



Park Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 5, 2025
2:00 p.m.

955 E. Main Street
Danville, IN 46122

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m.

Board Present: Brad Eisenhart, President
Vicky Byarley
Gary Emsweller
Paul Miner

Board Absent: Mike Hayden, Vice President
Matt Freije, Secretary
Jeff Pell

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

Guests: Eric Weflen, Studio View Architects

A. CALENDAR

A-1. Adopt Agenda

Lemley requested adding to the agenda item C-3. W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park Additional Services for Restroom Septic System. **Miner moved to adopt the updated agenda; seconded by Byarley, the motion passed unanimously.**

A-2. Approval of Minutes from February 5th, 2025, Park Board Meeting

Miner moved to approve minutes from the February 5th, 2025, Park Board Meeting; seconded by Byarley, the motion passed unanimously.

B. PUBLIC HEARINGS/PRESENTATIONS

B-1. Public Comments

None

C. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

C-1. W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park – Welcoming Center/Administrative Office RFQ Proposals for Construction Manager as Constructor

Lemley announced that three proposals had been received for qualifications as the Construction Manager as Constructor to assist with the planning and construction phases of the Welcoming Center and Administrative Office project at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park. The vendors that submitted proposals include Garmong, Patterson Horth, and Rigdon Construction. Lemley indicated that he communicated with a representative from Meyer Najem, who expressed a desire to submit a proposal; however, they are currently unable to assign a superintendent to the project. Lemley provided the three proposals to Eric Weflen of Studio View Architects for review. Following the meeting, Lemley will distribute the proposals to the committee members for their evaluation and scoring of each proposal. The committee is expected to present its recommendations to the Park Board at the meeting scheduled for April 2nd.

C-2. Vandalia Trail – Proposed Right-of-Way Agreement

Lemley presented a right-of-way agreement from Beam, Longest, and Neff (B-L-N) to the Park Board. The firm has undergone expansion and acquisition. Lemley clarified that this agreement is fundamentally a continuation of two prior agreements with Beam, Longest, and Neff, who serve as our right-of-way agent. The first agreement was established on March 2, 2020, for a sum of \$15,000, which was subsequently increased to \$27,000 on May 27, 2022, to account for additional work. The recommendation put forth is to augment this existing agreement by an additional \$48,000, which would be authorized by staff based on the volume of work performed. This increase would enable us to engage with landowners who may be inclined to collaborate with us, thereby ensuring the necessary budgetary provisions are in place. Lemley expanded further saying that they have established a working relationship with this firm, which has already initiated discussions with landowners regarding the acquisition of land for the expansion of the Vandalia Trail and other Park Board properties. This arrangement allows us to continue these interactions through professionals rather than informal channels, ensuring a streamlined process.

Lemley said that he consulted with Ryan Buckley, their original right-of-way agent, who has been promoted within the organization. Buckley maintains strong relations with two key landowners along the route of the future trail between Amo and Clayton. Lemley explained that he specifically requested Buckley's involvement in forthcoming negotiations with these landowners. Given his higher fee due to his promotion, a representative will be chosen with a lower fee structure to initiate conversations with new landowners. However, for existing landowners, it is Lemley's preference to retain established relations. This approach parallels the services utilized by Hendricks County Engineer John Ayers for right-of-way acquisitions associated with county roadways.

In terms of operational execution, a new team member will be assigned to this project, necessitating a meeting to familiarize them with our previous achievements and ongoing engagements. We aim to establish a comprehensive plan of action; Lemley's directive is to complete the Lambert Park Trailhead by June of this year and to proceed with tree planting. Lemley hopes to complete this phase within the next one or two months to revisit discussions with landowners from Clayton to Amo, as well as to expand outreach efforts to the east. Lemley clarified that the increased amount pertains solely to fees for engaging with landowners and for drawing up potential agreements should the Park Board decide to proceed with acquisitions. Additional compensation for surveys or other services would necessitate a separate agreement. **Emsweller moved to increase the right-of-way professional services agreement with B-L-N from \$48,000 to \$75,000 and to authorize Lemley to sign such agreement; seconded by Miner, the motion passed unanimously.**

C-3. Additional Services for Restroom Septic System

Lemley and Holtsclaw met with John Payne from John Hall Construction and a representative with

C&J Well Drilling for the preconstruction meeting for the septic system for the proposed restroom structures. The manufacturing process for the restrooms is scheduled to be completed at the beginning of April, and we are currently coordinating the delivery and site preparation accordingly. During the meeting on-site, John Payne raised a critical concern regarding the original location of the secondary Denali restroom, which was intended to be situated off the parking lot. We identified that this area suffers from drainage issues, resulting in water accumulation. Consequently, we agreed to modify the primary restroom location to a more appropriate site adjacent to the parking lot. Following additional assessment of various placements for the two-stall restroom, Holtsclaw and Lemley reached a consensus on the new location.

Lemley provided important context regarding the acquisition of Align by Fishbeck. He was assured that there would be no increase in costs. The budget for the project has nearly been exhausted, initially allocating approximately \$50,000 for the septic system, site preparation, and state plans. Additionally, the septic system had to be relocated from the central area of the park to the disc golf area, which required two rounds of soil analysis. Currently, nearly all budget lines related to the septic system are nearing their limits, with expenditures reaching about 99% and 98%.

Evan Miller from Align contacted Lemley about the change in restroom location. Consequently, the construction plans for the Denali restroom must be revised and resubmitted to the State Department of Health. Align is requesting an additional \$2,500 to cover these updates.

Eisenhart inquired whether the restroom location was selected independently or if it was determined by Align. Lemley clarified that his team made the decision regarding the location. Eisenhart then asked if drainage issues had been considered. Lemley confirmed that drainage considerations were indeed an integral part of their decision-making process.

After further discussion, it was decided that Lemley would negotiate with Align regarding the additional fee they are requesting for this work.

D. PROPERTY UPDATES

D-1. McCloud Nature Park

Lemley reported that the first weekend of the Maple Syrup Days event, held at McCloud Nature Park on Saturday, March 1st, went well despite the cold and windy weather conditions. He commended the naturalist staff for the smooth operation throughout the day, as they had three different food vendors on site for the event, as well as various activity stations for the event attendees. Lemley also requested to discuss the Pancake Breakfast fundraising event with the Park Board. He expressed gratitude to Seymour and her family for recruiting volunteers for the event, as there were initially very few volunteers signed up. Additionally, Seymour's husband organized a last-minute volunteer sign-up for employees at his workplace.

Eisenhart provided a list of shifts that still need to be filled for the pancake breakfast to occur. During the discussion about volunteer recruitment, Eisenhart noted that Sarah Wolf had previously sought assistance from members of the Master Naturalist program and has maintained contact with those volunteers over the years. Ivie added that the new naturalist staff is diligently working on rebuilding the volunteer program and reaching out to establish a strong foundation for a volunteer base. The Park Board continued discussing the logistics for the Pancake Breakfast scheduled for Saturday, March 8th.

Lemley reported that they recently conducted interviews for the Part-Time Naturalist position. However, the selected applicant raised several red flags during the hiring process, including non-compliance with the employee manual. As a result, Lemley stated that they have rescinded the

employment offer and are now working with Human Resources to repost the job vacancy.

Lemley reported that the maintenance staff is making good progress on the large deck construction project adjacent to the nature center. This outdoor space will primarily be used for programming events. Seymour plans to apply for a grant from the Hendricks County Recycling District to fund five benches for the deck, with a total request of \$2,557.00.

Lemley provided the Park Board with an update on the “professionally” constructed turtle tank exhibit for the Nature Center.

TRAFx counters documented 721 vehicles visiting McCloud Nature Park this month.

D-2. Vandalia Trail

Lemley reported that Butler, Fairman, and Seufert (BFS), on behalf of the County, conducted an erosion control and stormwater pollution prevention inspection on February 14 at the construction site for the eastern expansion of the Vandalia Trail in the Lambert Park area. Following the inspection findings, J.R. Bowling addressed the unsatisfactory work. A pre-construction meeting has been scheduled for March 12 to resume work on the trail expansion project. Lemley noted that the contractor has a deadline of June 1, 2025, to complete the entire project.

Lemley informed the Park Board that a park patron approached him seeking approval to host a community event along the Vandalia Trail on Sunday, May 4th, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. The purpose of the event is to raise awareness about Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorders Associated with Streptococcal Infections (PANDAS). Lemley approved the event with the following conditions: 1) The trail must remain open to the public, and 2) Any potential fundraising activities must take place off Park Board property. The park patron has acknowledged these conditions and is proceeding with the event plans as proposed.

Lemley reported that Jerry Decker, the Town Manager of Coatesville, reached out to him about the potential installation of a gas station at the Coatesville Food Store. Although this project is still in the early planning stages, its construction could affect a small section of the Vandalia Trail. Lemley plans to meet with Decker soon to discuss the details and the potential easement request.

In a related matter, Jerry Decker informed Lemley that INDOT is now supportive of the Town of Coatesville’s plans to install additional safety lights on S.R. 75, which borders the Vandalia Trail. The approved safety lighting will flash continuously to warn motorists of the trail crossing. The Town of Coatesville will fund this project.

TRAFx counters documented 701 patrons visiting Vandalia Trail this month.

D-3. W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park

Lemley reported that the Park Board subcommittee, along with department leadership and staff from Studio View Architects, met shortly before this meeting to review the conceptual plan for the Welcoming Center & Administrative Office at Gibbs Park. This plan was developed based on feedback from the three different options previously provided by Studio View. Consequently, Studio View created a new floor plan design influenced by these discussions. The Park Board discussed several topics related to the schematic design of the facility, focusing on room sizes, overall building square footage, and the building's layout.

Lemley provided an update to the Park Board regarding the ongoing progress of the Bicentennial Tree

Trail, indicating that he has finalized the order for the trees. A total of 224 trees will be purchased at a cost of \$26,847.00. Furthermore, Katie Cummings, with the Parks Foundation of Hendricks County, purchased benches for the department, amounting to \$5,663.00. Additionally, Holtsclaw has commenced work on the trail and has acquired crushed stone and other essential materials for the project.

TRAFx counters documented 2,018 vehicles visiting W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park this month.

E. REPORTS

E-1. Superintendent Report

Lemley informed the Park Board that Todd McCormack, Executive Director to the Commissioners, had notified him that they will not be receiving the Federal Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant for McCloud Nature Park. It seems that the overseeing department and all associated federal staff no longer exist. McCormack mentioned that he would try to contact them a couple more times to confirm this situation. Lemley added that he is not comfortable using their budget to implement those improvements at this time. Additionally, Lemley stated that the maintenance staff will be replacing the door of the Mill Cottage, which is currently in poor condition.

Lemley reported that half of the department's staff has completed CPR, First Aid, and AED re-certification training, while the rest will complete the training on March 21st.

Lemley reported that the Adventure Backpack loaner program at McCloud Nature Park received positive attention thanks to a custom wall hanging shaped like a turtle created by Holtsclaw and his team. This turtle-shaped wall hanging will be used to store the backpacks.

Lemley reported receiving their standard payments from the Hendricks County Community Foundation. They reverted the Harlos funding to the spendable account for future development at McCloud Nature Park and requested that the PFOHC cash the other two endowment checks for them.

To improve the visual appeal of the idle land acquired by the County for the roadway roundabout at the intersection of CR 900 East and 100 North in Avon, a diverse mixture of wildflower and pollinator seeds has been purchased for \$1,149.50. Lemley reminded the Park Board that this project was initiated at the request of former Commissioner Palmer.

Lemley reminded the Park Board that the PFOHC Picnic at the Parks event is scheduled for March 6.

E-2. Budget Report

Ivie reported that there were no concerns with the budget to date and provided the Park Board with a summary of the budget report. Ivie also added that the previously reported encumbrance discrepancies have been resolved by the Auditor's Office. Additional discussion took place regarding the Maintenance and Repair line-item budget.

E-3. Parks Foundation of Hendricks County Report

Eisenhart reported that there was no new information from the Foundation other than preparing for the Picnic at the Parks event.

Miner provided the Park Board with an update on his conversation with Jeff Thompson about the funds available for Parks and Recreation departments. Additional discussion regarding this topic also took place.

ADJOURNMENT

Miner moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:16 p.m.; seconded by Byarley, the motion passed unanimously.

The next regularly scheduled Park Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 2nd, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. at the Hendricks County Parks and Recreation Department Main Building Conference Room.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brad Eisenhart, President