



Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission

May 21, 2011 Regular Meeting - 11:00 AM

Historic Forks of the Wabash

3011 W Park Dr., Huntington, IN 46750-8956

President - John Gettinger Vice-President - Norman Neiburger
Treasurer - Chase Ellis Secretary - Dale Brier

Meeting minutes

Voting Members Present:

Allen County – Ron Zartman
Carroll County – Lynn Brown (proxy)
DNR – Dale Brier (alt)
Huntington County – Dave Hacker
Knox County – Chase Ellis
Miami County – Martha Gettinger (proxy)
Sullivan County – John Gettinger
Tippecanoe County – Ron James (proxy)
Vigo County – Kara Kish (proxy)
Warren County - Louise Jewell

DNR Staff Present:

Leah Kopp – DNR Nature Preserves

Non-Voting Members Present:

None

Guests:

none

Voting Members Absent:

Cass County- Arin Shaver
Fountain County - Janet Shoaf
Gibson County - William Knowles
Jay County - Jim Zimmerman
Vermillion County - Eliza Porter
Wells County – Scott Elzey
Parke County – Penny Cox (proxy)
Posey County - Marianna Weinzapfel (proxy)
Wabash County - Michael Beauchamp

Counties not represented:

Adams County - vacant

Call to Order, Introductions, Announce proxies, Open Agenda

John Gettinger called the meeting to order at 11:15 AM and asked for introductions. Dale Brier read the proxies; William Knowles gave his proxy to John Gettinger, Keith Ruble gave his proxy to Kara Kish, George Mears gave his proxy to Lynn Brown, Ken Einselen gave his proxy to Martha Gettinger, and Lucky Neiburger gave his proxy to Ron James.

Comments from Visitors of Guests

Lynn Brown gave a very interesting talk about her involvement with the Historic Forks of the Wabash. Several events are hosted each year at the Forks including a Quilt Show, Heritage Days, Senior Day, Pioneer Festival, Ghost Walk and Christmas at the Forks.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Ron James to approve the March 9 minutes with a second from Chase Ellis; minutes were then accepted as presented.

President's Report

No report.

Finance Report

Dale distributed the finance report. As of May 1, there is \$252,546.37 in the Corridor fund. Expenses since July 1, 2010 are \$12,337.00 Chase reported. Dale then explained that before the year-end some administrative costs could be involved with the DNR grant team. Chase stated that the fund is looking good! Dale then explained how the money is appropriated and then allotted.

Budget Committee Report

The budget committee still has not met.

Sponsorships were then brought up, John would like to put up more money for sponsorships, places like Forks of the Wabash can use more money but they don't want to go through a grant to get it. Dale reminded him that the Commission could not just start handing out money; certain criteria, procedures and state laws have to be followed. The state Budget Agency requires the Commission to submit a marketing plan that would include sponsorship. The budget for 2012 has already been set at \$2500. This year (2011) after the MATAG Conference, \$2,000.00 of the \$2,500.00 that was allotted has been spent. Chase suggested staying with the smaller sponsorships. Dale agreed, by awarding larger sponsorships, it would be bypassing the grant process. The current individual sponsorships that have been awarded by the WRHCC are acceptable. If the Commission wishes to have more of these sponsorships, an increase will have to be made for FY2013. Dale informed the group that the budget agency has been very tight with sponsorship and marketing funds, so the requested increase may not automatically be granted. Chase suggested have more money allocated for 2013, Ron added that it would not hurt to ask for more. Any group wishing to receive sponsorship money must be registered with the state and be set up for direct deposit of the funds. Dale then asked Chase to send him an email in the next week or so requesting the Marketing Plan for Outdoor Recreation to have an idea of what to do for 2013. Chase then added for the next fiscal year he would like for the Budget committee to meet to get a better look at the finances of the Commission.

Grants

The current Grant committee consists of Chase, Keith, John and Dale.

As voted at the last meeting, the total grants round will be \$250,000. Once the contracts go through the state system, money is encumbered and locked into place and will be removed from the available balance. Dale said that unencumbered money would stay in the fund to be used for administrative costs or put into the next grant round. The new Wabash River Corridor Fund (WRCF) does not revert like the Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission (WRHCC) fund did. The group talked about involvement of the Commission grants committee with the DNR grants team. Dale suggested that the Grant committee coordinate with Bob Bronson for reports once every six months or once a year. Chase said he would be fine in doing that and will be the liaison to Bob Bronson's grant team. Dale informed the Commission that Bob and his group have not had a chance to work on their grants at this time. Bob is still hopeful that the grant round will open in September and might have something for them to look at during the July meeting. They have been very busy with the RTP and LWCF Grants. Typically a grant round will be open for 30-45 days. Chase will email Bob and just double check to see if he can meet with him soon. The WRHCF grant website lists goals of the grant program; access sites, canoe launches, and trails. Other info such as funding and eligibility are also listed.

Water Trails

Ron explained that they were 1/6th of the way of having the assessments filled out. John asked that everyone please take the time and fill them out.

Banks of the Wabash

No report.

Old Business

River Currents is still going strong, Ron reported, he would still like for someone to submit some articles or news leads. He stated that during the months of July, August and September that there would be news up and down the Corridor.

Bridges and Railing

No report.

Meeting Cancellation Procedures

John reported that he has not made any progress.

New Business

Commission appointments expire at the end of this year. Dale suggested County Commissioners be contacted soon because most do their annual appointments at the first meeting in January. Dale and Ron had talked before the meeting about having the Commissioners term run from March to March so they are officially appointed at the beginning of March instead of January. This would not interfere with the statute. Dale went on to say every other January he is always waiting on faxes 48 hours before the meeting to see if anyone has officially been appointed and often counties have not met before the WRHCC. Ron Z. then suggested that they just extend their appointment into the first meeting in January. Ron J. said to bring it up as old business in July to decide whether we want to change the dates of service years of the Commissioners. Dale will check into the terms of the appointment and see if the dates are listed on them or not. John thought it would be a good idea for each member of this Commission to report to their county Commissioner on what they have accomplished. Dale went on to explain that the Commission should write a letter to their Commissioners explaining the job description and expected tasks.

Mid America Trails and Greenways Conference – Ft. Wayne, IN

Dale plans to move forward with doing the \$1,000 sponsorship before the end of the fiscal year. That will include two full paid admissions to the conference and a booth so that Commission information will be available. Dale commented the Commission should pick two people to attend. If anyone else would like to go on behalf of the Commission, the Commission can pay their registration and travel expenses. Chase would like to attend. Ron Z. stated that he would like to attend as well because it is such a good conference. Dale made the comment that decisions have to be made as soon as possible to get those registered who want to attend. Ron James will be making a presentation so he should be one of the attendees. Ron Z. has committed to help with the water trail trip down the Wabash and discussion then ensued about canoe or kayak trips down the river. Dale suggested that as a Commission; authorize to pay two more registration fees on top of the two that go along with the sponsorship. Louise then made the motion with a second from Chase. The motion carried. The Commission can have four representatives at the Conference; possibilities are Ron J., Ron Z., Chase E., and Dave.

Announcements and General Reminders

Next meeting will be held in Lafayette at the Depot, the September meeting is being set up by Mike B in Wabash county and it will be at the Honeywell Center. November and January meetings will both be held in Indianapolis.

John announced the Little River Landing Nature Preserve open house would take place at 3:00 PM today. Presentations would start at 3:30 featuring, LRWP, ACRES, and Historic Forks of the Wabash. The River Citizen Award presentation would be presented to Ron James.

Kara Kish thanked everyone for welcoming her to the meeting she would like to join more meetings with Keith. She went on to state that she is the incoming president for Indiana Parks and Recreation Association (IPRA), and hopes that this is the beginning of a relationship between the two. The IPRA Conference will be held in Michigan City, January 18th - 20th.

Other County or Special Event Announcements, Festival Dates for Next Year

More discussion followed and events mentioned were: Muster on the Wabash in September, 100th Anniversary. Sol Fest is the first weekend in May in 2012.

Final comments were then made Ron J. he wanted to thank everyone for arranging the festivities for the day. Special thanks to Dave for lunch as well. Lynn Brown announced that the museum would open from 1:00 - 5:00 PM along with the cabins if anyone was interested in touring them.

July meeting is at the Depot in Lafayette.

September meeting is in Wabash at the Honeywell.

Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn at 1:15 PM by Ron J. with a second coming from Chase.