



Presented February 3, 2014

Town Council Report for January 2014 Parks and Recreation Activity Highlights:

Highlighted Matters

- Work is nearing completion on the previously awarded \$32,000 Lake & River Enhancement (LARE) matching reimbursement grant from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (I-DNR). First reimbursement submission has been submitted and a check should be coming our way shortly. Council members may recall this original grant is to assess several serious bank erosion locations in our oldest park Starkey Park. As a part of this 80%/20% grant, a variety of bio-engineering stabilization practices will be identified for each section of affected stream reach. This then prepares us, per the DNR recommended process, for the potential for competitive participation in the next several yearly grant rounds. The Park Board has currently authorized submission for this yearly LARE grant program for each of the next few years through 2017. Although of course, there is not a guarantee of automatic success in what is always a competitive yearly process (with more dollars requested statewide each year than I-DNR has to distribute).
- Along those lines, a 2014 LARE grant request for Starkey Park was submitted last week, ahead of deadline. This 80%/20% grant submission is targeting the DNR maximum of \$100,000 in LARE grant funds. It is hoped we will be successful and help leverage additional project moneys back into our community.
- These two highlights above mean that in the last 5-years we have been successful in garnering of over \$285,000 in additional grant funds to assist in projects. By the end of 2013, most of these grant obligations are complete and their respective grant funds have trickled back to us. Two grant projects are still in active here in the early stages of 2014. Those dollars above generally do not include other, harder to quantify efforts, from some of the other projects (and occasionally smaller efforts), with which the Department is involved such as volunteer efforts (Eagle Scout projects and such). It also doesn't for the most part include Zion Nature Center grant efforts.
- Park Staff benefitted from attending educational, training, and certification sessions at the Annual Indiana Park & Recreation Association's Annual Educational Conference held on the north side of Indianapolis.
- We have already had several significant snow events in January (Something on the order of 20 events this winter, so far with likely another one in the week of the Council meeting). January added at least three rounds clearing efforts (with several trips/hours in each round). This makes over 12 major clearing efforts for the Department and several minor ones (or returns to an area to scrap closer to the trail surface as temperatures warm enough to cur through an ice layer). When we are able to clear, Mulberry Fields (sledding hill access) and the Zionsville Rail Trail are high priorities. We also try and help out on the other Street-trails that aren't in a park or immediately adjacent to a park.
- Regarding the ribbon-cutting for Heritage Trail Park, we hope this winter will loose its grasp by mid to late April and the Park Board would love to have every Town Council member in attendance for a short ceremony. Please send an email to Park Superintendent Matt Dickey as to if you have any hard dates for windows of time in which you will be unavailable. Also please indicate if you would be generally be available for a Saturday morning event or would prefer a weekday morning or afternoon. Thank you for your continued support.