

MINUTES
Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee Meeting

Thursday, February 17, 2022
Location: Teleconference

Meeting began at 9:01 a.m.
Quorum established at 9:08

PRESENT FOR BIPAC

Attending remotely:

Michele Hodges; Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan
Sommer Woods; Detroit, Michigan
Michael Curis; Detroit, Michigan
Bud Denker; Detroit, Michigan

EXCUSED ABCENCES

Lonnie Peek
Brad Dick

DNR STAFF PRESENT

Ron Olson, Chief
Scott Pratt
Mike Terrell
Adam Lepp
Joel Thomas
Jeremy Kemp
Darlisa Terrell
Amanda Treadwell
Lt. Todd Szyska
Mia Moore
Barbara Graves

OTHERS PRESENT

Deanna Apps, USACE – Detroit District
Bill Schreck, MDOT
Aly Melnik, Belle Isle Conservancy
Ayo Thomas, Belle Isle Conservancy
Amy Greene

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of Minutes for October 21, 2021

Moved by: **Bud Denker**

Seconded by: **Michael Curis**

Approval of Minutes for December 16, 2021

Moved by: **Sommer Woods**

Seconded by: **Bud Denker**

Approval of Minutes for January 20, 2022

Moved by: **Michael Curis**

Seconded by: **Bud Denker**

Approval of the 2022 BIPAC Meeting Dates

Approval with the suggestion to hold another evening meeting.

Moved by: **Sommer Woods**

Seconded by: **Michael Curis**

GENERAL UPDATES

Deanna Apps, Physical Scientist, USACE – Detroit District, gave a water level forecast. Bud Denker asked if the inflows and outflows are working properly, if we still need the coffer dam, and ask if the pumps are fully operational in the event we have unexpected problems this year. Amanda Treadwell said they do not anticipate having to install the coffer dam based on the water level threshold that was prepared and the pumps for the canals are working as they are supposed to.

Ron Olson, DNR Parks and Recreation Chief

Brian Barnhill has resigned from the committee due to his work schedule. He is a governor appointee so the process will be followed-up with them. The federal recovery act Senate bills are still pending. The Belle Isle Annual Report presentation to Detroit City Council is being discussed with the new council president and her staff. Once scheduled, it will be announced.

Chair Hodges said the BIC has supplied letters of support for the SBs regarding the federal recovery funds and is having a meeting with legislators to effectively make the case so Belle Isle is represented well. She encourages advocacy more advocacy.

Park Update – Joel Thomas and Adam Lepp; PRD

- In the process of asbestos removal from the Zoo, The Flynn Pavilion, and the Remick Band Shell.
- Working on summer plans, including vehicle capacity preparation; researching car counter options.
- Efforts continue to increase staffing levels, filling vacancies. Interviewed for lead janitor.
- Seasonal rangers have begun prep work; painting, plumbing, maintenance, gutter cleaning, equipment prep.
- Working on long-term maintenance for the Fountain.
- They have been working on trapping some of the beavers while working with the local wildlife biologist.

- Continue combination methods to help with the geese and beaver issues.

Special Events - Darlisa Terrell, Event Coordinator, Belle Isle Park

- She continues to review event requests and working with clients to plan.
- Reviewing an average of 5 to 10 requests weekly. Next month more details on upcoming events will be shared.
- At this point, the only areas reservable are the shelters, and reservations can be made by calling 1-800-447-2757. Currently the Flynn Pavilion, Casino, Scott Fountain and Conservatory are not taking reservations due to planned construction.

Law Enforcement Update – Lt. Todd Szyska, DNR Law Division

- Public notice – no ice is safe ice. Please be careful.
- Starting talks with MSP for summer staffing and park closures strategies. Car counters are a must for real time management. Closures are for health and safety reasons, especially if emergency vehicles cannot navigate through the park.
- Lt. Courier is now the new post commander at the Taylor Post.

Infrastructure Update - Amanda Treadwell, Urban Field Planner (see attachment)

Belle Isle Conservancy Updates - Michele Hodges, Ayo Thomas, and Aly Melnik; BIC

- STEM Stars – YouTube video can be seen at www.youtube.com/watch?v=kwrl1FrnMLo
- March 24 at 6 p.m. is the State of the Conservancy meeting. See <https://belleisleconservancy.org>.
- April 23 is Keep Belle Isle Beautiful kick off and runs through October. April 21 Earth Day Celebration and other programming all weekend long.
- Nature Center is still under construction; may be open April or May. Offering outdoor programming on Fridays and Saturdays. Check the website: <https://belleislenaturecenter.detroitzoo.org>
- Looking for artists with environmental oriented art, pictures, poems, dance, spoken word etc. Any local artists are welcome.
- The golf course is closed until April, but it does have an available indoor gym for strength training. Check out their Instagram or Facebook pages for availability. The website is: <https://belleisle.golf>
- User feedback is valued and appreciated. Please feel free to reach out at www.belleisleconservancy.org.
- Sarah Earley’s term has expired on the board and Nancy Vella is the new chair.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Robin Heller – Finds the meetings informative. Wednesday, April 20, is the Annual Daffodil Luncheon at the Detroit Yacht Club and is open to the public. Tickets can be found at <https://michdivwnfga.weebly.com/daffodils4detroit.html>. The money goes towards planting the

daffodils. Hundreds of bulbs have been lost due to the flooding, so this is an opportunity to help restore the beauty to the island.

COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Michael Curis thanked Ron Olson and the team for their knowledge, professionalism, and partnership in making Belle Isle State Park the best it can be.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:48 a.m.

**NEXT REGULAR MEETING:
March 17, 2022
9:00 a.m.**

DRAFT