



Presented December 7, 2015

Town Council Report for November 2015 Parks and Recreation Activity Highlights:

Park Programming

- *Zionsville Parks Golf Course (ZGC)*: Our gross operating profit for the Zionsville Park's Golf Course was ~\$7,045 for the month. While this was an expected drop from the previous month as our weather becomes more problematic, this actually represents our 2nd highest gross operating profit ever collected for November. And this was even with being closed 10 full days (mostly in the later part of November). During our seven seasons of operation, the gross operating profits for this month have ranged from a very abnormal high of ~\$10,533 (in 2009), to a low of ~\$1,445 (last year). With a clustering of three years coming in at the ~\$6,000 to ~\$6,300 range. This month's average for our seven-year time span (including 2015) is ~\$5,680, so this past month's total in 2015 was 24% above average.
- *Zions Nature Center (ZNC)*: This was a solid month for the Zion Nature Center with 819 participants in our programs (at various locations in the park system and community) and visitors to our Center. Over 40% of these (339) were unscheduled walk-ins to our Zionsville Nature Center. As per our practice, we try and offer drop-in visitors staff-led impromptu programs and our Park Naturalist and her Part-Time Staff interacted with 51 of those visitors in this manner; the remaining 28 walk-in visitors just enjoyed the exhibits/animals.

Additional Programming, Partnerships, Other Events in the Parks, etc.:

- *Grant for Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning*: Zionsville Parks and Recreation was very excited to hear in late summer that we were one of only 4 departments out of 25-30 in the State to be funded for a community-wide Pedestrian and Bicycle Trails Plan. This funding is to help promote health and economic development in communities by increasing the opportunities to walk and bike within those communities. Due to some challenges in the State's funding process we weren't actually under grant-contract until mid-November, but now an RFP has gone out to 13 of these specialized planning and engineering firms in a multi-state area (including the Town's current engineering consulting firm). The planning process will be robust, will take about 5-6 months, and will involve numerous opportunities and ways to involve the public. There will be more reporting as the process evolves and we will hope that all Town Councilors and many Town Staff also join the general public in providing input on this important community improvement project.
- *Lake and River Enhancement Project (LARE)*: Our most recent partnership with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources through our first LARE Grant is nearing the end on the first, very-successful project. We had received a \$115,000 grant from this source to help stabilize one of four, very critically eroding sections of streambank in Starkey Park. This fall has seen the construction of the first of this extensive type of bio-engineering efforts in Zionsville... although; there have been three other less involved stabilization projects undertaken in the past (two in the parks and one across road from our Zionsville Golf Course). This project, the largest construction project of its type funded by the LARE program in this particular cycle, has garnered attention from across the State and many have travelled to visit the site. We have been told that the overall Director of the DNR also wants to come up to our parks and visit the site. Word has been passed to us that we would be a strong contender for another \$100,000 grant award. This is fortunate because we have at least three more areas that are nearly as bad as the one with which we just dealt and those could easily cost out at two more full grant applications... if we have the required matching funds in our budget. Like most grant programs these are reimbursed matching grant funds *after* one pays for the project. But unlike most, these are an 80%/20% program so our local match is much smaller

Other Highlighted Parks Matters

- *More Donations*: In addition to last month's \$3,000+ dollars of new aquarium equipment donated by a community member to our Nature Center. We also have several new donated taxidermy mounts coming to our ZNC. Most of these were in process this past summer, but it takes time for these to be mounted. These include a Great-blue Heron found at Starkey Park, a Wild Turkey (in flight) mount, an American Mink, and a male White-tailed Deer (head mount). We are also paying to have mounted a (found) Pileated Woodpecker.