



CITY OF BLOOMINGTON
Parks and Recreation

**ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES ADVISORY COUNCIL
CITY OF BLOOMINGTON PARKS AND RECREATION
REGULAR MEETING**

**Wednesday, December 9th, 2020
4:30 - 6:00 p.m.**

**Zoom (virtual) Meeting
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86982797562>
Meeting ID: 869 8279 7562**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Laney called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Melissa Laney, Dan Meyers, Sue Sgambelluri, Denise Gardener, Kathy Mayer, Sarah Murray, Rebecca Swift, Bill Jones, Steve Cotter, Joanna Sparks

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 2020

Melissa Laney moved for the approval of the October meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. AGENDA

A. Public Appearances

A-1 Public Comment Period

B. Old Business

B-1 Griffy Lake Aquatic Vegetation Management Update (LARE)

During the last meeting, Leif from Aquatic Control provided an update on progress made in 2020 at Griffy Lake. Less herbicide was required, and less invasive species were found. Steve provided a follow up presentation of LARE findings to the Park Board. After being used for 2 years, the use of ProcellaCOR (Florpyrauxifen-benzyl) will be paused at Griffy Lake and replaced by Renovate (Triclopyr) for use in 2021 to reduce the likelihood of built-up resistance to ProcellaCOR in plants. Both Indiana DNR and Aquatic Control approve the use of Renovate, which has already been used at Griffy prior to ProcellaCOR and is an allowed product under the Department's Integrated Pest Management Plan.

B-2 CHAP Program

The CHAP hunt occurred during the first three weekends of November, concurrent with the firearm season's opening day. A total of 40 deer were removed from the preserve. In January, Steve Cotter will be meeting with DNR to review the past year's CHAP hunt and discuss potential changes for next year's hunt. Hunter feedback on changing the hunt's days to occur during the week will be collected, as the weekend hunting dates displaces people who would typically use the parks during the weekend. The draft report from White Buffalo, inc. found that 16 deer were harvested on 11/14, 3 on 11/15, 9 on 11/21, 2 on 11/22, 4 on 11/28, and 6 on 11/29. Of the 40 deer harvested, 15 were yearling adult males, 19 were yearling adult females, two male fawns, four female fawns (17 males and 23 females). Some hunters used deer reduction zone tags. At least two deer were distributed to families facing food insecurity. Meyer asked if the IURTP was closed during the hunt. Although the IURTP trails were not closed, people were discouraged from using the trails during the CHAP hunt dates. Volunteers were placed in the IURTP parking lot, in addition to 4 other access points, to let people know Griffy was closed. Due to confusion, some people turned away from accessing the IURTP.

Murray asked if there was a target number of deer to be harvested to restore the Griffy Ecosystem. Cotter responded that there should be five deer per square mile to allow plant life to recover. It is difficult to get an accurate count of the total number of deer in the Griffy Preserve. However, a maximum of 10 deer is estimated to be sustainable within the preserve. A healthy habitat in an eastern forest would allow for up to 15 deer per square mile. EcoLogic is monitoring plant growth and population density to evaluate the success of the CHAP hunt.

B-3 B-Town Parks & Trails on OuterSpatial Mobile App Pilot Launch

The OuterSpatial application is being prepared for launch to better engage with younger generations of park users that use smartphones in their daily lives. This platform can provide GIS data on trails and create curated hikes for educational purposes, in addition to providing alerts on park hazards and closures. Cotter added that IU students in Professor Reynolds' class are making a new Griffy Loop tour that will explain the EcoLogic vegetation inventory. For those that do not have a cell phone but have access to the internet, the XR application will also be available.

B-4 Integrated Pest Management Review

The updated IPM plan will be presented at the February Park Board meeting. This update will include an updated inventory list from the sports division and improved IPM signage based on public input.

C. New Business

C-1 Education Update

In-person educational opportunities remain difficult due to COVID. However, small programs for groups of 10-15 people have been successful with end-of-season owl hikes and other educational programs. During the off-season, efforts will be concentrated on developing the upcoming Nature Day programming. The Monroe County - Identify and Reduce Invasive Species group will encourage people to address the invasive species of the year – purple wintercreeper, in their backyards. Additionally, the Backyard National Park Program may be an initiative that the City of Bloomington should look into promoting. The Sassafras Audubon Society is also holding monthly bird walks on the third Saturday of the month, with a 15-person limit. Previous bird walks have been held at Griffy, Karst, Lake Monroe, and Flatwoods Park.

C-2 Climate Action Planning (CAP) Update

The City of Bloomington Climate Action Plan consists of 8 sub-teams - Transportation, Waste, Local Food, Energy in the Built Environment, Health and Safety, Water and Wastewater, Green Space, and Climate Economy. Parks and Recreation is represented by Sparks and Swift, the health and wellness coordinator, and the individual who works in the community garden. Pale Blue Dot has been hired to develop the CAP and create policy recommendations on how Bloomington can prepare for climate change.

C-3 CHAP Results

Results were shared during old business. Cotter added that CHAP staff costs came to \$2645.59. The cost of security was \$4,752. White Buffalo is expected to provide an invoice of \$29,000. \$25,000 will be reimbursed by DNR.

C-4 Griffy Pier/ Loop Trail Update

Bidding will be delayed until the spring, likely in March, due to the permitting process for changes to the dam. A permit was also submitted for mitigating wetland loss along the proposed walkway on the west side of Headley Road. Up to ¼ of an acre will need to be mitigated for the walkway project. Wetland mitigation in-lieu credits will need to be purchased at an approximate cost of \$20,000. Ownership of the 14-acre parcel south of Griffy Lake on both sides of the road was determined by a title search, which found that the City of Bloomington is the owner. However, a deed presented by IU may indicate that they are the owners. Parks and Recreation is working with the title company and IU to address this. Switchback placement on the south side of the lake and the guardrails' location alongside Headley road is currently being investigated. Parks and Recreation has bundled the pier plan and design with the Loop project. A few unhealthy trees by the boathouse and a telephone pole have been removed in preparation for the project.

Jones asked if fishing structures by the fishing piers will be included in the plan. Cotter responded that fishing structures will not be a part of the current plan but will be considered after further consultation with DNR. Meyers asked if wetland loss was avoidable for the Griffy Loop project. Cotter responded that due to the nature of the proposed walkway, this will not be possible. Meyers asked if wetland mitigation could be

done at another park in place of being done at Griffy. Cotter responded that it may be a possibility, but priority is given to wetland mitigation at Griffy.

C-5 Switchyard Park Native Plantings

All formalized landscaping at Switchyard Park consists of native plants. A field guide comprised of the aerial views, planting areas, and species lists is available for all interested. Currently, there are 16 species of native shrubs, 13 graminoids, and 14 forbs. Much of the soil brought in to cap the coal ash cinders contained large amounts of weed seeds, which has resulted in Johnson Grass becoming a problem in 2020. Moreover, early detection and rapid response are critical to addressing potential invasives at Switchyard Park.

C-6 2021 Outlook

Assuming that COVID-19 will continue to limit in-person gathering in 2021, ERAC meetings will be held over Zoom until it is deemed safe to meet in-person.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:32 PM. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 10, 2021 over Zoom.