



Presented April 4, 2016

Town Council Report for March 2016 Parks and Recreation Activity Highlights:

Park Programming

- *Zions Nature Center (ZNC)*: Over this past month, Zion Nature Center had 1774 participants in our programs (potentially, at various locations in the park system and community) and/or visitors to our Center. This is a new monthly record for the two years Park Naturalist Mindy Murdock, has been employed. Looking back over 5 years of reports from the previous staff person at the Center, we haven't found any monthly number that was higher. So this may be an all-time high for the 14 year history of the Center. A portion of this above total represents the number of unscheduled walk-ins to our Zionsville Nature Center (480).
- *Zionsville Parks Golf Course (ZGC)*: Our monthly gross operating profit for the Zionsville Park's Golf Course was at ~\$8,173 for this past month. The course was scheduled to open March 18th. But we did open almost a week early. That helped us with one additional good day of golfing weather and two mediocre ones. The rest of the "extra days" were weather-washouts. This monthly gross number is our 4th highest for the months of Marchs we have tabulated in our 8 seasons of operation. It is actually a touch below our average for March as calculated over our 8 seasons (average= ~\$9,176). It is interesting to note that the 5th place in for the month of March was almost half again as low as our number this time (~\$4,893). It seems March is a "feast or famine month". Our highest recorded gross operating profit for March was ~\$18,037. Second and third places came in at ~\$11,959 and ~\$11,289 respectively. So when March weather is good, we do well.

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, Zionsville is taking its existing basic Pedestrian and Bicycle pathways plan to a much more detailed level. That existing plan will stay in existence because it is used in the planning and zoning process so that when a developer builds a new subdivision, if there are pathways shown they have to build their fair share. For this new planning 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. 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*: As the process has evolved it became clear there is indeed room for a Nature Center and a future fire station to exist and operate independently on the two acres just north of Heritage Trail Park. The decision to split and build a separate stand allowing Park Facility buildings on the property was confirmed with Town Manager Mitro. And that discussion was also bumped up to Councilor Jeff Papa, who as Mayor Papa back in 2015 was one of the "godparents" of the building concept. The current mayor, Mayor Haak was also consulted in the decision to split into two buildings and all agreed this was the right thing to do This will allow a standalone Park facility to exist on that site in perpetuity and will not absolutely require us to move our Nature Center at a future date. And if some donation of a fantastic piece of land someday provides a better home for some future nature center, this building can be converted by the park department to a recreation facility that could hold small classes and workshops.
- *Another Grant Application sought for ZNC's New Turtle Exhibit*: Our Park Naturalist, Mindy Murdock has prepared another grant application submission, this one for \$6,000 to Subaru. The previous month's grant application, submitted via the Friends of Zion Nature Center to Boone REMC, was turned down by REMC.