt Freije, Secretary

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

Guests: None

A. CALENDAR

A-1. Adopt Agenda

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

A-2. Approval of Minutes from May 5th, 2021, Park Board Meeting

Miner requested to edit the meeting minutes for Section E-2, second paragraph regarding a drainage concern within the Town of Clayton. Miner requested the minutes to be amended to reflect that the Clayton Town Manager, Dan Slattery, not a Clayton Town Board Member, acknowledged that the

drainage issue in question lies within the responsibility of the Town of Clayton to address.

DuMond moved to adopt the minutes with Miner’s modification; seconded by Emsweller; motion passed unanimously.

B. PUBLIC HEARINGS / PRESENTATIONS

B-1. Public Comments

None.

B-2. Who is W.S. “Smith” Gibbs – Paul Miner

Miner shared with the Park Board findings from historical research he completed on W.S. “Smith” Gibbs and the Gibbs Park property. According to John “Chub” Gibbs, the Gibbs family came to Hendricks County initially settling just north of the property and ultimately purchased the land, currently known as Gibbs Park, from James Petty in March of 1920. Before that, the property was first settled by William McCracken in 1833 with Petty eventually coming into ownership of the farm in 1865.

Smith Gibbs was the grandson of Thomas Gibbs, of whom was one of the first settlers arriving in the “unbroken wilderness” of Hendricks County in 1830. Smith Gibbs, born in 1857 was a Methodist who helped build Cartersburg Methodist Church. Smith was a lifelong farmer who led a simple life until his death in 1941. Smith was survived by his fourth wife and a son named Frank Gibbs. Frank was Smith’s only surviving son and was the grandfather to John “Chub” Gibbs. Chub and Lydia wanted to memorialize this ground in honor of the Gibbs’ family history.

Per Paul’s recommendation, Ryan stated that he will review the historical findings with Chub and Lydia Gibbs. Hayden commented that there is something to be said for a multi-generational farm still in existence.

C. NEW BUSINESS

C-1. Monthly Park Board Meetings – Revised Location (Meeting Room 3)

Seymour reported that she was informed by the Hendricks County Government Center that the Park Board Meetings will need to be relocated to Meeting Room 3 beginning July 2021 through July 2022. Emsweller suggested resuming Park Board Meetings at the Hendricks County Parks & Recreation (HCP&R) Main Campus site. Lemley instructed Seymour to inform Eisenhart and Freije of such changes. Seymour noted she will update meeting planner email invitation to reflect changing meeting location to the HCP&R main campus site located at 955 E. Main Street beginning July 2021 through December 2021.

C-2. W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park – Hendricks Power Electrical Service Cost Estimate & Selection of Future Utility Locations

Lemley reported that Hendricks Power provided a quote of \$11,000.00 to install underground electric service to Gibbs Park. Lemley further stated that this quote does not include costs associated with boring under existing roadways, nor does it include costs associated with final service connection(s) to each shelter structure and future restroom facilities. The proposed service line will run to the park entrance and follow the main internal park road to a point where Hendricks Power will install the main transformer box. Lemley further stated that HCP&R will be responsible to extend service lines beyond the proposed location of the transformer box placed by Hendricks Power.

Lemley requested approval to authorize Hendricks Power to install underground electric service line in the amount of \$11,000.00. After additional discussion, **DuMond made a motion to move forward with the electrical service installation proposed by Hendricks Power within the specified locations in the amount of \$11,000.00, plus the cost of boring under the road; seconded by Emsweller; motion passed unanimously. Motion does not include approval of future toilet facility location determination.**

C-3. W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park – Mark Keutzer Appraisal Report

Lemley informed the Park Board that upon previous Board authorization, Mark Keutzer completed the appraisal report for the remaining 20-acre parcel that houses two barn structures and one single-family dwelling unit, owned by John “Chub” and Lydia Gibbs in where they currently reside. With a variance of \$160,000.00 in appraised value between the Keutzer appraisal report completed in April 2021, and the Beam, Longest, and Neff (B-L-N) appraisal report completed in November of 2020, Lemley requested Park Board approval to collect an additional up to date appraisal.

DuMond mentioned seeking an opinion from a realtor, for informational purposes, to gain a better understanding of the varied appraisal reports. DuMond furthermore brought into discussion, and questioned, HCP&R staff possibly utilizing the 20-acre parcel for a maintenance and office hub in the future. Upon further discussion between Park Board members, Lemley responded to the Board by providing comments pertaining to past discussions regarding said topic.

After some discussion, Hayden brought the conversation back to topic providing comments regarding property tax assessment and appraisal reports of the 20-acre Gibbs residence parcel. DuMond shared his concerns regarding receiving a completely neutral third-party objective appraisal report. Lemley responded, stating that he has “no influence whatsoever on the appraisal reports” conducted to date. Lemley further shared that Seymour initiated the Keutzer appraisal request while he initiated the B-L-N appraisal request. Hayden added to the discussion, commenting that we want to be diligent while also making sure we are being fair to all parties involved. Hayden further noted that our responsibility lies within being good stewards to the constituents of Hendricks County. Park Board members and HCP&R staff agreed with Hayden’s comments.

Lemley presented an option to the Park Board to authorize a third-party opinion on the matter of the appraisals while isolating him from the subject matter to provide additional assurances of impartiality regarding the outcome of such opinion. After some discussion, Hayden proposed to provide directive to Lemley upon consensus of Park Board Executive Session and prior to the next Park Board Meeting. **Miner motioned to approve Hayden’s proposal; seconded by Pell; motion passed unanimously.**

D. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

D-1. Vandalia Trail – Acquisition Update

Lemley reported that through Ryan Buckley, B-L-N Right of Way Agent, Mr. Pringle has requested a letter be issued to him providing written assurance that HCP&R will not construct a trailhead/parking lot on the property he is considering selling to the Park Board, for the eastern expansion of the Vandalia Trail. Lemley requested permission from the Park Board to provide such letter to Mr. Pringle. After much discussion, The Park Board directed Lemley to provide assurances, both in writing and verbally, to Mr. Pringle stating that the Park Board does not intend to, nor will not, construct a trailhead on the Pringle property, so long as he lives there and without prior written consent from Mr. Pringle. **DuMond**

made a motion to approve issuance of letter; seconded by Emsweller; motion passed unanimously.

D-2. W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park – Request to Finalize Grand Opening Ceremony

Lemley reported that with preparations going well and recent progress done at the park he recommends the Park Board approve and finalize the Gibbs Park Grand Opening Ceremony to be held on Wednesday July 21st at 9:00 a.m. Lemley further requested input and guidance from the Park Board regarding itinerary of Opening Ceremony content related to including a blessing, armed forces color guard presence, and proposed speakers. Hayden offered to speak during the ceremony. Upon further discussion, and with divided agreement, the Park Board, by consensus, determined the official ceremony should maintain secular content and not include an opening prayer.

Lemley informed the Park Board that formal and informal invitations will be forthcoming.

D-3. W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park – Request for Adopting Final Park Rules

Lemley provided the Park Board with W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park Rules sheet to review for final Board adoption. After discussions related to grills, sledding, and specific rule language, Lemley requested to move forward with creating final park rule sheet subject to Park Board updates. **Emsweller made a motion to approve request; seconded by Miner; motion passed unanimously.**

D-4. W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park – Submission of 2021 Land & Water Conservation Fund Grant

Lemley informed the Park Board he received confirmation from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) receipt of HCP&R Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant submittal. Lemley further stated that Bob Bronson, with DNR, continues to be responsive and commended Ivie and Seymour on their efforts toward this project, with Ivie dedicating a lot of time on producing and submitting a high-quality application packet.

Lemley provided the Park Board USB devices that included an electronic copy of the CMP and Executive Summary. The USB devices have also been provided to the County Council Members and County Commissioners. Lemley requested signatures from Park Board President, Hayden and past Park Board President, Miner to finalize document certification for Grant Application. Ivie provided additional comments regarding grant information.

E. PROPERTY UPDATES

E-1. McCloud Nature Park

Lemley informed the Park Board that per recommendation from John Hall Construction, the damaged culvert pipe at the park entrance is in the process of being removed in preparation for the chip and seal paving project in partnership with the Hendricks County Highway Department. If it is determined that a culvert is needed in the future, significant site and design work will be needed. The chip and seal paving work is scheduled to take place the week of June 14th. Lemley noted that Wolf and her team are planning to accommodate for the park closure with the Naturalist's summer programs during this time.

Lemley stated that Ryan Mendenhall, Senior Project Scientist with Cardno, has begun work on the arboretum enhancement project and is pleased with progress to date.

Lemley reported that the DHL Supply Chain Volunteer Day event was successful and provided the Park Board with Power Point hand-out of photos taken during the event.

With the Summer Fun Run series finishing up at McCloud Nature Park, Lemley commented that the Race Maker sign installation was highly welcomed and requested The Parks Foundation of Hendricks County continue coordination of this effort in the future.

Lemley provided an update on the Danville Fire Department ropes/single evolution training that took place at McCloud Nature Park in May.

As of May 27th, TRAFx counters documented 2,181 vehicles visiting the Nature Park this month.

E-2. Vandalia Trail

Lemley informed the Park Board that he and Ivie had a Next Level Trails review session with leadership from the DNR selection committee, who was pleased with our progress thus far. Lemley highlighted that HCP&R placed in the mid-pack range on the first and second-round application submittal. With encouragement from DNR, Lemley noted that HCP&R will revise and update the third-round grant application prior to submittal deadline. Lemley expressed positive thoughts on the subject matter as Vandalia Trail is part of the State visionary trail system. Additional discussion took place regarding the Next Level Trails grant program including possible trail material options.

Lemley reported to the Park Board that Jerry Decker, Coatesville Town Manager, recently contacted him regarding a small chemical spill within the Town of Coatesville. Lemley notified Hendricks County Clean Water department of possible contamination within the drainage ditch that borders the Vandalia Trail. In an effort to be a good neighbor, HCP&R provided supplies to assist Decker with cleanup efforts. Lemley referred to his report and stated that in conversations with Decker, the Clean Water Department's appointed inspector, contracted to Butler, Fairman, and Seufert (BF&S), advised Decker to remedy the situation. Lemley further noted that HCP&R does not own this area of land in which the drainage ditch is located and lies within boundaries of the Town of Coatesville.

As of Thursday, May 27th, TRAFx counters documented 1,888 patrons visited the Vandalia Trail this month.

E-3. W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park

Lemley commended Holtsclaw and HCP&R maintenance crew on their valuable efforts completing installation of the pond forebay bridge and the wetland boardwalks.

Permits have been received from the Town of Avon. John Hall Construction is on site and has been given approval to move forward with construction of shelter structures and concrete work.

Lemley advised the Park Board of a recent inquiry received from Chad Wright regarding hunting on five acres of woods on the Gibbs' property and retrieval of game on Park property. Lemley noted that he has encouraged Wright to seek alternative hunting location not adjacent to Park property and furthermore, does not have permission to retrieve game on Park property, while noting that he will review with the Park Board at the upcoming meeting. Additional discussion took place regarding Wright's request in addition to comments he made about fence installation on the Gibbs' residence property. Lemley informed the Park Board that he advised Wright to communicate with the owner of the Gibbs residence property, which is not HCP&R nor the Park Board, regarding fence in question. Hayden referred to an

agreement in place regarding said fence. The Park Board instructed Lemley to advise Wright to attend Park Board Meeting to discuss further if needed.

Lemley informed the Park Board that Tri-Kappa is donating 70 books for Our Little Free Library and will be coordinated through Wolf.

Lemley reported that after a minor delay, property previously purchased from John and Lydia Gibbs has been recorded to reflect 100% ownership by the Park Board.

HCP&R are continuing efforts and working with INDOT and other agencies regarding future installation of way-finding signs for Gibbs Park.

Lemley informed the Park Board that HCP&R will be front cover featured in the upcoming publication of Hendricks County ICON in anticipation of the grand opening of Gibbs Park.

F. REPORTS

F-1. Superintendent Report

Lemley informed the Park Board that Cassie Vance recently joined the Naturalist crew as a new hire and will be with us through mid-August. Additionally, Lemley made comments, and referred to his report, regarding a generous donation HCP&R received from an anonymous donor for specific ADA amenities at Gibbs Park.

F-2. Budget Report

Ivie reported no day-to-day budget operations concerns at this time.

F-3. Parks Foundation of Hendricks County Report

Hayden reported that the Summer Fun Run series has begun and is going well thus far. Ivie provided comments stating that HCP&R ordered a plaque for the message board information station in which the Parks Foundation provided grant funding for.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:09 p.m.

The next Park Board meeting will be held on July 7th, at 2:00 p.m. at the Hendricks County Parks and Recreation Department Main Building Conference Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mike Hayden, President