

2015 Pekin Park Foundation Annual Report

2015 was a year of change, continued progress and ambitious projects for the Pekin Park Foundation. We welcomed the Pekin Park District's new Director, Cameron Bettin and said goodbye to Bob Blackwell upon his retirement. The election for Park District Commissioners saw Ron Maquet and Barb Owens both leave the Park Board and the Foundation Board of Directors. In their place, veteran Park Commissioner Paula Helm and newly-elected Dennis Barron Jr became new members of the Foundation Board. Rich Hallam, the Park District's new Business Manager also became a member/advisor to the Foundation.

Board election was held in May with Pete Ault remaining as President; Gary Gillis being named Vice President; Dennis Green retained as Secretary, and Rich Hallam officially serving in the role of Treasurer.

Among the continuing progress and projects the Pekin Park Foundation saw in 2015 were:

- A \$100,000 gift was made to the Miller Center for expansion of the Craft and Wood Carver's Room by Charles Thomas in honor of his late mother Elizabeth Thomas. Work was completed and dedication was conducted on February 6, 2016. Sadly, Mr Thomas passed away before the project was completed. Thankfully, he lived to see the project's plans and construction begin.

- Began the planning process with Jim Donahue for a Park Improvement Project at James Field, to be funded by the Donahue family and completed in Jan Donahue's memory. At year end, the project was in the final stages of the planning phase.

- A decision was made to have 10% of revenue generated by events held at outer parks be paid directly to the Park District rather than the Foundation- unless designated otherwise.

- Discussion was held and plans drafted to place a marker at the Park Pavilion noting its original completion date of 1905.

- The Interpretive Sign Project in McNaughton Park- noting the reforestation of designated areas was completed.

- Signage was completed and installed naming the park administration building the "Robert N. Blackwell Administration Building".

- An Ethics Pledge was discussed, reviewed and approved by the board.

- A review of the Park Foundation's By-Laws was reviewed by Pete Ault with minor updates and revisions made.

- The board clarified the process behind the Park's Gifting Policy. While any citizen can petition the Park Board directly, protocol asks that the person doing so pursue their efforts through the Park Foundation which will serve as the body that discusses and researches the project in great detail ultimately making a recommendation for any action to the Park Board who makes the final determination.

- Conversion of foundation trust accounts to regular savings accounts as per the recommendation of Rich Hallam. This reduced the number of accounts from five to one and resulted in a savings of administrative costs. Also, after consulting with Busey Bank, \$30,000 was moved to an ultra short-term bond fund in an effort to earn more interest.

- The Endowment Fund was initially funded with \$1000 being moved from the General Fund. \$1000 more was added by Dec. 31.

-Discussion by the board began regarding the need to pursue foundation fund raising projects. Terri Gambetti- Superintendent of Recreation was exploring the idea of a "Kids Adventure Run". The details would be finalized in early 2016 with the event to be held in late spring/early summer.

-The foundation chose to change its meeting times to adjust to the board's changing schedules. The change reads:

"The Pekin Park Foundation shall meet at 4 pm on the third Monday of each month unless it falls on a state or federal holiday, in which case, the meeting would be held at 4 pm on the third Wednesday of that month. No meeting will be conducted in December unless authorized in advance, and all meetings will be held at the Pekin Park Board Room."

-Respectfully submitted:

Gary Gillis