

SUMMARIZATION OF MINUTES FOR THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS



The Board of Park Commissioners held its monthly Board meeting on **Wednesday, May 20, 2026**. At 9:00 am, 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, Rhonda Berg, Rob Hines, Steve Schuhmacher, David Weadock, Travis Roth, Kathy Pargmann, April McCampbell, David Weadoc, Chad W. Shaw, and Chuck Reddinger.

Others in attendance were Mr. Rick Schuiteman, Fort Wayne Zoo, and Mr. Patrick Stelte of the Allen County Public Library.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Board President Justin Shurley called the monthly Board meeting to order at 9:00 am.
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Board President Shurley called for approval of the minutes from the Thursday, April 9, 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 03/13/26 and 03/27/26, account payables payment vouchers #0340 to #0596, with a Payroll Sub-Total of \$984,906.29. **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 \$1,560,793.71, and a total of \$2,554,758.00. Commissioner Jauch 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 **March 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 a complete listing, which is on file. Received as of **March 31, 2026 – \$21,624.27, Franke Park Renaissance Reimbursements: Park Foundation Donors** (Franke Park Renaissance Project) **\$50,000.00 YTD**

\$286,832.54, Grand Total including the Franke Park Renaissance Reimbursements, \$336,832.54. 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 and planning efforts. Riverfront Phase II hardscape construction continues until AEP moves out of the area. West of the Wells Street Bridge, the new “Eddy” development and easement agreement will be presented to the Board in June. Work continues on the north lawn area, near Clinton and the MLK Bridge, and foundations are in for the Amphitheatre seating. We have received 14 RFPs for the new design proposal for Hanna Homestead Park and will review and present during the next Board meeting. We continue to work with the Communication Foundation for fundraising efforts for this project. Foster Entrance Project, we are still in talks with the Design Team and City Utilities on specific changes. We continue to be in communication with the Steering Committee for the Reservoir Park Master Plan Project. The architectural concepts and landscape concepts have been reviewed by the Design Team and Staff for the Botanical Conservatory’s Exploration and Terrace Project. We are hopeful of getting into the bidding process for Wells Street Park. As a collaborative effort, we have been working with the Public Arts Commissioner on the “Shout Out” project, as we plan a visit to the city with an Artist from South America, to install Art in REA Park. Invitations will be mid-June.

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

A. *Glorious Gates (G2) Dock Agreement - Reddinger*- VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Jauch seconded the motion to approve a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), as a renewal of a previous agreement from 2021, for the purchase of the Dock in Shoaff Park, with Glorious Gate Rowing Association, Inc. The motion was duly carried. In our files are the signed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) effective dates, terms, both aerial and land photos, and an area map.

B. *Johnny Appleseed Festival Barn Lease Agreement – Reddinger* – Commissioner Jauch moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve the Real Estate Lease with Johnny Appleseed Festival Inc. The motion was duly carried. On file are the signed Real Estate Lease agreement effective dates, terms, and conditions.

C. *Summer 2026 (June/July/August) Fun Times Brochure - Reddinger* – For public notification, Commissioner Briley moved, Commissioner Jauch seconded the motion to approve the fee recommendations for the 2026 Summer (June, July and August) Fun Times Brochure as presented with 434 fee based programs, also granting the permission and authority of the Deputy Director and/or Director to be responsive to unforeseen circumstances such as health emergencies, severe weather, etc., to modify, adjust and add programs (and their associated fees if applicable) with written approval. The motion was duly carried. On file are the electronic approvals from each Board member, the approved fee recommendations, and the 2026 Summer Fun Times Brochure.

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

A. *Spring 2026 Vehicle & Equipment Auction - Roth* - Commissioner Briley moved, and Commissioner Jauch seconded the motion to approve the disposal of four (4) vehicles, five (5) mowers, 1 tractor, 1 green aerator, and other pieces of equipment through the City’s new online Auction company, completely vetted by the Purchasing Department. On file are the signed

Purchasing Approval form, a complete listing, and photos of all the Spring 2026 excess vehicles and equipment to be disposed of.

B. *Botanical Conservatory Roof Glass Project – Weadock* – Commissioner Briley moved, and Commissioner Jauch seconded the motion to approve the scope of work for the annual project to replace twenty-five tempered glass panels in the Foellinger Freimann Botanical Conservatory roof structures of the Showcase, Tropical, and Arid areas; requesting the approval of a contract with O’Neil’s Glass. The motion was duly carried. On file is the signed Purchasing Project Summary form, the contract, proposal letter, conditions, and terms.

C. *Foellinger Outdoor Theatre House Lighting Project – Weadock* – VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve Change Order #1 – Project #2025049, for an additional amount to the contract with Ross Electrical Contracting, LLC. The motion was duly carried. On file is the original contract, the scope of work, and the signed change order.

D. *McMillen Park Pool Liner Project – Weadock* – VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve an increase in the original contract amount with Natare Corporation, for the installation of a new PVC membrane liner system in the main lap pool, diving well, and wading pool at the McMillen Park Aquatic Center, in McMillen Park. The motion was duly carried. On file are the signed Purchasing Approval form, the contract, and the signed change order.

8. **FORT WAYNE ZOO** – Rick Shuiteman, Director, narrated for the Board a Power slide presentation, highlighting the mission statement, 2025 year in review, challenges, partnerships, collaborative efforts with Blue Jacket, events, revenue, completion of capital projects, attendance, Staff and event photos, camps, field trips, along with the 2026 goals, expectations, new animals, exhibits, programs, services, calendar schedules, construction of a new barn to house animals for the winter, the retirement of the gas train engine (replaced), National exposure of a WANE-TV segment on the Kelly Clarkson Show, ticketing program, extended hours, annual Zoo for All Non-profit program, grant school program, certified and designated Autism program location, better communications for the public, and survey ratings. Additionally, the Fort Wayne Zoo is formally signed to help support the AZA SAFE (Save Animals From Extinction) program’s location, focusing on pollinators and other regional conservation priorities for the Songbirds, Monarch Butterflies, and Sea Turtles. Concluding with awards, recognitions, educational programs, and Teen, Leadership, Home School, and the rearing of other animals for various other Zoo locations.

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

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

- ✚ The Headwaters Park Fountain is now active, in line with the same hours of operation as other Splashpads throughout the City.

- ✚ MSKTD and Associated submitted for recognition of the project in Packard Park, and we are Department is the recipient of 2 Awards from the Building Contractors of Northeast Indiana
- ✚ June 1 at 9:30 am, we will have a Press Conference to kick off the 47th Annual Senior Games at 233 West Main Street – Community Center – Downtown
- ✚ Splashpads are open, LSA, Learn to Swim, and major programs will open the first week of June
- ✚ An information session will be held this evening at 6 pm, distributing information on participating in The Dragon Boat Festival in August.
- ✚ We currently have 284 individuals on Staff, the number of seasonal Staff applying to work at the Foellinger Outdoor Theatre was impressive
- ✚ We are grateful that all the lighting projects at the Foellinger Outdoor Theatre are complete
- ✚ Our Crews are busy with ALL components of the Parks Maintenance Division
- ✚ Landscape and Greenhouse Crews have been busy, along with the “Grow It!” program
- ✚ A total of 3,175 bulbs were grown for exhibits, showcases, and the Botanical Conservatory’s Gift Shop, and the Community Centers
- ✚ The Color in Motion Exhibit will conclude on June 21
- ✚ We had 29 Field Trips to the Botanical Conservatory
- ✚ Back To Our Roots, branded as a small acoustic musical set by local Musicians, has been scheduled for the summer, on Thursdays – a revamp of the tradition Roots Concert series.
- ✚ Two new Interns have been added to the Marketing Team – Pierre Loya and Micah Carlson
- ✚ Rob Hines has written a blog about our Youth Scholarship program
- ✚ We had 70 media mentions in April
- ✚ June 6th, marking the 2nd Annual Electric Riverfront in Promenade Park
- ✚ We are still hiring, and many job opportunities for those aged 16 years and older are listed at www.fortwayneparks.org
- ✚ Upcoming events: are the
- ✚ The next scheduled Board of Park Commissioners meeting will be held on **Thursday, June 11**, at 10:00 am, in **Citizens Square**

- ✚ **COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS:** Board President Justin Shurley mentioned the MOA with Glorious Gates Association, Inc. (G2) is another good collaboration with a community organization, along with the great opportunity to lease a barn for the Johnny Appleseed Festival, and thanked everyone, Parks Staff, and the Community. Commissioner Briley commented on the number of visits to the City’s Parks in April. We are able to measure attendance at 80 of our parks. Unfortunately, we cannot measure all locations due to some restrictions from Placer AI.
 - These 80 parks had **542K** visits for April
 - The Top 3 Locations: Franke Park (96K visits), Foster Park (56K visits), Kreager Park (51K visits)

No further business was to come before the Board of Park Commissioners, on Wednesday, May 20, 9, 2026, Room 30 of the Citizens Square Building, 200 East Berry Street, Fort Wayne, IN 46802. At 10:05 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 Wednesday, May 20, 2026, meeting online:

<https://acpl.viebit.com/watch?hash=lu3Ol6oS3SOB9bb>

