

Steve McDaniel – Director

- ◆ I met with the Park Foundation Sub-committee early this month. Most of the discussion was centered around the Franke Park Renaissance Project and where we are in the design. Later in February, I attended the bi-monthly meeting of the Foundation's Board. Franke along with several other projects and programs were discussed.
- ◆ Proposals were received for the Foster Park Golf Course Master Plan project. Eight firms submitted proposals. They were evaluated and scored by our Park's team. The firms from the top three proposals were then interviewed. The team has made a recommendation to accept the proposal from Hills-Forrest-Smith Golf Course Architects out of Toledo, Ohio.
- ◆ We have created a transition team of staff members for Headwaters Park. Staff is evaluating and making recommendations for how we will operate and run Headwaters Park starting next year. Several items need to be more defined over the next several months. We will be determining dollar amounts as we start the process of adding this to our budget for 2023.
- ◆ Lynda Heavrin was my guest for this month's podcast talking about the Lawton Park Greenhouse, all of the wonderful plants they grow, and volunteer opportunities. On a separate but related note, Lynda received a call after a couple heard the podcast to inquire about how to start volunteering at the Greenhouse.
- ◆ Tim and I had a good talk with a potential promoter for the Theatre. This promoter has done something in the past with us but currently does not have anything planned for this season. I believe it was a good conversation. Tim and I are very hopeful that this potentially gains an additional booking this season but more than likely glow for future seasons.
- ◆ I participated in the NRPA's monthly meeting of the Urban Leaders. This is only offered to the top 100 parks and recreation departments across the country. This month's topics were golf courses, homelessness, and conceal carry.
- ◆ Sandra and I met with the City's computer consultant Resultant to discuss issues we are having with hardware and software throughout the department. We still have several computers running older versions of software. As those get upgraded, the hardware also needs to be refreshed. They are working on a schedule for us so we will know when that transition will occur. We also talked about connectivity with several of our outlying facilities. They are working on a bandwidth study to determine our current loads and solutions to make them faster.
- ◆ The Mayor touched on several items in his annual State of the City Address that pertained to Parks and Recreation. We value his support and look forward to continuing to provide for our community.
- ◆ I was part of the presentation when the City was awarded the plaque for Runner Friendly Community. This honor was given to us by the Road Runners Club of America.

- ◆ Tim is working through multiple items at the theater this winter. He has several shows finalizing offers, a couple still pending, and is continuing to look for additional shows. He is also working with a couple of promoters. Tim was dealing with an issue with Ticketmaster’s newest software update not being compatible with many internet browsers. We received an update and believe that has solved the issues.

Chuck Reddinger – Deputy Director, Salomon Farm Park, Community Centers (Youth/Downtown/McMillen Park), Riverfront, Athletics, Aquatics, Golf, Outdoor Recreation, Special Events, Headwaters Park, and Travel Service

◆ **Community Youth Centers**

- Chantell Davis and Joel Bowerman met with Fort Wayne Community School Nutrition Dept to discuss the summer feeding program. FWCS will be adding more schools for their summer recovery program, which could cause an issue with the FWCS nutrition area having staff to serve for us.
- Dmitri Gholston has made many contacts this month with new outreach programs trying to secure a partnership for our summer and/or fall programming. He is in connection with Antoinette Francher-Donald, the Children’s Health Collaborative Director at the Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne. She has invited him to participate on the board so he can bring the needs of CYC to the table in hopes the collaborative group can help. Dmitri was also asked to be a part of the Fort Wayne United Front Mentor Program titled “Tie Day”. This program will take place on five Fridays between March and May 2022 from 9:00 am to 2:15 pm.
- Joel Bowerman started his cooking/nutrition class at the centers this month. The youth are enjoying being able to be “kitchen helpers and cooks”. February was the month of sweets, so they enjoyed fresh baked cookies.
- February is Black History Month, both centers did CORE programming around this topic.
- Science Central came out to learn about several elements (air, solid, and helium). The instructor showed the youth different examples of how air is used differently. She used a golf ball with a leaf blower to show how a ball can float in midair. The children were very curious and asked her to do it again!

◆ **McMillen Park Community Center**

- Flag football had 74 participants. Students will eat dinner with the program at 4:30 pm then meet in the green room to be broken up into teams and will play a game of flag football.
- Youth basketball has been going well. Every Monday, youth basketball development is taught from ages 4-10. Children are learning the basic skill of basketball and what it means to work hard and be a good team. For February 110 children attended.
- Cardio Fit is now back, and the instructor Dorothy is doing a great job. For February 42 ladies participated.

◆ **Community Center**

- Community Center is getting all volunteers registered for getting Connect. This is Volunteer Center’s program for reporting hours. We have access to all the reports including Hour export, agency data, etc.

- Staff attended the WMEE Baby Fair and Family Expo at Memorial Coliseum. There were about 1,400 in attendance. We handed out several hundred flyers (Fun Times, Day camp, PODS, and misc. flyers).
- The full-Time Program Facility Coordinator position has been offered to Caleb Schanep. His start date will be March 14.

◆ **Outdoor Recreation**

- Salomon Farm Park - Farmin' Fun Day Camp Supervisor Vickie Marquart and Assistant Supervisor Bailey Dzierla returns for their 10th and 7th year working camp at Salomon Farm Park. Counselor's positions have been posted for the upcoming 2022 summer season.
- Lindenwood Nature Preserve - In partnership with Science Central staff, we've added four Night Stargazing hikes. Two in January and two in February. Three of the four hikes registration was full at 20 people per hike.
- Franke Park Day Camp - Chris Freehill will be returning as the Camp Supervisor of Franke Park Day Camp. Alexis Madden will fill the spot of Assistant Supervisor for the upcoming camp season. Alexis was a counselor and this will be her first year as an Assistant Supervisor.

◆ **Golf**

- Steve McDaniel, Mike Gore, Dave Weadock, Bryan Keister, and Jason Smith reviewed and scored the eight (8) Request For Proposals (RFP) that were submitted for the Foster Park Golf Course. After much discussion the top three (3) were identified. After much discussion, it was decided that the group needed to conduct an additional interview with the final three (3) to get further clarification on qualifications. All three (3) were sent a set of questions ahead of the interview.
- Dave Weadock notified Bryan Keister and Jason Smith that the chemical storage building project at McMillen Park Golf Course was a go and that everything in the existing building needs to be removed by March 31, 2022. This is three months ahead of the proposed date.
- Golf staff numbers to date appear to be at levels that they have been in the past years. Staffing will be tight until the operations start getting returners from winter and students in Mid-May.

◆ **Aquatics**

- Daryn Schwartz and Jenny Barney have been working on getting information out to pool staff from 2021 to see how many intend to come back for the 2022 season.

- Pool applications have been posted and are starting to trickle in. The pool operations should start to have a better understanding of staffing levels around the second week of April after Spring Break.

◆ **Riverfront**

- Yoga on the Riverfront was held on Sunday the 13th from 10:30 a.m.- 11:30 a.m. This was another successful yoga event that continued to see more participants from recent exposure on WPTA and the Journal Gazette. After Yoga on the Riverfront, the Sunday Heritage Concert Series kicked off at 2:00 p.m. with the American Legion Band featuring Dottie Mack. Dottie kicked off Valentine’s day for attendees with gifts and a great show!
- On February 16th the YLNI NextGen Leadership for Professional Development held an annual meeting from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. The renters utilized the pavilion all day for specific leadership training and professional development for this year’s 20 participants.
- On Sunday, February 27th was the second Sunday Heritage Concert Series of the month with Heartland Sings presenting a Piano Bar. The show included a Dueling Piano featuring singers Lisa Greenhorn and David Bobay accompanied by pianist Maestro Robert Nance, this program features a variety of songs in piano-bar style. The audience will be treated to excellent renditions of favorite songs from the American cultural scene, imbibe on their favorite coffee from the onsite coffee bar, and just might be inspired to sing along. Along with the concert, Riverfront Fort Wayne provided a coffee bar for attendees.

Sandra Odisho, CPA – Manager, Finance

- ◆ The Parks and Recreation Department paid 169 employees (128 full-time, 36 regular part-time, and seasonal for the payroll ending February 12, 2022, and paid on January 18, 2022.
- ◆ We currently have the following permanent positions open, posted, or in the process of being filled:
 - Full-time position, High Range Operator (Fund 121) - Five positions - Posted
 - Program Coordinator Facility-Preschool Youth-Athletics and Special Events for the Downtown Community Center (Fund 121) – Process of being filled
 - Part-time position, Recreation Specialist – Preschool Youth and Special Events – Community Center (Fund 121) –
Posted
- ◆ By the time of the meeting, we will have begun using our new credit card processor, PayTrac. This system will make for a more seamless transaction for our internet customers as they will not be transported from our website to another to make their payment. The entire transaction will happen on our website.

- ◆ We have begun entering all of the summer days camps into the registration system. Registration for all our summer camps begins March 21st.
- ◆ Our IT Department developed a digital form for customers that are wanting to purchase Dog Park Memberships. The customers can now fill out all the paperwork, attach the vet records and submit these electronically. We then review the records, contact the customer for payment and the customer stops by to quickly pick up their gate key. Customers have been very happy to have this option.
- ◆ Meeting weekly with IT to develop a new system to track our trust and non-reversing funds that are currently being tracked in Access.

Steve Schuhmacher – Deputy Director, Facilities, Grounds, Projects Administration, Safety Compliance, Storeroom, Fleet & Mechanical Operations

◆ Facilities/Grounds Maintenance

- Pavilion rentals totaled: **107** for February. This is down **125** in January.
- The annual cleans at all of the youth centers were completed for the 2022 season. The Franke Park Day camp's annual clean will be wrapped up on the first of March.
- Promenade Park was flooded after the snowmelt which resulted in several days of clean-up.
- Hamilton Park playground and underneath the Promenade Park restroom building had graffiti removed.
- Construction began on a new display planter box for the upcoming butterfly showcase at the Botanical Conservatory. This piece will become part of the annual show and is designed to be reconfigured for use in other showcases as well.
- Work continues to repair/upgrade the ventilation fans for the East range greenhouse at Lawton Park.
- LED light upgrades were completed at the following locations: Franke Park Longhouse, Downtown Community Center, Northside Park main office, and Lawton Park carpenter shop.
- The Nice Rink at Lakeside Park is still set up and there were 19 days of skating in February.
- Sidewalk crews cleared heavy snow from sidewalks and walking paths.
- Snow crews came in early on Feb. 2nd to do snow removal.
- Crews worked both the 2nd and 3rd even though all city facilities were closed.
- Snow on the evening of the 17th required crews to come in early on the 18th.
- Sidewalk crews have had to continuously salt slippery walks and paths.
- The trash truck is running 1 day a week on Sunday in the parks.
- Crews are operating the trash trucks on the city streets 6 days a week and evenings.
- Trash routes have logged over 1000 hours of regular time and 600 hours of overtime.
- All costs associated with the city garbage route are being tracked through our software.
- Snow removal on the greenway took several days to clean up completely.
- Major flooding on the river greenway has required all of the underpasses to be closed.
- Crews removed fallen limbs and debris from various parks.

◆ Project Administration

- Buckner Park LWCF Grant Project – Waiting on local permit applications approvals. Bidding is planned for late winter or early spring.
- Downtown Community Center Roof Project Phase 2 – Bids received, awaiting approvals.
- Foster Park Pavilion #3 Construction – Electrical service installation is in progress. Pavilion materials begin arriving in late February.
- Foster Park Pavilion #3 I&M Electrical Service – Scheduling work with I&M
- Foster Park Golf Course – Design RFPs received, and interviews completed.
- Foster Park 2-5-Year-Old Playground Equipment Replacement – Installation planned for early May.
- Franke Park Playground 5-12-Year-Old Equipment – Purchase order issued. Installation is scheduled for completion by May 1.
- Hamilton Park Tennis Courts Fencing – Purchase order issued, awaiting contractor start in early spring.
- Headwaters Park Fountain – Project planning in progress.
- Jennings Center Parking Lot Lighting – Project completed.
- Jennings Center Playground Equipment Replacement – Installation planned for mid-May.
- Kreager Park Taylor’s Dream Playground Surface – Vendor under contract. Project installation planned for March-April 2022.
- Mechanic St. Bridge Engineering – Preliminary drawing submitted along with updated cost estimate.
- Northside Park 2-5-Year-Old Play Equipment Replacement: Installation planned for early May.
- Salomon Farm Rental Barn – Project is out to bid. Construction planned for July-August.
- Swinney Park Homestead Log House Roof Replacement – Awaiting purchase order. Work planned for spring.
- Various Parks 2022 Paving Projects – Awaiting City Council approval.
- Various Parks Pickleball Conversion – Awaiting City Council approval.

◆ The Safety Committee: Met on February 22nd, with five members and three guests in attendance.

- There was one treatable personal injury this period, for a total of 3 for the year. OSHA recordable incidents total 3 for the year. 48 restricted days for two injuries this period, and the annual total stands at 53 for two incidents. 41 lost days to date for one broken leg incident. Recorded worker compensation costs to date are \$0.
- There was one property damage incident this period, the yearly total is one. Total damages for the year are \$426.
- There were three CPR/First Aid classes training 21 employees.
- A class on detailed operation and maintenance of chainsaws is planned in March for storm response volunteers.
- Worker Protection Standard class required annually for landscape and maintenance will be completed in March.

Alec Johnson – Deputy Director,  **BOTANICAL**
CONSERVATORY Planning & Development,
Forestry, Landscape, & Riparian

◆ Botanical Conservatory Report

- Under the Big Top at the Botanical Conservatory continued to delight visitors in February. In addition to Under the Big Top is the Sweetheart Orchid Display (Feb 8 – Mar 13), which offered a colorful array of orchids in the Tropical Garden. Conservatory staff prepared for the Home &

Garden Show (Mar 3 – 6), Great Train Connection (Mar 11 – 13), and Bunny Tales in the Garden (April 15 – 16).

- With the promotion of Nate Cardelli to Conservatory Manager, a job opening is being posted for a new part-time sales position to assist with special event rental, membership, and other administrative responsibilities. Additional open positions at the Conservatory include Camp ACTIVenture Counselors (3) and Assistant Camp Supervisor (1), Seasonal Maintenance (2), and Seasonal Gardener (1).
- Conservatory KPIs - In February the Botanical Conservatory experienced an increase in attendance to last year. With the removal of the mask mandate in City-owned buildings, staff anticipates higher levels of attendance in March. Conservatory Membership revenue decreased in February due to the timing of receivables from the MAP partner institutions, membership is even on the year with a planned renewal appeal going out in March. Conservatory Shop revenue showed a nominal increase to last February, the shop is up 11.45% to last year. Staff prepared for the Home & Garden Show in February, which should offer increased revenue in March. Rental & Catering revenue continues to increase as the special event industry rebounds from the impacts of COVID-19.

Attendance February 2021: 3,934 visitors
 February 2022: 4,048 visitors An increase of 114 or +2.90% to 2021

YTD Comparisons 2021 Attendance: 7,564 visitors
 2022 Attendance: 8,012 visitors An increase of 448 or +5.92% to 2021

Admissions Revenue February Admissions 2021: \$12,524.00
 February Admissions 2022: \$19,723.00
 An increase of \$7,199.00 or +57.48% to 2021

YTD Comparisons 2021 Admissions Revenue: \$23,377.00
 2022 Admissions Revenue: \$36,836.00
 An increase of \$13,459.00 or +57.57% to 2021

Membership Revenue February 2021: \$7,479.00
 February 2022: \$5,207.00
 A decrease of \$2,272.00 or -30.38% to 2021

YTD Comparisons 2021 Membership Revenue: \$10,798.00
 2022 Membership Revenue: \$11,184.00
 An increase of \$386.00 or +3.57% to 2021

Conservatory Shop Revenue February 2021: \$9,829.45
 February 2022: \$9,876.65
 An increase of \$47.20 or +0.48% to 2021

YTD Comparisons 2021 Gift Shop Revenue: \$18,512.68
 2022 Gift Shop Revenue: \$20,631.94
 An increase of \$2,119.26 or +11.45% to 2021

Rental & Catering Fee Revenue February 2021: \$1,945.00
February 2022: \$4,223.88
An increase of \$2,278.88 or +117.17% to 2021

YTD Comparisons 2021 Rental Revenue: \$4,090.00
2022 Rental Revenue: \$9,791.38
An increase of \$5,701.38 or +139.40% to 2021

Other Revenue (includes Activity Enrollments, Donations, etc.)
February 2021: \$4,575.00 February 2022: \$1,463.00

YTD Comparisons 2021 Other Revenue: \$10,248.28
2022 Other Revenue: \$14,612.70

Conservatory Total Revenue February 2021: \$36,352.45
February 2022: \$40,493.53
An increase of \$4,141.08 or +11.39% to 2021

YTD Comparisons 2021 Total Revenue: \$67,025.97
2022 Total Revenue: \$93,056.02
An increase of \$26,030.05 or +38.84% to 2021

- Conservatory Business Development

- The Conservatory submitted a grant application to the Journal Gazette Foundation for \$5,000 support of the 2022 Paris: City of Light & Love exhibit. The grant application was completed to the Wilson Foundation for \$4,500 funding of the 2022 Paris: City of Light & Love exhibit; however, we will submit it in the next cycle pending completion of the required Park Department cash flow budget. Sandra is completing the budget, a new requirement from the Wilson Foundation.
- Media sponsorship for the Mother's Day in the Garden event was secured from ABC21; the station declined to sponsor the Mother's Day Plant Sale. Media sponsorships for Bunny Tales in the Garden, Garden Trick-or-Treat, and the Mother's Day Plant Sale have been submitted to Fox 55, Fort Wayne.
- Staff is working on the details and research/comparisons to other venues for the creation of a web page for higher-level gifts (estate, IRA, donor-advised funds) to the Conservatory. Staff is also working on the creation of 2023 corporate sponsorship proposals for Showcase Garden exhibits and special events.
- Conservatory donations in February 2022 totaled \$25.00. Work also continues on the creation of the Spring 2022 donation pitch to our members and volunteers.

- Conservatory Public Programs

- **Education** - \$1Night Insight- Circus Animals (Feb 3):
This drop-in program was canceled due to inclement weather and the closure of City of Fort Wayne offices and buildings.

- ✓ Garden Railroading (Feb 19): This pre-registered program was canceled having not met the minimum requirement for registration.
- ✓ Youth Field Trips: There were no field trips in February 2022 due to school closures and cancelations. All scheduled groups have been rescheduled for a later date. In total, there were 0 students from 0 groups in February 2022, 0 students from 0 groups in February 2021, 102 students from 1 group in February 2020, and 83 students from 6 groups in February 2019.
- **Exhibits & Displays** - Sweetheart Orchid Display (Feb 8-Mar 13):



Guests to the Botanical Conservatory are enjoying a complementary backdrop and stunning array of Orchid flowers in the Tropical House. Not only are guests inspired by the beautiful blooms, but they are also invited to make a memory by snapping a photo or purchasing Orchids in the Conservatory Shop.

- ✓ Under the Big Top (Jan 8-Apr 17) The latest Showcase Exhibit offers playful fun and colorful warmth this winter. It consists of circus-themed elements including a balloon garden, topiary animals, and clown car to name a few. There are also prompts to step right up and use your imagination!



- **Volunteers/Staff** - Volunteer opportunities have been picking up with seasonal programs and events! Program staff is heavily recruiting butterfly attendants for the “Emergence” live butterfly exhibit in addition to volunteers for the Mother’s Day Plant Sale at McMillen Community Center. Staff is also preparing to celebrate active volunteer service by hosting a Volunteer Appreciation Dinner as an off-site, special occasion at Promenade Park.
 - **Upcoming**
 - ✓ Mar 3: Bee the Change drop-in program
 - ✓ Mar 11-13: The Great Train Connection event
 - ✓ Mar 17: In-person Butterfly Attendant training
 - ✓ Mar 19: In-person Butterfly Attendant training
 - ✓ Mar 21: Volunteer Appreciation Dinner 2022
 - ✓ Mar 26: Pollinators & Plants pre-registered program
- Conservatory Landscape and Horticulture
 - Work continues in cleaning the Desert House with additional pruning underway. Staff is currently pruning the puffball tree, removing debris and leaves from the beds, and adding Turface MVP material to the beds where needed.

- Nearly all of the new tools have arrived and have been marked and labeled for the Conservatory. These new tools will enable us to install shows and maintain the Conservatory grounds and collection more safely and efficiently.
- A contractor has been selected to perform landscape maintenance activities for the Conservatory grounds. This is part of a larger contract to maintain certain park spaces throughout the City and will enable us to focus our attention on the plant collection inside the Conservatory.
- The staff has been working to prioritize and cost out tree work within the Conservatory houses and adjacent gardens. Staff will be conducting walk-throughs with contractors on March 2nd and should have estimates shortly following the walk-through.
- The staff has begun ordering and releasing beneficial insects to combat insect pests within the indoor gardens. This is a key aspect of the Conservatory Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program.
- Work continues with the Lawton Garage on maintenance for Conservatory equipment to have it ready for spring.

◆ **Planning Report**

- Design work continues for Phase I of the Franke Park Renaissance. One proposal for CMC (Construction Manager + Constructor) was received for this project; board and council approvals will follow in March. The design team continues to refine the pavilion layout and details. In addition, the team moves closer towards releasing a set of permit drawings.
- Final cost proposals were reviewed by two teams for the River Activation Master Plan. The successful team will be announced in March, with the process set to begin following necessary approvals.
- An RFP for CMC was released for Riverfront Development Phase IIB. Proposal review and interviews are scheduled with the two submitting teams for early March.
- Riverfront Development Phase IIA design documents were released for bidding following final drawing reviews. A pre-bid meeting is scheduled for early March; it is anticipated that construction will begin in late spring.
- An RFQ was released for public bid for the St. Marys River Streambank Restoration Project: Phase II. This project will restore the streambank adjacent to the Old Fort, continuing a project that was completed in 2018.
- Following recent discussions with local enthusiasts, staff has begun exploring the potential for the inclusion of permanent chess tables within one or more of our parks.
- Planning continues at the Conservatory about capital improvements, staffing, horticulture, and programming. We are working closely with Nate Cardelli, the recently named Conservatory Manager, in successfully moving the facility forward.
- Staff continues to work with the Conservatory showcase design team; a new planter was designed in-house and constructed by Parks MTs. This will be reused annually inside the butterfly exhibit tent.

- Bids were received for much-needed HVAC system repairs at the Conservatory. Work is scheduled to begin on these repairs in March.

◆ **Horticulture and Landscape Report- February 2022**

- Landscape staff continued pruning trees in Lakeside, Foster, Memorial, Northside, and Tillman Parks, as well as the Rea Building.
- Lakeside staff continued clearing honeysuckle and other invasive shrubs and trees from around the southern Delta pond in Lakeside Park.
- With snow events in February, Landscape staff spent time clearing and salting Lawton, Lakeside, Promenade, and Foster Parks. Limited space at Lawton lead to trucking multiple loads of snow to a parking lot in Franke Park. Staff also assisted the heavy equipment division by hauling away snow from the Downtown Community Center parking lot. The Staff came in and worked snow removal at Lawton Park on the two days the parks department was closed.
- Some poor weather has resulted in greenhouse work (transplanting, seeding, etc.) being completed by landscape staff.
- Staff spent time maintaining equipment and did truck and tool organization in preparation for the upcoming spring.
- A Purchase Order was received to retain Lawnscape for the 2022 Landscape Maintenance in Promenade Park. Work is to begin April 1st unless favorable weather provides them earlier opportunities.
- The 2022 Landscape Maintenance for various parks RFQ was posted in February. This includes mulching, mowing, and leaf cleanups at Kreager boundless playground, Courthouse Green, Freimann Square, Nuckols Park, Franklin Park, Community Center, Foellinger Theatre, Main Street Medians, McMillen Pool, Meyers Park, Northside Park, Memorial Pool, and the Botanical Conservatory. This project will be awarded in March.
- An RFQ for turf fertilization and weed control was sent out in February for the Courthouse Green, Freimann Square, Nuckols Park, Franklin Park, Community Center, Foellinger Theatre, Lakeside Rose Gardens, Foster Gardens, Main Street Medians, McMillen Pool, Meyers Park, Northside Pool, Memorial Pool, and the Botanical Conservatory. Traditionally this had been included in the Landscape Maintenance RFQ but was taken out this year to offer to companies that provide organic-based fertilizer lawn care solutions. This will be awarded in March.
- Two landscape staff passed exams to obtain necessary pesticide licenses this month. Austin Barton took and passed his Ornamental Pest exam and will now be awarded his 3A license from the Indiana State Chemist office. Jacquie Carroll took and passed her Core exam and now will be awarded a Registered Technician license from the Indiana State Chemist office.
- CPR training was attended for staff as needed.
- Landscape staff spent 6 hours volunteering at the Community Harvest Food Bank on February 28. Staff sorted, organized, and restocked food to the shelves in both the warehouse and pantry.

- Greenhouse and Landscape staff set up a plant display on the stage for the Mayor’s State of the City address at the Grand Wayne Center.
- 27,300 seeds were sown for park plants, the Mother’s Day Plant Sale, and Conservatory Showcase displays.

◆ **Riparian Management Report**

- Volunteer planning is in full swing for the coming year. Currently working with Boys & Girls Club to formulate a robust summer volunteer schedule for their ambassador program. Potential separate schedule with G2 Rowing students forthcoming. Networking with local organizations for more volunteer riparian clean-ups continues.
- Plans for an April Job Fair are underway. The Riparian supervisor will be in attendance for the fair to answer questions and recruit seasonal crew members.
- The Parks Ecology Maintenance Contract is open for bids on Quest for Bloomingdale, Franke, Old Fort/Headwaters East, and Promenade parks. The bids are due on March 25th. Two contractors have already expressed interest.
- Geese nest scouting for future egg addling was successful until the rivers flooded. Any nests and/or eggs will have washed away which will prompt the geese to lay replacement eggs. Scouting and addling will continue.
- Plans for replacing the hardware cloth for sand paint at Promenade are underway to both protect the trees from beavers and improve the aesthetics of the park. A professional, DNR-regulated trapper was successful in respectfully reducing the beaver population within the downtown area.
- The first maintenance meeting for Sweet Breeze was successful. Plans for any maintenance or repairs are being compiled and prioritized for the coming season. Sweet Breeze is still being stored at REA property with no problems of any kind.
- Garage mechanics are finishing seasonal maintenance on the work barge. Storage of work barge at Lawton through the winter did not present any problems.
- Maintenance on city docks for the upcoming season is proceeding. Currently improving the general system of the piano hinges for easier installation and removal, and finalizing the strong-arm system for Headwaters dock.

◆ **Forestry Report**

- The forestry division continues seeking applicants for their five vacant High-Ranger Operator positions. We feel confident that the necessary changes intended to make these positions more attractive are within reach.
- Collaboration continues with Southwest Area Partnership representatives to identify priority tree planting sites for the 2022 fall tree planting. We expect this partnership to result in over 200 additional trees planted within our community.
- Work has begun on the recently approved contract to remove 197 street trees. We expect this contract to be completed within 180 days.

- Our partnership with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources and the School Children Flower and Vegetable Association to distribute seedling trees to area 3rd graders have been reestablished following a 2-year break for COVID-19. This year, we anticipate delivering nearly 2,700 trees.
- In-house forestry crew efforts continue to focus on tree removals and mitigating significant immediate risk until staffing levels allow for the reimplementation of routine maintenance and other tasks. Currently, crews have 20 outstanding trees scheduled for removal
- Forestry Staff completed 9 tree-related property damage appraisals totaling \$3,995.00 in damages. The vast majority of these are the result of vehicles losing control and striking City-owned trees.
- Crews pruned 0 street trees this month, bringing our total to 0 for the year. Our goal is to re-establish a 7-year pruning cycle.
- 128 total trees were removed this month. (114 street tree removals, 6 park tree removals, 2 removals resulting from damage caused by storms, 6 vehicles damaged tree removals, and 6 were private trees that had fallen into the street).
- Forestry crews responded to 3 storm-related fallen/hanging limbs.
- Forestry staff responded to 0 after-hours calls concerning tree failures that resulted in blocked roadways.
- Forestry staff responded to and resolved (8) 311 call center tickets this month.

Kathryn Pargmann – Manager Lead of Marketing

- ◆ The Marketing Team is continuing to work on various Riverfront Marketing tasks with a special focus this month on promoting winter special events.
- ◆ The Parks Promenade link has received over 1,670 hits and www.RiverfrontFW.org has 2,255 hits to the site this month. The Rental link continues to be a popular source of information and has received over 992 hits in February.
- ◆ Completed evaluation reports for:
 - Evergreen Centerpiece Workshop
 - Pumpkin Macramé
 - Plant Swap
 - Succulent Pumpkins
 - Tai Chi
 - Succulent Christmas Tree
 - Santa's Breakfast
 - Salomon Classes (2021).
- ◆ Completed Complaint Reports for - October-December 2021 and January 2022.
- ◆ The Marketing Team worked on producing and distributing Camp Brochure and PODS information.

- ◆ 34 Design projects completed.
- ◆ Seasonal job promotion with signage, flyers, social posts.
- ◆ Prepared golf courses for opening with signage and discount cards.
- ◆ Area foundations were contacted and meetings have been scheduled for this spring.
- ◆ Worked with the Director to determine top fundraising priorities for 2022.
- ◆ Finalizing sponsorships for Salomon and River, Set Go! with WPTA/NBC.
- ◆ Produced the “What’s Blooming” podcast with guest Lynda Heavrin.
- ◆ **December** Media Mentions: 34 **January** Media Mentions: 36 **February** Media Mentions 49

◆ **Web Statistics:**

<u>Users:</u>	<u>Hits:</u>	<u>Month:</u>
28,101	70,194	December
29,280	79,586	January
26,422	75,120	February

Note: Total web hits for 2021: 1,259,208. This is the second-highest amount of yearly hits in the past 11 years.

◆ Social Media Totals for the months of:

	<u>December</u>	<u>January</u>	<u>February</u>
FB Followers	68,864	69,180	69,721
FB Reach	97,733	141,330	137,645
 Twitter Followers	13,042	13,097	13,645
 Instagram Follower	19,851	19,961	20,069

Gary Whitacre – Manager, Golf Operations

- ◆ The projected opening of the golf courses is March 14/15/16, with one course each day. Course order will be determined by the Golf Course Superintendent. Depending on the weather, there should be no issues with the opening.
- ◆ Staffing appears to be adequate, with the vast majority of last year’s staff returning, as well as several new staff recruited with the help of the Marketing Department. The initial paperwork/drug testing day was March 2nd and was well attended. Staff training is scheduled for March 8.

- ◆ Secondary interviews with the top 3 rated architects for the Foster Park master plan RFP occurred on February 23 and 24. Each of the three was asked the same questions in a Zoom interview. A recap of the notes of the interviews, as well as the rankings, are attached. After the three interviews, the committee recommendation is **Hills Forrest Smith** from Toledo, OH.
- ◆ Golf course merchandise is scheduled to begin arriving on March 15. Once again, this year, the merchandise stocked in the shops will be essentials (balls/gloves/tees). There will be limited expansion, but not a lot of inventory will be carried.
- ◆ High School boys golf and middle school golf will start as soon as the courses open. A total of seven schools will utilize our facilities.
- ◆ Leagues are being contacted for the start of their seasons (usually mid-late April). All are being informed about the new availability of alcohol at the courses. Things are shaping up well for the '22 season!



FW PUBLIC WORKS
**Greenways
& Trails**
In Your Neighborhood

Dawn Ritchie – Greenway & Trails Manager

- ◆ API Construction will begin right of way clearing and retaining wall construction for the Fishing Line Trail between Ludwig and Cook in early March. We will also have a cleanup with volunteers on March 26th to rid the former railroad corridor of illegally dumped tires, construction debris, and other junk/trash.
- ◆ Parks, Public Works, Animal Care, and Control, Fort Wayne Trails, Inc, and Humane Fort Wayne met to discuss a new program called “Tails on Trails.” This program will encourage trail users to stop by Humane Fort Wayne on Hanna Street and take a dog on a walk-in Tillman Park or Foster Park. We eventually hope to include Animal Care & Control, as well. We plan to have the kick-off event in Foster Park on 4/30 at 1 p.m. (still tentative).
- ◆ We are meeting with the Fort Wayne Running Club on March 9th to discuss a program similar to *Trek the Trails* for runners. We plan to start the new program in June.

- ◆ Neil and I recently met with the Volunteer Center. We have signed up to become a partner organization and will utilize their volunteer program to help staff our events and our volunteer programs like the Greenway Rangers.
- ◆ Public Works, Parks, and City Utilities will be meeting on March 9th to discuss resurfacing the Rivergreenway from Airport Expressway in Foster Park to the intersection of Calhoun/Tillman in Tillman Park.
- ◆ We are meeting with our volunteer Greenway Rangers in March to re-connect since we have not met for two years due to COVID. We are making some minor improvements to the program. We also hope to find out which of our 90+ Rangers are still active. We have not heard from some of them in a long time, so we need to see if they still want to be involved. If they don't, then we'll find new Rangers through the Volunteer Center.



Division News and Media Coverage:
COVID Safety

Mayor's Office Communication **Sent:** Monday, February 21, 2022, 1:57 PM

Subject: City Mask Restrictions ease on March 1

Mayor Tom Henry today announced that masks will no longer be required at City of Fort Wayne-owned facilities effective March 1. Masks will continue to be recommended.

City-owned locations include Citizens Square, the Fort Wayne Metropolitan Human Relations Commission office, Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Department office, Parks and Recreation pavilions, community centers, youth centers, the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, and Fort Wayne Animal Care and Control's facility.

Additionally, the Indiana State Department of Health has rescinded much of the contact tracing and quarantine requirements. If employees test positive for COVID-19, they are still to notify their supervisor, stay home 5 days and follow the latest isolation guidelines. Risk Management no longer needs to be notified, as the City will cease contact tracing immediately. This is moving toward a more traditional model of how the flu and other diseases are handled.

Mayor Henry cited a reduction in local COVID-19 cases and fewer hospitalizations than in

previous weeks and months. However, Mayor Henry continues to stress caution and vigilance and encourages residents to get vaccinated and use good judgment in public settings.

Sweetheart Orchid Display

February 8 to March 13, Public hours

A tasteful display of orchids in bloom creates a delightfully intimate space in the Botanical Conservatory's Tropical Garden. Find yourself in a fanciful backdrop of Cattleyas, fragrant Dendrobiums, dainty Oncidiums, and moth-like Phalaenopsis. It's just the place for a date and an ideal photo opportunity with your sweetheart! Orchids and other memorable plants will be available for purchase in the Conservatory Shop. This display is included with regular Conservatory admission.

Bee the Change

Thursday, March 3, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Visit the Conservatory on the first Thursday of each month for a specially-crafted activity to “be the change” you wish to see in the world. Each monthly theme offers a positive reminder of self-worth and the potential of each person to impact the community – including plants and animals. The theme on March 3 is *Circus Skills*. No registration is required. New in 2022, Conservatory admission is just \$1 from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. every Thursday. Plus, Civic Center Garage parking is validated for free.

The Great Train Connection

Friday-Sunday, March 11-13, Public hours

Connect with Fort Wayne's rich railroad history at the Botanical Conservatory as local railroad clubs present all types of interactive activities and displays ranging from G scale to HO to tiny N scale model trains and more! It's a “freight” time for the whole family, especially the littlest engines. General admission fees apply.

Slightly Used Bulb Sale

March 26-April 24, Public hours

This annual sale features slightly used tulips, daffodils, and hyacinths from the Botanical Conservatory's spring exhibit. Located in the Sales Garden, bulbs are priced to sell for \$1.95/pot and ready to plant in preparation for next year's blooms! Purchases can be made through the Conservatory Shop while supplies last. Admission is not required to shop.

Pollinators & Plants

Saturday, March 26, 10:00 a.m. -11:30 a.m. Session fee: \$12

Dig deeper into the topic of how to become a pollinator companion in your garden! Ask questions and find out all about this hot topic with Master Gardener Glenn Hile who has firsthand knowledge about local pollinators and the plants that attract them. Garden admission is included. This session is for age 12 and above. The deadline to register is March 19.

Art Display, Gregg Coffey: Life in the Brush January-March, Public hours

Art serves many purposes. It can be decorative; calming to those suffering and even bring sensual pleasure through color and form. Art may challenge the status quo, play devil's advocate, and cause someone to think. Some art is so sublime that it incites a sense of wonderment while prompting a mini samadhi or moment of enlightenment. While a student of classical Chinese painting, the rules for Gregg Coffey was simple – "follow rules of the natural world." Explore Coffey's unique calling and contemplate what it communicates. General admission fees apply.

JG, March 4, Public health emergency over – Governor signs bill into law, rescinds earlier declaration
<https://www.journalgazette.net/news/local/20220304/public-health-emergency-over>

WOWO, March 4, Russ Jehl on Fort Wayne's Morning News discussing collective bargaining
<https://www.wowo.com/russ-jehl-comments-on-collective-bargaining/>

WBOI, March 3, LegacyOne moving the corporate office to Southtown Centre
<https://www.wboi.com/news/2022-03-03/legacyone-moving-corporate-office-to-southtown-centre>

WANE, March 3, Real estate company to build headquarters in south Fort Wayne
<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/real-estate-company-to-build-headquarters-in-south-fort-wayne/>

WANE, March 3, Fort Wayne water again scores high at international tasting competition
<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/fort-wayne-water-again-scores-high-at-international-tasting-competition/>

WBOI, March 2, City Council extends public art program
<https://www.wboi.org/news/2022-03-02/fort-wayne-city-council-extends-public-art-program>

“Under the Big Top”

Winter Showcase Exhibit Sunday – Noon – 4:00 pm Closed on Mondays

Adults \$5.00/Children age 3-17 \$3.00 Ages 2 and under **FREE**

Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, 1100 S. Calhoun Street – 260 / 427-6440 Tuesday – Saturday – 10 am – 5 pm – Thursday – 10 am – 8 pm

January 8-April 17, Public hours

Come one, come all to the greatest circus Garden in town! Join the Side Show when posing as a Strong Man or Bearded Lady. Marvel at exotic topiary animals and astonishing plant oddities. This winter, everyone is invited to go to the circus and “clown around” under the Conservatory's Botanical Big Top. The Winter Showcase exhibit is sponsored by The Waterfield Foundation, Howard P. Arnold Foundation, the English Bonter Mitchell Foundation, the Magee-O'Connor Foundation, 103.9 Wayne FM and WANE-15

WFFT, March 2, City's Public Works Division hiring for seasonal positions
https://www.wfft.com/news/local/city-of-fort-wayne-public-works-division-hiring-for-seasonal-positions/article_cfc7d238-9a52-11ec-911d-2b4202d914a0.html

WANE, March 2, Fort Wayne receives three bids for a trash contract
<https://www.wane.com/news/local-news/fort-wayne-receives-3-bids-for-trash-contract/>

Inside Ind Bus, March 2, Fort Wayne lands bids for a new trash collector
<https://www.insideindianabusiness.com/articles/fort-wayne-lands-bids-for-new-trash-collector>

JG, March 2, Starbucks planned for southeast Fort Wayne

The city announced this week that construction will begin later this year on a new Starbucks café. The Starbucks at Southtown Centre will be in a new 2,225-square-foot building, and the café will be its only tenant. The project is in partnership with the city of Fort Wayne's Community Development Division and the Elia Group, a Michigan-based real estate developer. The Elia Group plans to build two commercial buildings on the property located along U.S. 27. The other building will be general use. "As a lover of coffee, I am over-the-moon excited," 6th District Councilwoman Sharon Tucker says in a written statement. "Excited not only for southeast Fort Wayne but also excited for other development that a Starbucks could entice to come to the community. This project speaks to the collaboration and commitment to the southeast for not only myself but the mayor and all of our partners. I can't wait to get my first venti pike."

WELT Radio, Feb. 2022, 'Investing in the City of Fort Wayne' program with John Felts as host and Jessa Campbell from Visit Fort Wayne as guest

https://soundcloud.com/mayorfw/visit-fortwayne?utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing
https://www.wfft.com/news/coronavirus/indoor-mask-mandate-gone-in-allen-county-health-department-hopes-it-lasts/article_77887276-98f9-11ec-943e-d76589d3823d.html

Inside Ind Bus, Feb. 28, Foam supplier expanding to Fort Wayne

<https://www.insideindianabusiness.com/articles/foam-supplier-expanding-to-fort-wayne>

Adams Radio Group, Feb. 25, City grants \$170k for neighborhood improvement projects

<https://1039waynefm.com/city-grants-170000-for-neighborhood-improvement-projects/>

WFFT, Feb. 24, City Utilities works to protect residents from basement sewage backups

https://www.wfft.com/news/top-stories/fort-wayne-city-utilities-works-to-protect-residents-from-basement-sewage-backups/article_342ecff4-95d7-11ec-9af4-8ba7fb2ffb44.html

WBOI, Feb. 23, Fort Wayne again asking for patience over garbage collection as state code change clears next hurdle

<https://www.wboi.org/news/2022-02-23/fort-wayne-again-asking-for-patience-over-garbage-collection-state-code-change-clears-next-hurdle>

WFFT, Feb. 23, Some residents turning to compost

https://www.wfft.com/news/fort-wayne-residents-fed-up-with-trash-pickup-delays-turn-to-composting/article_7a7c6d9c-9521-11ec-a9ad-c33eec6a286a.html

WFFT, Feb. 23, Elected officials react to HB 1286 passing Senate as Fort Wayne trash pickup is behind schedule

https://www.wfft.com/news/local/elected-officials-react-to-house-bill-1286-passing-senate-fort-wayne-trash-pickup-behind-schedule/article_685127f0-9514-11ec-83e6-4bafb57a6dca.html

WPTA, Feb. 23, Possibility of a new jail

<https://www.wpta21.com/2022/02/23/possible-new-jail-be-discussed-public-meeting-friday/>

WPTA, Feb. 23, Afghan refugees find hope and new life in Fort Wayne

<https://www.wpta21.com/2022/02/24/afghan-refugees-find-hope-new-life-fort-wayne/>

WPTA, Feb. 23, Council votes down an ordinance to bring back collective bargaining for some city workers

<https://www.wpta21.com/2022/02/23/council-votes-down-an-ordinance-bring-back-collective-bargaining-some-city-workers/>