

## **MINUTES**

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

Thursday, March 16, 2017

#### **Location: Belle Isle Flynn Pavilion**

NOTE: The March and April, 2017 minutes were not considered formal due to lack of a quorum. Chair Michele Hodges requested that the minutes be acknowledged and accepted. Motion to accept by Bud Denker and seconded by Michael Curis.

Meeting called to order at 9:04 a.m.

#### **No Quorum**

Roll Call and Excused Absences

#### **EXCUSED ABSENCES**

Bud Denker  
Sommer Woods  
Rev. Lonnie Peek  
Bryan Barnhill

#### **PRESENT FOR BIPAC**

Chair Michele Hodges  
Michael Curis  
Bryan Barnhill  
Brad Dick

#### **DNR - BIC STAFF PRESENT**

Ron Olson  
Scott Pratt  
Mike Terrell  
Jacob Brown  
Amanda Hertl  
Katy Wyerman  
Brittany Sanders

#### **APPROVAL OF EXCUSED ABSENCES**

Due to lack of a quorum there was no motion to approve excused absences.

## **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

There was no motion to approve the February 16, 2017 minutes, due to lack of a quorum present. Minutes will be brought before the next committee meeting for review and approval.

## **GENERAL UPDATES**

### ***Planning Process - Public Sessions Update***

**Ron Olson** updated the group on the public input sessions that have been scheduled regarding the Belle Isle Park planning process. A public meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 29, 2017. Two sessions will be conducted that day; the first session will run from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m., and the second session from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. Both sessions will be held at the Flynn Pavilion at Belle Isle Park. A press release will also notify the public of these upcoming public comment sessions. A memorandum outlining additional details was provided to the members in their packets.

A project website has also been provided that will chart the progress of our ongoing planning efforts. Please see link below.

<http://www.mdnrmanagementplans.org/belle-isle-park/>

The goal is to have a draft planning document completed by July 1, 2017. **Chair Hodges** reminded those present that public input is one of the most important parts of this process.

### ***DNR Law Enforcement Update***

**Ron Olson** took a moment to speak about an attempted suicide on the MacArthur Bridge on March 13, 2017. Belle Isle Park Ranger, Jennifer Etienne and Border Patrol Agent Marco Humerez prevented a man from successfully taking his own life when he jumped into the Detroit River. The man was taken to a local hospital for evaluation. At 10:30 a.m. today local news station Channel 7 will be on the island to interview the DNR and Border Patrol staff involved in the incident.

**Chair Hodges** mentioned that Jennifer Etienne was off duty and wearing flip flops at the time of this incident. **Jacob Brown** added that Jennifer was leaving the island, driving off the bridge when she noticed something wrong on the bridge and turned around to assist. Ultimately Jennifer and the Agent Humerez were able to wrestle the man back over the bridge rails preventing a tragedy.

The Belle Isle Advisory Committee will be recognizing Park Ranger Jennifer Etienne and the border patrolman for their successful lifesaving efforts at the next BIPAC meeting.

**Damon Owen**, DNR Law Enforcement, noted only routine patrols that are going well and no major incidents on the island.

## ***Park Operations Update***

**Jacob Brown** reported that two Park Rangers Todd Keith (Milliken SP) and Matt Krupansky (Belle Isle Park) are both attending the law enforcement academy. Both have successfully completed the survival tactical portion of the training.

**Jacob Brown** also reported on current projects and other events:

- Flynn Building updates consisting of painting, lighting and refinishing to the bar and floor.
- New toilets are being installed in the golf course restrooms; expect those to be online this summer.
- On Sunday, March 19, 2017 a volunteer event was conducted for volunteers from Tourism Cares.
- Volunteer project March 30, 2017, the Arboriculture Society of Michigan (ASM) and the ASM Historical Foundation will work on tree removal from the canals.

Jacob Brown shared that both Heidi Frei and Bob Clancy, with the DNR Stewardship section have been on the island this week assisting with the oak wilt tree removal project. Helicopters are removing the trees as this is the least invasive way to move them. The tops of the trees and bark will be chipped and sent to Flint to an incinerator. The helicopters have been refueling in the band shell parking lot. The east end of the island is currently closed during this tree removal process for everyone's safety. There will be a total of 110 diseased trees removed.

## ***Infrastructure***

### ***Partnership Updates***

**Amanda Hertl** shared a PowerPoint presentation showing photos of various projects. A written report was included in each committee member's packet. Some highlights are listed below.

- Former Internal Affairs Building  
FH Martin is almost done with the concrete decking replacement in the garage; with an anticipated completion date of March 24, 2017. DNR staff has removed the trailer offices on the west side of the Internal Affairs Building.
- Former Police Headquarters  
Police headquarters building roof replacement with an anticipated completion date March 24, 2017.
- Casino  
FH Martin is currently working on masonry repairs, as well as roof and structural beam repairs. Anticipated completion date of March 24, 2017.

- Flynn Pavilion and White House  
There will be improvements to the entrance of the Flynn Building entrance for ADA accessibility and storm water drainage will be addressed.  
  
The White House roof will be repaired as needed. Construction bids were received March 13, 2017; expected construction start date is by the end of April.
- Newsboy Shelter Temporary Stabilization  
Stabilization to be completed mid-April.
- Shelter 9 Shoreline Fishing Improvements  
Construction bids were received March 8, 2017; a start date for construction has not yet been determined.
- Belle Isle Aquarium and Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory  
A structural analysis to be completed for both facilities will address immediate needs as well as future improvements. Items such as the climate systems for the Aquarium and the Conservatory will be addressed. Also major glass repairs, replacement and glazing will be addressed. As well as the restoration of the Conservatory gardens.
- Upcoming 2017 Projects:
  - Iron Belle Trailhead development
  - Lake Okonoka picnic area improvements
  - Casino elevator assessment
  - Restroom improvements
  - ADA Accessible kayak launch design at Nashua Canal
  - Boating Access Site (BAS) Feasibility Study
  - Wet-Mesic Flatwood Habitat Restoration Plan
  - Island wide Stormwater Utility Assessment and Maintenance
  - Stormwater line repairs
  - Shelter 2, 5 and 6 improvements

Committee member **Michael Curis** thanked Amanda Hertl for the presentation and inquired if the LED lights around the island are solar or indirect lighting?

*Amanda Hertl responded that the new lights on the poles are solar. Ron Olson also mentioned that solar lighting may flicker at times due to cloudy weather; and that the bridge lighting is LED lighting and hard wired.*

**Chair Hodges** gave a big thank you to the Detroit Yacht Club for their hospitality during the power outage.

### *Outreach and Upcoming Events*

**Darlisa Rickman** shared that on Sunday, April 2, 2017 an Open House will be held from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. Please rsvp at [www.Eventbrite.com](http://www.Eventbrite.com). Present will be 20 vendors that offer various products and services for weddings and other events.

April 3, 2017	Detroit Police Dept. - Paddock	Drive Training	8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
April 9, 2017	Escape to Belle Isle – Casino	Kohl’s 5k Run	9:00 a.m.
April 10, 2017	Grand Prix Load Begins		12:00 p.m.
April 22, 2017	BIC and DNR – Flynn Pavilion	Clean up-Tree Give away	9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
April 29, 2017	Spring into Nature-Aquarium	5k	7:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
April 29, 2017	Caring Hands Sarcoidosis – Shelter 8	Balloon release	1:00 p.m.
April 30, 2017	Detroit Love In – Shelter 8E and 8W	Picnic	10:00 a.m. – 5 p.m.

### *Belle Isle Conservancy Update*

**Chair Hodges** noted that the Belle Isle Aquarium and Conservatory are open all season. To purchase Belle Isle drawings, t-shirts, post cards, coasters etc. please visit our online store at [www.belleisleconservancy.org](http://www.belleisleconservancy.org)

**Brittany Sanders** in conjunction with Challenge Detroit, a fellowship program in the City of Detroit, is focusing on the development of a user application for Belle Isle.

### *Conservancy Upcoming Events*

- Daffodil Luncheon April 19, 2017  
Their goal is to plant 1 daffodil bulb on Belle Isle Park for every Metro Detroiter.
- The Lily Pond Restoration is underway thanks to the support of the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT); MDOT will be providing matching dollars. The DNR and garden clubs are actively engaged in providing leadership and core funding.

**Brittany Sanders** shared that the Conservancy partnered with the DNR and Detroit SOUP (a local non-profit) to host a community grant dinner “The Belle Isle SOUP” held in August, 2016 at Belle Isle Park. There were approximately 60 fund-raising proposals for the park, with four presented at the event. The community voted on their favorite and Belle Isle Kite Festival was the winning proposal.

**Brittany Sanders** introduced Margo Dalal who gave a brief overview of the Belle Isle Kite Festival. The Belle Isle Kite Festival will be hosted on July 16, 2017 and has a fundraising goal of \$7,500. If that goal is reached the project will receive a matching grant with funds made possible by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC).

Partnerships with local organizations will provide free transportation for 150 kids in Detroit to the festivities, as well as providing on-site kite making, professional kite flyers and education about kites in different cultures.

For more information, please visit: [www.detroitkitefestival.org](http://www.detroitkitefestival.org) or [Patronicity.com](http://Patronicity.com) is running a crowd funding campaign until April 9, 2017 if you wish to donate.

### ***MDOT Road and Bridges Update***

**Carrie Warren** spoke about road and bridge projects coming in the next 5 years; some of those noted were as follows:

- 2018 - MacArthur Bridge - rehabilitation of the bridge deck
- Resurfacing of the boat club parking lot
- 2022 – MacArthur Bridge structural repairs totaling approximately 7.4 million
- Central Bridge repairs
- Vista Bridge replacement
- Oakway Bridge repairs
- MacArthur Bridge road repairs

Carrie Warren also noted that the bridge repairs may cause some lane closures.

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

Steve Mvozek

Manager of the Dossin Great Lakes Museum commented on the upcoming construction project and development of the exterior of the facility. The facility was built in 1960 and this will be the first construction project to upgrade the exterior of the building since that time.

Stephanie Donaldson

Gave a Senior Power Days update. She thanked the Detroit Historical Society for partnering on the July 5, 2017 event. Seniors will be interviewed about their experiences on Belle Isle. Thank you to the Detroit Yacht Club for hosting the Detroit Symphony Orchestra on May 23, 2017, sponsored by Robert Gillette American House.

Donald Green

Mr. Green feels that the Grand Prix presentation in February had many questionable details. Mr. Green submitted a typed statement expressing his concerns. He feels there is no need for a feasibility study for boat access on Belle Isle, as there are over 10 boat launches on the Detroit River.

Mr. Canneton

Is not in support of the existing large concrete (paddock). Belle Isle is not the place for concrete. Mr. Canneton stated he will continue to advocate for reversing and having the concrete removed.

**COMMITTEE MEMBER ITEMS**

Brad Dick

Spoke about the Mayor’s 40 City of Detroit park rehabilitation initiatives and that they should have these parks projects completed by fall.

**Next BIPAC Meeting:      April 20, 2016      Belle Isle Flynn Pavilion**

Motioned to Adjourn      No Quorum

Meeting Concluded      10:16 a.m.

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

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

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