

## SUMMARIZATION OF MINUTES FOR THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS



The **Board of Park Commissioners** held its monthly Board meeting on **Thursday, April 9, 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, Mike Gore, Rhonda Berg, Steve Schuhmacher, David Weadock, Gary Whitacre, Chad W. Shaw, Stacy Haviland, Chuck Reddinger, and Dr. Nate Cardelli.

***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 10:00 am.
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Board President Shurley called for approval of the minutes from the Thursday, March 12, 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 02/13/26 and 02/27/26, account payables payment vouchers #0096 to #0339, with a Payroll Sub-Total of \$984,906.42. ***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 \$1,285,360.04, and a total of \$2,270,266.46. VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Jauch 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 **February 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 the following donations and grants from: Judi Cox-Lawton Greenhouse and the Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory General Trust, National Christian Foundation, Indiana – General Park Areas, in Memorial of Mr. & Mrs. Michael Allison, Needham & Associates, Inc. – Dragon Boat Races, James McClung, Elizabeth Mendez, and Physicians Health Plan of Northern Indiana, Inc. – Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory General Trust, Absolute Angels, AWS/WindSwell Foundation, Englewood Health & Rehab, Indiana Donor Network, and Senior Information Fair, Inc. – Community Center (233 W Main St.) Bingo, Sensory Clubhouse, Cornhole, Lunch Sponsor and

General, Kathleen Halbach and Ronald Rami – Winterval, Design Collaborative and Indiana Donor Network – Winterval, Register/Web Donations: Linda Colglazier, Amanda Fleith Faria, Tracie Luley, Melissa Schwartz, and Evelyn Silver – General Park Areas, Tom Dwire, Tracie Luley, and Lelia Vaden – Salomon Farm Park, and Melissa Schwartz, Community; were received as of **February 28, 2026 – \$53,842.27, Franke Park Renaissance Reimbursements: Park Foundation Donors** (Franke Park Renaissance Project) **\$50,000.00 YTD \$265,208.27, Grand Total including the Franke Park Renaissance Reimbursements, \$315,208.27.** By acclamation, the Board accepted the Trust Fund Donations report.

5. **PARK PRIORITIES:** Deputy Director of Planning and Landscape, Chad Shaw, updated the Board on the construction of Riverfront Phase 2B progress, construction continues, with weather challenges, and the coordinating efforts of AEP on-site work continue with the Army Corps permit, plans are being formulated for a tour of the area, and the move of the Depot by the Redevelopment Commission. Meetings have resumed with the Foster Park Entrance Project and the phasing plan. Hanna Homestead RFP will be issued today. Superintendent Stacy Haviland is coordinating final design work for Wells Street Park. Master Plan efforts for the Reservoir Park continue. A vision workshop was held with the Consultants and the Staff in the Botanical Conservatory for the Terrace Garden Exploration Garden Redesign project.

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

A. *NIPSCO Temporary Easement - Schuhmacher* - VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve the request of a temporary construction easement requested by NIPSCO Gas Company at Kreager Park, in the (see site map) location area, to conduct gas utility work on the existing gas line. The easement shall be in place for a period of twelve (12) months from the date of approval by the Board of Park Commissioners. As payment for any damage that may be incurred from the project, NIPSCO offers an up-front payment to the Board of Park Commissioners of \$1,000.00 for this temporary easement. The motion was duly carried. On file are the signed Project Summary, the signed Agreement, and the area maps.

B. *Mother's Day Plant Sale Fees – Haviland/Cardelli* – Commissioner Jauch moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve the fee recommendations for the Botanical Conservatory Annual Mother's Day Plant Sale, to establish and simplify a pricing multiplier of no less than 2.0 times the acquisition and labor cost is applied, with prices rounded up to the nearest \$0.95, to ensure a sustainable margin that supports ongoing program operations. The motion was duly carried. On file are the fee recommendations for the 2026 Annual Mother's Day Plant Sale

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

A. *Playgrounds Communication Panels – Superintendent of Administration, Dave Weadock* - Commissioner Jauch moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve the scope of work, purchase and installation of a Game Time brand Communication Panel inclusivity design tool at twenty park playgrounds, to include a full English alphabet, allowing visitors to easily express their needs, preferences and emotions by identifying playground areas, activities, or feelings, spelling out more specific messages; entering into a contract with Sinclair Recreation. The motion was duly carried. On file are the contract, signed Purchasing Approval form, a single proposal, and a complete listing of all park playground locations.

- B. *Foster Park Golf Design Architectural Services – Weadock* – VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve the scope of work, including architectural services for the development of a new practice facility at Foster Park Golf Course, a new amenity, in the form of a full-size driving range, entering into a contract with Hills Forrest Smith. The motion was duly carried. On file are the contract, agreement with proposal summary, and the signed Purchasing Approval form.
- C. *Foster Park Golf Permitting Services – Weadock* - Commissioner Briley moved, and Commissioner Jauch moved to approve the engineering services required for the floodway permitting process as it pertains to the development of a new practice facility at Foster Park Golf Course, entering into a contract with Engineering Resources, Inc. The motion was duly carried. On file are the signed Purchasing Approval form, the contract, and the single proposal.

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

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

- ✚ The Press Conference for the Desert House, to showcase the renovations, went GREAT!
- ✚ Mr. Gilbert Young, Superintendent, Botanical Conservatory, was the most recent Parks Department Podcast Guest, with host Director Steve McDaniel
- ✚ In the absence of Marketing Lead, Kathy Pargmann; Director Steve McDaniel reports on:  
Web Statistics continue to climb with 162,649 hits in March
- ✚ The Marketing Team has formulated brochures for the Senior Games and Learn to Swim
- ✚ 10 Media interviews were arranged, and 66 Media mentions in March
- ✚ 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)
- ✚ The new system for the hiring process, initiated by the City's HR Department, is user/employee-friendly, and encourages seasonal and part-time candidates to apply for positions
- ✚ May 2<sup>nd</sup> is the date for the McMillen Park Community Center E
- ✚ Summer programs have been submitted for the Summer (June/July/August) Fun Times Brochure, scheduled to be distributed on May 5<sup>th</sup>
- ✚ Boats will be launched in May
- ✚ Hursttown Reservoir will be opening soon, and registration for Camps is going well with some

sessions full, generating a “wait list” for many sessions.

- ✚ Goat Yoga at Salomon Farm Park will begin on May 2
- ✚ Camp registration online went “amazing” this year. Parents are encouraged to register early
- ✚ The Youth Scholarship program, which is \$75.00 per child, per household, per year, giving our financial Staff the ability to identify, verify, and credit (*can only be used for scholarships*) the account of each Youth Scholarship applicant who has a child in their household that also qualifies for free or reduced school lunch
- ✚ Key Staff for the Foellinger Outdoor Theatre hired this season has been successful in placing individuals in positions with experience and a passion for their skill set and abilities
- ✚ Our employee count is steadily rising
- ✚ New Concerts this summer are: Little River Band – June 12<sup>th</sup>, the Ghost Busters (experience) – October 10
- ✚ Spring has sprung as Crews are mowing, maintenance Technicians are preparing seasonal facilities, turning on water, working on pools, splashpads, as our Cleaning Crews are busy with equipment and facilities are in preparation for the coming season
- ✚ Landscapers are busy bedding, mulching, preparing for Spring, and Gardners are cleaning up after the most recent storm.
- ✚ We welcome a new full-time Gardner at Riverfront
- ✚ The Greenhouse is supporting the Botanical Conservatory Staff in preparation for the “Grow It” School program
- ✚ Riparian Crew continues with the Riverbank clean-up, and docks are scheduled to be out in approximately one week
- ✚ The Forestry division responded to 89 storm-related fallen/hanging limbs, 100 high-priority trees were removed by in-house crews, 74 of which were due to storm damage, 4 were a result of vehicle damage, and 26 of these were in our Parks
- ✚ The Bunny Tails event was experienced with over 3,000 attendees
- ✚ The Slightly Used Bulb sale continues along with the Color in Motion: Spring Artisan Market on April 26 at the Botanical Conservatory
- ✚ The Great Train Connection exhibit and event to place with over one thousand attendees
- ✚ Upcoming events: are the Annual Mother’s Day Plant Sale, Spring Bonsai Show, and the Iris Flow Show, and the last days for the Fern’s Fairylight Express showcase are slowly coming to an end

**COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS:** Board President Justin Shurley thanked everyone and reminded all that the next scheduled Board of Park Commissioners meeting will be held on **Wednesday, May 20, at 9:00 am**, instead of 10:00 am, in **Citizens Square**.

No further business was to come before the Board of Park Commissioners, on Thursday, April 9, 2026, Room 30 of the Citizens Square Building, 200 East Berry Street, Fort Wayne, IN 46802. At 10:35 am, the meeting was adjourned.

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

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**Justin Shurley, 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 & 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, April 9, 2026, meeting online:**

<https://acpl.viebit.com/watch?hash=iH3qJBbUtgNm6ZcU>

