

Minutes of the Meeting: April 3rd, 2025

Board members present: Brian Wetcher, JoAnn York-Gilmore, Tabb Stringer, Nathan Schwarck

Staff present: Bob Vaux, Jamie Burroughs, Darby Jordan

Meeting held in person and called to order at 6:02PM

Minutes: March minutes were unanimously approved.

Public Comments:

None

Lapsansky Proposal:

Tony Lapsansky was in attendance to give an overview of his scientific proposal. He is studying the effects of cyanotoxins on aquatic invertebrates and would like one of his testing sites to be Heart Lake. The other local lakes will be Campbell, Pass and Erie. The testing window will be from May through October. He proposes about 6 sites on Heart Lake in about 6 feet of water with weekly testing. Data will be shared with the City.

Bob will show Tony the best spots to place the traps. Brian made a motion to approve the proposal, there was full Board approval.

Forest Plan Board Review

JoAnn gave an overview of the process and timeline, thanking the public for their written comments.

Bob presented a power point review of the public comments received and the major topics covered. There was discussion about the new electric motorcycles that are coming out and the need to address them in the plan. Bob addressed the topic of ADA access at Little Cranberry. It is in the plan as the state and RCO require ADA access. A number of years ago the group, Barrier Busters, did an audit of the forest lands and determined that Little Cranberry was the best location for ADA access. Bob also clarified that the DOE dam safety office required the removal of vegetation and planting of grass on the LC dam. They have asked staff to remove more vegetation but so far have not required it. As to trail maintenance, that is Jamie's main focus. He works tirelessly on narrowing trails.

JoAnn then asked the Board members to share their feedback on the public comments.

Brian asked the Board to refer to the letter submitted by Evergreen Islands as he had a hand in writing that. The letter has goals and recommendations listed.

Tabb stated that on page 17, there should be some review and rewriting of the policies and goals regarding motor vehicles. He would like to see it written similar to the other goals, stating that the main goal is to protect the ACFL.

Nate had nothing new to add but discussed how the comments should be evaluated and weighted.

Bob spoke about the previous Parks and Recreation comprehensive plan and the survey that was done for that project. There were 418 households that responded with overall favorable ratings. Staff have found that when there are no calls or requests, people are happy with the parks and ACFL. Staff generally only hear from the public about problems or issues, with pickleball being a perfect example.

There was discussion about Mt Erie and the suggestion that climbing groups should be required to get permits. However, this opens the City to liability.

JoAnn shared that she also reviewed and categorized the comments and was pleased to see that it matched up with what staff had presented. She would like to see an expanded section about fire safety and response.

Kit was not in attendance but had submitted written comments. He would like to see ebikes addressed in the plan. He also submitted a draft executive summary and glossary of terms.

Discussion was had about defining “best available science”. Bob stated that Staff relies on other regulatory agencies and their expertise during the extensive permitting process.

Nate would like to see a section on regulation and the processes of writing the plan.

The Board voted unanimously to approve Staff writing the final draft. This will be brought back to the Board for adoption and then presented to Council. Public comments will be taken by Council at that time.

Friends of the Forest Update:

Josie Henderson was in attendance and introduced herself as the new Executive Director. She comes with a background of professional non-profit management and is excited to be a part of the Friends. Youth programs are running at this time, with the Homeschool program in its second year. Spring Break camp is next week and summer camp sign-ups are open. They are looking for volunteers for the Trail Ambassador program this summer with sign-ups available online. The Friends are working with the Downtown Alliance, Procession of the Species and the Luminary Parade to celebrate Earth Day.

Staff Reports:

Bob shared that the Dallas Klope Mt Erie clean up is happening soon. There will also be a lake clean up on Earth Day. And opening day for fishing is April 26th.

Jamie presented a list of the infractions in the last 16 months in the ACFL that have required a call to police. Every one of these events takes time away from trail maintenance and his regular responsibilities.

Parks Commission Report:

JoAnn reported that Staff are working on fixing the pickleball fencing and the sound dampening curtains will go up by the end of the month. Staff are also in discussions with the school district on resurfacing and lining two of the district's tennis courts to allow for pickleball play there. Staff are working on updating cemetery policies and adding green burials.

Other Business:

Bob announced that former Mayor Laurie Gere will be in attendance at the next Parks Commission meeting on April 8th. She will be presenting about the future Community Center.

Adjourned at 7:45pm

Respectfully Submitted by Darby Jordan