

SUMMARIZATION OF MINUTES FOR THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

On **Thursday, September 11, 2025**, the Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Department, along with the Board of Park Commissioners, held their monthly Board meeting in Citizens Square Building, City of Fort Wayne/Allen County Council Discussion Room, (*Garden level*) Suite 30, 200 East Berry Street, Fort Wayne, IN 46802.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Justin Shurley, President, Mr. Cory Miller, Vice President, Mr. Richard Briley, Commissioner, and Mrs. Jenna Jauch, Commissioner.

PARKS STAFF PRESENT: Steve McDaniel, Harlean Falls, Rhonda Berg, Steve Schuhmacher, Kathy Pargmann, Jill Bowyer, David Weadock, Chad Shaw, April McCampbell, Dr. Nathaniel Cardelli, Derek Veit, Robert Hines, and Stacy Haviland.

Others in attendance were: Pat Stelte of the Allen County Public Library.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Board President Justin Shurley called the monthly Board meeting to order at 10:02 am.
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Board President Shurley called for approval of the minutes from the Thursday, August 14, 2025, meeting. VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Jauch seconded the motion to approve the minutes. The motion was duly carried. On file are the August 2025 Board minutes.
3. **PAYROLL & COMMERCIAL VOUCHERS:** Deputy Director Rhonda Berg requested the Board's approval of payroll and commercial vouchers. Included in the report are the number of full-time and part-time employees, for pay periods ending 07/03/25 and 07/18/25, account payables payment vouchers #1647 to #2081, with a Payroll Sub-Total of \$1,431,528.32. **NOTED** were various Parks Capital projects. The totals are in the Park General Fund, Park Trust Fund, Park Non-Reverting Operating Fund, Park Non-Reverting Capital Fund, Park Cumulative Building Fund, and Other City Funds, for Account Payables Total of \$3,905,804.60 and a total of \$5,337,332.92. Commissioner Jenna Jauch moved, and Commissioner Richard Briley seconded the motion. The motion was duly carried. On file is the signed, recorded document and the **July 2025** report.

4. **TRUST FUND DONATIONS:** Deputy Director Berg navigated the Board members through a listing of the donors, amounts, and purpose, along with donations, endowments, and grants from: Noted were donations from the National Christian Foundation to the General Park Areas on behalf of Mr. & Mrs. Michael Allison, from Sarah Nitza to the Lakeside Rose Garden and the Tree Canopy, from SeyferthPR, for a Dragon Boat Sponsorship, from Linda Gaff, to the General Trust of the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, from Fountain of Hope Home Care Services LLC to the Community Center's General Trust, from Lincoln Heritage Funeral Advantage, to the Community Center's General Trust, from Alicia McCarty memorial dedication -Bo Astrup, from Sally Barger, memorial dedication-Maralyn, Cash donations to the Lifetime Sports Academy, and Registration/Web Donations from: John and Laura Blum, Kendra Granados, Richard Grubaugh, Stephanie Mack and Christin Riemesch. All donations, and amounts received as of **July 2025 \$5,182.00, Franke Park Renaissance Reimbursements: Park Foundation Donors \$350,000.00** – Franke Park Renaissance Project (Total \$1,441,143.46). **Total year-to-date is \$1,091,143.46.** By acclamation, the Commissioners approved all donations and grants listed in the report. On file is the July 2025 Trust Fund Donations report.
5. **PARK PRIORITIES:** Deputy Director of Planning and Landscape, Chad Shaw, updated the Board with a few photos of the Riverfront construction site. Highlighted were planning and construction site projects at Riverfront Phase 2, along the paver esplanade area, between Harrison and Calhoun Streets, and the garden area toward Promenade Park. The paver esplanade area for pedestrians, a view of the Hammock Grove area, and the linear garden that collects stormwater. Progress continues with the development drawings for the Foster Park entrance project. The 2 neighborhood projects are completed for Brewer Park and Packard Park, with the finalization of the Splashpads in working order at the end of the season. We have issued a request for RFP for the Arid House gardens at the Botanical Conservatory, and we received a wide range of 13 submissions. We have reissued with a scope of work change.

Director McDaniel reported that the Splashpad in Headwaters Park is still under construction, and we have a final dedication possibly in the Spring of 2026.

6. **AGREEMENTS / FEES/ RESOLUTIONS / POLICY APPROVALS:**

A. Foellinger Freimann Botanical Conservatory Fee Recommendations for the Tulip B. Tree Gift Shop Sales – Dr. Nate Cardelli - Commissioner Jauch moved, and VP Miller seconded the motion to approve the proposed fee recommendations and consistent pricing structure for the Tulip Tree Gift Shop. The motion was duly carried. On file are the fee recommendations for the Botanical Conservatory Gift Shop Sales.

B. Foellinger Freimann Botanical Conservatory Café Fee Recommendations – Dr. Nate Cardelli - VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve the establishment of a flexible, food-service-specific pricing structure for the Café Flora in the Botanical Conservatory. The motion was duly carried. On file are the fee recommendations for Café Flora.

C. Community Center (Downtown) Fees - Deputy Reddinger - Commissioner Jauch moved and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve proposed fee recommendations for the Community Center (Downtown) rental rates effective September 11, 2025. The motion was duly carried. On file are the proposed rental fees.

D. Headwaters Park Ice Skating Rink and Rental Fees - Deputy Reddinger - Commissioner Jauch moved and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve the proposed fees for admission, skates, miscellaneous fees, and rentals both per day and per hour (Rothchild and Lincoln Financial Pavilions) for the Headwaters Park Ice Skating Rink, effective September 11, 2025. The motion was duly carried. On file are the fee recommendations.

E. Weisser Park Youth Center Rental Fees - Deputy Reddinger – VP Miller moved and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to set facility rental fees for the Weisser Park Youth Center. The motion was duly carried. On file is the fee structure, effective September 11, 2025.

7. BIDS / CONTRACT / CHANGE ORDER APPROVALS:

A. Change Order for the Fun Times Brochure Mail and Prep – Jill Bowyer, Manager/Marketing Graphic Design - Commissioner Briley moved and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve a contract with Tandem (aka) Anthony Wayne Rehabilitation Center, for an increase in mailings, postage, and for the handling of the quarterly Fun Times Parks & Recreation program and services brochure. The motion was duly carried. On file is the signed approval form and the Purchase Order.

B. 2025 Fall Tree Planting – Derek Veit, Superintendent/Arborist – After a brief discussion on the Citizens’ match program, VP Miller moved and Commissioner Jauch seconded the motion to approve a contract with Shade Trees Unlimited for the purchase and planting of 725 trees along our streets and within our parks. The motion was duly carried. On file are the signed approval form, a complete listing of 51 different species by name, cost, scope of work, service agreement, the signed approval form, and the contract.

C. McMillen Park Pool Liners Replacement Project #2025061 IB No.: 9833965 – Commissioner Briley moved, and Commissioner Jauch seconded the motion to approve the scope of work and contract with Natara Corporation. The motion was duly carried. On file are the contract, bid tabulation sheet, diagrams of all 3 pools to be serviced, and the signed approval form.

D. Salomon Farm Park Pasture Barn Utilities Project #2025060 ITB No.: 9853768 – David Weadock, Superintendent of Project Administration – Commissioner Briley and Commissioner Jauch seconded the motion to approve entering into a contract with Strebig Construction, for the scope of work, including interior and exterior, and boring utility lines from existing buildings on site to the pasture barn (eastside of the property). The motion was duly carried. On file are the bid tabulation sheet, the contract, and the signed approval form.

E. 2025 Parks Pavement Renovations Change Order #1 for Project #2025001 QuestCDN No.: 9487193 – **David Weadock, Superintendent of Project Administration** - VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Jauch seconded the motion to approve the scope of work that will generate an increase in the initial contract amount with T-E Incorporated. The motion was duly carried. On file is the original contract, the bid tabulation sheet, the signed Change Order, and the signed Board Approval form.

8. **Recreational Services Updates and Summer Highlights:** - Deputy Director Chuck Reddinger presented highlights and a fraction of summer programs, percentage of Staff, services, Aquatics, Youth Centers, Salomon Farm Park, the Community Center, Lindenwood Nature Preserve, food service/security, camps, new programs, Riverfront activities, events, the 27th year of the Lifetime Sports Academy (LSA), 78th year of Franke Park Day Camp was full all 6 weeks offered, and operational facility updates, for the primarily hot summer of 2025. The summer snapshot of events concluded with the following quote: “Remember the days of sun and laughter, as they will keep you warm all winter long.”

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no Public Comments during this meeting.

DIRECTOR’S COMMENTS: Director McDaniel and the Deputy Directors reported the following:

✚ Director McDaniel gave a “shout out, congratulations to the Project Administrative Team, and thank you” to all the Parks & Recreation Team who assisted and were a part of the Brewer Park, Packard Park, projects, and the Ribbon-Cutting ceremonies

✚ Senate Bill 1 will have an impact on the Department Budget for 2026, and the Budget has been submitted

✚ The Fall Fun Times Brochure is now available. Check the Department website as well

✚ Hurshtown fishing is still available and will close in October

✚ Concert on the Farm (Salomon Farm Park) is scheduled for September 28th

✚ Dinner in the Flower Fields is **SOLD OUT**

✚ The Johnny Appleseed Campgrounds are temporarily closed to accommodate the Annual Johnny Appleseed Festival

✚ World Rivers Day is scheduled for Saturday, September 27th, in Promenade Park

✚ Active Aging Week and the Halloween Haunt are scheduled for the (Downtown) Community Center in October

✚ The Administrative Office Staff and the (Downtown) Community Center Staff have been working to learn how to reconcile the 6 different types of credit card fees for the newly installed parking lot gate

- ✚ The Foellinger Theatre had a GREAT Concert Season with an attendance of 3352 people
- ✚ The Maintenance Crew is busy, will end of season mowing, and will switch over to leaf clean up
- ✚ Maintenance Techs and Skilled Carpenters are preparing for the next Foellinger Freimann Botanical Conservatory Showcase
- ✚ The Greenhouse is preparing plants for the Fall and Winter landscapes and showcases in various facilities, including the Poinsettias. Landscape crews continue with Fall maintenance
- ✚ The Riparian Crews hosted the Annual Day of Caring in Foster Park, with 77 adult volunteers participating for 4 hours of work, which equated to 308 volunteer work hours, covering over 75,000 square feet (1.7 acres). Crews cleared invasive honeysuckle with a chipper after the event, yielding approximately 7.5 tons of debris. Members of the Riparian Crew attend Purdue's "Securing the Land" training
- ✚ Our Forestry Team completed 85 out-of-cycle tree maintenance requests and responded to 63 storm-related broken/fallen/hanging limbs requests, responded to and closed 101 Calls generated from the 311 Call Center
- ✚ "...Something Blue" Showcase is still open, with the Bonsai Show (9/20), Pumpkin Patch Display (9/29), and Botanical Brew (10/3)
- ✚ Anna Harpe is the new Program Facility Coordinator in the Botanical Conservatory
- ✚ Gilbert Young has returned from his "westward journey" to secure plants and additions to the Arid House in the Foellinger Freimann
- ✚ The Marketing Team was a consistent presence during the Dragon Boat Festival
- ✚ Policy updates are now the responsibility of the Marketing Team
- ✚ Received 87 Media mentions, which include 10 interviews
- ✚ Jobs are still being posted, and we are still hiring, and many job opportunities for those aged 16 years and older are listed at www.fortwayneparks.org

COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS: Board President Shurley thanked the Recreation team for what they did during the 2025 summer and all year long, and commented on the transition of seeing the neighborhood Parks of Brewer and Packard Parks master plans come into fruition. Commissioner Jauch echoed the same sentiments, commenting, “Truly incredible, and the touching ceremonies and involvement of the neighborhoods.” Board President thanked the Staff for all that they do, and for allowing the Board of Park Commissioners to be a part of it all.

No further business was to come before the Board of Park Commissioners on Thursday, September 11, 2005, in the City Council Discussion Chambers of Citizens Square, Suite 30 (*garden level*), 200 East Berry Street, Fort Wayne, IN 46802. At 11:00 am, the meeting was adjourned.

CITY OF FORT WAYNE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

Justin Shurley, Board President

Cory Miller, Vice-President

Richard Briley, Commissioner

Jenna Jauch, Commissioner

Steve McDaniel, Director/Board Secretary

All documentation, correspondence, and prints/site plans presented at this meeting are on file in the office of the Parks and Recreation Department. This meeting was recorded by the Park staff and videotaped by Pat Stelte, Government Access Coordinator, in Television Services of the Allen County Public Library.

Here is the link to the Thursday, September 11, 2025, meeting online:
<https://acpl.viebit.com/watch?hash=rD6TTulCWiCZPxtZ>