

# MINUTES

## Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**Location: Belle Isle Nature Center**

**Meeting called to order at 9:12 a.m.**

### **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

Bud Denker  
Brad Dick

**No Quorum established**

### **PRESENT FOR BIPAC**

Chair Michele Hodges  
Michael Curis  
Bryan Barnhill

### **DNR STAFF PRESENT**

Ron Olson  
Michael Terrell  
Karis Floyd  
Jacob Brown

### **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**No Quorum established**

### **General Updates**

**Ron Olson, Chief, DNR, Parks and Recreation**

#### **Oudolf Garden Update**

Announced that the DNR Parks and Recreation and the Friends of the Oudolf Garden finalized the agreement and that all the funding for the construction and the long-term upkeep of the Oudolf Garden has been secured. The Belle Isle Conservancy will serve as the fiscal sponsor for the project and they have signed the construction contract to begin the project. The Friends of Oudolf Garden raised \$4 million for the project. \$2 million for construction and \$2 million for the maintenance endowment. The first planting will take place this Fall, the second planting will take place in Spring of 2020 and the garden will be open to the public in the Fall of 2020.

## **DNR Law Enforcement Update**

**Jennifer Johnson, MSP**

**Lt. Todd Szyska, DNR**

- Gearing up for the fireworks on Monday 6/24
- There will be no access to the island on Monday, June 24 until 2 p.m.
- There is a 3,000-car limit for the island.
- Busses will have additional pick-ups scheduled for the island on Monday, June 24 to assist in the flow of the traffic for the public.
- Offered assistance to an impaired driver that had an issue at Lake Tacoma.
- Parking issues due to overcrowding on the park

## **Park Operations Update**

**Karis Floyd**

**Jacob Brown**

- The rain has been problematic and in conjunction with the higher than normal water levels it has caused extensive flooding throughout the park. This is a regional issue so it is not just exclusive to Belle Isle. The pumps are up and running to try to help balance the water in the canals.
- The Army Corps of Engineers are predicting that the Great Lakes will rise another 4 inches before the water crests.
- Areas of the east end of the park have been blocked off for public safety.
- Hiring for Belle Isle staff is complete. The new GOA for the Special Events Department has been hired. They are looking forward to onboarding their new Rangers.

## **Outreach and Upcoming Events**

**Darlisa Rickman**

- Booking events for 2020, executing events that are taking place currently this year and fielding calls, inquiries and concerns about island business.
- The rain has been very problematic with some of our outdoor events. We have had to relocate and even cancel some of our events as a result of the rain and subsequent flooding.
- Sunday, June 23, the MoBig group will be playing a concert that begins at 6:30 p.m. They are raising funds to rebuild the Bandshell. Admission is free and donations are welcome.
- June 24 - The Ford Fireworks will take place. Vehicular traffic will be allowed at 2 p.m. Foot traffic and bike traffic is permissible prior to that time. There will be additional times added to the bus schedule for traffic assistance.
- July 10 - Metro Youth Day
- July 14 - Annual Kite Festival
- August 3 – August 4 -Art Fair
- August 15 - Grand Opening for the dome at the Conservatory

**Michael Curis** asked how many events they have had to cancel, to which **Darlisa** replied about a half dozen; some of the big scale events they try to reroute but sometimes it does not work out.

### **Infrastructure Updates**

#### **Karis Floyd**

- The Conservatory is now open to the public with phase one renovations completed early.
- The ADA accessible walk to the fountain is now complete.
- The park Mobility Study will be kick-started soon.
- The Boating Access Study to the Detroit River has been completed and the results will be shared with the public soon.
- DTE will be finishing up their work to replace electric service infrastructure on the west side of the island and moving around to the Sunset Point area. They are currently ahead of schedule.
- The final element of the Lake Okonoka restoration project involving a new drainage culvert will take about 11 weeks and then the installation will take about 6 more weeks.

### **Grand Prix Update**

#### **Michael Montri**

- The Grand Prix was a success with the attendance numbers being higher on Friday and Sunday than 2018. The lower attendance on Saturday was weather related.
- The loadout time for the Grand Prix was 5 days quicker than last year and 1 day quicker than what is in the event agreement.
- This year it was decided that it would be better for the park if we set up a lot of our operations off the park turf, which helped to preserve a lot of the park grass due to wet conditions.
- Changed the I.T. set-up of our operations in the Casino and the Flynn Pavilion to provide permanent wi-fi so park visitors can now utilize the service at both buildings free of charge.

### **Belle Isle Conservancy Update**

#### **Chair Michelle Hodges**

- Please thank our volunteers they are such an important part of our operations.
- The Aquarium is open on Fri, Sat and Sunday.
- We are looking for a few more tank sponsorships. In honor of Father's Day we were selling stuffed seahorses with little baby seahorses we still have 2 left.
- East Jefferson corridor initiative planning process is in its final stage. It is looking at 3 hubs for mobility along Jefferson: Van Dyke, Chalmers and Riopelle.
- Met with the new Executive Director of the YMCA for Metro Detroit to discuss that partnership.

- Grand Prixmiere was a success and netted \$800,000 from our generous donors. \$200,000 of the donation will be dedicated to the Scott Memorial Fountain.
- Riverdays starts this weekend.
- Silence the Violence will be held at Church of the Messiah June 29.
- Jazzing on Jefferson June 29 - June 30.
- Keep Belle Isle Beautiful Initiative will take place on June 29.
- Deeper Dive is June 27 featuring the Cuban Gar.
- Metro Detroit Youth Day July 10.
- Kite Fest is July 14.
- The August BIPAC meeting will be held in the evening.
- September 10 - Garden Party at the Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory.
- Polish the Jewel October 10

**PUBLIC COMMENTS** (3 minutes each)

- Michael Betzold**      The public deserves answers. Why does the set-up and take down of the Grand Prix take so long? Why do the winners of the race get to swim in the fountain? If a member of the public did that they would be arrested. Would like to see evidence of the claims of the economic benefit of the Grand Prix being on the island. Why are the public comments from the last BIPAC meeting missing? The public should be able to see documentation of the budget of the Conservancy.
- Jerry Farrell**      Belle Isle is looking good and would like to see the upgrade of the island continue.
- Robert Moore**      Mr. Moore indicated he was the new manager of the Belle Isle Golf Center. It is heavily affected by the flooding on the island but he will try to have the Center up and running within the next 4-6 weeks. He finds that speeding cars make it unsafe working on the back of the island by golf maintenance workers. He asked for enforcement to regulate the traffic on that section of the island.
- Angela Lugo-Thomas**      Opposed to the Grand Prix being held on Belle Isle. Park users should not have to navigate around a construction zone for the Grand Prix. Belle Isle is our escape into nature for those of us who live here, not those who only come for the Grand Prix, or maybe 2-3 times a year or even those who have parks in their own communities, some that we cannot go to or get to. Find another location for the Grand Prix, it does not belong in a public park. We are waiting for the person that will finally stand up and do the right thing.
- Audrey Elkus:**      Here to voice support for MOGO bike share stations on the island. Possible locations: The Point, The Conservatory, the beach and the

parking lot near the Blue Heron Lagoon trail. It is more cost effective than the current biking service hosted on the island and would greatly help with the mobility issue. Not affiliated with the MOGO bike service at all.

**COMMITTEE MEMBER ITEMS**

**Bryan Barnhill:** Would like to explore some volunteer opportunities for a group of Ford company employees for the month of September on the island.

**Michelle Hodges:** Would like to thank Mr. Betzold for pointing out the fact that the public comment section is missing from the Minutes from May. They are still in a draft state so we will be checking into that. Thank you to our DNR and MSP team.

Motion to Adjourn: **No Quorum**

Moved by:

Seconded by:

Meeting Concluded: 10:08 a.m.

**NEXT REGULAR MEETING:**

**July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

Flynn Pavilion

Belle Isle Park

Detroit, MI 48207

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 am.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Michele Hodges

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ronald A. Olson, Chief

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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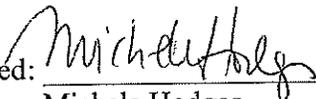
Flynn Pavilion

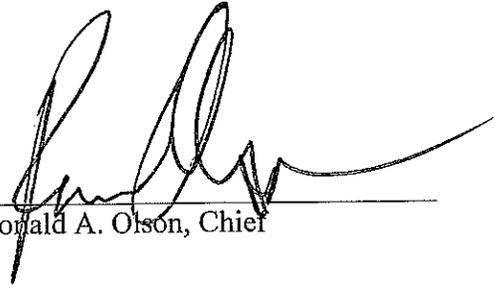
Belle Isle Park

Detroit, MI 48207

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 am.

DRAFT

Approved:   
Michele Hodges

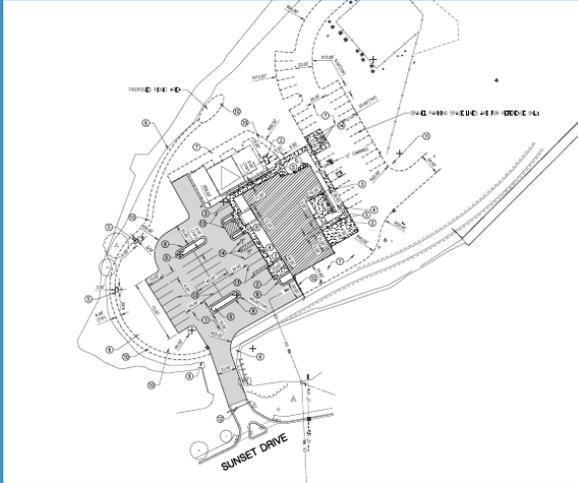
  
Ronald A. Olson, Chief

Date: 7.18.19

*note - this meeting did not have a quorum*

# BELLE ISLE PARK

## INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATE



### Internal Affairs Building New Belle Isle Park Headquarters

DNR is now moved into the new Headquarters. Ranger staff will be working out of the White House until the maintenance operations are moved to the site behind new headquarters building.

Phase 2, DNR and DTMB are reviewing pricing to complete garage work. The construction period is 60 days.

The consultant is will provide draft site design for DNR/DTMB review by Friday, June 21st. Construction is scheduled for late summer. Construction period is estimated at 60 days.

A new two-lane entry drive with more direct ADA crossing for pedestrians using the sidewalk along Sunset Drive. will replace existing one-lane drive.

### James Scott Memorial Fountain Masonry Repairs

#### ADA Accessible walk:

ADA sloped walk to the fountain plaza is complete.

#### Masonry and Structural Repairs:

Structural investigation of the concrete piers started Monday June 17<sup>th</sup> and are underway this week.

G.H. Forbes will be retained to complete maintenance manual for Scott Fountain start-up and maintenance. G.H. Forbes will work with Robert Carpenter, DTE, PBA Engineering and DNR staff to complete maintenance and training manual.



*Panoramic view of iron workers progressing with final painting of the upper truss replacement truss sections*

## Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory Repairs

### PROJECT UPDATE:

#### Phase One

- All Work is complete ahead of schedule.
- ASWC Conservatory will be open to the public again as of Wednesday, June 19<sup>th</sup>.

#### Phase Two

- Engineering for phase two scope of work is underway.
- Construction documents will be complete by the end of the year.
- Scope of work for phase two includes;
  1. Repointing damaged interior/exterior knee walls
  2. Replace and repaint cracked cast iron in Low houses.
  3. Clean lead-based paint from steel and cast iron in Upper Dome for assessment. Prep and Repaint steel and cast iron (including gutters) in Palm House.
  4. Repair/replace corroded steel and cast iron in Palm House Upper Dome Areas. Lead-based paint removal required.
  5. Replace glass throughout facility, this will require some modification or replacement of major (rafter) bar caps in the Palm House. Existing glazing bedding compound and caulk contains asbestos and will require mitigation.
  6. Ventilation (vent sash, machines and operating equipment) in Upper Cupola to be completed in this Phase 2 when scaffolding will be required for the painting. This work identified in ventilation assessment as requirement for maintaining health of plants as current ventilation (from 1950 remodel) is greatly below minimum requirements for adequate ventilation.
- Funding sources for Phase 2 scope of work are being reviewed by the DNR and BIC. Estimated project cost at current prices are approximately \$10 million.



## Belle Isle Aquarium and Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory

*\*THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS HAVE BEEN FUNDED BY THE WILLIAM DAVISON FOUNDATION*

1. **Belle Isle Aquarium and Conservatory Drainage Study \***
  - Contractor completed preliminary investigative work.
  - Additional investigation underway.
2. **Belle Isle Aquarium Geothermal System Feasibility Assessment\***
  - Engineers are reviewing proposals for boring tests.
  - Boring tests have yet to be scheduled.
3. **Cost Comparison Evaluation Of The Original 1904 Conservatory Design Vs. The Current 1950 Design To Guide Future Improvements Of The Conservatory Glazing Design And Vestibule Renovation\***
  - Final report has been submitted to DNR and BIC for review.
  - Future master plan effort for the conservatory will include development of a committee to determine era to restore conservatory to.
4. **Aquatic life support system evaluation\***
  - Final report has been submitted to the DNR and BIC.
5. **BIC - Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory Garden ADA Access\***
  - The Belle Isle Conservancy Garden Committee has raised funds for engineering plans to provide ADA access to the West and East end of the formal garden.
  - The engineering plans will be completed for the Fall Garden party Fundraising event.
  - The DNR and BIC Garden Committee will review consultant proposals submitted Wednesday, June 26<sup>th</sup>.

# The Detroit River

## Boating Access Study



OHM has provided final draft for DNR review.

- Draft Report has been reviewed by the DNR and City of Detroit GSD.
- DNR submitted final comments to OHM last week.

### Athletic Complex Handball Courts-

- Contractor has provided pricing for mesh ceiling panels. Costs to replace the roof with steel panels are approximately \$300,000.
- Current cost estimates exceed budget for the Athletic Fields currently. DNR will review options to proceed.

### Lake Okonoka Shelter and Playground Improvements - NO UPDATE

- Contractor has excavated for shelter and playground footings.
- Contractor has filed for extension of contract due to wet weather conditions.

### North Shoreline fishing:

- Preconstruction meeting is was held earlier this month.
- Engineer is currently revising plans to include the relocation of the kayak launch from the west side of the canal behind the DYC to the parking area for the North Shoreline fishing area.

## PARTNER COORDINATED PROJECTS

### Belle Isle Boat House - Friends of Detroit Rowing (FODR)

#### Physical Assessment and Facility Master Plan - NO UPDATE

- Consultant has been selected for the Boathouse master plan and physical assessment and FODR is working to complete project contract.
- The contract is still in negotiations.
- Quinn Evans will finalize draft and incorporate results of water mainline pressure test when complete.

## PARTNER COORDINATED PROJECTS, Contd.

### DTE Boring - Electric Upgrade

1. Restoration of site is complete.

### DTE - Electric -

1. DTE will install underground conduit, transformers and stations around island in 2019. DTE and DNR have coordinated utility layout and work schedule. Work has already begun on Central Ave and is anticipated to continue through October 2019.
2. DTE has installed underground conduit along Central and will be starting along the beach area and work their way towards the south end of the island.
3. DTE will provide new service connections to facilities next in 2020.



## BIC, The Arboriculture Society of Michigan Foundation & The Michigan Forestry Foundation- Sawmill Roof Replacement

- Quinn Evans and Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc. are the architecture and structural engineering consultants have submitted 90% engineering plans to replace the Sawmill roof.
- Roof replacement plans have been reviewed and approved by SHPO.
- Roof Construction is to be complete this year.

## McArthur Bridge Maintenance

### Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)

- Work on the West sidewalk of the McArthur Bridge has begun. Sidewalk will be closed while MDOT completes resurfacing work.
- During week, one lane will be closed to southbound traffic. Work is weather dependent. If weather does not permit work to be complete this week, work expected to finish up the week of the 24<sup>th</sup>. All traffic lanes will be open during weekends.

## PARTNER COORDINATED PROJECTS, Cont'd.

### Oudolf Garden Detroit - Piet Oudolf Garden -

- Groundbreaking was Site June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019.
- Irrigation and planting are scheduled for fall, 2019.
- The second phase of planting is anticipated for spring 2020.



### BIC - Belle Isle Beach House Assessment -

- Quinn Evans will finalize draft of assessment and facility and schematic.
- Future water mainline pressure test will be incorporated into results of when complete.

### Lake Okonoka Habitat Restoration

#### - Friends of The Detroit River

- Contractor is finishing approaches on the Lakeside Drive Bridge. Approaches will be complete by June 29<sup>th</sup>.
- Once bridge work is complete the traffic may access The Strand and Lakeside Drive again. As only one lane will be open on the Strand until all work is complete, vehicular traffic routes will be coordinated with previously scheduled weekend events.
- Once the Bridge work is complete, the contractor will pause work until the box culvert is scheduled for delivery. Contractor will return to site to prepare for box culvert installation about two weeks prior to deliver.
- The high water around the project will not impact the schedule for the culvert installation, and as soon as one week prior to delivery of the culvert sections, Z Con will remobilize and commence with the earthwork.
- Traffic Routes along the Strand will be reviewed by DNR and updates for road closures will be updated on the DNR Belle Isle park and BIC websites.

## FY 2019 UPCOMING PROJECTS

- 1 (SAW) Stormwater, Asset Management, and Wastewater-  
The water main scope of work will be funded by GSD with UTGO Bond funds.
  - DNR reviewing scope of work provided by DWSD for stormwater and municipal water assessments.
  - DNR and GSD will coordinate with DWSD to have work completed under existing DWSD contract.
  - Meeting with GSD, DWSD and DNR is scheduled for July 10<sup>th</sup> to review scope of work.
2. Engineering, Athletic Shelter Roof Replacement
  - PSC walk through occurred on June 10<sup>th</sup>.
3. Engineering, Maintenance and Operations barn and site improvements  
Work ordered issued May 13<sup>th</sup>.
4. Belle Isle Park Transportation Planning Study. The DNR is coordinating with MDOT and SEMCOG to refine scope of work for study.
  - Meeting scheduled with MDOT, DNR and SEMCOG on June 25<sup>th</sup> to review scope of work.