

SUMMARIZATION OF MINUTES FOR THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

The Board of Park Commissioners held its monthly Board meeting on Thursday, March 12, 2026. The meeting was held in the City Council Discussion Chambers Room 30 (garden level), Citizens Square Building, 200 East Berry Street, Fort Wayne, Indiana 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, Jason Smith, Rob Hines, Mike Gore, Kathy Pargmann, April McCampbell, Travis Roth, David Weadock, Gary Whitacre, Chad W. Shaw, Robert Schenkel, Stacy Haviland, Chuck Reddinger, Rhonda Berg, Steve Schuhmacher, and Dawn Ritchie.

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

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** After the Annual Organizational meeting, 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 Friday, February 6, 2026, meeting. Vice President Miller moved, and Commissioner Jauch seconded the motion to approve the minutes. The motion was duly carried. On file are the monthly Board minutes.
3. **PAYROLL & COMMERCIAL VOUCHERS:** Deputy Director Rhonda Berg requested the Board's approval of payroll and commercial vouchers. Included in the report is the number of full-time and part-time employees, for pay periods ending 01/02/26, 01/16/26, and 01/30/26, account payables payment vouchers #0001 to #0095, with a Payroll Sub-Total of \$1,500,561.68. **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 \$1,246,142.52 and a total of \$2,746,704.20. VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve the Payroll and Commercial voucher payments as examined and listed in the signed, recorded document. The motion was duly carried. On file are the **January 2026** financial reports.
4. **TRUST FUND DONATIONS:** Deputy Berg navigated the Board members through a listing of the donors, amounts, and purpose, along with donations, endowments, and grants from; AWS/WindSwell Foundation, The Journal Gazette Foundation, John S. & James L. Knight Foundation, National Christian Foundation Indiana, English-Bonter-Mitchell Foundaton, Magee-O'Connor Foundation, Ann Foster, Cash Donations, The Elex/Biggs T C Development LLC, Allen County Public Library, Google Inc., Goodwill Industries of Northeast Indiana, Inc., Life Care Center of Fort Wayne/Hendricks County Hospital McMahan's Bet-One Tire and Auto Center,

Register/Web Donations: Julie Esslinger, Heather Stevens and Jessica Waggoner, were received as of **January 31, 2026 - YTD \$211,366.00**. By acclamation, the Board accepted the Trust Fund Donations report.

5. **NON-REVERTING BUDGETS (Capital and Operating):** Deputy Berg presented to the Board the Non-Reverting Capital and Operating Budgets for each cost center, with a brief explanation of the formulation, purpose, budgeted transfer-in taxpayer dollars, and total expenditures of each non-reverting-fund-account. Commissioner Jauch moved, and VP Miller seconded the motion to approve the non-reverting (aka a spending plan) budgets for 2026. The motion was duly carried. On file is each budget as listed

6. **PARK PRIORITIES:** Deputy Director of Planning and Landscape, Chad Shaw, briefly updated the Board on the progress and planning on the Riverfront Phase II paving, electrical work, walks, paths, earthwork around the MLK Bridge, scope and cost changes in the updated construction schedule due to the weather with Hagerman Construction, AEP, and the Foster Entrance Project budget is coming into focus. Also, progress was reported on the prepping for the design contract for Hanna Homestead Park, as funding for the design work was received through the |Community Foundation, and we met with Community Stakeholders and our Marketing Team. Reservoir Mater Plan met with the Steering Committee. We had the “Kick-Off” meeting with the design team, and an all-day workshop has been scheduled with the Botanical Conservatory Staff. The Wells Street Park project received a handful of comments on the City’s Engage Page, and Superintendent Stacy Haviland will follow through on the input received.

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

A. **Duck Street Temporary Construction Easement- Shaw** - Commissioner Jauch moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve the request of a temporary construction easement for all infrastructure and landscape work associated with the Lofts at Headwaters construction project within the Duck Street ROW and adjacent to the Headwaters Park parking lot. The motion was duly carried. On file are the signed Project Summary, the Right-of-Entry Agreement, and area maps.

B. **Trail and Park Ordinance – McDaniel/Shaw** – VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve an update to the definitions of Chapter 97.74 with references to bicycle, e-bicycles, sizes of other vehicles, other power-driven mobility devices (OPDMD), toy vehicles, safety etiquette, general regulations, and penalties. The motion was duly carried. On file is the City Council approval and the Ordinance defining Chapters 97 and 74.

C. **2026 Summer Day Camp Fees – Reddinger/Lamb** Commissioner Jauch moved and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve the June-August youth programs and fees introduced in the Summer Camp Brochure, for Franke Park Day Camp, Salomon Farm Park-Farmin Fun Day Camp, PODS (*Positive Outdoor Days of Summer*), and the Zoo Camp, are highlighted in the Brochure, promoted electronically, social media and post card mailings. Additionally, the Board approved the authority to modify, adjust, and add programs (and their associated fees if applicable) with written approval from the Deputy Director or Director. The motion was duly carried. On file is the Summer 2026 Summer Day Camp Programs Brochure.

- D. *Sweet Breeze Fees - Reddinger* - Deputy Director Reddinger, as he offered a brief introduction of the purpose of the shared partnership with Friends of the Rivers, the collaborative operation to build an efficient crew, and requested the Board's approval of fee recommendations for the Sweet Breeze Canal Boat 2026 season. The Manager of Outdoor Recreation and Boating, Eden Lamb, shared a few challenges, such as moving the boarding location due to high water levels, as the rivers are unpredictable, and then requested the Board's approval of the 2026 Fee Schedule. VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve the fee recommendations for the 2026 Sweet Breeze canal boat. The motion was duly carried. On file is a breakdown for ticket prices, tours, Catering, Security, and other fees associated with the 2026 Sweet Breeze canal boat season fees.
- E. *Golf Lesson Rates – Smith/Whitacre* – VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Jauch seconded the motion to approve the suggested rate structure change for the McMillen/Shoaff/Foster Park Golf Courses golf instructions. The motion was duly carried. On file are the 2026 Fee Recommendations for a single and series contracted golf lesson for adults and junior golf lessons.

8. BIDS / CONTRACT / CHANGE ORDER APPROVALS:

- A. *March 2026 Vehicle Purchase – Roth* - Commissioner Briley moved, and Commissioner Jauch seconded the motion to approve the 2026 Equipment and Vehicle purchases, to replace existing equipment and vehicles for the daily operations of the Department, based on the condition rating of existing equipment and vehicles and mission changes. The motion was duly carried. On file is a vehicle and equipment listing, photos, 2026-2030 Capital Improvement Program Project Title and Description, and the signed Approval Form.
 - B. *Kreager Park Tennis Courts Recoating – Weadock* - Commissioner Jauch moved, and VP Miller seconded the motion to approve through the Public Bid process a contract with K&M Asphalt Sealing Maintenance Inc., for the renovation of eight tennis courts located at Kreager Park. The motion was duly carried. On file is the bid tabulation, the contract, the scope of work, and the signed Approval Form.
 - C. *Parks Paving Projects – Weadock*- VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve a contract with Wayne Asphalt for the annual paving project for 2026 to include road, parking lot, and trail work at Bloomingdale, Foster, Franke, Foellinger Theatre, Johnny Appleseed Parks, and Salomon Farm Park. The motion was duly carried. On file is the bid tabulation sheet, the contract, the scope of work, and the signed Approval form.
9. **EMPLOYEE VIDEO/YEAR IN REVIEW:** Manager of Development, Rob Hines, presented a video highlighting each department, several facility upgrades, renovations, new structures, events, Staff, Volunteers, achievements, awards, various Parks, Lindenwood Nature Preserve, Foellinger Theatre, Headwaters Park Ice Skating Ring, Golf Courses, Youth Centers, Community Centers, Camps, Aquatics, Lifetime Sports Academy, displays, Tours, participants, Press Conferences, use of vehicles and equipment, and collaborative efforts for a year in review of 2025. This video can be viewed on the Department website with a link to YouTube.

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

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

- ✚ Director McDaniel acknowledged the presence of Dawn Ritchie, thanking her for all her efforts and work on the trails and the Rivergreenway
- ✚ Most of the Golf Staff have been hired and trained
- ✚ Director McDaniel thanked the Staff for the completion and distribution of the Department Annual Report for 2025
- ✚ Renovations and changes to the Desert House inside the Botanical Conservatory will be featured during the 1:00 pm Press Conference on March 26.
- ✚ The 2025 Employee of the Year went to both Nicole Roth (Lawton) and Neil Miller (Recreation)
- ✚ A very successful year for the Headwaters Park Ice Skating Rink
- ✚ The HR Department of the City has improved the online applications for an easier process
- ✚ The open-house and facility tour offering for the new McMillen Family Pavilion in Franke Park may have a weekend date in the future.
- ✚ Kansas and 38 Special Concerts are on sale
- ✚ House lighting project at the Foellinger Outdoor Theatre is almost completed
- ✚ Crews are preparing equipment for the Spring and Summer season
- ✚ In anticipation of the Board meeting, Deputy Director Schuhmacher thanked Superintendent Mike Gore and Crew for the fresh coat of paint and new fans in Franke Pavilion #1.
- ✚ New pool liners are being installed
- ✚ Facility Crews and Landscape Crews are completing annual cleanings
- ✚ Riparian Crew has taken care of maintenance on land and barge maintenance
- ✚ Contracted Street removal is in process
- ✚ The Great Train Connection, Bunny Tails, and a volunteer celebration and appreciation are scheduled for the Botanical Conservatory
- ✚ Camp registration will begin on March 23
- ✚ The Department has received the Tree City USA Award for the past 35 years, and the Growth Award for the 20th year on Arbor Day
- ✚ 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 inquired about the progress of the Headwaters Park Fountain Project and the possible completion date for usage. President Shurley encouraged the Public to participate in early Camp registration and expressed the need for hiring additional Staff to facilitate programs and services. Commissioner Jauch inquired about the Sweet Breeze Tours, which explained that Community Tours will run on non-prime days, Monday-Wednesday. The Board President thanked all who participated in the approximately 500 golf lessons held in 2025. Also, the Board noted and acknowledged that Department vehicles and equipment are consistently used when there is inclement weather and/or significant storm damage within the City.

No further business was to come before the Board of Park Commissioners, on Thursday, March 12, 2026, in Franke Park Pavilion #1, 3411 Sherman Blvd., Fort Wayne, IN 46808. At 11:12 am, the meeting was adjourned.

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

Justin Shurley, 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 & Recreation 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, March 12, 2026, meeting online:

<https://acpl.viebit.com/watch?hash=aRLRwBjJaalp0Eh4>

