



ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES ADVISORY COUNCIL

City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation
Regular Meeting

Wednesday, August 10th, 2022
4:30 - 6:00 p.m. at Olcott Park

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://bloomington.zoom.us/j/81481368876?pwd=ZlI4S0tlaXFJWit3aHN0RGN3QWc1Zz09>

Meeting ID: 814 8136 8876

Passcode: ERAC

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:38 pm.

II. ROLL CALL

Denise Gardiner, Autumn Brunelle, Bill Jones, Jeff Ehman, Dave Parkhurst, Marne Potter

Staff: Rebecca Swift, Steve Cotter, Tim Street, Joanna Sparks, Jake Wood

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – June 2022

Motion to approve meeting minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. AGENDA

A. Public Appearances

A-1 Public Comment Period

B. Old Business

B-1 Bicentennial Bond Tree Planting Project Updates

The city has hired, Haskell Smith, as the new Urban Forester. The bond money from the bicentennial bond from 2018 is still available to increase urban canopies. \$180,000 obligated for 300 trees to be installed. About 80 have been planted. Will notify ERAC members when fall planting season begins. Big challenge is finding areas that we are able to plant trees. Also working on request for quotes (RFQ) to replace the nine callery pear trees that are on the B-Line Trail. BPRD hopes to use some larger stock trees to replace those removed.

B-2 Winslow Woods Property Updates

Trail staff has been on property to work on some drainage issues, property encroachment issues, and gaining support for invasive removal around Winslow Woods Park from the monthly Weed Wrangle volunteer support.

B-3 Griffy Lake Project Celebration & Ribbon Cutting Event

The event was hosted on July 29th. The Griffy Loop Trail Project has been mentioned in management plans since the 80's. The ribbon cutting event included showcasing the new accessible fishing pier and walkway that connects users to the north and south shore hiking trails. Phase one of the Griffy Loop Project also includes a .5 section of dirt trail located on the south side of the lake. This section of trail was installed by Spectrum. Spectrum is also working on trail signage suggestions and updating the trail section of the Griffy Lake Master Plan to provide management and trail route recommendations. One focus of trail management is addressing people walking off trail and causing further erosion near steep ravines. Boathouse and Trails Staff

continue to collect fishing line from shorelines and trees. Unfortunately, the fishing waste receptacles are not being used correctly and continue to fill up with other debris that is hard to remove.

B-4 Roger's Family Farm Project Updates

The Goat Farm property was donated in 2007 to the Parks Department by the Rogers Family. In 2020, the Rogers Family made a large financial donation to be used for restoring and improving the Goat Farm property. The property contains a prairie habitat and is located in a floodplain near Jackson Creek. The prairie was seeded with native species in 2017 and continues to be managed by City Landscape Crews. The northern 3rd of the park was restored using funds from a the U.S. Fish and Wildlife grant which included the installation of chimney swift structures.

A contractor has been hired to renovate the barn, add parking spots, and install a looped paved trail around the park to increase access. The project also includes funding for other park amenities such as benches and interpretive signs.

C. New Business

C-1 Education Update

City of Bloomington: Fall program season begins in September. Leonard Springs Nature Day and Griffy Lake Nature Day start the first week of September through first week of November. Due to bus driver shortages, both program times had to be reduced. It's the 19th year for Leonard Springs Nature Days (6th grade students) and the 17th year at Griffy Lake Nature Days (4th grade students). BPRD is always looking for volunteer support for these programs from 9:45 am – 2 pm every Tuesday and Thursday. Monthly and weekly weed wrangles continue to combat invasive plant species in our parks as well as volunteer support for the City's Adopt-A-Trail, Adopt-A-Stream, and Adopt-A-Greenspace participants. The First Saturday Weed Wrangle in September will be at RCA Community Park and will focus on managing Japanese stiltgrass. BPRD staff are still looking for volunteers.

Monroe County Parks: Had to push back on the opening of the Karst Farm Greenway Trail due to some issues with railroad crossings. Should be completed by end of October. There will be an opening event when the times come. MCPR is partnering with Monroe County Airport for a 5k event on August 25th. MC-IRIS native plant sale will be Sept 10th at 9 am at Switchyard Park. MCPR staff are still looking for volunteers for plant sale. Bug Fest will be at Hilltop Gardens and Nature Center on Oct 1st from 10 am- 2 pm. MCPR will be hosting a Harvest Fest on Oct 29th at Will Detmer Park. Staff be giving out free pumpkins. Event includes pumpkin carving contest, information booths, and food. MCPR will be offering a Fall Master Naturalist program September through October.

C-2 Lower Cascades Celebration & Project Update

Celebrate 101 years of management and recreation at Lower Cascades Park on Sept 18th from 1 pm - 4 pm. Many trail and stream improvements have been completed this past year. A new accessible boardwalk was constructed to allow users a safe way to access the waterfall as well as limestone "stairs" that have improved stream embankments and access to the stream. There is no more parking located near Waterfall Shelter or driving across the spillway. BPRD will continue to work with Utilities and Public Works to make additional repairs to the creek wall.

C-3 Mill Property Donation & Trail Extensions

Public Investment Corp owns the property on northwest side of Woolery Mill on Tapp Rd. A 9.5 acre section of the property is being donated to BPRD and includes a paved section of trail. BPRD Staff hope to use this trail section to connect the Clear Creek Trail to Wapehani Mountain

Bike Park. Previously, there has been an agreement for park users to access the property. BPRD Staff are conducting an environmental assessment on the land to better understand management needs before taking ownership.

C-4 Griffy Aquatic Vegetation Updates

IDNR came out to do a water quality assessment and inventory the fish population in Griffy Lake on July 29th. Water clarity and dissolved oxygen levels were average for the season. There was a very small algae bloom but it was only in a small area near the dam, likely caused by the high heat and drought conditions impacting the county. Fish inventories continue to show increased populations of invasive Asian carp. IDNR recommends installing education signs to notify anglers on the impacts of these species and how to help manage the populations.

Aquatic Control Inc. was contracted again this year to perform two aquatic vegetation surveys and make updates to the Griffy Lake Aquatic Vegetation Management Plan. Early season surveys showed a lack of all submerged vegetation. Later season surveys, showed many natives species are coming back but some invasives species are present as well. Typically, crews apply herbicide to manage invasive aquatic vegetation in Griffy Lake but due to the lake being drawn down for construction and previous management efforts to control Eurasian watermilfoil infestations, there was no herbicide treatment this year. BPRD was not awarded any funding through the Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) this year but plans to apply again in 2023. LARE funds may be used to manage invasive species as well as introduce native species to improve fish habitat. BPRD Staff have also submitted a grant application through the Friends of Reservoirs group that can provide funding to purchase Mossback Fish Habitat products to improve habitat conditions along the newly constructed walkway.

C-5 Waldron, Hill and Buskirk Park Project Updates

Parts of the Hidden River Pathway Project that impact the Waldron, Hill and Buskirk Park are complete. According to CBU, the whole project should be finished by the end of the year. The new playground should be delivered by the end of August and will hopefully be installed by the end of the year. The stage is undergoing repairs and should be re-opened by the end of September.

C-6 October 2022 Meeting Agenda Items

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:40 pm.

**NEXT MEETING: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12TH, 2022
RCA COMMUNITY Park– Small Shelter**