Park Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 7, 2026
2:00 p.m.

4481 Gibbs Road
Danville, IN 46122

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:09 p.m.

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

Board Absent: Mike Hayden, Vice President

Staff Present: Ryan Lemley, Superintendent
Eric Ivie, Assistant Superintendent
Avery Tyler, Park Manager
Patty Seymour, Administrative Assistant

Guests: None

A. CALENDAR

A-1. Adopt Agenda

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

A-2. Approval of Minutes of September 2, 2026, Park Board Meeting

Approval of the previous meeting minutes was tabled due to an insufficient quorum of Board members who had been present at that meeting.

B. PUBLIC HEARINGS/PRESENTATIONS

B-1. Public Comments

No public comments were presented

The Board discussed a Circuit Court appointment and the need to recommend a non-Republican appointee to fill the vacancy left by Matt Freije. Staff will follow up on the appointment process and verify any advertising requirements before proceeding.

C. CONTINUED BUSINESS

C-1. McCloud Nature Park – Vault Privy Proposal/Purchase

Lemley presented a revised Romtec vault restroom proposal for the Harlos parcel. Discussion covered exterior materials, skylight, odor control, pumping access, cleaning, vandalism, and state application requirements. Staff would monitor, stock, and clean the facility. The estimated cost was $70,000 to $77,000, depending on shipping and options. **Pell moved to authorize $80,000 from the Harlos Endowment to procure the proposed Romtec unit, including shipping, seconded by Emsweller; the motion passed unanimously.**

Staff will request creation of the spendable account through the Hendricks County Community Foundations (HCCF), begin procurement and the required state application process, and obtain site development estimates. Site development will be presented separately for additional approval. The endowment balance was reported at approximately $550,000.

D. NEW BUSINESS

D-1. 2027 Pancake Fundraising Breakfast

The Board agreed by consensus to hold one pancake breakfast at McCloud Nature Park on March 6, 2027. March 13th was discussed as the staff preference, but March 6th better accommodated Board availability. Staff will plan and advertise the event.

D-2. RecDesk Service Agreement

Staff requested renewal of the RecDesk registration and payment software agreement for three years, from November 1, 2026, through October 31, 2029, at approximately $3,400 per year. RecDesk is used for program registration, GRIT Freedom Chair rentals, pavilion rentals, and vendor registration. Staff estimated annual receipts processed through the system at $20,000 to $25,000. **Miner moved to authorize staff to enter into the three-year service agreement, seconded by Byarley; the motion passed unanimously.**

E. NEW BUSINESS

E-1. McCloud Nature Park

Lemley reported that maintenance staff installed a mini-split HVAC system and electric service in the new programming storage barn, installed new top handrails on all lower footbridges, cleared obstructive vegetation at the emergency access gate and stone pillars bordering the Putnam County line, and that a contractor removed a large red oak near the arboretum entrance. With assistance from Vice President Hayden, a replacement diesel tank was obtained from Keystone Cooperative at no charge, avoiding an anticipated $4,316 expense.

Miner was thanked for donating a Hornbeam tree and 20 coneflower starts. Naturalists continued recruiting volunteers and preparing for October events. Permission to name a future pavilion after David A. Rodgers was confirmed; further pavilion planning awaits the second trust payment and clarification of the project scope.

Lemley reported preliminary interest in a proposed 24-hour running event at McCloud Nature Park in 2027. Lemley will request that the interested party submit a written proposal detailing the event and staffing needs for review.

Hayride wagon arrangements for the Fall Colors Festival were discussed.

Lemley presented a wetland study estimate of approximately $5,500 for delineation, $2,800 for report preparation, and an additional $8,300 for conceptual site layouts. Board members questioned whether delineation was the appropriate scope and discussed obtaining a second proposal from a wetland

specialist. The Board discussed the wetland's original mitigation purpose, monitoring records, regulatory release status, appearance, educational value, and the deteriorating boardwalk. Staff will seek the original project monitoring documents from the county engineering office, clarify project requirements and release status, and report back next month. No contract or expenditure was approved.

TRAFx counters documented 1,853 vehicles visiting McCloud Nature Park this month.

E-2. Vandalia Trail

Lemley reported progress on Phase II, eastern expansion of the Vandalia Trail. A used railcar bridge structure was delivered for $9,500. Engineering plans will address trimming, exterior finish, surfacing, and handrails and will be included in the bid documents. Staff anticipates requesting authorization to solicit bids on November 4, opening bids on December 2, and presenting an award recommendation at the January meeting, tentatively on January 6, 2027. Indiana DNR received the required Land and Water Conservation Fund quarterly grant update.

Winter seeding is planned for the reforestation understory using a seed mix funded by a grant from the Parks Foundation of Hendricks County (PFOHC).

Staff continues working with Coatesville officials and police on restroom vandalism and camera operations. Restroom availability will be reduced and adjusted seasonally.

The Gear Up bicycle event was held along the trail. 40 cyclists participated, with 10 additional participants joining the ride later in the day.

The Board discussed a potential future trail connection to preserve historic interurban arch bridges near Cartersburg. Members and staff identified major concerns regarding land acquisition, structural review, feasibility, and funding. The Park Board and staff emphasized connecting the existing trail to Amo as the top land acquisition priority.

TRAFx counters documented 1,772 individuals using the trail this month.

E-3. W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park

Revised septic plans were submitted on October 1st, following receipt of state review comments in late September. Staff reported a 15-business-day state review period and a planned construction restart on November 2nd, subject to approval progress. Any additional costs related to the delay must be brought before the Park Board. Staff has authorized no additional delay payments.

Concrete picnic table pads and stand-up grills were completed, including two universal-accessible tables and three standard tables. Seymour will submit grant completion documentation to the Hendricks County Recycling District for funds received to purchase the picnic tables.

Staff reported satisfactory stormwater pollution prevention inspections at Gibbs and the McCloud maintenance hubs.

County Facilities is expected to transfer two unused snowplows to Parks for use.

Market in the Park drew slightly more than 100 attendees and 20 vendors. Staff reported work on homeschool ecology programming and concerns about scheduling disc golf tournaments without advance coordination.

TRAFx counters recorded 5,732 vehicles visiting W.S. Gibbs Memorial Park this month.

F. REPORTS

F-1. Superintendent Report

Staff received 63 applications for part-time naturalist assistance. The County Council authorized proceeding with interviews, and 10 applicants were selected for telephone screening, with in-person interviews scheduled for the following week.

A maintenance reporting email account was established at park facilities to improve reporting and response, including on weekends.

Seymour was recognized for compiling countywide park locations for the Sheriff's Department.

F-2. Budget Report

Ivie reported that the third-quarter figures had been reconciled with the auditor's online records. Two transfers made on the meeting date were not reflected in the distributed report: $2,000 from the County General Fund for exhibits and displays to maintenance and repairs, and $1,500 from the property rental fee to the development of educational programs. Staff reported no budget concerns for the remainder of the year.

Equipment replacement funding for 2027 has been approved. Staff expects to present equipment quotes and trade-in values in January. Retaining or trading the Kubota UTV stationed at McCloud Nature Park will depend on its trade-in value after recent repairs.

F-3. Media Report

Ivie reported that Instagram activity and views increased this past month, with an osprey post at McCloud Nature Park drawing the most attention. Program promotions performed well on Facebook. The website recorded approximately 9,800 views in September and is approaching 700,000 all-time views.

ADJOURNMENT

With no additional business to come before the Board, Miner moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:22 p.m., seconded by Pell; the motion passed unanimously.

The next regularly scheduled Park Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 4, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. at the Gibbs Homestead located at 4481 Gibbs Road, Danville, IN 46122.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Brad Eisenhart, President