

Tippecanoe County Park and Recreation Board
Minutes of July 1, 2020
4449 State Road 43 N
West Lafayette, IN 47906

Present: Board members John Gambs, Denny Mellon, Opal Kuhl, Mike Gery, Scott Rumble, Esther Chosnek and Karen Mitchell. Also in attendance were staff members Mary Barrett, Randy Lower, Jed Wright, Mary Cutler, Adam Libbers, Teddy Balsler and Allen Nail. Del Bartlett, TCHA liaison attended.

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by John Gambs.

March minutes were unanimously approved on a motion by Opal Kuhl and a second by Scott Rumble.

Claims were reviewed and unanimously approved on a motion by Opal Kuhl and a second by Denny Mellon.

Old Business:

VS Engineering Update: VS Engineering will finish up the conceptual design for the proposed trail at Bicentennial Nature Area in the next 30 days. It will be presented at the August meeting.

BNA Trail Easements with TERF: The TERF Board approved a resolution supporting a trail easement through their monitoring well area at Bicentennial Nature Area and also included language in the resolution that supports the development of the trail. The easement cannot be written or executed until final construction drawings are completed and reviewed by EPA and IDEM. No problems are anticipated in that process unless the design of the trail changes.

Battlefield Museum Lease: Allen provided the Board with a copy of the proposed lease and Del Bartlett outlined some of the specific terms of the lease. After discussion, the Board decided to take it under advisement in order to have more time for review. The lease would not go into effect until 1-1-2021.

New Business:

- Status of Park Events: Allen reviewed the status of events that were scheduled for 2021. Indiana Fiddlers was canceled at Battlefield Park along with Ouibache and Outdoor Explore! at the Amphitheater and Camp WACK at BNA. Many reservations at Ross Camp and Ross Hills Park have been cancelled or postponed and moved to 2021. Following Indiana's Back on Track requirements, shelter houses are open and the campground opened at the end of May. A Town Hall meeting at the Amphitheater on July 25th was announced and many details such as security, social distancing and insurance still have to be worked out. The Health Department will also have to provide

guidance given the possibility of a large crowd. Feast of the Hunter's Moon organizers will make a decision in the near future. Mary Cutler reviewed changes to her programs in order to align with the Governor's mandates. Wednesday's in the Wild will take place outdoors; masks and social distancing are strongly encouraged along with class sizes of 25 or less. The *On the Banks of the Wabash* annual rafting trip has been canceled. The Nature Center is open with modifications for volunteers, sanitizing and social distancing. Mary is also developing online resources and educational kits for teachers should she be unable to go into the classrooms for programming.

- 2020 Budget Report: The Board reviewed the June budget. There were no questions or concerns.
- 2021 Budget Proposal: Prior to the Board meeting, Allen had provided the Board with a copy of the proposed budget for 2021. Given anticipated revenue shortfalls due to Covid-19, Allen has proposed a flat budget for 2021 and feels there could be further cuts. Allen asked the Board for permission to submit the proposed budget allowing for changes to insurance numbers once he receives the 2020 premiums for worker's comp, liability and property insurance. Karen motioned to submit the proposed budget subject to insurance changes, seconded by Esther and unanimously approved.
- Tecumseh Trails Graphics Proposal: Allen hopes to move forward with a proposal from Travis Nuest for a conceptual drawing to revitalize Tecumseh Trails Park in the hopes of making the park more inviting to families. The park has recently seen an increase in visitors from Veteran's Home employees and local families. The drawings will showcase the Department's vision for the future and highlight how the park will play an important role in WREC's long range plans for the North River Road Scenic Byway and improving the river corridor. Park upgrades could include reconfiguring the shelter house, eliminating driveways, an overlook, and incorporating trails from the Amphitheater. Travis will attend the next Board meeting and provide more information.
- Foundation Appointment: The Park Board has a current opening due to the passing of Bryan Metzger. This appointment ends in December, 2021. John Gambs motioned for the position to be filled by Allen Nail. Scott Rumble, seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously approved.
- Superintendent's Report:
 - Next Level Trails – the grant has been temporarily suspended. It is not clear if or when the State will move forward. If the grant is re-instated at a later date, Allen will follow up on the grant if the Board wishes him to do so.
 - Allen was contacted by Gus Nyberg with Niches Land Trust in regard to land on CR 400 W, near Kingswood subdivision. The land owner would like the land to be preserved for public benefit; Niches would like to pursue a partnership with the Department in order to provide a benefit for the community. Mary Cutler, Tom, Randy and Jed will visit the property and report back to the Board in August.
 - The Department has a security agreement with Bonnie King to open and close the Fairfield Lakes gates 7 days a week. Bonnie recently approached Allen regarding an

increase in the monthly fee as the contract was last negotiated in July 2012. Allen is recommending an increase to \$150/month given the increased cost of insurance that Bonnie must maintain as a contractor, an increase in park visitors and an uptick in conflicts when closing the park. Mike made a motion to increase the fee for security at Fairfield Lakes to \$150 per month. Opal seconded, motion carried unanimously.

- Allen thanked the staff for their effort during March and April as the Department was considered an essential service. Allen recognized Randy, Jed, Adam and Tom for their daily efforts maintaining the parks so that the community could benefit from sunshine and fresh air during the stay-at-home order.
- John Gambs introduced the newest part-time staff member, Teddy Balser. Allen appreciates Teddy's strong work ethic and noted that he is a great addition to the team.
- Brian Cook proposed the August Board Meeting be held in the Dining Hall at Ross Camp in order to social distance and to highlight improvements to the property.
- Miscellaneous:
 - Allen encouraged the Board to begin discussions regarding the selection of the new Superintendent. Allen will do whatever is necessary for a seamless transition and continue to volunteer with grant writing and the Foundation if needed.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:28 PM.

Minutes compiled by Mary Barrett.