

Belle Isle Park – Fiscal Year 2016

Annual Report, Detroit City Council
May 9, 2017

Belle Isle
Park
Advisory
Committee

2016 striving goals- 3 years



- **Safe and clean park**
 - Michigan State Police and DNR Conservation Officers partnership,
 - Continued maintenance and infrastructure improvements
- **Customer-oriented thinking**
Customer satisfaction with park management
- **Partnerships and alliances**
Examples: Belle Isle Conservancy, Detroit Rowing Club, Friends of Detroit River, Dossin Museum, Detroit Zoo and the Sigma Gamma Foundation
- **Stewardship**
Protect natural resources and invasive species removal
- **Continuous improvement**
Operations and capital investments ongoing



Fun in the Youth Conservation Academy

Responsibilities

- **Ownership**
City of Detroit
- **Management**
Department of Natural Resources,
Parks and Recreation – 30 yr. lease



In collaboration with

Roads and bridges

Michigan Department
of Transportation

Public safety

Department of Natural Resources Law
Enforcement Division
and Michigan State Police

Public water/sewer utilities

City of Detroit DWSD

Public electric utilities –

DTE Energy Company
Public Lighting Authority



*New light poles and solar lights –
provided by Public Lighting Authority*

Belle Isle Park Advisory Committee



- Formation outlined in lease
- Appointed by the Mayor, City Council and Governor
- Eight members
- Ten meetings held in 2016
- Public comment encouraged during meetings
- Update public on planning projects in progress and improvements completed on Belle Isle



Michelle Hodges,
Chair



Rev. V. Lonnie Peek, Jr.,
Vice Chair



Brad Dick



Sommer Woods



Michael Curis



Bryan Barnhill



Bud Denker



Ron Olson
DNR Liaison

Community partnerships

Over 20 community partnerships with the DNR



- Belle Isle Conservancy
- Michigan Civilian Conservation Corps
- Alliance for the Great Lakes
- Metro Youth Day Foundation
- Friends of Detroit River
- Wayne State University
- Sigma Gamma Foundation
- Michigan Press Association
- General Motors Foundation
- Chevrolet Belle Isle Grand Prix
- Greening of Detroit



Shiver on the River Event hosted by the Friends of Detroit River



Connecting with the community

Events

- Second annual Harvest Festival
- Praise on the Isle event
- Holiday Stroll
- Metro Detroit Youth Day
- Boo at the Nature Zoo
- Grand Prix

Programs

- Stepping Stones youth program
- DNR Wildlife programs
5 wildlife hikes & a total of 34 participants
- Belle Isle Conservancy events
Aquarium and others

Community engagement

- Five listening sessions
- Vendor sessions
- Open house for island trail masterplan
- Athletic fields planning process



Five wildlife hikes were held by DNR Wildlife staff

Public safety partnership



Michigan Department of Natural Resources conservation officers and Michigan State Police

- Working together to provide public safety for all major events
- Positive visitor feedback on public safety
- Assisting park visitors -- from finding lost children to providing emergency rescues and medical assistance
- Conservation officers and Michigan State Police on patrol 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



Community policing at Metro Detroit Youth Day



2016 improvements

- Clean and functional restrooms
- Detroit Department Of Transportation public transit service
- Newly installed LED/solar power lights
- Iron Belle Trail upgrades and bike paths



2016 improvements



- Universally accessible playground
- New kayak launch
- Lake Okonoka flatwoods restoration plan
- Drainage improvements





2016 infrastructure improvements

- Roof and structural repairs to the Internal Affairs Building, former historic Police Headquarters and Casino.
- Continued upgrade of HVAC system for Belle Isle Aquarium and Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory
- Universal accessible playground added on east end -- donation by Sigma Gamma Foundation
- Repair to copper roof on Belle Isle Aquarium -- Belle Isle Conservancy and DNR
- Sidewalk replacement at Belle Isle Aquarium and Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory
- Stormwater drain Improvements along strand
- Blue Heron Bridge abutment repair



A new roof for the Police Station headquarters started last year



2016 infrastructure rehabilitation

- Structural assessment of Newsboy Shelter and shoring up to project structure
- Belle Isle trails master plan
- Assessment of Scott Fountain
- Engineering plans and estimates for critical repairs to White House and Flynn building
- Engineering plans and estimates for repairs of six picnic shelters.
- Engineering for Casino fire suppression system.
- Athletic Complex engineering drawings
- Structural assessment completed of Boat Club T pier, building and sheet piling foundation, bridge assessment and ADA accessibility study. Preliminary engineering and cost estimate for T pier and ADA access completed.
- Lake Okonoka and Detroit River Connection



Smithgroup JJR presents the design teams research and analysis to the community

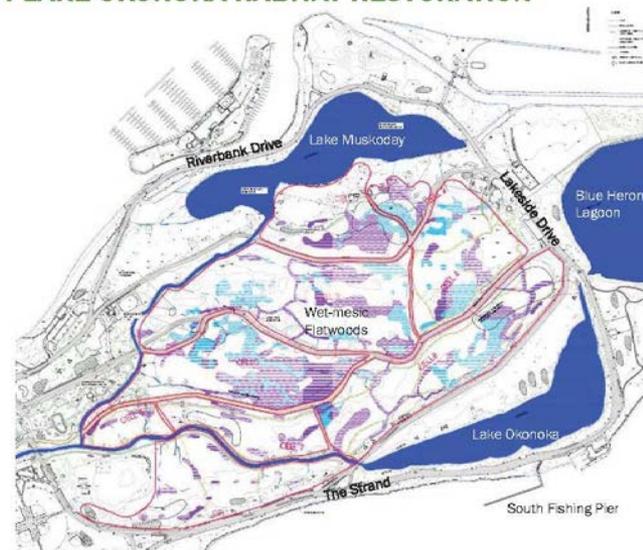
2017 infrastructure projects



Design/engineering

- Flatwoods restoration engineering planning
- Stormwater system assessment and maintenance
- Casino elevator assessment
- Boating access site assessment
- ADA accessible kayak launch design in coordination with Lake Okonoka restoration
- Picnic area design to be completed in coordination with Lake Okonoka restoration
- Structural assessment of the Belle Isle Aquarium and the Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory as well as ventilation study of Conservatory
- Design of trail head for Iron Belle Trail on island
- State Park Management and Operations Plan

5.4 LAKE OKONOKA HABITAT RESTORATION



The Flatwoods Restoration Plan will follow-up on the hydrologic assessment that was completed last year



2017 infrastructure projects

Construction

- Continuation of HVAC improvements at the Belle Isle Aquarium and the Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory
- Continuing to improve sidewalk -- universal accessibility island-wide
- Stormwater drain replacement in stables
- Casino fire suppression replacement
- White House and Flynn stabilization
- Belle Isle Staff office space assessments and improvements
- Renovating Athletic Complex fields and courts
- Shoreline fishing improvements at Shelter #9
- Picnic shelter improvements
- Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory koi pond improvements



Roof and structural repairs will be taking place at the Casino this spring

Investments



Total Investment as of FY2016 **\$32,200,000**

- Investments from multiple sources
 - Operational and infrastructure improvements and public safety
 - All divisions of the DNR collaborating
 - Grants, private and in-kind donations
- *Volunteer hour contributions **\$994,000**
- *Private donations – collaboration with Belle Isle Conservancy **\$769,000**
(*included in the \$32.2 million investment)



FY2016 revenue

**Total revenue -- park and Passport
\$1,070,000**

**Belle Isle Park revenue only
\$514,000**

Up 14% from
\$451,000 in FY 2015
All park-generated
revenue returns to the park

- **Use permits for shelters and facilities**
- **Event agreements**
- **Giant Slide**

Revenue placed in sub-account to administer, maintain and improve the park.

(This is all revenue excluding Passports)



Senior Power Day event at the Conservatory

Recreation Passports sold on Belle Isle



FY2016 Revenue

\$556,000

- 27% increase from 2015 sales



Seniors enjoying a day out on Belle Isle



Services

The 2016 season included the following:

Food concession contracts

- 5 vendors

Service concession contracts:

- 6 vendors

Recreational services:

- Kayak and canoe rentals
- Paddle boats
- Bicycle rentals



Adult flag football league game



Youth employment

2016 Detroit Summer Youth Employment Initiative program

187 youth participants

Partnering agencies are:

- The Youth Connection
- Detroit Zoological Society
- Healthy Kids R Us
- Urban Neighborhood Initiatives
- The Greening of Detroit
- Mack Alive
- Detroit Employment Solutions
- The Youth Connections, Inc.
- Healthy Kidz
- MDOT Youth Corps



2016 DNR-sponsored Detroit Summer Youth Employment Initiative participants



Youth opportunities

DNR Stepping Stones

- 3,114 youth
- 562 adults
- 10 week program to expose children to nature and engage them in experiential learning in a fun and safe park environment

Fourth grade field trips

- \$55,000 supported 27 fourth grade field trips to the Belle Isle Aquarium and Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory
- 15 schools (Detroit public and 3 Hamtramck public schools)
- Total of 1174 students

Summer swim lessons

- 90 local children taught by YMCA staff at Belle Isle beach



DNR-sponsored Stepping Stones

Island visitor attendance



- **FY2016**
4,100,000 park visitors
- **FY2015**
3,600,000 park visitors
- **14% increase**
from 2015 to 2016



*Children enjoying basketball at
Metro Detroit Youth Day*



Island attractions attendance

Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory

- **2016: 250,430**
- Up 123% from 2015 (112,201)
- Up 162% from 2014 (95,400)

Belle Isle Nature Zoo

- **2016: 95,363**
- Up 20% from 2015 (81,592)
- Up 52% from 2014 (62,850)

Belle Isle Aquarium

- **2016: 162,331**
- Up 34% from 2015 (121,105)
- Up 142 % from 2014 (67,180)
- *Added Fridays due to demand*

Dossin Great Lakes Museum

- **2016: 46,456**
- Up 21% from 2015 (38,407)
- Up 42% from 2014 (32,871)



Koi wrangle at the Belle Isle Aquarium

Rentals



20 shelters available for rent

- 695 rentals
- Reservations available through DNR's Central Reservation System up to 12 months in advance

Athletic Complex fields and courts available for rent

- 49 rentals of fields and courts

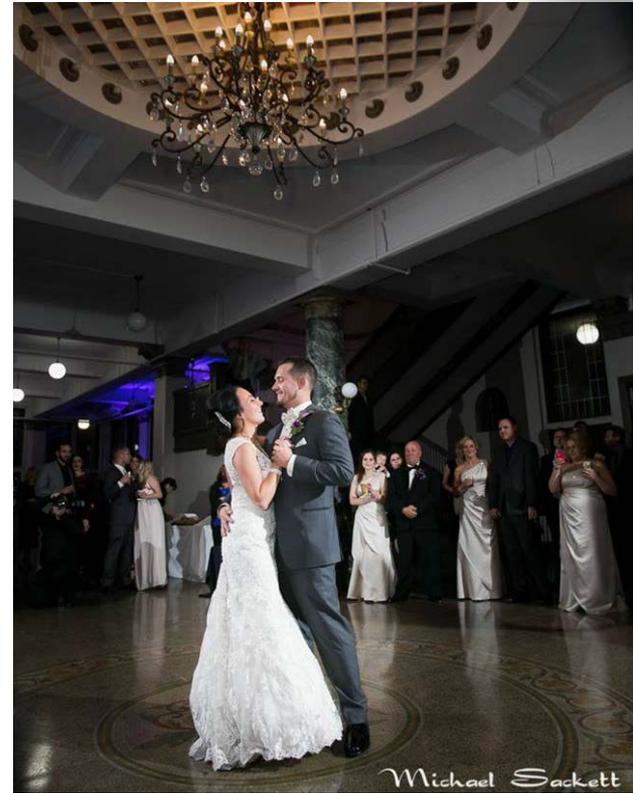


Youth enjoying a day out on Belle Isle

Facilities use



- 83 Casino rentals
- 44 Flynn rentals
- 21,112 riders on the DNR-operated Giant Slide



Wedding at the Belle Isle Casino

Strategic Direction Plan

- Being developed now to guide the short and long term for the park
- Public survey and public meetings conducted
- June/July target for draft plan for review





GM Volunteers

Thank You!