



Presented March 7, 2016
Town Council Report for February 2016
Parks and Recreation Activity Highlights:

Park Programming

- *Zions Nature Center (ZNC):* During this past month Our Zion Nature Center had slightly over 500 visitors to the Center and participants in our programs (potentially, at various locations in the park system and community). Three-hundred and forty-one of these (341) 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 108 of those visitors in this manner; the remaining walk-in visitors just enjoyed the exhibits/animals and unstructured conversations with our ZNC staff.
- *Zionsville Parks Golf Course (ZGC):* Our monthly gross operating profit for the Zionsville Park's Golf Course was at ~\$3,115 for this past month. Of course, since the course is not scheduled to open until March 18th (weather permitting), this is all from yearly season passes purchases for greens fees and/or cart usage. Total for the years so far in season passes is ~\$8312 (including the \$3,115 above).

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

- *Zionsville's Active Transportation Implementation Strategy Process:* Active Transportation is a term encompassing walking and bicycling for... transportation, commuting to work, running errands, health and fitness, as well as the recreation purposes. Utilizing in part an \$18,500 grant from the Indiana State Board of Health, The Town of Zionsville is taking its existing basic Pedestrian and Bicycle plan to a much more detailed level. There have been a whole series of public input opportunities and various planning activities. At this point the public has provided input via a public forum meeting, online surveys, hard copy surveys (available at various points in the community), an online opportunity to mark maps with the public's route and destination suggestions. We have had over 1800 public input contacts from just the online survey and map-suggestions. The next public input opportunity is another public input forum schedule in the Town Hall's Community Room at 6:30-8:30 PM on March 10th. This planning process continues to early summer, when the documents will work through an adoption process culminating at the Town Council.

Other Highlighted Parks Matters

- *Zion Nature Center/ Possible Emergency Town Hall/Fire Dept. Hybrid Build Construction Project:* At the end of January, the first meeting of the design committee for this joint project between the Park Board and other Town Agencies was held. Attending were the Mayor and Town Manager, Department heads from the Park and the Fire Department, and Planning/Economic Development, a Park Board Member, the Park Naturalist, and members of the two firms (construction management and the architectural firm) were also present. The concept for this group is to discern the joint design principles that are important for a hybrid building that could have functionality beyond a Nature Center should the Parks Department move beyond or out from such use at that site. Of course the ability to move out may be dependent on whether the Park Board can recoup some of their funds used in implementing this structure since, if the Park Board does have to move they will still need a Nature Center building in some further location. It is interesting that the design firms have, on their own, been able to come up with a possible concept that does not absolutely require the Fire Department or some other non-park use to someday supplant the nature center and require it to be moved off-site (i.e. uses could coexist on site). In any case, the meetings to date have been quite productive and this intensive process will continue over the next few months as the project readies for construction stages.
- *Grant Application sought for ZNC's New Turtle Exhibit:* Our Park Naturalist, Mindy Murdock has prepared a grant application submission for \$6,500 to Boone REMC. While not required as part of the grant program, we chose to submit it through our Friends of the Zion Nature Center.
- *ZNC Intern:* We have posted for a summer intern position that would assist in the ZNC programming operations. This has been sent out to 7 Indiana colleges that have curriculum in environmental education and/or similar arenas. In addition to assisting Mindy Murdock, this part-time position will also help train the student with valuable real world experience.