

# **MINUTES**

## **Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2019

**Location: Belle Isle Nature Center**

**Meeting called to order at 9:03 a.m.**

### **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

**Quorum established**

Brad Dick

Motioned by: Bud Denker

Seconded by: Michael Curis

### **PRESENT FOR BIPAC**

Chair Michele Hodges

Rev. Lonnie Peek

Michael Curis

Sommer Woods

Bryan Barnhill

Bud Denker

### **DNR STAFF PRESENT**

Scott Pratt

Karis Floyd

Darlisa Rickman

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

**Motion to Approve Minutes for December 20, 2018**

**Motioned by: Bud Denker**

**Seconded by: Michael Curis**

**Motion to Approve Minutes for January 17, 2019**

**Motioned by: Bud Denker**

**Seconded by: Michael Curis**

## **General Updates**

### **Scott Pratt**

- Reiterated that as formerly stated the Auto Show is not coming to Belle Isle.
- There has been a halt to the MDOT mobility study that was being conducted on the island.
- Looking forward to the State Park Centennial Celebration.
- This year Milliken Harbor is opening up early.

## **Presentation**

### **Ami VanAntwerp**

State Park Centennial Celebrating all 103 parks in the state park system more information is available at: [www.michigan.gov/stateparks100](http://www.michigan.gov/stateparks100)

## **DNR Law Enforcement Update**

### **Lt. Joe Molnar**

#### **Lt. Johnson MSP**

- Higher attendance as the weather is warming up.
- Typical issues such as speeding.
- Arrest of one drunk driver.
- Would like to acknowledge Detroit Harbormaster for their quick response to emergencies.

**Lonnie Peek:** How many island closures were there last year?

**Joe Molnar:** The island was still open to foot and biking traffic but there were 8 vehicular traffic closures. There are only 3500 parking spaces vs. there sometimes being upward of 15-20k vehicles coming on a day so that causes congestive issues.

**Bryan Barnhill:** How are we addressing mobility issues? Like bikeshare stations and E-scooters?

**Scott Pratt:** MDOT is providing a mobility study the DNR has allocated funds for this study to take place.

**Bryan Barnhill:** Do we allow E-scooters on the island?

**Mike Terrell:** E-scooters are illegal in all state parks.

**Bill:** In regard to the mobility study this is a partnership where DNR is more in the lead, currently we are in the process of seeing if we can use US DOT transportation funds on this. This is not our normal research funding project.

## **Park Operations Update**

### **Karis Floyd**

- The positions to be posted for the State of Michigan consist of 1 General Office Assistant for the events office; 3 ranger positions, 2 will be seasonal and the other will be a fulltime Lead Ranger position.
- Doing spring cleaning prepping to begin opening buildings for the season.
- Starting to hire our STWs for the summer season; no driver's license required.
- We now have recycling containers placed around the island so feel free to put your recyclables into the containers.

**Bryan Barnhill:** What are the positions' pay ranges?

**Karis Floyd:** For the Summer Temporary Workers pay begins at \$9.45 an hour. The rangers starting pay rate is about \$18 dollars and the Lead ranger starts at about \$23 dollars an hour. The ranger positions we have are all entry level, so it is a teaching and mentoring kind of position. The Lead ranger position requires experience as that person will work directly under the Supervisor, so they have to be aware of things that require attention out in the park. All 3 of the Ranger positions are commissioned, requiring attending our Law Academy. We are basically peace officers.

**Bryan Barnhill:** Are there restrictions for people who may have a criminal background?

**Karis Floyd:** There is a background check that is required, and you have to have a clean background due to the officer aspect of the position.

**Sommer Woods:** Is there a drug test required? Are there agricultural and internship opportunities available?

**Karis Floyd:** Yes, there is a drug test required for all positions. Yes, we will have a program this summer that ties into the agricultural realm as well as a paid internship opportunity that will be coming up soon.

**Michael Terrell:** The Ranger is a unique and all-encompassing job; they do a variety of things that usually multiple people would be hired to do. They are the police, fire department, mechanic, EMS, plumber, carpenter, and electrician; a "jack of all trades."

**Lonnie Peek:** What is your outreach here in the city? Did you make your hiring quota last year?

**Karis Floyd:** We have several different outreach programs in the city from the Cadets to the ministry. Unfortunately we did not get the staffing last year due to the pay rate being a bit lower.

**Scott Pratt:** To offset that our pay is a bit lower, we do offer 40-hour work weeks for the entire summer.

**Sommer Woods:** What is the duration of the employment?

**Michael Terrell:** 1040 hours which is 6 months.

**Lonnie Peek:** Have you made direct contact with DPS? That could be a resource.

**Karis Floyd:** No, other than the police cadet program we have not.

**Bryan Barnhill:** I will do an initial follow up with you and put you in contact with some schools.

**Karis Floyd:** DTE is onsite doing the conversion of public lighting and they are currently in the first phase so that is the construction you may witness along Central. The second phase will be them hooking up the power.

**Bud Denker:** All that wiring will be underground?

**Karis Floyd:** Correct.

### **Infrastructure Updates**

**Amanda Treadwell**  
(See attached)

### **Outreach and Upcoming Events**

**Darlisa Rickman**

- We have moved into our new office and we are settling in.
- Currently we have 451 events.
- Monday, April 1st the books will open for facility rentals for the year of 2020. We begin taking applications at 12 a.m. and take them in the order in which they are received.
- Park capacity is an issue.
- Sunday, March 31st is the Wedding Vendor Open House at the Belle Isle Casino. You must be registered to attend from 3 p.m. - 5 p.m.
- April 27th the BIC/DNR clean up will take place. Registration starts at 8 a.m.
- Monday, April 22nd at 12 a.m. the Grand Prix will begin their initial load in.

**Lonnie Peek:** Are the shelters already rented out? From year to year is there a waiting list?

**Darlisa Rickman:** During peak season in most cases every shelter is already rented out. And we do not keep a waiting list because with the number of calls that would require, it would be difficult to manage.

## **Belle Isle Conservancy Update**

### **Chair Michelle Hodges**

- Will be honoring volunteers the week of April 7<sup>th</sup> - 13<sup>th</sup> which is National Volunteer Week.
- April 14<sup>th</sup> MSU Science Festival.
- Daffodil Luncheon Day April 17<sup>th</sup> at the Yacht Club.
- Frederick Law Olmstead's Birthday is on April 26<sup>th</sup>.
- April 27<sup>th</sup> is the Spring Clean Up.
- April 27<sup>th</sup> is also the day we host Spring into Nature which is a 5k.
- The Koi Festival is May 4<sup>th</sup>.
- Keep Belle Isle Beautiful May 18<sup>th</sup> and June 29<sup>th</sup>.
- The Grand Premier is on May 31<sup>st</sup>.
- Deeper Dive June 27<sup>th</sup> featuring the Cuban Gar.
- Metro Detroit Youth Day July 10<sup>th</sup>.
- Kite fest is July 14<sup>th</sup>.
- Polish the Jewel is October 10<sup>th</sup>.
- We were able to welcome MSU students in regard to their ideas for Belle Isle.
- We are hiring an Aquarist, a volunteer coordinator, education specialist and an events associate.
- Clean up on June 29<sup>th</sup> following the fireworks.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS (3 minutes each)**

- Kent Gallagher** Does not agree with a boating launch being put on Belle Isle.
- Skip Davis** Opposes the Grand Prix and strongly feels it is in direct conflict with the DNR's mission statement.
- Khalilah Turner** Interested in vendor opportunities on the island.
- Donald Green** Feels that the concrete paddock used for the Grand Prix was a needless destruction of green space on the park. The Grand Prix continues to be a destructive presence on Belle Isle and finds the number of visitors purported to visit the island questionable.
- Angela Lugo Thomas** Against the Grand Prix and Auto Show being on Belle Isle. Would like to know how is the Piet Oudolf Garden going to be enjoyed if it is surrounded by the racetrack from the Grand Prix? Does the Ralph Wilson foundation ask for anything in return for their generous donations? What steps have been taken towards making Belle Isle independent of the Grand Prix funding?
- Michael Betzold** The Oudolf Garden and the Grand Prix cannot co-exist on Belle Isle.
- Lucille Nawara** Does not want the Auto Show to extend itself onto Belle Isle Park. Also feels that alternative ways should be explored as far as traffic on Belle Isle.

**A. Gira**

As a former health inspector was shocked to witness Grand Prix employees dumping oil and food waste into the trees and in the port-a-johns and it's a big concern. How will that be addressed?

**COMMITTEE MEMBER ITEMS**

**Bud Denker:** Would like to thank the Belle Isle team spearheaded by Michael Terrell and Karis Floyd and would like to personally comment that the Ralph Wilson Foundation has never asked for anything in return for their charitable donations.

**Rev. Lonnie Peek:** Would like to thank the DNR staff for all of their hard work.

**Sommer Woods:** Would like to advocate for DarLisa Rickman to get some help in the Special Events Office and also promote the Agriculture programming.

**Michelle Hodges:** The Ralph G. Wilson Foundation has such integrity and we are thankful to have their help. They are very inspiring and responsible stewards that have a meaningful impact and we are appreciative of their partnership but to be clear, they have never received any perks or kickbacks for donating to Belle Isle Park.

Motion to Adjourn:

Moved by: Bud Denker

Seconded by: Michael Curis

Meeting concluded: 10:57 a.m.

**NEXT REGULAR MEETING:**

**February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2019**

Nature Center

Belle Isle Park

Detroit, MI 48207

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 am.

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

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

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