



Park Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 1st, 2023
2:00 p.m.

955 E. Main 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
Matt Freije, Secretary
Gary Emsweller
Paul Miner

Board Absent: Bill DuMond
Jeff Pell

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

A. CALENDAR

A-1. Adopt Agenda

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

A-2. Approval of Minutes from October 4th, 2023, Park Board Meeting

The minutes from the last Park Board Meeting could not be approved because there were only four members of the Park Board present at the last meeting and only three of them are at this meeting. **The matter is tabled until next month's meeting.**

B. PUBLIC HEARINGS/PRESENTATIONS

B-1. Public Comments

None.

C. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

C-1. W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park – Maintenance Hub Progress

Lemley reported that the occupancy permit for the maintenance hub has been granted by the Town of Avon on October 23rd. Washington Township Fire Marshal, Levi Carpenter, and Avon Planning and Building Director, Mike Tulli was present for the inspection and will be involved with inspecting the interior build-out of the building. Additionally, the Indiana Department of Homeland Security approved the Homeland Security permit for the interior portion of the building. The interior work will be completed by in-house staff. Park Manager, Jim Holtsclaw, has begun purchasing building materials for such work.

Lemley reported that John Hall Construction completed site work at the maintenance hub site. Ivie submitted their last payment in the amount of \$71,760 for the capital project. The final 10% retainage claim will be submitted to the Auditors Office upon receipt from John Hall Construction.

Lemley offered to give the Park Board a tour of the maintenance building.

Hayden asked for an update on the illegal dumping incident that occurred at the maintenance hub site back in September. Lemley provided a summary to the Park Board in response to Hayden's inquiry.

Lemley suggested hosting a Park Board meeting at the maintenance facility in the spring of 2024 tentatively depending on completion of interior of the building.

C-2. W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park – Request to Solicit Revised Construction Bid Packets for ADA Trail Expansion

Lemley requested Park Board approval to advertise the revised ADA trail design packets for competitive bids. Lemley explained that in effort of making the project more appealing to contractors, the concrete ADA trail leading to the top of the 30-foot property outlook/sledding hillside has been revised to eliminate a potentially problematic section (steep switchback) on the north side of the hill. The 10-foot wide asphalt trail will now only connect to a single entrance/exiting section of the concrete trail, as opposed to the original design that connected from the north to south. Lemley recommended receiving sealed bids to be opened during the December 6th Park Board meeting. Upon further discussion **Miner moved to approve advertisement of the revised ADA trail design for competitive bids per Lemley's recommendation; seconded by Eisenhart; motion passed unanimously.**

C-3. W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park – Revised Property Deed

Ivie updated the Park Board on the status of the revised property deed at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park to reflect requirements of receiving the Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant through the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for Phase 1 portion of the property. Ivie explained that Align Civil Engineering Consultants (CEC) is providing surveying services needed to create a new legal description for the affected area. Once that is complete the revised deed will be reviewed by legal counsel to draft the legal document to include the required language from DNR. The document will then be submitted to the recorder's office for recording. Lemley asked the Park Board if he should proceed with facilitating signatures upon legal review and approval of required documentation. The Park Board directed Lemley to move forward with facilitating completion of requirements upon legal counsel approval.

D. NEW BUSINESS

D-1. Vandalia Trail – Development Discussion for Eastern Expansion

Lemley informed the Park Board that he has been researching viable options to create a "park setting" within Park Board property purchased for the eastern expansion of the Vandalia Trail. Implementing large scale reforestation efforts outside the future construction area for the trail is the primary area targeted to potentially implement such efforts. Lemley added that another option would be to implement a prairie within the existing agricultural fields. The Park Board discussed the following options to

potentially implement next year.

1. Large scale reforestation efforts outside the future construction area.
2. Prairie field outside of the future construction area.
3. Maintain a crop lease to continue generating revenue.

After some discussion, the Park Board provided the directive to maintain the crop lease for 2024. As 2024 progresses, along with the status of our Next Level Trails Grant being known, a detailed plan of action will be developed to re-forest the property (outside of the future construction zone). A detailed reforestation proposal will then be presented to the Park Board in mid-2024 for their review and consideration.

E. PROPERTY UPDATES

E-1. McCloud Nature Park

The Fall Colors Festival and Fall Colors Run at McCloud Nature Park took place on Saturday, October 21st. The event began with the 5K and 10K marathon facilitated by RaceMaker Productions. Attendance for the event is estimated at approximately 749 attendees and was based off of the traffic counters. Kolcun said that there were 78 registrants for the run event but approximately 60 patrons ended up participating in the event. Lemley pointed out that the top 5K finisher was a young boy and was impressed with his time in being the top finisher competing against the majority of adults. Lemley praised the maintenance staff for making sure the course was safe and cleared of fallen walnuts and tree limbs and for replacing a failed hot water heater at the last minute and in time for the festival. Lemley thanked Gary Emsweller for loaning his wagon to the department for the day for hayrides.

Lemley reported that Mike McCoy contacted him regarding the passing of his father, John McCoy, and mother, Marti McCoy, and his desire to continue supporting the Nature Park in memory of his parents. Donations have been received from support of their family and friends and will be put toward development of McCloud Nature Park. The funds will be deposited with the related Parks Foundation of Hendricks County account. Lemley expressed appreciation toward the McCoy family for their contributions over the years at McCloud Nature Park.

Lemley reported that the roofing project for the Nature Center was completed on October 31st. Lemley commended Oather Duncan, Maintenance Foreman, on spearheading this project.

Hayden inquired about removal of the greenhouse that is currently attached to the Nature Center. Kolcun replied that due to uncontrolled temperature and lack of usage for that space, it could be better utilized for alternative uses, such as a continuation of the library. Lemley added that the structure is an eye-sore and the heating boiler has not been in operation for quite some time. Lemley reminded the Park Board that they provided approval to remove the greenhouse at last month's Park Board meeting.

As of Thursday, October 27th, TRAFx counters documented 2,069 vehicles visiting McCloud Nature Park this month.

E-2. Vandalia Trail

Lemley informed the Park Board that the Coatesville public restroom at the Vandalia Trail head was recently vandalized. Lemley reported the incident to the Coatesville Police Department. Lemley expressed positive comments toward the patron (a schoolteacher from Fishers) using the trail at the time who discovered the incident and ended up cleaning most of it up. Miner asked Lemley if it would be

possible to keep the restrooms open year round. Lemley responded that the structures are not four season facilities and they do not have approval from Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) to keep the restrooms in operation year round.

Lemley reported that the Coatesville revitalization group has installed hard-wired accent landscaping lights surrounding Vandalia Trail through Coatesville town limits. The portion of lighting that was installed goes from State Road 75 to the restroom at the trail head. The green-colored accent lighting has already gained much attraction on social media.

As of Thursday, October 27th, TRAFx counters documented 1,539 patrons visiting the Vandalia Trail this month. The TRAFx equestrian counter documented 88 patrons this month.

E-3. W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park

Lemley reported that the installation of seven solar security light fixtures were installed in various locations throughout the park. Additionally, installation of the ADA fishing dock on the secondary pond/fishery was completed by Deaton's Waterfront Service. Both projects were funded from the Land and Water Conservation Grant.

Lemley informed the Park Board that Reconyx cameras have been ordered and received for the maintenance hub entrance and will be installed shortly.

The Fall Harvest Festival took place at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park on October 7th. Lemley noted that the naturalist staff is discussing alternative options for such event going forward as this year's event was poorly attended.

The memorial bench in honor of Lydia Gibbs was presented to the Gibbs' family and will later be placed along a trail near the ephemeral creek.

Lemley reported that the maintenance staff is coming to completion of installation of the Pollinator Pathway which will have a limestone aggregate surface. Lemley remarked that DuMond had previously requested Lemley to keep the surface a natural path. Due to the alignment of that trail path, runoff drainage would make a natural surface path impassable during the springtime and during heavy rain events. Therefore, requiring more of a solid type of aggregate surface to keep the trail intact. Miner brought to the Park Board's attention that erosion is occurring in several areas located throughout the park. Lemley responded that they are aware of such erosion and maintenance staff continues to remedy those areas as much as possible while also trying to maintain positive drainage throughout the park trail system. Hayden remarked that the Park Board's role is to focus on big picture goals in providing direction and to not get involved with the daily routine management of Park Board owned property. Hayden added that Lemley and his staff are responsible for day to day operations of park property along with sustaining Park Board policy and procedures in their daily operations.

As of Thursday, October 27th, TRAFx counters documented 3,298 vehicles visiting W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park this month.

F. REPORTS

F-1. Superintendent Report

Lemley reported that 27 applications were received for the vacant Part-Time Naturalist position. Kolcun will screen applicants for consideration, with interviews to follow in early November.

Development of the 2024 winter/spring edition of *The Explorer* is underway as Ivie delegates

responsibilities to staff members.

In preparation for the total solar eclipse advertisement within the publication of *The Explorer*, Ivie customized and ordered 1,000 solar eclipse glasses. Lemley advised that they had originally planned to seek a grant to offset the cost of the glasses, however the delayed grant award timeline would potentially jeopardize their ability to receive the glasses in time for the event.

The maintenance team hosted an arbor skills tree training seminar in partnership with the Hendricks County Highway Department at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park this morning.

On October 13th, Lemley provided approval (via MOU) to the Parks Foundation of Hendricks County to host the 2024 Summer Fun Run Series. The 2024 season will kick off at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park on May 29th. McCloud Nature Park will host the week of July 2nd and the Vandalia Trail will host the week of August 7th.

Lemley highlighted that two tort claims have been received for two separate incidents on park property located within Hendricks County. Lemley added the claims do not pertain to Hendricks County Park Board owned property and that Hendricks County insurance agents are responding to the claims on behalf of Hendricks County.

Lemley reported that the administrative staff will be attending the upcoming Indiana Park and Recreation Association (IPRA) conference in Fort Wayne.

Lemley notified the Park Board that the annual performance reviews are almost complete. Hendricks County government employees have the opportunity to receive an additional up to 1% raise based off of performance as the County transitions to a pay for performance policy for raises going forward. Lemley reminded the Park Board that they will need to complete his performance review.

Lemley reminded the Park Board that HCP&R Park Board elections will be held at the December 6th Park Board meeting.

F-2. Naturalist Update

Kolcun reported that the naturalist staff is preparing for the upcoming wreath making workshop scheduled for Saturday, December 2nd, at McCloud Nature Center, with four sessions being offered throughout the day. All four sessions are completely booked as this seems to be a popular event during the winter season.

Kolcun announced that the department received the Robert Wood Environmental Education grant award through the Parks Foundation of Hendricks County in the amount of \$4,064.60. Grant funds will go toward updating the interior displays within the McCloud Nature Center. Kolcun said the intent is to create a more immersive experience for guests visiting the nature center. Additionally, the current displays will be updated seasonally throughout the year to provide a fresh perspective for park guests to enjoy. The mural that was painted by Marti McCoy will continue to be displayed within the nature center.

Kolcun reported that the interview process for the Part-time Naturalist vacancy has started with phone interview invitations that have been sent to five prospective candidates.

Kolcun informed the Park Board that she will be working on updating and revamping the Volunteer Program over the winter months. Kolcun would like to provide more options and opportunities for

volunteers to utilize their skills while also providing interpretive and naturalist training for them.

F-3. Budget Report

Ivie reported that with only two months left in the budget year he and leadership staff continue to stay in close communication on budget related items. Ivie added that the Part-Time Employees line item is not an issue and does not foresee any problems finishing out the year with the allotted budgeted amount.

Ivie reported that Holtsclaw is in the process of purchasing supplies and materials for the interior build-out of the maintenance hub at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park and has sufficient funds for the rest of the budget year for purchases related to such project.

F-4. Parks Foundation of Hendricks County Report

Eisenhart reported that the only item to discuss was the Robert Wood Education Grant award which was discussed earlier on in the meeting. No additional information to report from the Foundation. Lemley added that after reviewing all the projects and programs they have partnered with the Foundation, he feels that PFOHC Executive Director, Katy Cummings, has done an excellent job with the Foundation and feels confident that they are heading in a positive direction. Hayden added that Katy's position is critical to the Foundation along with partners of the Foundation and feels that she has done a good job with her role.

Some discussion took place regarding B&O trail maintenance. Emsweller provided a summary of the history of that trail from previous conversations that occurred several years ago.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 3:33 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled Park Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 6th, at 2:00 p.m. at the Hendricks County Parks and Recreation Department Main Building Conference Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Matt Freije, Secretary