



Annual Report

2022

Appointing Authority for the Wayne County Park District
Board of Commissioners:

The Honorable Latecia Wiles, Probate Judge
Wayne County Common Pleas Court

Park District Board of Commissioners:

Denny Jordan, Chr.

Joseph Reed

Phil Grimm

David Armstrong

Carole Van Pelt

Per ORC: 1545.08 Yearly Report

2022 Review for Wayne County Park District

With Covid 19 on the down swing we were able to do a couple of nature education programs. Pavilion reservations were down indicating that the community was choosing to gather inside again. Regardless, attendance at Barnes Preserve continues to be busy all week long with both parking lots full on summer weekends. Barnes Preserve continues to be a safe place for visitors to exercise and refresh their mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

Noteworthy:

- Volunteers from the Friends of the Park, Park Board, Wooster Kiwanis, and Apple Creek Scouts constructed 60 eight-foot boardwalk sections for the wet areas in the woods and east Meadow trails. Materials were purchased with funds from last year's donation. Construction and installation of the boardwalks happened in the Spring and again in the Fall.
- A summer youth work program provided labor over a three-week period. Two young men mulched the path down to the lower ponds and painted all the picnic tables at the Pavilion. It gave the young men a sense of pride and the Park District, some much needed work projects completed.
- Kohler's Pond was saved from fast-growing cattails. The Board contracted with AquaDoc to remove the invasive plants so the wetland pond would remain viable for all the aquatic and wildlife.
- Participated in the Wayne County Fair with a booth manned by 20+ volunteers over the course of the week. Pictures, brochures and stickers for kids were distributed to bring more awareness to Barnes Preserve and the Wayne County Park District.
- Website was re-done and is being handled by a new volunteer. Updates are done on a regular basis.

- ASPO held their annual Trick or Treat fundraiser at Barnes Preserve with nearly 160 paid reservations. Event was successful with 13 vendors sponsoring doors, one nature education stop, Wayne County Sheriff's Office, Wooster Twp. Fire Dept., and a favorite stop - getting to pet a miniature pony. Crafts and games were provided around the pavilion. The event was manned by 30+ park volunteers and staff and volunteers from ASPO. Theme was: "A Ghostly Affair" with volunteers in costumes. Wayne County Sheriff and Wayne County Amateur Radio Club provided security.
- Monthly business meetings for both the Friends group and the Park Board are being held at Buehler's Milltown Community Room. Meetings were held each month except Sept. and December.
- The Board was asked to collaborate on a ODNR grant with the Wayne County Library in a "Storybook Trail" program at Barnes Preserve.
- Sadly, one of our main nature educators, Dr. Herb Broda, passed. His many contributions to the Park District began at the inception of the Board in 1991.
- Two park commissioners have devoted much of their time this year to strategic planning with the goal of passing an operating levy in the future. A levy would open up many opportunities of land acquisitions, educational programs, and collaboration with other like-minded organizations as other adjacent counties have done.
- The Barnes Preserve hosted Norwayne Middle School's Science classes back again this year for an outdoor education event. Over 150 students spent the day learning about nature and diversity of ecosystems from OCVN educators and Wayne County Soil and Water education staff (sponsor).
- The Board was awarded TWO state grants: \$ 250,000 from Ohio Capital Improvement Fund, administered by ODNR, and Ohio Public Works grant for \$ 264,938 (NRAC). Both grants are designated for the restoration of the stream that flows through the area and development of fishing pond from two abandoned retention ponds on the lower end of the park. Amenities include a new and improved one acre fishing pond, pier, boardwalks and trails around the pond. Site analysis, permitting, and surveying has begun with project to be completed by June 2024.

Info and Statistics

Total Revenue: \$ 5,416.43

Total Expenses: \$ 13,327.23

Land: 76 acres at Barnes Preserve (partially developed)

Includes:

.09 ADA paved trails through woods and meadow

1 mile of mulched paths-some with boardwalks

Large pavilion with tables and grill

Observation Deck overlooking wetland pond

Seasonal port-a-john

2 parking lots (one paved/one gravel)

12 donated park benches throughout the park

88 acres of undeveloped woods at another location

Pavilion Reservations: 12 reservations

Average number of active volunteers: 30

Number of hours of volunteer labor: 500+hours

Website: waynecountyparkdistrict.org

Facebook: Wayne County Park District and Friends of the Park

(postings archived by Archive Social through the County)

Related Facebook page: *A Walk at Barnes Preserve* (not administered by Park District)