



## Park Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August 6, 2025  
2:00 p.m.

4047 Park Maintenance Drive  
Danville, IN 46122

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 2:18 p.m.

**Board Present:** Brad Eisenhart, President  
Matt Freije, Secretary  
Paul Miner  
Jeff Pell

**Board Absent:** Mike Hayden, Vice President  
Vicky Byarley  
Gary Emsweller

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

**Guests:** Jay Kumar, Coatesville Food Store

### **A. CALENDAR**

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

Miner requested an addition to the agenda to add "B-2. Study Committee" as a topic of discussion.

**Miner moved to adopt the agenda as amended; Pell seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

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

The minutes from the July 2, 2025 meeting could not be approved due to having a lack of a quorum of Park Board members present at this meeting who were present at the July meeting. **Tabled until the Sept. 3 Park Board meeting.**

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

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

None

## B-2. Study Committee

Miner alerted the Park Board to a study committee being formed in state government to evaluate the economic impact of trails in communities, in relation to [HB 1616](#). The study committee includes District 24 State Senator (and former two-term Hendricks County Sheriff) Brett Clark. Miner has spoken with Senator Clark, and Miner feels we would be remiss if we didn't make some sort of overture to the study committee, at least in the form of bullet points of information about the benefits of trails. Eisenhart and Ivie asked a bunch of questions and discussion took place. Ivie requested that the parks staff be left out of this project because he and Lemley are already bursting at the seams with ongoing projects and cannot take on anything additional right now. Miner understands and honors that request, stating that he will ask Greg Midgley of National Road Heritage Trail, Inc. to work on this endeavor with him instead.

## C. NEW BUSINESS

### C-1. Coatesville Food Store – Request to Utilize Public Water System

Jay Kumar, owner of the Coatesville Food Store, presented a request to the Park Board for the store to tie into the well that is used for the Coatesville trailhead. He wants to put gas pumps in at the store, and his current well is right where the underground fuel tanks would go. By State law, his well must be placed at least 100 feet away from the fuel tanks, so he has two options: tie into the Vandalia Trail well or drill a well on his personal property near the store and pipe that water in to the store.

Lemley, Holtsclaw, and Eisenhart all expressed serious concerns about the store tying into the Vandalia Trail for a variety of reasons. Lemley recommended that the Park Board deny Kumar's request. **By a 4-0 consensus, the Park Board denied Kumar's request to tie into the Vandalia Trail well.**

### C-2. Waste Management – Recycling Service Agreement

Ivie presented a request to the Park Board to add a 2-yard recycling receptacle from Waste Management (WM) next to the dumpster at the Gibbs maintenance hub for about \$108/month. Holtsclaw provided some information about the recycling that is collected within the park that now makes it clear that such a recycling receptacle would be overkill, and that a residential type of recycling toter at the main office would probably be a wiser choice. With this new information, Ivie rescinded his request to the Park Board and will seek a different option for collection of recyclable materials.

## D. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### D-1. Vandalia Trail – Eastern Expansion (Phase I) Construction

Lemley advised the Park Board that he, Ivie, two members of Fishbeck (civil engineering firm), and a representative of J.R. Bowling (constructor) completed a walk-through of the Phase I project from Lambert Park to Michigan Street in Clayton. A variety of minor touch-ups are needed, but for the most part, that project is completed.

Lemley informed the Park Board that the sod has a 30-day guarantee, so he is waiting those 30 days before closing out the contract, just to make sure that the sod takes hold.

Lemley also advised that vehicular traffic is seeing the stop sign on the trail at County Road 500 S. and Michigan Street, and several vehicles have come to an unexpected stop there on the county road, thinking that the stop sign is for them, not for users of the trail. The stop sign has been bagged in the short-term, and Lemley is working with Fishbeck civil engineers to come up with a better system of making trail users yield to vehicular traffic without confusing motorists.

#### D-2. Vandalia Trail – Eastern Expansion (Phase II) Engineering Change Order

Lemley informed the Park Board that in order to appease the federal government regarding the Land & Water Conservation Fund grant request for Phase II of the Vandalia Trail expansion, the department must add a parking lot for trail users. Fishbeck has prepared a “Professional Services Agreement Amendment 2” for the Park Board to consider. It will cost \$25,850.00 for Fishbeck to design the lot. That does not include the actual construction of the lot.

After some discussion, **Miner moved to accept the Professional Services Agreement Amendment 2; Pell seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

#### D-3. W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park Conservation Fund Grant Close-Out

Lemley and Ivie advised that in the course of preparing to close out the Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant used for additional amenities at W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park, they have been informed by Carman Jackson with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources that the entire park must have the LWCF encumbrance language in its deed. Ivie informed Jackson that this contradicts what she told the department two years ago, and based on her suggestion at that time, the department split the park into two parcels and only added the LWCF encumbrance language to the parcel on which all the amenities were added.

Lemley and Ivie strongly recommend against encumbering the entire park because the department is not done developing the other parcel, and it becomes a bureaucratic nightmare to later add certain amenities (like enclosed buildings, including the future Gibbs Welcome Center) when that encumbrance is in place.

After some discussion, **the Park Board came to a unanimous consensus for Lemley and Ivie to actively resist encumbering the entire park.**

### **E. PROPERTY UPDATES**

#### E-1. McCloud Nature Park

Lemley reported that the new turtle enclosures are complete and fully functional in the Ray & Mary Benson Nature Center. All that remains are some interpretive signs, which are currently in production through Envirosigns out of Utah. The cost for the signage is \$5,359.66, which will exhaust the Robert A. Wood Environmental Education grant the department received for this project through the Parks Foundation of Hendricks County.

Lemley informed the Park Board of a personnel issue that has been handled by department leadership.

Lemley advised that the maintenance crew has installed five (5) park benches made from recycled plastic on the back porch of the Ray & Mary Benson Nature Center. These benches were generously funded by the Hendricks County Recycling District through their Spring 2025 Community Grant Program.

TRAFx counters documented 1,817 vehicles visiting McCloud Nature Park this month.

#### E-2. Vandalia Trail

Ivie advised that the Indiana DNR Division of Historical Preservation & Archaeology – on the basis of landscape architect HWC Engineering’s investigation and report indicating an unlikelihood to adversely affect anything historical through the extension of the trail along County Road 500 S. –

issued a letter stating that it is okay with the department moving forward with construction of Phase II once the LWCF grant request gains federal approval.

Ivie and Lemley informed the Park Board of the quest by Greater Indy Trailways to create a unified logo for the Vandalia Trail, regardless of who operates any given section. Lemley and Midgley both provided input on the design. Four potential logos have been created, which were shown to the Park Board.

Lemley advised he recently worked with the Central Indiana Land Trust on a marketing press release to promote reforestation efforts along County Road 500 South, where the Phase II trail expansion will be constructed. The Central Indiana Land Trust has already planted 26,000 seedling trees along that corridor at no cost to the department.

TRAFx counters documented 1,392 patrons visiting the Vandalia Trail this month.

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

Lemley updated the Park Board on the installation of a well in the park and a perimeter drain for the septic area to try to dry the soil enough that the injection pit can be installed when it is completed by Cash Concrete.

Lemley also updated the Park Board on the continued planning for the future Gibbs Welcome Center, which includes weekly meetings with architects and engineers. Lemley advised that earlier this morning, the Hendricks County Council agreed to fund this project in 2026, which is excellent news.

Lemley advised of some spray paint vandalism on the new asphalt trail loop around the ponds, which he suspects is from one of the local school's athletic teams that train in the park. Lemley does not know which school or which team is the culprit, but the orange paint marking distances along the trail has been covered.

Lemley filled the Park Board in on the maintenance team's continuing battle against erosion along the ephemeral creek banks. He also reported that the naturalists hosted 15 volunteers from MIBOR Realty Group to remove invasive bush honeysuckle. That event went well.

TRAFx counters documented 5,214 vehicles visiting W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park this month.

## **F. REPORTS**

### F-1. Superintendent Report

Lemley advised that the department moved its main office to 4481 Gibbs Road in Danville on July 30.

Lemley reported that he participated in a secondary meeting for the Hendricks County Multi-Hazard Mitigation Planning Team on July 22, focusing on prioritizing mitigation measures of natural disasters that could impact Hendricks County, including park properties.

Lemley informed the Park Board that he, Ivie, Holtsclaw, Senior Park Naturalist Ryann Hoffman, and Park Naturalist Alexis Weidman will all be attending the 2025 Indiana Parks & Recreation Association Annual Conference in Muncie on Nov. 11-13, 2025.

Lemley advised that the department has been contacted by a law firm, informing him that the late David A. Rodgers has left 1% of his estate to the department to be used at McCloud Nature Park. The matter is still in probate, so Lemley does not yet know what that sum of money will be, but he

expressed his deep appreciation of Mr. Rodgers leaving such a legacy behind to benefit the park.

Lemley announced the arrival of the Fall 2025 issue of *The Explorer* magazine, which covers programming and events from September through December. Ivie praised Administrative Assistant Patty Seymour, Hoffman, and Weidman for their excellent work on this issue and the content within it.

#### F-2. Budget Report

Ivie reported no issues with the budget. Communication between him, Holtsclaw, and Hoffman has been excellent and essential because the department is going to be really tight on funds this fiscal year due to all of the major projects going on right now. Ivie cited an example of Holtsclaw recently asking if the department has the funds for an implement that the maintenance crew is requesting (it does) prior to purchasing it, which is very much appreciated by Ivie so that the department does not go over-budget.

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

Eisenhart reported that the Summer Fun Run Series is at the Vandalia Trail (Amo trailhead) this week, beginning tonight.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**Miner moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:35 p.m.; Freije seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

**The next regularly scheduled Park Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 3, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. in Meeting Rooms 4 & 5 at the Hendricks County Government Center.**

Respectfully Submitted,

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Matt Freije, Secretary