



## **Park Board Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, July 2, 2025  
2:00 p.m.

955 E. Main Street  
Danville, IN 46122

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

**Board Present:** Brad Eisenhart, President  
Mike Hayden, Vice President  
Matt Freije, Secretary  
Vicky Byarley  
Paul Miner

**Board Absent:** Gary Emsweller  
Jeff Pell

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

**Guests:** None

### **A. CALENDAR**

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

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

#### **A-2. Approval of Minutes of May 7, 2025, Park Board Meeting**

The minutes from the last Park Board meeting could not be approved because only five members were present at that meeting, and only three are here today. Therefore, this matter will be tabled until next month's meeting.

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

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

None

### **C. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **C-1. Park Board Meetings – Revised Location**

Lemley informed the Park Board that the Hendricks County Parks & Recreation (HCPR) Main Office will be temporarily relocated to the Gibbs Homestead at 4481 Gibbs Road, Danville, IN, and presented the Park Board with a few options for hosting the next meeting. He recommended holding the August and October meetings at the Gibbs Maintenance Hub, located at 4047 Park Maintenance Drive, Danville, IN. Lemley also reminded the Park Board that the September meeting will take place at the Hendricks County Government Center. The Park Board approved Lemley's recommendation by consensus.

#### C-2. Magnet Fishing

Lemley requested input from the Park Board regarding a recent request to permit magnet fishing. He provided the Board with a copy of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) regulations on the activity and explained that magnet fishing involves tying a rope to a powerful magnet and throwing it into a body of water to retrieve various items. Lemley noted that, while magnet fishing can serve as a recreational activity and contribute to environmental cleanup, it also has the potential to disturb the ecosystems of ponds, potentially damaging nesting areas and aquatic habitats. After further discussion, the Park Board unanimously decided not to permit magnet fishing on property owned by the Hendricks County Park Board.

### **D. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

#### D-1. W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park – Welcoming Center & Administrative Office Update

Lemley reported that after meeting with the Washington Township Fire Marshal, the effort to save costs on the building plans for the future Welcome Center and Administrative Office was successful. By reducing the building's square footage, they eliminated the need for a fire sprinkler system, as the revised dimensions no longer mandated its installation. However, fire protection will still be required through the construction of a fire protection pond near the new facility.

Lemley informed the Park Board that he presented the capital project to the Hendricks County Commissioners and received formal approval to proceed with the \$5.5 million capital improvement project. Additionally, an alternative bid for a bus parking lot will be included in the proposal. With the Commissioners' approval and the budget submitted, they will move forward with the design development.

Lemley also mentioned that budget hearings are scheduled for August 3rd through 5th, which will be the final step in securing funds for the project. Further discussions took place regarding various topics related to the fire protection pond, allowances for unsuitable soils, exterior finishes, and the furniture package.

#### D-2. W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park – CXT Restroom Installation Update

Lemley informed the Park Board that they have received the public water system/well permit from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) for the recently installed restrooms at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park. He has since discussed the permit guidelines and their desire to open the restrooms to the public soon with the subcontractors, John Hall Construction and C&J Well Drilling. After developing a collective timeline for the water system installation, Lemley formally submitted all necessary information to IDEM and pre-scheduled the well drilling for July 14th.

One minor hurdle to overcome in the permit process is the revised location of the well pressure tank. It cannot be buried next to the well, as initially proposed by the project engineer, and will now be installed within the pipe chase of the Arapahoe restroom (the larger restroom). This revision will result in an additional expense and a change order with John Hall, as more electrical & water line will be required to complete the installation of the well pressure tank.

Jon Payne from John Hall Construction reported that the septic installer ordered all supplies for the installation process in early June but is facing a six-week lead time on some essential items, including the lift station pump and the concrete holding tank. Despite these delays, they continue to target a late July to early August opening for the public restrooms.

#### D-3. Vandalia Trail – Eastern Expansion Progress & Change Order

Lemley updated the Park Board on the eastern expansion of the Vandalia Trail, specifically stating that after several attempts to educate J.R. Bowling on the importance of passing the subbase proof-roll inspection—an INDOT requirement essential for constructing a durable and high-quality trail—four problematic areas have now been addressed (including the Lambert Park Trailhead). A subcontractor is scheduled to install the 10-foot-wide asphalt trail during the week of July 7th. The capital project will then be completed with the implementation of the erosion control plan and landscaping as outlined in the agreement.

Lemley praised Lynn Fox, the Construction Inspector with Fishbeck, for her dedication to the project and the extra effort she put into educating the contractor. He also mentioned that he authorized a change order to install crushed stone, instead of sod, in the 3-foot-wide strip of land between the walking path and the back of the curb along C.R. 500 South. Lemley anticipates the capital project to be completed in early August.

### **E. PROPERTY UPDATES**

#### E-1. McCloud Nature Park

Lemley provided the Park Board with an update on the turtle enclosure project. He shared that Park Manager Jim Holtsclaw has developed two electronic quiz games, each featuring 30 random questions about various turtle species. These educational quiz tablets will be permanently installed on the outside of each turtle enclosure. The naturalist staff will finalize the interior habitats and decorations for the educational exhibit before introducing the turtles to their new home.

Lemley reported that McCloud Nature Park experienced substantial storm and tree damage during the severe storms that occurred on June 18th. While the park's facilities remained intact, a significant number of limbs and trees were down, necessitating cleanup efforts.

Lemley informed the Park Board that the naturalist staff started hosting summer day camps throughout the month of June. Although some of the camps were initially scheduled to take place at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park, they were relocated to McCloud Nature Park due to the extreme heat during that week. Each camp session was well received, reaching full registration capacity. However, a few campers caused issues, necessitating incident reports to be written and discussed with their guardians.

Lemley reported that the naturalist staff has taken the initiative to organize and clean the inside of Mill Cottage. Additionally, a recent rodent issue at the nature center is being addressed. The maintenance staff continues to ensure that the park remains in pristine condition each week while also handling additional tasks to keep the equipment and amenities well-maintained.

Lemley announced that they have received five benches funded by a grant from the Hendricks County Recycling District. The maintenance staff assembled the benches and positioned them on the new deck, which will serve as an outdoor learning space at the nature center.

Lemley reported that a team from Stantec has completed the second quarterly maintenance session of the year at the arboretum in McCloud Nature Park. He also mentioned that there were discussions

about implementing in-house signage for tree and plant species identification in the arboretum. This project will likely be addressed in the winter, as the current workload does not allow for the time or resources to undertake it in the coming months.

Lemley reminded the Park Board that the Summer Fun Run Series will take place at McCloud Nature Park from Wednesday, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, through Tuesday, July 8<sup>th</sup>.

TRAFx counters documented 1,715 vehicles visiting McCloud Nature Park this month.

#### E-2. Vandalia Trail

Lemley updated the Park Board on the Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant for the eastern expansion of the Vandalia Trail. As requested by the National Park Service (NPS), he initiated the required Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) report, which is necessary for obtaining federal approval of the \$990,000 grant award. This report has been completed and submitted to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). It provides the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service with the information needed to evaluate the project's impact on federally listed species and other critical habitats. Additionally, the phase II portion of the trail project must be included within the LWCF grant. However, it must meet two additional requirements: 1) completion of a Historical Preservation & Archaeology report for the land used in the trail expansion project, and 2) the establishment of a stand-alone recreation facility that provides direct public access to phase II of the trail development. Lemley explained that due to the conditions outlined in the grant, a parking lot and public access area are essential for the NPS to encumber the property and ensure the park can be maintained indefinitely. The Park Board discussed options for the stand-alone recreation facility and determined that a small parking lot with a bike station, located adjacent to the phase II development of the trail, would best meet these requirements.

Lemley informed the Park Board that Greg Midgely will represent HCP&R at an upcoming in-person meeting regarding a unified logo for the entire Vandalia Trail System with leadership at Greater Indy Trailways.

TRAFx counters documented 1,773 patrons visiting the Vandalia Trail this month.

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

Lemley informed the Park Board that he approved a request from the Hendricks County Disc Golf Club to host an expanded disc golf tournament. The club will extend the course by setting up temporary baskets throughout the park, bringing the total to 27 holes. Lemley has provided the club's leadership with specific requirements that they must follow for this tournament.

The naturalist staff organized a fishing derby and tournament that attracted 75 participants. They will also collaborate with a representative from the Boy Scouts to host a Scouting America fishing event at Gibbs Park.

Lemley reported that several signs have been stolen from Gibbs Park, but they have since been replaced. He expressed concerns about motorized vehicles using the trails in the park, despite the presence of signs prohibiting such activity. Although additional signage has been installed, this issue persists. Lemley informed the Park Board that bollard posts will be installed if the situation continues to worsen.

TRAFx counters documented 5,636 vehicles visiting W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park this month.

## **F. REPORTS**

### **F-1. Superintendent Report**

Lemley announced that the County Council will consider the 2026 budget request submitted to the Auditors Office.

Lemley informed the Park Board that he participated in the Hendricks County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Planning Team meeting. He explained that the department's involvement in this planning effort is necessary to remain eligible for FEMA funding in the unlikely event of a disaster occurring in the County or on Park Board property.

Lemley reported that Ivie is still working on the Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP). The survey will be released soon and will be open to the public.

Ivie presented the Park Board with a media report for June, noting that website visitors are down, which is typical during the summer months. He expects traffic to increase again once school resumes. Ivie highlighted that the search engine remains the top referral source, with Visit Hendricks County in second place. Surprisingly, Sodalis Nature Park, which has not been under the Park Board's ownership for over five years, remains the most popular page on the website. Additionally, Ivie provided the Park Board with an update on social media data.

### **F-2. Budget Report**

Ivie reported no issues or concerns with the budget to date.

Ivie reported that they received a memo from the Hendricks County Tourism Commission regarding the Innkeepers Tax collection for the first half of the year, amounting to \$190,742.56.

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

Eisenhart reported that over 700 participants are signed up for the 2025 Summer Fun Run Series. Speedway Subaru will donate funds to the Foundation for additional grant availability.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**Meeting adjourned at 2:57 p.m.**

**The next regularly scheduled Park Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 6, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. at the Gibbs Maintenance Hub located at 4047 Park Maintenance Drive, Danville, IN 46122.**

Respectfully Submitted,

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Matt Freije, Secretary