

MINUTES

Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 16, 2017

Location: Belle Isle Flynn Pavilion

Meeting called to order at 9:00 a.m.
Roll Call and Excused Absences

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Sommer Woods

PRESENT FOR BIPAC

Chair Michele Hodges
Rev. Lonnie Woods
Bud Denker
Brad Dick
Michael Curis

DNR STAFF PRESENT

Ron Olson
Scott Pratt
Karis Floyd
Amanda Hertl
Jacob Brown
Lt. Joe Molnar, Law Enforcement Division

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: **Chair Hodges** requested approval of the minutes from the August 17, 2017 meeting. **Denker** moved to approve the minutes, with **Curis** seconding the motion. Minutes for August 17, 2017 were approved.

Motion: **Chair Hodges** requested approval of the minutes from the September 21, 2017 meeting. **Denker** moved to approve the September 21, 2017 minutes, with **Curis** seconding the motion. Minutes for September 21, 2017 were approved.

General Updates

DNR Law Enforcement Update

Lieutenant Joe Molnar, DNR Law Enforcement Division, updated the committee on regarding the past months status of Belle Isle Park law enforcement. Lt. Molnar shared that there were very few enforcement issues. They encountered a couple cases where cars entered the park after hours and the occupant was intoxicated. Also there were a few incidents involving cars going the wrong way on the one way road.

Chair Hodges asked if the wrong way traffic incidents were due to the signage.

Lieutenant Joe Molnar responded that clearer signage was being reviewed to make this preventable.

Park Operations Update

Karis Floyd, Belle Isle Park Manager, shared the following operational updates with the committee:

- White House office building temporary closure due to a mold issue discovered
- All staff members have been relocated to the Milliken State Park Outdoor Adventure Center due to the mold issue currently being addressed. Estimated clean-up costs are expected to be approximately \$45,000 and will take place over a period of approximately 3 weeks. A temporary office trailer is being reviewed as an option
- Restrooms open this winter are located at the Casino and Shelter 7 (Bus Stop), as the remaining restrooms are closed for the season.
- Recycling bins will be added to the park this spring
- Staffing Changes/Additions include the following:
 - Mia Moore - Accounting Assistant (out of class)
 - Egypt Burnley - Limited Term General Office Assistant
 - Terrell Coleman - Janitor
 - Christopher Bateman - Ranger

Committee member's questions were as follows:

Is there a beaver issue on the island?

Amanda Hertl – A memo was sent updating the committee on the tree damage caused by the beaver. Tree protection has been completed.

Chair Hodges asked if the phones are currently transferred to Milliken State Park and Harbor.

Chief Ronald Olson stated yes and further shared that the Outdoor Adventure Center is also a Customer Service Center if anyone has questions.

Chair Hodges asked about the recycling of cans as well as a recycling program.

Karis Floyd stated yes, elaborating that Belle Isle Park has received a donation from the City of Lansing of 55 recycling cans. Floyd stated that the recycling program will be established for the 2018 season after aligning the service with the waste management contractor.

Parks and Recreation Chief Ron Olson shared updates on Belle Isle State Park which were referenced in a memorandum to the committee.

- Some Parks and Recreation vendors will not be returning to the park due to lack of revenue generated.
- Seeking an operator to operate the giant slide that was previously operated by park staff.
- Mo-Go Bike Sharing is being reviewed as a possible addition to the park.

Infrastructure Updates

Amanda Hertl, PRD Field Planner, provided a written update regarding the infrastructure projects; a full update was included in committee members' packets. Some of the highlights are listed below:

- Casino roof repairs are near completion
- Picnic shelters are still in the progress of getting remodeled; completion is expected by the end of this month.
- Iron Belle Trailhead meeting was held on Tuesday, November 15, 2017.
- Piet Oudolf Garden
 - The Detroit Garden Club contacted Piet Oudolf, world renowned gardener, requesting he visit Detroit and select a spot to design a garden. Piet Oudolf visited and selected Belle Isle Park's, Nancy Brown Peace Carillon Tower as the favored site for the garden. On November 14, 2017 a public meeting was held at the Flynn Pavilion to receive public input. The Garden Club made a presentation introducing Piet Oudolf and his garden vision for Belle Isle Park. The Detroit Garden Club is committed to raising sufficient funds to design, construct and to insure resources to sustain the gardens maintenance.
- **Q:** Is the staffing of the garden and budget for the garden the responsibility of the Garden Club or of the Department of Natural Resources?
A: *Amanda Hertl responded that the responsibility for staffing and budget will be the Garden Club; the DNR will ensure the funds are secured for the project before initiating construction. The key to the garden projects success is ensuring funding and future maintenance for the project.*
- \$2.7 million dollars for the endowment is the estimated goal for the garden.
- Lake Okonoka restoration project, began 2 weeks ago, the project is funded by a \$5 million federal grant from the Great Lakes Restoration Initiatives Program. Work scheduled includes dewatering the lake and top soil stripping. Projected substantial completion date is July

2018; this project is in collaboration with the Friends of the Detroit River. Woodside area will be closed for the next few months to separate the public from the construction. Beginning in January, a new pedestrian bridge will be installed over Blue Heron Lagoon and Lake Okanoka (12 week project). Projected end date September 2018.

Questions from the committee:

Chair Michele Hodges asked if the waterslide is being removed.

Amanda Hertel responded yes, a contractor has offered to remove the waterslide as a donation to the park. .

Upcoming Events

Darlisa Rickman, Belle Isle Events Coordinator, shared the following upcoming events:

- YMCA sponsored Southeast Michigan Girls on the Run 5k event to be held Sunday, November 19, 2017
- Holiday Stroll to be held December 8, 2017 from 5 p.m. - 8 p.m.
- New Year's Eve 5k Run is scheduled for 4 p.m. on December 31, 2017.
- Event planning addition of Ian Burton. Ian will be assisting full time with handling of wedding arrangements. Egypt Burnley will also assist with weddings and photography permits.

The Casino is 98% booked for the 2018 calendar year; the Flynn Pavilion is currently 50% full for the 2018. All contracts and rental agreements are currently being reviewed to make necessary adjustments for 2019.

Chair Hodges shared that The Nature Zoo is collecting toys for the "Toys for Tots" charity drive and the Aquarium is working on a sleigh led by Sea Horses.

Committee Member Curis asked if there a spreadsheet of the revenue collected from events.

Darlisa Rickman responded that a list will be compiled.

Grand Prix

Ron Olson, DNR, shared that a meeting has been held with the representatives from the Grand Prix to discuss the outcome of the September public listening sessions. The Grand Prix representatives have not yet submitted any proposal regarding their plans to continue returning to Belle Isle after the 2018 agreement expires.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING:

January 18, 2018

Flynn Pavilion

Belle Isle Park
Detroit, MI 48207
9:00 a.m. – 11:00 am.

Approved: _____
Michele Hodges

Ronald A. Olson, Chief

Date: _____

DRAFT