

Tippecanoe County Park and Recreation Board
Minutes of April 6, 2022
Tippecanoe County Park Board Office
4449 State Road 43 North
West Lafayette, IN 47906

Present: Board members John Gambs, Mike Gery, Denny Mellon, Opal Kuhl, Dave Luhman, Pat Williams. Also in attendance were staff members Mary Barrett, Randy Lower and Jed Wright.

The meeting was called to order at 2:58 p.m. by John Gambs.

Miscellaneous:

Dave Inskeep, Wildcat Guardian member, appeared before the Board to seek their advice, expertise, and support as he moves forward on plan to keep Wildcat Park open for public enjoyment and as a canoe/kayak access. After communicating with several individuals and agencies, including DNR, he hopes there will be an opportunity to lease the property to a non-profit. The Board is supportive of another entity keeping the park open to the public if it can be operated in a safe manner.

Approval of Minutes:

March minutes were unanimously approved on a motion by Dave Luhman and seconded by Denny Mellon.

Election of 2022 Officers:

John Gambs asked for nominations.

- President: Denny Mellon motioned for Opal Kuhl to act as President, seconded by Dave Luhman, carried unanimously.
- Vice President: Opal Kuhl motioned for Denny Mellon to act as Vice President, seconded by Mike Gery, carried unanimously.
- Executive Secretary: Dave Luhman motioned that Randy Lower, Superintendent, will continue to act as Executive Secretary of the Park Board. Seconded by John Gambs, carried unanimously.

Review of Claims:

Claims were reviewed and unanimously approved on a motion by Dave Luhman, seconded by Denny Mellon.

Old Business:

Prophet's Rock Easement: Randy met with the engineer working with the Town of Battle Ground regarding the utility easement. He informed Randy that in an effort to provide a safer path from Hawk's Nest to the downtown area, the Town of Battle Ground may want to put a hard surfaced trail over the easement in the future. No action is required at this time as there has not been a formal request, but a decision may be needed at a later date. The Board feels that the trail over the easement is a good option for the town.

New Business:

- 2022 Budget Report: The Board reviewed the March budget report. There were no questions or concerns.
- N 9th Street Property: Randy provided the Board with GIS information and a real estate listing for a property on N 9th Street. It is a bare lot, 1.7 acres south of the Battlefield Park that goes back to the creek. The property is in flood plain and has an asking price of \$29,900. After discussion, the Board agreed that they would be willing to offer \$7,000. Randy discussed another N 9th property – 15 acres listed at \$45,000. Taking over these properties would enhance the drive to the Battlefield. It could also potentially be part of the WREC trail from Davis Ferry. Mike Gery motioned for Randy to inquire about both purchases. Denny seconded, unanimously approved.
- Superintendent's Report:
 - The Wabash Heritage Trail will be shut down from June 1st through August 31st due to repair and enhancement of the bridge over the trail. It will open around Labor Day and remain open until April 2023 and will then close again until August 2023. There could be delays due to supply disruptions resulting in random opening and closings.
 - Waggoner, Irwin and Scheele and Associates will be completing a salary study, updating job descriptions and/or changing classifications.
 - Mike Pechin has accepted the Wildcat Park/Fairfield Lake Property Manager position that was vacated when Brenda Moore retired. Mike's position as Assistant Maintenance Director has been posted and interviews will take place next week.
 - Niches arranged a meeting regarding invasives between Randy and a representative of Fish and Wildlife. There is a grant program that could pay 50% of the cost of removal. Removal cannot be done in-house and will have to be contracted out. Randy will pursue estimates for removal.
 - Randy attended an Emergency Action Plan meeting for the Indiana Fiddlers' Gathering. This year is the 50th anniversary of the festival. They anticipate 2500 attendees per day. It will be held June 24th and 25th.
 - The gift fund contains \$750 earmarked for Wildcat Park. Randy provided the Board with a proposal from Brenda and Mary to use these funds to develop educational kits

designed to provide content and activities which can be used in classrooms to teach about the human and natural history of the Wildcat Creek and Wabash River watersheds. Kits could be reserved by local schools in each participating county – Carroll, Clinton, Howard, and Tippecanoe. The kits will remain the property of the TC Park and Recreation Department and are free of charge. John motioned to use the gift funds for Wildcat Creek to create the educational kits for schools. Seconded by Dave Luhman, carried unanimously.

- o Stan Lambert with WREC reached out to Randy regarding a letter of support from the Board for a grant proposal from the federal government that will connect several trails. The Board unanimously agreed to offer a letter of support for the grant proposal.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:26 PM.

Minutes compiled by Mary Barrett.