

Jennings County Parks and Recreation Board Meeting

Meeting minutes: October 24, 2023

Park Board Meeting: 5:30-7:13 pm

Present:

Board Members: Avis McGovern, Samantha Wilder, Jennifer Sanders

Absent: Wayne Zamora, Kristin Wiley

Staff: Greg Martin

Guests: Rosita Dryden, Francis Walker, Teri Doran

1. Guests or Guest Reports:

Rosita Dryden, neighbor of Muscatatuck Park (165 S County Rd 25 W, North Vernon, IN) spoke regarding trouble with trespassers and has requested that we post "No Trespassing" signs she has created for her property. She has contacted authorities (DNR and sheriff). We discussed posting signs at the park office, Vinegar Mill, and display cases.

Francis Walker asked if there was any progress regarding climbing coming back. Sam shared information from Matt Sporleder. He said the insurance company says there will not be climbing in the future and even if an insurance company was found to cover the climbing, the county attorney and insurance provider says we would still be liable and it is understood there are no other options. The board was asked by Teri if they'd be proactive regarding getting climbing back. Sam mentioned that none of us have been opposed to climbing. There are questions as to how other extreme sports (mountain biking, etc.) can still happen. Francis asked if we could ask the county attorney questions regarding this. Accidents can happen at any time and she would like to see climbing come back. It was shared that discussing this topic with the commissioners or county attorney would be next steps. Sam asked if there are other parks in Indiana to use as examples for how they are up and going and making climbing work within the laws of Indiana. The park in Batesville is building a climbing wall and will be open to climbing in the future and is able to under Indiana Recreational Law per Teri. Avis is willing to reach out to Alex Zimmerman to find out some answers to some of these questions, specifically what differentiates climbing from mountain biking.

2. Approve Minutes - Minutes from the September meeting were approved.

3. Old Business - see directors report

- Eco Park Update - state board of health approved campground, Greg reviewed the punch list items/concerns (see it in director's report). Frostproof hydrant is not in the correct spot. Greg has brought it to the engineer's attention. A host has been found, Brett Ross pending interview/agreement. Avis asked about opening

dates. July was original completion date. Once paperwork is approved, camp host can move in. Greg is thinking mid-March/April. The soft opening won't happen this year as project hasn't been completed. Park will be winterized soon.

- Committee Meeting Update from NLTG - no update
- Eclipse Event - dining hall & a couple shelter houses have been rented out for the event Betty Engleston & Jan Furgason

4. New Business -

Greg would like the board to consider bids for the following:

Grills/fire rings \$6000

Engineered Wood Chips: Playground Surfacing \$11,200 to put in both parks

Tree Removal \$3000

Sam made a motion to approve, Avis seconded, motion carries.

Muscatatuck Park Improvements - Greg presented a proposal for the board to review to get bids from engineers to improve waterline, electrical, and sewer elements at Muscatatuck Park. Greg discussed a possible grant (Land and Water Conservation Fund) available that is a 50/50 match.

Greg mentioned possible future projects- shelter 2 will need replaced, public restroom at Eco Lake

Site Visit - the board will coordinate a time for site visits and arrange with Greg. He stated he is flexible.

5. Director's Report - see attached

Tourism - new director Briann Mefford. Greg wants to reach out and see if Muscatatuck and Eco can be promoted somehow through tourism. INDOT logo sign program? Placemaking Grant?

Dining Hall - raccoon demolished a renter's things for her daughter's bridal shower, a refund was issued.

6. Approve claims

7. Next Meeting - November 28, 2023

8. Adjournment - Meeting adjourned at 7:13.

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Wayne Zamora

Avis McGovern

Samantha Wilder

Kristin Wiley

Jennifer Sanders
