

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE TOURISM AND PARKS COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Becky Hutchins at 3:30 p.m. on February 2, 2004 in Room 241-N of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Representative Broderick Henderson - excused
Representative Mary Kauffman - excused
Representative Margaret Long - excused
Representative Ed O'Malley - excused
Representative Candy Ruff - excused
Representative Scott Schwab - excused
Representative H. Jan Scoggins-Waite - excused
Representative Clark Shultz - excused

Committee staff present:

Hank Avila, Legislative Research Department
Russell Mills, Legislative Research Department
Mary Torrence, Office of Revisor of Statutes
Lura Attig, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Governor Mike Hayden, Department of Wildlife and Parks.

Others attending:

See Attached List.

HB 2557 - Designating Menninger Memorial park as a state park

Proponents:

Governor Mike Hayden, Secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Parks testified before the committee as a proponent of **HB 2557**. (Attachment 1).

Secretary Hayden indicated the proposed park, adjacent land, and the Governor's Mansion on a large map.

General questions were regarding an adjacent railroad, river access, impact on Department of Wildlife and Parks Budget, fees, security, private land owners and the possibility of part of the Oregon Trail being located on part of the property in question.

The railroad would be contacted to upgrade the crossing. Engineers are working on the feasibility of facilities and boat ramps. It would be a free "Day Use" park and most likely will not be self supporting. The park will be closed at night thus eliminating most security problems. Adjacent land owners have been contacted. The Department of Wildlife and Parks will do an evaluation to ascertain if the Oregon Trail does pass through the proposed park. It is anticipated that other parks will have to subsidize this park.

Opponents: none

Chairperson Hutchins adjourned the meeting at 3:50 p.m.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 4, 2004.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM AND PARKS

GUEST LIST

DATE: Feb. 2, 2004

NAME	REPRESENTING
ERIC COLLINS	Ks Govt Consulting
Steve Swaffa	Ks Farm Bureau
Heather M. Schmitt	KDWP
Chris Tymeson	KDWP
Dick Koerth	KDWP
see. Mike Hayden	KDWP
DICK CARTER	TIAK
Peter Black	Ed O'Malley
CAROL ANN ALDRIT	KDOR
Bonnie Brawn	KDOR
DANIEL WARD	Ks WILDLIFE FDN

**Testimony on HB 2557 Relating to Menninger Memorial State Park
To
The House Committee on Tourism and Parks**

**By Mike Hayden
Secretary
Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks**

February 2, 2004

In May 2003 Secretary Howard Fricke, Department of Administration, discussed with Governor Sebelius and Secretary Hayden the potential for a donation, by the private developer who will be developing a portion of the Menninger campus, to create a Menninger Memorial State Park. The proposed state park would be approximately 70-80 acres in size and would adjoin the Cedar Crest property. It would provide an access point to the Kansas River, as well as picnic areas, hiking and biking trails. An existing pond on the property is well suited to become a children's fishing pond. Because of security concerns given the close proximity to Cedar Crest, the park would be limited to day-use only. The Governor has supported the proposal and her FY 2005 Budget Recommendation includes \$100,000 from the Park Fee Fund to fund the initial design costs for the development.

KDWP has also been in discussion with private landowners and Washburn University about accessing or acquiring additional parcels of land that would connect the proposed state park area with the State History Center property, creating a trail system from the History Center to Cedar Crest. Part of these adjoining properties contains a floodplain area, which is of great interest to both the KDWP and the City of Topeka. The City of Topeka is interested in a joint development with the department to create wetlands in this floodplain, which would assist the city in controlling storm runoff from areas south of the proposed area. The wetlands would be a great educational and conservation resource for the department.

In addition to the benefits to the KDWP and the City of Topeka, the proposed Menninger Memorial State Park is attractive to the Menninger Board of Directors, the OPUS development company, and the private developer for several reasons. The Board would appreciate the opportunity to use a portion of the former facility for public use. OPUS and the developer appreciate the value of KDWP developing a day use state park north of the proposed development area and providing a lasting buffer against any future development.

Many of the benefits that would be gained from the development of the Menninger Memorial State Park would help meet the needs cited in the *2003 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*, which identified a heavy demand for additional open space, children's fishing areas, river access, and hiking/biking trails near urban areas, particularly the Topeka area. By helping to meet these demands, the development of the park would improve the quality of life for Topeka's citizens, as well as all Kansans.

House Tourism Committee
Meeting Date 02/02/04
Attachment 1