SUMMARIZATION OF MINUTES FOR THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

The **Board of Park Commissioners** held its monthly Board meeting on **Thursday, September 10, 2026.** At 10:00 am, the meeting was held in the City Council Discussion Chambers (garden level) of the Citizens Square building, Suite 030, 200 East Berry 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, and Steve Schumacher, Deputy Director.

PARKS STAFF PRESENT: Steve McDaniel, Harlean Falls, Kathy Pargmann, Rhonda Berg, Chad W. Shaw, Derek Veit, April McCampbell, Stacy Haviland, Dave Weadock, Chuck Reddinger, and Rob Hines.

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

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** **Bo**ard President Justin Shurley called the monthly Board meeting to order at 10:00 am.

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Board President Shurley called for any questions, corrections, and/or approval of the minutes from the Thursday, August 13, 2026, meeting. Board Vice President Cory Miller moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded. The motion was duly carried. The monthly Board minutes are on file.

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 07/03/26, 07/17/26, and 07/31/26, accounts payable payment vouchers #1613 to #1940, with a Payroll Sub-Total of $2,196,990.08. ***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 Accounts Payable Total of $2,956,593.92, and a total of $5,153,583.00. Commissioner Briley moved, and VP Miller 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. **July 2026** financial reports are on file.

4. **TRUST FUND DONATIONS:** Deputy Berg navigated the Board members through a listing of the donors, amounts, and purpose, along with cash donations, registration/Web donations, endowments, and grants; a complete listing is on file. Received as of **July 2026 Totals - $19,469.19– $50,000.00; Franke Park Renaissance Reimbursements:** Fort Wayne Park Foundation Donors February-26. **Grand Total Including Franke Park Renaissance Reimbursements: $905,316.33. YTD $855,316.33.** By acclamation, the Board accepted the Trust Fund Donations; the complete listing is on file.

5. **PARK PRIORITIES:** Mr. Chad W. Shaw, Deputy Director of Planning, Landscape, Horticulture, Forestry, Riparian and the Botanical Conservatory, came before the Board to share information, inform, and answer any questions on the progress of Riverfront Phase II, major projects and new project proposals. Northeast from Harrison Street is largely complete, with the bio-swale clean-up, plantings, and installation of drinking fountains. Paving and lighting continue, along with seeding and looking at an increase in the contract amount due to design changes and improvements based on AEP's necessary specifications late spring in 2027. Construction changes on the Foster Park entrance design project will be forthcoming with additions, and the Hanna Homestead project is well underway, with additional communications with the East Central Neighborhood Association on the Pavilion and fundraising for the park. We are looking at a final draft to submit a new proposal to the Wildwood Neighborhood Association for a light Cultural Landscape report, looking at Rockhill and Wildwood Parks collectively. The Team for the Exploration Garden project continues to work ahead, as we look forward to the final schematic design, final renderings, and then we as a team will start working toward fundraising.

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

A. *North Highlands Neighborhood Mural MOU (Hamilton Park Mural) – **Shaw***
VP Miller moved, Commissioner Briley seconded, a motion to approve a proposal from artist Suzanne Rhee, the Public Arts Commission process, the scope of work, and the MOU with North Highlands Neighborhood Association for the Hamilton Park Mural. The motion was duly carried. On file are the signed project summary form, scope of work, the summary, and the signed MOU.

B. *City Utilities MOU (West Jefferson Outfall)* **- Haviland** Commissioner Briley moved, VP Miller seconded, to approve the scope of work, proposed installation, summary of work, and the MOU between the Division of City Utilities, by and through its Board of Stormwater Management, regarding the replanting of trees following the West Jefferson Blvd. for the Storm Outfall project. The motion was duly carried. On file are the signed project summary form, the MOU, and the signed and recorded Utility Easement Agreement.

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

A. *2026 Tree Planting - **Veit***–
VP Miller moved, Commissioner Briley seconded, and the motion was approved to approve the scope of work for the 2026 Fall Tree Planting project for 805 trees (221 trees are through the Citizens matching program) with 39 different varieties, entering into a contract with Fort Wayne Trees. The motion was duly carried. On file are the signed approval form, the bid tabulation sheet, the contact, the tree names, unit cost in Street or Park, and the tree grates if necessary.

B. *General Lawton Monument Restoration Contract – **Shaw***– VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve a contract with Conservation of Sculpture and Objects Studio, Inc., the scope of work for cleaning via laser ablation, patination, and waxing/coating; cleaning of the stone base; and recreation of the missing scabbard and its attachment for the monument located in Lakeside Park. The motion was duly carried. On file are the signed approval form, the contract, service agreement, and waiver letter for the quote process for the restoration of the General Henry W. Lawton monument.

C. *Foster Park Entrance Design Contract Change Order #1 –* ***Shaw*** – VP Miller moved, and Commissioner Briley seconded the motion to approve an increase to the contract with Earth Source, Inc., for scope of work changes, modification of services and contract prices, including anticipated construction costs, unforeseen phasing needs, and drawing changes. The motion was duly carried. On file are the signed change order approval form, the original contract, the scope of work, the change order, and the entrance design modification contract.

D. *Psi Ote Park Playground Improvements New Project –* ***Weadock*** – Commissioner Briley moved, and VP Miller seconded the motion to approve a contract with Sinclair Recreation for the project scope of work, installation of new (the old equipment has aged out and parts are no longer available) playground equipment (manufactured by Game Time), engineered wood fiber (FIBAR) surfacing, and drainage at Psi Ote Park. The motion was duly carried. On file are the signed approval form for the scope of work, the contract, and photos of the equipment.

8. **Summer Recap – Recreation Programming – Reddinger**

Deputy Director of Recreational Services presented a division brief recap of services, staff (full-time, part-time, and seasonal), volunteers, partnerships, contractual instructors, new programs, community-based programs, weather-dependent attendance, revenue, events, aquatics, quality disability services in the pools, camps, the Jennings Recreation Center, the Weisser Park Youth Center, the McMillen Park Community Center, the Community Center (Downtown), McKinney Commons, and athletic programs, highlights, festivals, programs, and services during the Summer of 2026 (June, July, August). Showcased in the presentation were the 2nd Annual Electric Riverfront, Riverfest, 10th Annual Dragon Boat Festival/Race, 28th year of the nationally recognized Lifetime Sports Academy (LSA), with emphasis on the 79th year at Franke Day Camp. A change in the neighborhood demographics, our great Staff, our Marketing Division, and the Fun Times Brochure all contributed to an 8.5% growth could be higher if the budget for hiring more staff had been approved. Deputy Chuck Reddinger thanked the Board members for their continued support.

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

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

- The 2027 Department Budget has been submitted to the Controller's office and will be introduced to City Council for approval in October. A special "thank you" to the entire Department.
- Discussions and brainstorming with FWCS on improving attendance in our Youth Centers. Plans for a partnership to use FWCS busing are in process after school
- We continue discussions with the Fort Wayne Curling Club's new green
- Still getting final numbers in from the summer season, as the Recreation Division prepares for Fall events, programs, and services
- Will set up for the Headwaters Park Ice Skating rink in early October

- Captain America will be screened outdoors in Reservoir Park
- Active Aging Week is scheduled for October 5 – 8
- Payroll has been reduced from 510 to 436, as we process seasonal and part-time employees
- Changes to the app will make the experience more "user-friendly" for pavilion rentals and event/wedding planning for any year-round rental space
- Ninja Kidz Live was a success with children of all ages
- Mowing continues, along with the typical Fall maintenance, and Crews are working on winterizing facilities and equipment
- Continues with Summer maintenance with plants and a "shout out of thanks" to all volunteers
- Riparian Crew cleared approximately 80 tons of debris off the bridges and began clearing debris accumulated after the latest substantial flood event from bridges, mostly from Ewing Street Bridge
- The Forestry Team responded to and closed 268 311 calls to the City's 311 Call Center, and was busy clearing storm-related broken/fallen/hanging limbs
- The Pueblo Exhibit will continue through to November 15
- The Back to our Roots Concerts Thursday Night Series will wrap up on August 27
- Memberships and the Gift Shop have seen an increase in revenue
- The "Grow It!" Blue-Ribbon show will conclude the program with final judging at McMillen Park Community Center
- On Friday, October 2, the Botanical Brew event returns
- On Sunday, September 13, the Be A Tourist in your own Hometown event has the Botanical Conservatory as a scheduled place to visit
- The Pumpkin Patch event will open on September 29th and run through October 25th
- Saturday, October 3, Open-House event at the McMillen Family Pavilion in Franke Park
- Over 73 promotional items were produced by the Marketing Team
- Next fall (2027), the Community Center (Downtown) will turn 50!
- The Marketing Team arranged for 14 media interviews
- To review available positions, please click on the following link: www.fortwayneparks.org
- The next scheduled Board of Park Commissioners meeting will be held on **Thursday, October 8, 2026**, at 10:00 am, in **Citizens Square**

- **COMMISSIONER'S COMMENTS:** Board President Justin Shurley thanked everyone in the community for their continued support, stating that it is always touching to see donations from the estates of individuals. Additionally, BP Shurley commended the Recreation Deputy Director, the Director, and the entire Staff for the work that they do to enhance the Parks, and services offered.

No further business was to come before the Board of Park Commissioners on Thursday, September 10, 2026, in the City Council Discussion Chambers of Citizens Square, 200 East Berry Street, Suite 030, Fort Wayne, IN 46802. At 11:00 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 Parks & 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, September 10, 2026, meeting online:
https://acpl.viebit.com/watch?hash=ptoQNWJNTmCXfQhh