

Steve McDaniel – Director

- ◆ Steve, Chad and I participated in a few interviews for Riverfront Phase 2 Construction Manager as contractor. This was in conjunction with the City's Community Development department. Scoring was completed per their process. Community Development will be making their recommendation to the Board of Works this month.
- ◆ Several of us met with the Fort Wayne Pickleball Association's new president and one of their board members. We shared with them our plans for several new courts throughout the city. Discussion started on a partnership with them to help teach some clinics later this year.
- ◆ Chuck and I met with members of the group who are bringing the Air Show to Fort Wayne this summer. They proposed a sky diving event to kick off the Air Show the night before the event starts. We helped facilitate a location that would be more optimal looking at safety and a location providing an audience. They are in the final stages of planning and will let us know if they will be accepting this new plan.
- ◆ The team and I met with a group who is looking to develop the North River property. We discussed their proposed use of the land and how Lawton Park could collaborate to be beneficial to our programming. This should be the start of several future discussions.
- ◆ We recorded two podcasts this month. The first was with Riley Hollenbaugh in which we discussed Riverfront Programming for this spring and summer. The second podcast was with Zynette Paige from Weisser Youth Center to discuss our seasonal jobs. Zynette is one of our Co-Chairs for our job fair committee.
- ◆ Tim and I attended the Alcohol Tabaco Commissions hear about our application for a license for the Foellinger Theater. Tim was able to answer all of their questions. Our application received four votes and moved out of the committee session.
- ◆ The City is in the process of starting a compensation study of all of its Civil City jobs descriptions. There was a kickoff meeting this month followed by a questionnaire. This will take the next few months as we will update all of our job descriptions and a new firm will analyze and evaluate them.
- ◆ I attended the open house for Jill Boggs the new CEO of Visit Fort Wayne. I was able to meet Jill and we will be setting up a time to have a more formal discussion on how our two organizations work together in the past and also for the future.
- ◆ I attended the Botanical Conservatory & Greenhouse's Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. This year it was held at the Park Foundation Pavilion in Promenade Park. We celebrated 147 volunteers who gave a total of 8,649 hours.
- ◆ Rick Schuiteman of the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo asked me to speak to the Executive Board of the Zoological Society updating them on the plans for Franke Park. I updated them on our status of design as well as shared with them our tentative time line for construction.
- ◆ The Foster Golf Master Plan had its kick off meeting between staff and the design team. We are planning a series of public meetings in the month of April and May. This is to help get public comments. The first is scheduled for April 21th at 6:00 pm. at Sears Pavilion on Bluffton Road.
- ◆ Jobs and filling open positions both full time and seasonal continues to be on our mind. The team held pop up events as well as attended the Spiece Job Fair. Our big Parks and Recreation Job Fair is scheduled for April 14th at Psi Ote Pavilion in Bob Arnold Northside Park

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**

- Weisser's attendance increased approximately 38% from February (165 more youth attended than in Feb.)
- Jennings attendance increased approximately 67% from February (93 more youth in attendance than in Feb.)
- **Jennings**
 - Ms. Woods continue to engage in steam projects on the science part. We continue to read Black History books and study and discuss Black Americans who help build America as it is today.
 - The S.T.E.A.M, Arts and Craft program consists of Ms. Allison helping the youth doing an art project creating a Nutrition poster provided by Parkview Healthy Seed. The youth was split up into groups and giving detail instructions on how to complete the project. Each youth had to use their imagination to create a creative poster about the 5 group of nutrition. The youth were encouraged to use markers, paint, buttons, wooden sticks and more to broaden their creativity. The youth were able to complete the projects and turned them in to Parkview Healthy Seed for a city-wide contest.
- **Weisser Park**
 - **Character-Building Activities:** Youth were placed in two teams, boys vs. girls and played *Name That Character Trait*. The youth took turns picking a good and bad character trait word from a bowl and had to describe or act it out the character trait for their team. The discussions included inclusion by prompting a discussion about intentionally leaving someone out is a form of bullying, purpose by asking how would you make the world a better place, courage by discussing a time when they stood up for themselves or someone else and fairness by asking does being fair mean treating equally. Another activity included a game of *Guess the Emoji and Facial Expression: Social and Emotional Learning*. After some of the rounds, we discussed why it is important to pay attention to and understand others facial expressions.
- On 3/16/22 Chantell was requested by Glenn Hines to attend a meeting at IMPACT with East Allen Community Schools Director Elsie Duell. This meeting was to discuss the summer program at the Youth Centers and playgrounds. East Allen has a program where they try to help the students get summer jobs. Chantell took information about all the jobs we have in the department and gave them handouts to keep and share.
- 3/17/22 Chantell attended the monthly meeting with FWCS for the Community Partners. Unfortunately, FWCS does not have as many staff as they thought they would have to work with their partners this year. They are still hopefully but as of the meeting date, they only had 8 of their staff that had signed up.
- **McMillen Park Community Center**
 - HER Girls' Social Club is going steady with 14 committed young ladies. Life skills has still been a part of our curriculum including laundry, cooking serving Kids' Café and knitting their own infinity scarves. Preparing dinner for the elderly and making waist beads were some of their favorite activities!
 - Readers of the Pack has ten members. We are reading a nail biter called *HIDDEN* written by local, award winning author, Helen Frost
 - 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 the month of March 86 children has attended.

- Cardio Fit is now back, the instructor Dorothy is doing a great job and the ladies are enjoying their exercise time. For the month of March 42 ladies have been in the cardio class.

- **Community Center**

- POD Program registration is going well with 4 sessions already full and another 5 almost full.
- Finished restructuring of Preschool/Youth summer programs and schedule to make better use of staff at sites. Will be using four sites this year only. These are Foster West, Sunrise/Deer Ridge, Arlington Elementary and Robinson Chapel.
- Caleb Schanep is the new Program Facility Coordinator. Has been on the job for 3 weeks now and doing a great job.
- Met with Tim Heffron and Julie Hollingsworth. We will be working with the Pickleball Club to offer introductory classes when new courts are completed. They will supply all materials and we will trade court reservation time.
- Senior Games is finalizing the 2022 schedule. We had our 1st coordinators meeting with 24 in attendance. Will be adding Euchre back this year along with a new event of Skee Ball. We are eliminating Foot Golf for this year.

- ◆ **Outdoor Recreation**

- **Salomon Farm Park**

- Salomon Farmin' Fun Day Camp registration opened on Monday, March 21, 2022.
- Capacities were reduced due to staffing concerns and are currently 5 staff short. If we are able to add staff we will be able to add more groups and welcome more children from the waitlist. The 2022 current camp capacity is at 115 campers per week. Within a week and a half camp registration is now full for the following age groups:
 - 4 – 5 years at 20 campers per week – **Full**
 - 6 – 11 years at 70 campers per week – **Full**
 - FIT 12+ (Farmers in Training) at 10 per week – **Full**
 - CIT 13+ (Counselors in Training) at 15 per week – spaces still available in all weeks
- Salomon Farm Park staff is working on preparing for the upcoming event season with the primary focus being the first events: Fiber Arts Celebration in May, the start of Farmin' Fun Day Camp in June and the Farmers' Market. Vendors are now being accepted for the Farmers' Market and the Fiber Arts Celebration. Staff is working with the Flax and Fleecers Guild to coordinate demonstrations for the Fiber Arts Celebration.

- **Franke Park Day Camp**

- Franke Park Day Camp registration opened on Monday, March 21, 2022. Capacities were reduced due to staffing concerns. As of March, Franke Park Day Camp is 11 counselors short. Within a week and a half camp registration is now full for the following age groups:
 - 4-5 years at 20 campers per week – **Full**
 - 6-11 years at 144 campers per week – **Full**
 - JR Leaders at 15 campers per week – week one has 5 spaces available all other **Full**
 - CIT (Counselors in Training) at 45 per week – spaces are still available
- Franke Park Day Camp 75th Anniversary Committee met on Tuesday, March 29, 2022 to discuss plans for the celebration on Tuesday, July 26, 2022.

- **Hurshtown Reservoir and Johnny Appleseed Campground** officially opens Sunday, May 1, 2022.
 - **Sweet Breeze**
 - Staff are hiring crew and anticipate the season to start late May/early June. The summer tour schedule will be released in late April.
 - Spring preparation of the vessel have started and we plan to put it in the water in early May for crew training.
 - **Riverfront**
 - The first Riverfront program events for March took place on March 13th with Yoga on the Riverfront and the Sunday Heritage Concert Series. Yoga on the Riverfront started at 10:30 a.m. and has continued to surpass expectations of participants as it continues to grow going into the summer. As the weather begins to warm up, the garage doors will open allowing for more participants with more space. Sunday Heritage concert series was held on the 13th and 24th from 2:00-3:00 p.m. with Remember When Duet (Eli Arnold & Jamie Foster) & New Horizons Retro Revival. Both bands had amazing shows in the pavilion and will be back for future shows. A new Riverfront event, “First day of Spring” was held on March 20th from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. The pavilion had a steady flow of participants for the Kids activities throughout the afternoon that made their way throughout the park for a scavenger hunt. The beautiful day brought it more participants for the event that seemed to be just under 300. Along with this event, a pop-up job fair was inside the pavilion to let people know about the diverse range of seasonal positions that are available from the Parks Department. Around 45 people stopped by the pop-up job fair with questions on how to apply for these positions.
 - Rentals in March continued to steadily increase as we move into the busy season of the summer with 4 events that started with the Parkview Nursing Directors meeting on March 10th. Parkview enjoyed the pavilion space and stated that they would be interested in coming back in the future for more meetings. March 12th was a sweet 16 Birthday party that had an attendance of 67 people. 2 Staff members were present for that event and everything went smoothly for the renters and participants. A last-minute rental was added for March 16th with the Black Chamber of Commerce. On March 21st, the Botanical conservatory held its annual volunteer dinner with 62 participants.
- ◆ **Golf**
- After narrowing down the Foster Park Golf Course RFP’s to three (3) firms and conducting additional interviews with them, Steve McDaniel, Mike Gore, Dave Weadock, Gary Whitacre, Bryan Keister and Jason Smith rescored them. After discussion the firm of Hills-Forrest-Smith was chosen. Dave Weadock was going to notify the winning RFP as well as the other two (2) firms.
 - The majority of the golf staff for all three (3) courses completed their paperwork and drug screen as well General Safety and SCAN Training. The clubhouse staff underwent additional training on updated procedures, pricing as well as the new credit card machines.

- Foster, McMillen and Shoaff Park Golf Courses officially opened on Wednesday 16, 2022. As is usual this time of the year the weather has been a mix of cold, rain, wind and very nice days. It's an encouraging sign that on the nice days there has been a lot of play at all three (3) golf courses.
- Gary Whitacre and the Clubhouse Managers reported that staffing levels are very positive. As was stated in the previous report, the initial returning staff was about 90% and we have received and hired approximately 10 new staff. The additional staff really helps before the summer staff hire in.

◆ Aquatics

- Pool applications have been posted and are still coming in. As Daryn Schwartz reported in our staff meeting, the applications are coming in (mainly returning) but have started to slow down. Jenny Barney will continue to push the pool jobs through the various school systems as well as any job fair that is offered.
- Daryn Schwartz reported that Spear will be here on May 5, 2022 to get the pools up and running for the season. Pool "startup" is the initial process of getting the pumps started, everything hooked up and the circulating.

◆ Other

- Chuck Reddinger, Steve McDaniel, Patti Davis, Andrea Patterson and Jason Smith met with the new Fort Wayne Pickleball Association President (Tim Heffron) and Vice President (Julie Hollingsworth) for an introduction. Upcoming pickleball events, the additional courts that Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation are adding to Lakeside, Hamilton, Foster and Kettler parks. There was also discussion about programming clinics and learning opportunities for the public.
- Catering Proposals for Salomon and Riverfront have been received. We were looking for 5 caterers at Promenade Park and 8 caterers for Salomon Farm Park. Only 4 qualified bids were received, so we will extend the bid process with Purchasing. Bids were required to go through an online bid process which may have prevented some caterers from bidding.
- Promenade Park Café Space is now out for bid. Bids are due May 6th.
- Chuck Reddinger was asked to serve as a member of the Electric Works Public Market Trust. The first meeting will be in late May.

Sandra Odisho, CPA – Manager, Finance

- ◆ The Parks and Recreation Department paid 210 employees (129 full-time, 81 regular part-time and seasonal) for the payroll ending March 26, 2022 and paid on April 1, 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
 - Part-time position, Weekend/Evening Receptionist/Host(ess) – Botanical Conservatory (Fund 121) – Posted
- ◆ All seasonal jobs have been posted.

- ◆ We spent the first part of March preparing the registration system for day camp registration and the last half of the month assisting customers with registration and preparing reports for programmers. Registration for all our summer camps began March 21st and these programs are extremely popular.
- ◆ Franke Park and Farmin' Fun Day Camp age groups 4-11 filled completely within the first few days of registration. Those camps are hoping to add more staff to be able to accept more children. We are encouraging everyone to wait list their children in case there are cancelations or we are able to expand the programs.
- ◆ We have spent some time this month with both the Community Center staff and the Botanical Conservatory staff reviewing how they use RecTrac to assist in finding ways that we can assist them by making their RecTrac processing and reporting more efficient.
- ◆ We worked with the IT Department to develop 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 as it makes the process faster.
- ◆ On March 7th we switched credit card processors. This has been a project we have been working on since the end of 2021. All of our locations now have credit card chip readers and can except all forms of credit card payments including Google Pay and Apple Pay. 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 within our website.

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

◆ Facilities Management

- Pavilion rentals totaled: **125** for March. This is down from **107** in February.
- Lawton Park's skate park was pressure washed for graffiti and to clean the surface as well.
- Foster Park's Pavilion #1 had the floors and tables pressure washed in preparation for the upcoming rental season.
- Justin Study Park playground has been vandalized with graffiti several times which was removed by the relief worker.
- The following pavilions had their floors stripped and re-waxed; Indian Village Sears pavilion, Lakeside Park Pavilion #1, and Franke Park Pavilion #1.
- Promenade Park's North and South docks were pressure washed to clean off flood remnants.
- Deck boards were repaired on the river greenway at Roosevelt Park and to the trail underpass at Taylor Street.
- The artificial turf at Kreager Park's Taylors Dream playground is being replaced. During that process, two damaged and obsolete pieces of equipment were removed. The Neos control panel was re-secured to its base and the step pods had the top rail and chain hold-downs replaced.
- A frost-free yard hydrant was replaced at the Historic Old Fort.
- Water service was restored to the Shoaff Park golf pro shop as the 2022 golf season began.
- Several boards of the guardrail on the river greenway along the St. Mary's river at Swinney Park had to be replaced due to flood damage.

- There was no skating in March and the Nice Rink at Lakeside Park was taken down on the 9th. The basketball court was reset with goals, nets, and pole padding removed.
- Knox boxes are being installed at several of our locations per the Fire Department.
- The Radio shop has switched over the alarm monitoring of the Cooper Center to be handled directly thru them

Grounds Maintenance

- Crews removed fallen limbs and debris from various parks.
- Winter work is wrapping up and transitioning into spring tasks.
- Mowing equipment was hauled to Lawton Park in preparation for the mowing season.
- 2 soccer fields were set up and lined at Blackhawk middle school.
- Kreager athletic fields were located to prep for the lining.
- Equipment maintenance of Toro 580s and 5910s continued.
- The Headwaters ice skating rink Zamboni was transported to summer storage.
- Greenway flooding closed the path under Jefferson and Fairfield several times this month.
- An overgrown section of the river greenway was cut back between Juliette and Vest Ave.

Project Administration

- Foster Park Pavilion #3 Construction – Construction is set to begin in mid-April and finish in early fall.
- Foster Park Golf Course Master Plan – Purchase order issued. Kickoff meeting with designer scheduled for late March.
- 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.
- Franke Nature Lodge and Long House Roofing – Construction is planned for early May with completion set for the end of May.
- Hamilton Park Tennis Courts Fencing – Work nearing completion. Punch list items are yet to be completed.
- Jennings Center Playground Equipment Replacement – Installation is planned for mid-May.
- Johnny Appleseed Campground Fire Pit – Project completed.
- Kettler Pavilion Exterior and Interior Improvements – Project completed.
- Kreager Park Taylor’s Dream Playground Surface – Reconstruction is in progress. Completion is planned for the end of April.
- Kreager Park Taylor’s Dream Playground Equipment – Removal and reinstallation of equipment per turf replacement in progress.
- Lakeside Park Arbors Improvements – Work is set to begin on April 11th. Painting is planned for the week of April 18th. Completion by end of April.
- Mechanic St. Bridge Engineering – Drawings nearing completion. The permit process is nearly set to begin.
- Memorial Park Olen J. Pond Monument Restoration – Completion is planned for late spring.
- Northside Park 2-5-Year-Old Play Equipment Replacement: Installation is planned for early May.
- Reservoir Park Cooper Center Roof Replacement – Construction in progress.
- Salomon Farm Rental Barn – Awaiting purchase order. Construction is planned for July and August 2022.
- Swinney Park Homestead Log House Roof Replacement – Construction is set to begin in early May.
- Weisser Park Youth Center Lobby Improvements – Project currently out to bid.
- Various Parks 2022 Paving Projects – Awaiting purchase order. Construction is set to begin in early May.
- Various Parks Pickle Ball Conversion – Awaiting purchase order. Construction to last most of the summer.

Storeroom Garage and Safety

- Recreation supplies for summer programs are being received and stocked/delivered as necessary.
- More warning signs were made for upcoming construction.

- Parts for mowers and golf equipment seasonal maintenance were ordered and those that shipped were distributed as necessary.
- Lots of cleaning and refinishing supplies were procured for seasonal facility maintenance.
- 117 work orders were performed this month, 18 of which were preventative maintenance/seasonal services.
- Parts availability continues to limit timely vehicle repairs.
- The 2022 lease package was approved in March and those items quoted have been requisitioned.
- Conversion of the polartracs to mowers has started.
- ✓ The Safety Committee met on March 29, with three members and one guest in attendance.
- There were five treatable personal injuries during this period, for a total of 8 for the year. OSHA recordable incidents total 8 for the year. 54 restricted days for 5 injuries this period, and the annual total stands at 133 for 8 incidents. 43 lost days to date for one broken leg incident. Recorded worker compensation costs to date are \$0.
- There were three property damage incidents during this period, the yearly total is four. Total damages for the year are \$10,426.
- There were two Worker Protection Standard classes required annually for landscape and maintenance completed in March.
- A class on detailed operation and maintenance of chainsaws for storm response volunteers have been delayed until city garbage tasking is complete.

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



◆ Planning Report – March 2022

- Phase I of the Franke Park Renaissance continues to move forward. A CMc was selected and has begun to assemble a schematic design estimate. The design team continues to refine the new pavilion layout and materials, while the site design and grading continues to come into focus. A set of drawings will be sent to permitting agencies in the coming weeks.
- Chad and Rob are working towards the completion of a grant application for the Spy Run Creek Bank Stabilization Project (Phase II). The Great Lakes Sediment and Nutrient Reduction Program application is due in late April; we plan to seek \$200,000 in funding.
- Chad and Rob completed a grant application with AARP for the potential funding of permanent chess tables at Freimann Square. Results are expected this summer.
- Following contractor interviews in March, a CMc has been selected for Riverfront Development Phase IIB; their contract will move for approval in April.
- One bid was received for Riverfront Development Phase IIA. The contract will move for Council approval in April.
- Staff continues to collaborate with other city departments in the selection of a consultant for the River Activation Master Plan. A successful consultant has been identified; we will be moving for contract approval in the coming weeks.
- A number of projects are in various stages of planning and completion at the Conservatory. Exterior tree pruning was bid and completed, bids are being sought for interior drywall/paint repair, and the HVAC controller project is set to begin shortly.

- A design for landscape renovations at Lakeside Park was completed, with an RFQ for installation due in mid-April. This project will renew the landscape located around the arbors surrounding the sunken gardens.
- Staff has been working to make staffing/efficiency improvements at Promenade Park. Scheduling and labor contracting changes are forthcoming; we are optimistic that these changes will improve the current maintenance at the park.

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

- Landscape staff began spring cleanups in landscape beds throughout the parks, finishing the golf course clubhouses and beginning to focus on high visibility areas such as community centers, rental facilities, etc. Clean-ups include litter removal, pruning/deadheading, bed edging, and mulching.
- Landscape staff installed approximately 150 perennials in the front of McMillen clubhouse. This is a permanent landscape that will take the place of the annual flower plantings. This new landscape will provide season long color, take less maintenance to care for, and will not require irrigation once established.
- Spring bed cleanups were done at Promenade Park with the help of Community Corrections.
- Foster Park and Lakeside Park began spring bed cleanups as well.
- Landscape staff pruned McCulloch Park, our last park on the winter pruning cycle.
- Landscape staff continued to pick up limbs throughout the parks that have come down from ice and wind.
- Pre-emergent herbicide applications have begun, prioritizing all large mulch areas across the parks. Weather depending, treatments will be finished April 9th.
- The North and South docks at Promenade Park continued being cleaned of sediment due to fluctuating water levels from rain events.
- Roses are being pruned at Lakeside Park.
- Some poor weather resulted in greenhouse work being completed by landscape staff. Staff also assisted in greenhouse seeding as needed.
- Landscape staff completed First Aid/CPR training.
- Lawnscape Land Management was awarded the landscape maintenance contract for the 2022 season. 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. Cleanups and mulching have already begun this month.
- Lawnganics was awarded the turf fertilization and weed control contract for the 2022 season. 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 will all be taken care of under this contract. Traditionally this had been included in the Landscape Maintenance contract, but was taken out this year to bring a company on board that provides organic based fertilizer lawn care solutions. Spring fertilization treatments began this month.
- 2022 schedules and priorities were completed and reviewed with each gardener.

- Two more landscape staff passed exams in order to obtain necessary pesticide licenses this month. Jacqui Carroll took and passed her Ornamental Pest exam and was awarded her 3A license from the Indiana State Chemist. Paul Rodriguez took and passed his Core exam and was awarded a Registered Technician license from the Indiana State Chemist office.

◆ **Riparian Management Report- March 2022**

- The first barge workdays of the season were successful. The following bridges were cleared as of March 22nd: Main, Van Buren, Ewing, Harrison, MLK, Old Fort pedestrian, and Spy Run. Monitoring of the bridges will continue to prepare for April's dock installation.
- Cooperation with Public Works for clearing logjams on the bridges is successfully continuing. Parks will still clear bridges and deposit debris, and Public Works will dispose of deposited debris.
- Guldin boat ramp was cleared and maintained after each flood. Build-up of silt in gangway trench from numerous flooding events was scoured and washed.
- Repairs on city docks for the upcoming season is continuing. Currently improving the general system of the piano hinges for easier installation and removal.
- The Parks Ecology Maintenance Contract for 2022 was awarded to the lowest bidder and is being processed. Work is expected to begin in late April or early May.
- Riparian Seasonal Supervisor was filled for the year. The job post for regular seasonal applicants is still open.
- Sweet Breeze was uncovered for maintenance and repairs before the start of the tour season.

◆ **Forestry Report- March 2022**

- The forestry division continues working toward changes intended to attract and retain qualified forestry staff.
- This year's Arbor Day celebration will be held at Foster Park West on Friday, April 29th. We anticipate being joined by Trees Indiana, who will be handing out seedling trees to the public.
- Representatives from the Southwest Area Partnership will also be on hand to make a few comments regarding our street tree planting partnership.
- Planning for the 3rd grader seedling tree distribution continues. This year, the Homestead Highschool Environmental Science Club has volunteered to help with packing and sorting the trees. We are thankful for their willingness to help.
- Forestry Staff completed 10 tree-related property damage appraisals totaling \$4170.50 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 an 8-year pruning cycle.
- In March, Forestry crews completed 128 out-of-cycle tree maintenance requests. Examples of these requests include tree limb elevation to facilitate buses, removal of limbs touching homes, clearing street lighting and signage, and removal of dead limbs. We expect these to become more common as the routine maintenance cycle timeframe extends.
- 54 total trees were removed by in-house crews this month. (17 street tree removals, 4 park trees removals, 18 removals resulting from damage caused by storms (3 were in parks), 9 vehicle damaged tree removals, and 6 were private trees that had fallen into the street).

- Forestry crews responded to 80 storm-related fallen/hanging limbs, and to 15 after-hours calls concerning tree failures that resulted in blocked roadways.
- Forestry staff responded to and resolved (76) 311 call center tickets this month.

◆ **Botanical Conservatory Report – March 2022**

- Under the Big Top at the Botanical Conservatory continued to delight visitors in March. 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) and Great Train Connection (Mar 11 – 13). Staff are gearing up for Bunny Tales in the Garden (April 15 – 16) and Emergence: Live Butterfly Exhibit (opening April 23).
- Molly Shondell has accepted the Rental Coordinator position; Molly has been with the Conservatory for over a year in the Weekend/Evening Receptionist role. Angela Daugherty has accepted the Gift Shop Coordinator position; Angela has been with the Conservatory for over a year in the Weekend/Evening Receptionist role. Kimberly Hartman was hired as a Weekend/Evening Receptionist; Meghan Wilhem has returned as a seasonal gardener. Two Camp ACTiVenture Counselors are in the process of being hired. Open positions include Seasonal Maintenance (1) and Seasonal Gardener (1).
- **Conservatory KPIs:** In March the Botanical Conservatory experienced an increase in attendance to last year. The removal of the mask mandate in City-owned buildings has anecdotally contributed to the increase. Conservatory Shop charted a sizable increase to last March, the shop is up 60.49% to last year, partially due to our attendance at the 2022 Home & Garden Show, which posted a sales revenue of \$13,731.25 – the Conservatory did not attend in 2021. Rental & Catering revenue continues to increase as the special event industry rebounds from the impacts of COVID-19.
 - **Attendance**

March 2021:	5,033 visitors
March 2022:	6,906 visitors
An increase of 1,873 or +37.21% to 2021	
 - **YTD Comparisons**

2021 Attendance:	12,597 visitors
2022 Attendance:	15,376 visitors
An increase of 2,779 or +22.06% to 2021	
 - **Admissions Revenue**

March Admissions 2021:	\$16,193.00
March Admissions 2022:	\$30,960.00
An increase of \$14,767 or +91.19% to 2021	
 - **YTD Comparisons**

2021 Admissions Revenue:	\$39,570.00
2022 Admissions Revenue:	\$67,796.00
An increase of \$28,226.00 or +71.33% to 2021	
 - **Membership Revenue**

March 2021:	\$5,815.00
March 2022:	\$7,686.00

An increase of \$1,871.00 or +32.18% to 2021

○ **YTD Comparisons**

2021 Membership Revenue: \$16,613.00

2022 Membership Revenue: \$18,870.00

An increase of \$2,257.00 or +13.59% to 2021

○ **Conservatory Shop Revenue**

March 2021: \$14,740.13

March 2022: \$32,733.84

An increase of \$17,993.71 or +122.07% to 2021

○ **YTD Comparisons**

2021 Gift Shop Revenue: \$33,252.81

2022 Gift Shop Revenue: \$53,365.78

An increase of \$20,112.97 or +60.49% to 2021

○ **Rental & Catering Fee Revenue**

March 2021: \$4,632.50

March 2022: \$3,895.00

A decrease of \$737.50 or +15.92% to 2021

○ **YTD Comparisons**

2021 Rental Revenue: \$8,722.50

2022 Rental Revenue: \$13,686.38

An increase of \$4,963.88 or +56.91% to 2021

○ **Other Revenue (includes Activity Enrollments, Donations, etc.)**

March 2021: \$171,287.76

March 2022: \$235,159.08

○ **YTD Comparisons**

2021 Other Revenue: \$181,536.05

2022 Other Revenue: \$249,771.78

○ **Conservatory Total Revenue**

March 2021: \$212,668.39

March 2022: \$310,433.92

An increase of \$97,765.53 or +45.97% to 2021

○ **YTD Comparisons**

○ 2021 Total Revenue: \$279,694.36

○ 2022 Total Revenue: \$403,489.94

○ An increase of \$123,795.58 or +44.26% to 2021

◆ Conservatory Business Development

The Conservatory was awarded \$5,000 support for the “Paris: City of Light & Love” Showcase Garden exhibit by the M. E. Raker Foundation. Staff also contacted the Barbara Bradley

Baekgaard Foundation for possible support of the Paris exhibit and they also have approved support of \$5,000. The Journal Gazette Foundation has declined support of the Paris exhibit due to limited resources.

- ◆ Media sponsorship for the Mother's Plant Sale was secured from Fox55; the station declined to sponsor Bunny Tales in the Garden, their decision is pending on Garden Trick-or-Treat. Massage Envy also was added as a sponsor for Mother's Day Plant Sale. Staff is working with Rob Hines and Conservatory staff to coordinate details on media spots, contracts, tickets and giveaways, and video sponsor shoots for our 2022 events and exhibits.
- ◆ Work continues on the creation of 2023 corporate sponsorship proposals for Showcase Garden exhibits and special events. More details are needed on dates, levels of sponsorship and overall strategy.
- ◆ Conservatory donations in March 2022 totaled \$204,529 (\$190,129 support from the Park Foundation, \$54.00 trust gifts, and \$90.00 in memorials for volunteer Karen Giant). Work was completed on the Spring 2022 donation pitch to our members and volunteers, it will be sent the second week of April 2022.
- ◆ Staff completed the Spring 2022 Member ENews, it will be sent the first week of April 2022.

◆ Conservatory Public Programs: Events

• *The Great Train Connection (Mar 11-13)*

Over the course of this 3-day event, there were 1,408 visitors (457 children, 951 adults) who were given the opportunity to enjoy different train setups and learn about Fort Wayne's own railroad history. A children's area for goody bags and crafts was offered in addition to a special display promoting gardening with trains while showcasing the Conservatory's G-scale model.

◆ **Education:** Bee the Change- Circus Animals (Mar 3):

- This new drop-in program had 70 people (45 adults, 25 children) in attendance. Specifically, participants learned how to juggle with a positive emphasis on the characteristic of persistence.
- Mini & Me Paint Party (Mar 5):
- This pre-registered program was cancelled having not met the minimum requirement for registration. Staff noted to not to schedule so closely to quarterly release of Fun Times.
- Pollinators & Plants (Mar 26):
- This pre-registered program was cancelled having not met the minimum requirement for registration.
- Youth Field Trips:
 - There were 8 on-site field trips throughout March with a total of 144 students who visited.



◆ **Exhibits & Displays**

- Under the Big Top (Jan 8-Apr 17):
- The current 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 many prompts to step right up and use your imagination!



◆ **Volunteers**

- Program staff continue scheduling a variety of different volunteer opportunities that have picked up this season. These include, and are not limited to, opportunities for the Mother's Day Plant Sale, Live Butterfly Exhibit, and Bunny Tales in the Garden. Seeding packaging for S.C.F.V.A. occurred in March in addition to goody bag and plant sale prep.
- On March 21st, the Botanical Conservatory hosted its Annual Volunteer Celebration. This special occasion took place at Promenade Park where Steve McDaniel delivered his remarks on behalf of the Parks and Recreations Department. Lynda Heavrin, Nathaniel Cardelli, and Amanda Amstutz delivered further remarks to celebrate active volunteer service. Those in attendance greatly enjoyed the beautiful park setting in addition to the company of staff and volunteers.

◆ **Upcoming**

- April 2: Vegetable-Stamped Market Bag pre-registered program
- April 7: Bee the Change \$1 Night drop-in program
- April 9: Spring Hoop Wreath drop-in program
- April 12-May 24: Tai Chi Tuesdays pre-registered program
- April 15-16: Bunny Tales in the Garden event
- April 17: Meet the Artist: Madeline Phuong, Naturescapes art display
- April 18-22: Showchange Week
- April 21: In-Person Butterfly Attendant training
- April 23: "Emergence" Live Butterfly Exhibit opening day
- 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**

- Our maintenance contractor has completed the first turfgrass treatment. This initial treatment is a pre-emergent herbicide which targets annual weeds such as crabgrass. This is the first step of many to enhance the aesthetics of the turfgrass while also reducing the long-term maintenance inputs.



Planting Hyacinth in Atrium

- The first two shifts of spring bulbs were planted in the Showcase House as part of the Under the Big Top show. Each shift contained approximately 2500 bulbs. The fragrance and bright splash of colors continue to delight Conservatory visitors.
- A local tree care company completed outdoor tree work at the Conservatory. This work included clearance pruning for the sidewalk along Harrison Street, building clearance to reduce the risk of damage to the Conservatory structure, removal of dead limbs to enhance safety, and the removal of 12 trees—three of which are considered an invasive species.
- A contractor has been selected to perform tree work inside the Conservatory. This tree work will commence in mid-April. The tree care company is a job training program for struggling high school students. The program teaches life skills of teamwork, initiative, safety, and integrity.
- Outdoor spring cleanup is in progress at the Conservatory. Staff have been deadheading hydrangeas, thinning shrubs such as dogwood, and cleaning the edges of paths throughout the outdoor garden spaces.
- The planting plan and plant selections for the Paris: City of Light and Love show have been finalized. A majority of the herbaceous plant materials will be grown by Lawton staff, while the woody plant materials used in the show will be sourced locally.
- The first release of beneficial insects was successful.
- The populations of mealybugs and spider mites have been substantially reduced within the areas treated. Another order will be placed next month as insect activity and temperatures increase during spring.
- Lawton staff replaced the failing pump starter for the Tropical House waterfall. This starter replacement extends the life of the entire waterfall pump system and protects the system components.



Planting Daffodils in Showcase



Removing Callery Pear from Terrace

Kathryn Pargmann – Manager Lead of Marketing

- ◆ Marketing Team is continuing to work on various Riverfront Marketing tasks with a special focus this month on promoting spring special events.
- ◆ The Parks Promenade link has received over 2,095 hits and www.RiverfrontFW.org has 5,723 hits to the site this month. The Rental link continues to be a popular source of information and has received over 1,410 hits in March.
- ◆ Completed evaluation reports for: Adult & Children's Special Interest (Winter 2021/2022).

- ◆ Marketing Team produced various marketing assets and supported messaging around job openings and Job Pop-Up events as well as the upcoming Job Fair (April 14/4-7 pm at Psi Ote Pavilion in Bob Arnold Northside Park).
- ◆ Marketing Team worked on sponsorships, web site, e-news, posters, handbills, and other marketing assets for four Theatre concerts.
- ◆ 49 Design projects completed.
- ◆ Summer brochures/flyers all produced, printed, distributed.
- ◆ Botanical appeal postcard produced/data merge.
- ◆ Submitted \$11,000 grant request to the AARP Community Challenge; project is to install permanent chess game tables in Freimann Square.
- ◆ Beginning to put together RFP for Great Lakes Sediment and Nutrient Reduction Program grant for Spy Run Creek project (\$200,000 grant, proposal due April 22).
- ◆ Working on determining next steps for ARPA funds for Franke Park project.
- ◆ Produced two podcasts in March. The first podcast was with Zynette Paige discussing Job Recruitment and the second podcast was with Riley Hollenbaugh discussing Riverfront programming.
- ◆ **January Media Mentions: 36 February Media Mentions: 49 March Media Mentions: 52**

◆ Web Statistics:	<u>Users:</u>	<u>Hits:</u>	<u>Month:</u>
	29,280	79,586	January
	26,422	75,120	February
	42,302	124,848	March

- ◆ Social Media Totals for the months of:

	<u>January</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>March</u>
FB Followers	69,180	69,721	80,373
FB Reach	141,330	137,645	160,850
 Twitter Followers	13,097	13,149	13,204
 Instagram Follower	19,961	20,069	20,194

Gary Whitacre – Manager, Golf Operations

- ◆ The golf courses opened for the season on Wednesday, March 16. The weather has been very uncooperative this year so far, with below average temperatures and above average precipitation. Through April 6, we have only been able to run carts for three total days, and carts have been restricted

to paths (Foster) or only run on one nine (McMillen and Shoaff). Ranges at McMillen and Shoaff have been too wet to accept golf balls, and have only been open one day.

- ◆ On the handful of good weather days, we have had, play has been strong. There is definitely pent up demand, and as soon as the weather and conditions normalize, activity level should remain high.
- ◆ Alcohol sales have restarted for the year, and courses are rebuilding their supply. People are noticing that the courses do sell alcohol, and are appreciative and accepting of this. A letter was sent out to the leagues and league officers were contacted to inform them of this change.
- ◆ The golf course design firm of Hills-Forrest-Smith was selected to create a Master Plan for the potential redevelopment of Foster Park Golf Course. An initial meeting with the firm discussed many items and the potential plan is beginning development. The first of several public meetings is scheduled for Thursday, April 21, at the Sears Pavilion (6 p.m.). The purpose of this meeting is to hear from the public what they would like to see out of any potential upgrades to Foster Park golf course, while laying out what our project goals are.
- ◆ Staffing levels are good, with a number of new employees being brought on to complement the returning crew. An Assistant Supervisor position has been added at each course to help with administrative duties. This position has been filled at Foster and Shoaff, and will soon be at McMillen.
- ◆ All new staff are being trained, and are in the process of receiving their alcohol servers training and permit.
- ◆ The courses have already picked up some new outings. All outings will be required to purchase any alcohol from the courses.



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

Dawn Ritchie – Greenway & Trails Manager

- ◆ The Mayor will have a news conference to kick-off the “Tails on Trails” program in Foster Park on 4/30 at 1 p.m. This new program will encourage trail users to stop by Humane Fort Wayne on Hanna Street and take an adoptable dog on a walk in Tillman Park or Foster Park.
- ◆ We are launching a new program with the Fort Wayne Running Club, Fort Wayne Trails, Inc and New Haven called, “Tread the Trails.” This will be a biweekly 5K walk/run on the trails with options for longer and shorter distances. The first event will coincide with our kickoff of Trek the Trails at Salomon Farm on 4/26 at 6 p.m. All future Tread the Trails events will be every other Thursday beginning 5/12 at 6 p.m. Just like Trek the Trails, the route and meeting place will change every event date.

- ◆ We will be bidding out three trail projects in April or early May: Summit Park Trail on Ludwig Rd, west of Lima; Hanna Street Trail from Decatur Rd to Pettit; and Hanna St Trail from Pettit to Rudisill.
- ◆ We are in the appraising phase for the Covington Road Trail and the Liberty Mills Road Trail. We will begin appraising the Pufferbelly Trail parcels in May. This will be a big year of easement acquisitions for trails. Quite a few property owners have agreed to donate easements, saving the taxpayers a great deal of money! The fact that property owners will donate easements shows that property owners welcome the trails and understand the benefits of being connected to an active transportation network.
- ◆ The contractor will resume work on the Lake Avenue Trail from Hobson to Coliseum the week of 4/11 and complete the trail by May 25th. The contractor is moving along well with the construction of the Fishing Line Trail between Ludwig and Cook, west of Lima. They are 25% complete. The trail will be completed by early June. Our contractor is finally able to complete the Dupont Rd Trail between Coldwater Rd and Woodland Plaza Parkway. The trail was constructed in 2021 but we could not complete the very east end due to utility conflicts. The trail should be completed any day now.
- ◆ We are spending a lot of time preparing for upcoming events: Tread the Trails, Trek the Trails, Trot the Trails, Renaissance Cruise-In and Open Streets.
- ◆ We have hired an intern, Elise Jones. She is an urban planning student at Ball State. Elise will begin work on 5/9.
- ◆ I will be attending the Greenways Foundation of Indiana’s annual luncheon and awards ceremony in Carmel on April 26th. Hopefully, we will bring back an award for the Beckett’s Run Trail! I also nominated Senator Dennis Kruse for outstanding public official and Jon Bomberger for outstanding trail advocate.
- ◆ The Building Contractors Association named the St. Joe Center Road Trail as the “Specialty” Award project of the year. We’ll receive the award at their annual spring membership and awards banquet on 4/21.
- ◆ Neil Miller and I will be guests of John Perlich on “In Your Neighborhood” on 4/20 to discuss trails and all of our events.



◆ **Division News and Media Coverage:**

COVID Safety

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.

Registration continues for Learn to Swim Lessons

Learn-to-Swim is offered in conjunction with the American Red Cross and adheres to national standards for Red Cross aquatic programs. Classes are held at Northside Pool in Bob Arnold Park (Parnell Ave. at E. State Blvd.) and are open to boys and girls ages 1-15. Each Learn-to-Swim session consists of eight 45-minute lessons held Tuesday through Friday over a two-week period. Pre-school and Toddler lessons are 30 minutes. Four Learn-to-Swim sessions will be offered this summer. Participants must be of minimum age by June 1, 2022. Register online at www.fortwayneparks.org, by phone at 260-427-6000, in-person at 705 East State Blvd. (business hours, Monday – Friday), or download the form from the website and mail, fax or use the drop-box at 705 East State Blvd.

Job Fair

Thursday, April 14, 4:00-7:00 p.m.

Psi Ote Pavilion, Bob Arnold Northside Park, Parnell Avenue at East State Blvd.

Join the team at Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation and discover a unique summer adventure! At this job fair you can learn more about open seasonal staff positions, meet with hiring managers, apply for positions and complete pre-employment screenings on-site. Select jobs are available in Youth Sports, Aquatics and at Golf Courses for ages 16 and up, most other positions such as Pre-school/Youth Coordinators and Instructors, Day Camp Counselors and Supervisors, Sweet Breeze Staff, Recreation Attendants, Facility Maintenance, Forestry, Riparian Maintenance and Foellinger Theatre utility workers require a minimum age of 18 years. Please plan to bring a minimum of one government issued photo ID to complete the hiring process. See more information and apply online at: www.fortwayneparks.org/jobs

“Under the Big Top” Winter Showcase Exhibit

January 8-April 17, Public hours

Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, 1100 South Calhoun Street

This is the final week to experience the “Under the Big Top” exhibit! Come one, come all to the greatest circus Garden in town! The “Under the Big Top” exhibit continues at the Botanical Conservatory. 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. Learn more at botanicalconservatory.org. Sponsored by The Waterfield Foundation, the Howard P. Arnold Foundation, the English Bonter Mitchell Foundation, the Magee-O'Connor Foundation, 103.9 Wayne FM, and WANE 15.

City Golf Courses to Open March 16

Offering Membership Packages, Instruction, Tournament and Group Outings
Masks are recommended inside city and park facilities but are no longer required as of March 1, 2022. **City Golf Courses Open for the Season**

Foster, Shoaff and McMillen Park Golf Courses are open for the season. The first start time will be 8:00 a.m. beginning on April 1. Course conditions will determine cart and driving range availability and will be assessed each day. City golf courses begin operations at sunrise and close 30 minutes prior to sunset, weather permitting. When inclement weather occurs, courses may close for a short period, or for the day, depending on the severity of the weather. To check on course availability or to schedule tee times, call the golf course clubhouse where you plan to play.

Foster Park Golf Course, 427-6735, www.fostergolfcourse.com

McMillen Park Golf Course and Driving Range, 427-6710, www.mcmillengolfcourse.com

Shoaff Park Golf Course and Driving Range, 427-6745, www.shoaffgolfcourse.com

Season memberships are on sale at the Main Parks Office (705 East State Blvd.) and at all of the clubhouses. To schedule league reservations, an outing for a business or tournaments, contact Gary Whitacre, manager of Golf Operations by phone at 260-427-6016 or email at gary.whitacre@cityoffortwayne.org

Input FW, April 13, High rent, few options: Addressing poverty, profit, and disconnection in Fort Wayne's housing system

<https://www.inputfortwayne.com/features/housingsummit.aspx>

FW's NBC, April 12, City to hold public meeting for Hillegas Road widening project

<https://www.fortwaynesnbc.com/2022/04/12/city-hold-public-meeting-hillegas-road-widening-project/>

WANE, April 12, Downtown EV charging stations now operational

<https://www.wane.com/news/charge-it-up-downtown-ev-stations-now-operational/>

WANE, April 12, City Council passage on riverfront development and ARPA

<https://www.wane.com/news/city-council-passes-two-funding-motions-regarding-arpa-and-the-riverfront-development/>

WANE, April 11, FWPD begins crackdown on bus stops in school zones

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/fwpd-begins-crackdown-on-bus-stops-school-zones/>

\$1 Admission to the Botanical Conservatory

Thursday, April 14, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, 1100 South Calhoun Street

New in 2022, the Conservatory admission is just \$1 from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. every Thursday. Plus, Civic Center Garage parking is validated for free.

Bunny Tales in the Garden

April 15 and 16, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, 1100 South Calhoun Street

Hop from one garden to the next. Along the way, enjoy festive activities, happy spring blooms and the cutest little Easter animals. Discover the tale's ending when visiting the Easter Bunny. General admission fees apply. The East bunny will take breaks 11:30 a.m.-12:00p.m. and 1:30-2:00 p.m.

Five for Fighting with special guest The Verve Pipe to Play at Foellinger Theatre August 13

General Sales begin April 15

Fort Wayne, Ind – Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation announces that Fort Wayne's Foellinger Theatre will host Five for Fighting with special guest The Verve Pipe, August 13, 2022. The concert will begin at 8:00 p.m.

John Ondrasik -- the songwriter and performer known as the platinum-selling, Grammy-nominated, Five For Fighting has penned major hits, including the chart-topping "100 Years," "The Riddle," "Chances," "World," and "Superman (It's Not Easy)," which have earned tens of millions of streams and place him as a top-10 Hot Adult Contemporary artist for the 2000s. Ondrasik will have his full band on stage with him.

With a reputation for spectacular live performances, the multi-platinum alternative rock band The Verve Pipe is recognized worldwide for radio hits "Photograph," "Hero," "Happiness Is," "Never Let You Down," and the #1 smash single "The Freshmen."

All general and in-person sales at the Parks and Recreation Department (705 East State Blvd.) begin Friday, March 15, at 10:00 a.m. For more information, visit www.fortwayneparks.org and click on Purchase Theatre Tickets.

Masks are recommended inside city and park facilities but are no longer required as of March 1, 2022.

Slightly-used Bulb Sale

March 26 to April 24, public hours

Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, 1100 South Calhoun Street

This annual sale features slightly-used tulips, daffodils and hyacinths from the Conservatory's spring exhibit. Bulbs will be listed for \$1.95 per pot and are ready to plant for next year's blooms. Find them in the Sales Garden. Admission is not required to shop.

Registration continues for Camp ACTI-Venture

The brand-new *Camp ACTI-Venture* at the Botanical Conservatory engages campers in active, adventurous fun! It incorporates off-site excursions to city and state parks, rivers, trails and other recreation destinations. Campers will experience zip lining, kayaking, hiking, bouldering, fire building and orienteering activities. Another perk is cooling off in freshwater sources. Camp ACTI-Venture integrates exploration and nature play to foster individual accomplishment, community belonging and character development. Natural elements of earth, air, water and fire are also explored through safe, outdoor challenges that are designed to educate and thrill. Registration deadlines are one week prior to each session. Space is limited to 24 campers per week. Download the brochure from <http://www.botanicalconservatory.org/youth-education/202-camp-actventure>

Lake Street Dive to Play at Foellinger Theatre, August 9

General Sales begin April 1

Fort Wayne, Ind – Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation announces that Fort Wayne's Foellinger Theatre will host Lake Street Dive on Tuesday, August 9, 2022. The concert will start at 8:00 p.m.

By blending a variety of genres including pop, rock, R&B, and jazz, the eclectic Lake Street Dive has risen to become one of the premiere alternative rock bands. The band's most recent album "Obviously," is referenced as their "first truly abashed yacht rock record" by Rolling Stone magazine

(2021) and topped the charts at No. 1 on Americana/Folk, No. 2 on Rock Albums, and No. 2 on Alternative Albums. Madison Cunningham will play as the opening act.

All general and in-person sales at the Parks and Recreation Department (705 East State Blvd.) begin Friday, April 1, at 10:00 a.m. For more information, visit www.fortwayneparks.org and click on Purchase Theatre Tickets.

WBCL, April 6, FWPD teddy bear effort to comfort kids

<https://www.wbcl.org/news/fort-wayne-police-comfort-kids-with-their-own-teddy-bear-audio-photo>

WPTA, April 5, Mayor Henry signs sexual assault awareness month proclamation

<https://www.wpta21.com/2022/04/05/mayor-henry-signs-sexual-assault-awareness-month-proclamation/>

WFFT, April 5, INDOT and City of Fort Wayne expanding EV infrastructure

https://www.wfft.com/news/indot-fort-wayne-expanding-electric-vehicle-infrastructure/article_ed14c56c-b546-11ec-97b6-df890c718dee.html

WFFT, April 5, Local law enforcement partnering on distracted drivers enforcement

https://www.wfft.com/news/allen-county-law-enforcement-watching-for-distracted-drivers-this-week-part-of-connect-2-disconnect/article_a4396f56-b52c-11ec-8e5b-9329559c998d.html

WANE, April 5, Fort Wayne's homicide rate falls

<https://www.wane.com/news/crime/fort-waynes-homicide-rate-falls-as-police-lock-up-gangsters-seize-guns/>

JG, March 18, PFW set to end mask mandate as of Monday

<https://www.journalgazette.net/news/local/schools/20220318/pfw-set-to-end-mask-mandate-as-of-monday>

JG, March 18, Allen County Dept. of Health COVID-19 update

<https://www.journalgazette.net/article/20220318/WEB/220319853>

Adams Radio Group, March 18, Fort Wayne details plans for COVID stimulus money

<https://1039waynefm.com/fort-wayne-details-plans-for-covid-stimulus-money/>

WANE, March 16, Republic makes pitch for Fort Wayne trash and recycling contract

<https://www.wane.com/top-stories/republic-services-makes-pitch-for-fort-wayne-trash-and-recycling-contract/>

WPTA, March 16, Mayor Henry announces campaign to help Ukrainians through Poland sister city

<https://www.wpta21.com/2022/03/16/mayor-henry-announces-campaign-help-ukrainians-through-poland-sister-city/>

WFFT, March 16, Will higher gas prices lead more people to bike to work in Fort Wayne

https://www.wfft.com/news/local/will-higher-gas-prices-lead-more-people-to-bike-to-work-in-fort-wayne/article_f9e9f2b0-a599-11ec-b189-a33d0c30ecaa.html

United Way

Matthew Purkey, president and chief executive officer of United Way of Allen County, has resigned after two years, the agency announced Thursday.

Purkey will become vice president of regional operations with The Mission Continues, a national nonprofit that connects military veterans with new missions in under-resourced communities.

“Matthew has been a great asset to the United Way of Allen County team and a passionate community advocate with whom the organization has surpassed unprecedented milestones,” the agency said in a statement.

Purkey successfully led the recent community needs assessment and strategic planning process that produced United Way of Allen County's new priorities of educational opportunities, mental health access, food security and housing stability, the agency said. Purkey also convened and facilitated United Way of Allen County's Emergency Relief Fund, raising more than \$5 million to aid community members and organizations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Greg Johnson, longtime volunteer and current United Way of Allen County chief financial officer, will become interim CEO until a permanent replacement is identified. Board Chairman Don Cates will lead the nationwide hiring search.

“Matthew, a seasoned nonprofit professional, and U.S. Marine Corps veteran himself, has been offered a once-in-a-lifetime role that aligns perfectly with his passion, skill sets, experience, and expertise,” Cates said in the statement. “On behalf of the Board, we thank Matthew for his contributions to United Way of Allen County and wish him well in his future endeavors.” Purkey's last day was April 1.

Plan Commission

Wetlands and unsuitable soil held a 50-lot single-family housing development on East Till Road back from being discussed by the public Monday.

It was one of two projects – the other a mixed-use project on the east side of North Clinton Street – that was pulled from Fort Wayne Plan Commission's public hearing agenda.

Neighbors gave input at the hearing on two Fort Wayne projects – one to renovate the former Ward School into a health center and the other to develop land near the Poplar Ridge development and Menards off of Illinois Road.

Michelle Wood, a senior planner, said Granite Ridge Builders requested the development be pulled after finding out the site has more extensive wetlands and unsuitable soil.

The Cedar Grove project, proposed for the 100 block of East Till Road just west of Coldwater Road, had previously been postponed from the January public hearing.

Arneo, the mixed-use project on Clinton, sought an additional postponement through its attorney, Joshua Neal of Barrett McNagny of Fort Wayne because one of the main principals of the project was dealing with the death of a close family member.

Neal said some previously unknown site considerations had arisen, such as the need for a public street to go through the site, rendering seven acres unbuildable and increasing costs.

B1 Enterprises LLC had two rezoning requests for the land that is zoned for agricultural with low-intensity residential. The developer asked 138 acres be rezoned to planned residential and 64 acres to the neighborhood center.

Both requests were unanimously granted.

Ward School neighborhood residents said they do not oppose Neighborhood Health Clinics renovating and using the former Fort Wayne Community Schools building at 3501 Warsaw St. for a health center. The building has sat vacant for several years, they said.

But they presented a petition signed by 45 neighborhood residents with concerns about the main entrance being on Monroe Street and increased traffic on narrow residential streets. Monroe currently has parking on both sides and is too narrow to allow opposing vehicles to pass.

The residents also questioned whether the site's 83 parking spaces would be enough for 15 staff members and as many as 70 to 90 patients a day.

Henry Nadjeski, a Fort Wayne attorney representing Neighborhood Health Clinics, said moving the main entrance to the Warsaw Street side of the building is impractical because of the distance away from a traffic signal.

Andy Eckert, representing neighbors in the Poplar Ridge development, said the Bob Rohrman Toyota dealership plan is generally satisfactory after negotiating with the developers for some time. But he said the plan also would create a neighborhood "totally boxed in on all sides by a public street or a commercial business."

Eckert wants the plan commission to get a written commitment that the lots north of a service road that will be created by the project will not be developed in the future, he said.

He also shared concerns that two separate properties were being treated as one for rezoning.

If someone would want to develop the land currently owned by Menards, the neighborhood might not have input if the plan meets all requirements of the ordinance, he said.

"I think there was something overlooked here," Eckert said.

The Neighborhood Health Clinic and Rohrman proposals are scheduled to be voted on during the plan commission business meeting at 5:30 p.m. March 21.

All rezoning also has to be approved by the City Council.

New business

A defense industry company has chosen Fort Wayne for its first Midwest office. Pacific Defense, an electromagnetic spectrum operations tech company, will open its newest location at the Northeast Indiana Innovation Center.

Pacific Defense has had a presence in Fort Wayne since 2020 with local employees working remotely, delivering hardware and software solutions for the U.S. Department of Defense as well as defense contractors. Now, company leaders are uniting their Fort Wayne team under one roof intending to grow the local workforce in the coming years.

Plans call for Pacific to lease about 2,100 square feet of office and lab space at the innovation center, 3201 Stellhorn Road, adjacent to Purdue University Fort Wayne and Ivy Tech Community College.