



WORTHINGTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Minutes of the Tuesday, May 21, 2019 Meeting

Location Note – This meeting was held at the Olentangy Parklands with members meeting in the lower parking lot and touring the trail.

Members Present - The members present were Dan Armitage, Laura Ball, Bob Burpee, Rachel DeNoewer, Michele Miller, and Rob Wendling. City support staff Darren Hurley, Parks & Recreation Director and Lauren Lange, Recorder were also present.

The minutes from the April 19, 2019 meeting were approved.

Walking Tour of Olentangy Trail and Potential River Access – Members gathered in the lower parking lot at the Olentangy Parklands and reviewed the status of recent projects. The members walked the entire Worthington section of the Olentangy Trail from the lower parking lot to the Thomas Worthington High School fields at the Flats. Along the way, members looked at various access points and brainstormed some ideas with staff. A summary of some of the comments is listed here:

- At the first access point between the parking lot and the pickleball courts, a more permanent solution is needed for watercraft access as the river flow washes away most of the efforts to date. Some ideas include utilizing concrete, adding permanent steps, studying the best angle to minimize river current impacts, and looking to MetroParks and other partners as possible experts and funding help.
- On the bridge overlooking the river between the courts and the skatepark, members observed the rapids and discussed the potential of a fishing access point based on the experiences there of Mr. Armitage. Members also discussed the benefits of creating a safe passage through the rock walls/riffles for watercraft. Ms. Ball pointed out a difficult transition on the pavement leading onto the bridge and asked staff to assess for repair.
- Ms. Miller pointed out the dated signage on the skatepark and asked staff to update it.
- Members continued along the trail past the skatepark and observed the existing rest areas created with benches and pavers. They liked these areas and noted that in many cases the benches could be positioned to look over the riffles if the bank overgrowth were cleared and that would create great views and river access as desired. Periodic placement of these types of spaces as is already done in a couple of places further south on the trail would be ideal.
- Members suggested taking another look at the scenic river designation and whether that would be something to consider moving forward.

- Members also commented on some existing benches that needed to be fixed or replaced. There were also some side trails and clearings that need to either be restored or abandoned as they have become overgrown.
- There was a suggestion for trail etiquette signage to remind users of the best way to share the multi-use trail.
- Members noted some trees along the trail that needed assessment for removal by our arborist.
- The idea of interpretive signage was discussed and how we could do education and history along the trail including the river's history and habitat.
- It was suggested the center line on the trail be repainted as it is fading.
- Members noted that the existing bench and paver areas that are river facing and have been cleared for sight onto and across the river are a great starting point and represent what they have in mind in more places.
- Members looked at a potential secondary river access point for watercraft in the area of the flats at Thomas Worthington High School and liked the possibility of the area already cleared just off of the trail and close to the parking areas and the area under the Route 161 bridge a little further south. A further review of both options would be ideal to determine which would be the most sustainable and effective for users.

Members boarded a city bus at the Flats and returned to the Olentangy Parklands.

Other –

Being no further business, the motion for the meeting to adjourn was granted.