

## SUMMARIZATION OF MINUTES FOR THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

On **Thursday, December 11, 2025**, the Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation Department, along with the Board of Park Commissioners, held their monthly Board meeting in the **Kessler Room** of the Foellinger-Freimann **Botanical Conservatory**, 1100 South Calhoun Street, Fort Wayne, IN 46802.

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

**ABSENT:** Mrs. Jenna Jauch, Commissioner

**PARKS STAFF PRESENT:** Steve McDaniel, Harlean Falls, Travis Roth, Nate Cardelli, Kathy Pargmann, Jill Bowyer, April McCampbell, Chris Rudolph, Chad Shaw, Stacy Haviland, David Weadock, Jason Smith, Daryn Schwartz, and Robert Hines.

**Others in attendance were:**

Réna Bradley, former president, representing the Mount Vernon Park Neighborhood Association, Allen Donnelly, representing Genesis Sod Farms, and Pat Stelte of the Allen County Public Library.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Board President Justin Shurley called the monthly Board meeting to order at 10:00 am.
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Board President Shurley called for approval of the minutes from the Thursday, November 6, 2025, meeting. Mr. Richard Briley, Commissioner, moved, and Mr. Cory Miller, Vice President, seconded the motion to approve the minutes. The motion was duly carried. On file are the November 2025 Board meeting 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 10/10/25 and 10/24/25, account payables payment vouchers #2820 to #3082, with a Payroll Sub-Total of \$1,095,305.85. **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 \$1,183,124.97 and a total of \$2,278,430.82. VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Richard Briley seconded the motion. The motion was duly carried. On file is the signed, recorded document and the **October 31, 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; Karen Surguine for the Headwaters Park Splashpad, National Christian Foundation Indiana to General Park Areas in Memorial of Mr. and Mrs. Michael Allison, Cindy Hensley, to the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory General Trust, Absolute Angels, At Home Healers Homecare LLC, Celebrate Seniors Living of Fort Wayne, Englewood Health & Rehab, Hearing Aids Plus, Indiana Donor Network and the Waters of Fort Wayne, all to the (Downtown) Community Center Active Aging Week. Hearing Aids Plus to the (Downtown) Community Center Lunch Sponsor, The Waters of Fort Wayne, (Downtown) Community Center-Veteran’s Day Breakfast, Holiday Dinner, Park Place Senior Living, (Downtown) Community Center – Senior Games, Cash Donations to the Lifetime Sports Academy, **Registration/Website Donations:** Allison Cunningham-General Park Areas/Youth Scholarship, Michelle Fraser – Lindenwood Nature Preserve/Rivergreenway, Patrick Gould, Laura Hartman, Michele Kadenko-Moniran and Steven Squires – Lindenwood Nature Preserve. YTD for 2025, \$1,319,260.46, Franke Park Renaissance Reimbursements: Fort Wayne Park Foundation Donors July-25 \$350,000.00, Grand Total Including Frank Park Renaissance Reimbursements \$1,669,260.46. President Shurley declared, by acclamation, that we accept all donations, totals, and amounts received as of **October 2025**. On file are all donations listed.

5. **PARK PRIORITIES:** Deputy Director of Planning and Landscape, Chad Shaw, updated the Board on the continued progress on Riverfront Phase II, with slow-going on-site work, due to the extreme changes in the weather, and Deputy Shaw continues to keep the Board up-to-date with any FEMA issues. Another source has been in communication with the Forster Park Entryway Project. The Wells Street Park Project, Hanna Homestead Project, and the Reservoir Project continue with communication with the Neighborhood Associations, with plans to RFP the projects in 2026.

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

- A. *Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory Exploration & Terrace Garden Design Contract – Superintendent Haviland* – VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve a contract with Merritt Chase for the scope of work to prepare conceptual and schematic designs, including surveys, geotechnical services, and marketing graphics for the Botanical Conservatory Exploration and Terrace Gardens Design. The motion was duly carried. On file are the terms of the contract and the score tabulation sheet.
- B. *Athletic Fees and Court Fees – Supervisor of Athletics, Aquatics, & Special Event-Daryn Schwartz* – VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve the 2026 Fee Recommendations for Athletic Fields and Courts. The motion was duly carried. On file are the fees and comparison pricing.
- C. *Aquatic Fees – Supervisor of Athletics, Aquatics, & Special Events – Daryn Schwartz* -- VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve the 2026 Aquatics Fees. The motion was duly carried. On file are the projected results, outcome, and the comparable aquatic facility pricing.
- D. *Golf (Foster/McMillen/Shoaff) Course Fees – Manager of Athletics, Aquatics, and Golf – Jason Smith* – VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve the 2026 fee recommendations for Golf Courses (Foster / McMillen / Shoaff), including any fees associated with the three (3) Park courses. The motion was duly carried. On file are the fee schedules.

7. **BIDS / CONTRACT / CHANGE ORDER APPROVALS:**

- A. *Golf Course Equipment - Smith / Roth* – Commissioner Briley moved, and VP Miller seconded the motion to approve a contract with Midwest Golf and Turf for eighteen (18) new golf carts, trading in twelve (12) 2015 carts. The motion was duly carried. On file are the quote, invoice, and product agreement. Additionally, VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to a purchase contract with Kenney Machinery for the purchase of one (1) Toro Reelmaster 3555 mower, one (1) Toro GM3500 mower, and one (1) Toro Procore 864 aerator for Foster and Shoaff Park Golf Courses. The motion was duly carried. On file are the quote, invoice, specifications sheets, and photos of the mowers.
- B. *Forestry Crane Repair – Roth* – VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve the repair of the Department’s large 20-ton Forestry Crane Truck (V0151), repair work to be completed by RPM Machinery, authorized to complete OSHA inspection repairs. The motion was duly carried. On file is the scope of work, the service estimate sheet, description of parts.
- C. *2026 Fun Times Brochure Mailing Bid – Bowyer* – Commissioner Briley moved, and VP Miller seconded the motion to approve the 2026 postage fee for the mailing for the prep and postage work to be completed by Anthony Wayne Rehabilitation (dba Tandem) of the Fun Times Brochure. The motion was duly carried. On file is the project narrative, printing/ mailing RFP for February, May, August, and November of 2026.
- D. *Bob Arnold/Northside Park Pool Sand Filter Project 2026004 RFQ 9957223 – Weadock* – VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve entering into a contract with Buddenbaum & Moore for the replacement of the main swimming pool sand filter in Bob Arnold/Northside Park. The motion was duly carried. On file is the scope of work, the quote tabulation sheet, and the contract.
- E. *Hanna Homestead Playground Project 2025069 – Weadock* – Commissioner Briley moved, and VP Miller seconded the motion to approve the removal of the existing playground equipment and safety surfacing and installation of new playground equipment and synthetic turf safety surfacing in Hanna Homestead Park, with work to be completed by PlayPros. The motion was duly carried. On file are the scope of work, the project summary, the contract, and the digital landscape structure sheets.
- F. *Franke Park Renaissance Project Change Order #1 – Schuhmacher* - VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve an additional amount to the contract with Michael Kinder & Sons for Change Order #1, PO# 23121146. The motion was duly carried. On file is the scope of work, the original contract, detailed request logs, and the change order.
- G. *Headwaters Park Fountain Design Project Change Order #1 – Schuhmacher* – With the project being 95% complete, Commissioner Briley moved, and VP Miller seconded the motion to approve change order #1, PO# 23121220, with an addition to the original contract with Grinsfelder Associates Architects. The motion was duly carried. On file is the scope of work, the original contact, the invoice, and the detailed change order.
- H. *Lawton Park Trestle Bridge Construction Change Order #1 – Shaw* – VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to accept a credit/decrease to the original contract amount with R. L. McCoy, Inc. The motion was duly carried. On file is the scope of work, contract, and change order.

8. **RECREATION HIGHLIGHTS:** - Deputy Director Chuck Reddinger recited the Mission Statement, and presented a pictorial overview, Staffing, highlights and updates of leisure services, outdoor recreation, and facilities. Also featured were community collaborations and partnerships, rentals, Golf operations, Sweet Breeze Canal Boat, owned by Friends of the Rivers, Camps,

programs, Headwaters Park & Ice Skating, classes, Lindenwood Nature Preserve, courts, fields, cultural components in our Youth Centers, Community Centers diversity, athletics, Hurshtown Reservoir, owned by City Utilities, aquatics, attendance, iconic areas that we maintain, Riverfront development, revenue, Johnny Appleseed Campground, the Travel Program, and special events, festivals, highlighting with appreciation the very necessary volunteers.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Rena Bradley, representing the Mount Vernon Park Neighborhood Association, came before the Board with a statement of gratitude for the Department's commitment to engaged Master Planning collaboration and work done in Brewer Park and Packard Park. Thanking the Staff for reflecting the heart and soul of our community, and wishing everyone happy holidays.

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

- ✚ Director McDaniel expressed a special thank you to the Staff, all Commissioners, and Volunteers for their time, participation, and all the ways they contributed to a successful 2025
- ✚ During the Warrior Breed Motorcycle club's press Conference, the Department was gifted a plaque and a new flagpole in Memorial Park on November 8, 2025
- ✚ On the Grand-Opening weekend for the [Academy Sports](#) retail store, 614 E Coliseum, invited 20 Youth from our Centers, on a shopping spree, donated \$5,000.00 to the Department. Both the Department's Staff and young people had a positive experience
- ✚ The Summit City Music Theatre is presenting [A Christmas Carol](#) at Salomon Farm Park, December 5 – 14
- ✚ Youth Centers and the McMillen Community Center will be participating in Toys for Tots
- ✚ Photos with Santa are scheduled on December 14<sup>th</sup> in Promenade Park
- ✚ The 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Winterval is scheduled for Saturday, January 24, in the Downtown areas, with the Community Center on Main Street, the Botanical Conservatory, Lindenwood Nature Preserve, Historic Fort Wayne, Allen County Public Library, Headwaters Park, the Fort Wayne Curling Club, and Heartland Mushers, hosting events, along with events in the Park Foundation Pavilion at Promenade Park
- ✚ Classes, Winter events, and the YLNI (Young Leaders of Northern Indiana) Market continue in Salomon Farm Park
- ✚ The November 4<sup>th</sup> Open-House for the Public to tour the McMillen Family Pavilion in Franke Park was well attended for the third time this year. Plans are being considered for the staff to host an open house in the McMillen Family Pavilion every quarter

- ✚ The garden plots at Foster Park West have been added to Rec Trac as an online process for renting to the Public, and the process is user-friendly
- ✚ Joana Garcia has assisted in other areas of the department with her bilingual skills in Spanish, assisting in creating a Social Media video
- ✚ Jarin Hart continues to work on the 2026 events, shows, and concert offerings and schedule
- ✚ Fort Wayne Newspapers awarded the Foellinger Outdoor Theatre as the “Best Place to Rock-N-Roll for 2025.”
- ✚ The most recent Showcase Garden exhibit was a collaborative effort with Maintenance, MT’s, Gardeners, and Botanical Conservatory Staff working together to create *Fern’s Fairylight Express*, based on the book by author **Talitha Shipman**. A book signing will be on December 20. The exhibit will be open for touring through April 12, 2026
- ✚ Grounds Crew is busy removing snow and deep cleaning the Pavilions
- ✚ Marketing is busy assisting in Press Conferences, securing sponsorships, and promoting donations
- ✚ The Riparian Team was awarded the **2025 IPRA Excellence in Resource Improvement** award
- ✚ \$1 Admission nights will continue through to the end of 2025
- ✚ Happy Holidays to ALL!
- ✚ 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](http://www.fortwayneparks.org)

**COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS:** President Shurley stated his agreement to keep the Golf Course fees affordable, and was “echoed” by VP Miller, thanking the Golf Committee for walking through all the variables, and all their work behind the scenes. All of the Commissioners expressed their gratitude to the Staff, and their contribution to the Community. VP Miller and Commissioner Briley all agreed that the Department is just like family.

No further business was to come before the Board of Park Commissioners on Thursday, November 6, 2025, in the Kessler Room of the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, 1100 South Calhoun Street, Fort Wayne, IN 46802. At 11:20 am, the meeting was adjourned.

## **CITY OF FORT WAYNE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS**

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**Justin Shurley, Board President**

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**Cory Miller, Vice-President**

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**Richard Briley, Commissioner**

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**Jenna Jauch, Commissioner**

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**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, December 11, 2025, meeting online:****

**<https://acpl.viebit.com/watch?hash=VaSs2kjLORl1Bh95>**