

**Minutes**  
**Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority**  
**Board of Commissioners**  
**Thursday, January 14, 2016**

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The regular meeting of the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority's Board of Commissioners was held at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, January 14, 2016 at the Administrative Office.

Commissioners Present:	John C. Hertel Robert W. Marans Bernard Parker Jaye Quadrozzi John E. La Belle Anthony V. Marrocco Timothy J. McCarthy
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Staff Officers:	
Director	George Phifer
Controller	Rebecca Franchock

Other Attendees:  
    Steve Mann with Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, PLC

Chairman Hertel called the Jan. 14, 2016 meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

**Chairman's Statement**

Chairman Hertel said he hoped everyone had a good holiday and was looking forward to a smooth and good weather filled year.

**1. Public Comments**

None.

**2. Minutes – Dec. 10, 2015 Regular Meeting**

Motion by Commissioner Marrocco, supported by Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners' approve the Dec. 10, 2015 meeting minutes as presented.

*Discussion:* Commissioner Marans requested the minutes be amended to include the following statement on the U of M student run project: "Commissioner Marans said this student-run project would be a good, low cost opportunity to generate ideas for a new building and the site. Once the Board decided to move forward, an architectural firm would be selected to carry out the proposed work."

Motion by Commissioner Marrocco, supported by Commissioners Marans that the Board of Commissioners approve the amended Dec. 10, 2015 minutes.

Motion carried unanimously.

**3. Approval – Jan. 14, 2016 Agenda**

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy, supported by Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners' approve the Jan. 14, 2016 agenda as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

**4. Approval – Jan. 14, 2016 Consent Agenda**

Motion by Commissioner Marrocco, supported by Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners' approve the consent agenda consisting of the following:

- a. Purchases
  - 1. Mowers, all locations

2. Beverage Contract, all locations
3. Fireworks, various locations
4. Golf Carts, Stony Creek
5. Island Queen, Kensington
- b. Update – Purchases over \$10,000
- c. Approval – TIFA Exemptions
  1. City of Dearborn Warren Business District Improvement Authority
  2. City of Dearborn Dix-Vernor Business District Improvement Authority
- d. Approval – Wayne County Annual Maintenance Permit
- e. Approval – Property Donation, Lake St. Clair Metropark

Motion carried unanimously.

## **Regular Agenda**

### **6. Legislative Report**

Motion by Commissioner Marans, supported by Commissioner La Belle that the Board of Commissioners' receive and file the Legislative Report as submitted by Consultant George Carr.

*Discussion:* Director Phifer let commissioners know George Carr was ill and unable to attend the meeting.

Motion carried unanimously.

### **7. Reports**

#### **A. Lake St. Clair Metropark**

##### **1. Approval – Seawall Replacement and Marina Accessible Docks**

Motion by Commissioner Marans, supported by Commissioner Quadrozzi that the Board of Commissioners' Commissioners' (1) award Contract No. 502-15-662 to the low responsive, responsible bidder, LaBelle Development, in the amount of \$937,277; and (2) transfer \$690,877 from the Fund Balance to cover the full cost of the project as recommended by Manager of Engineering Mike Brahm-Henkel and staff.

*Discussion:* Manager of Engineering Mike Brahm-Henkel updated the Board on the project, explained what was to be replaced, explained that the project was slated for 2015; however, because they were not started in 2015, the unspent funds were returned to Fund Balance. The 2016 budget only included \$246,400 to complete the project. At this time, \$690,877 in additional funds will be needed for the project.

Commissioner La Belle said there was no connection between the LaBelle Development and him or his family.

Commissioner Marrocco asked if handicapped accessible docks were a part of the project and where would they be located. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said yes, and they would be located in the first two slots at the south marina.

Commissioner Hertel asked if Mr. Brahm-Henkel would explain the meaning of accessible docks. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said that accessible docks are for people with disabilities, have certain widths and slopes that are required in order to provide patrons access to facilities. He said the accessible docks were a challenge because it is a floating dock and fluctuates with water levels of the Black Creek.

Commissioner Hertel asked why they were so far from the parking lot. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said engineering staff worked with both planning and the park for the location of the dock.

Commissioner Marrocco asked if the dock could be moved closer to the north marina. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said the south marina is the facility with the newer amenities – shower, restrooms and is ADA compliant. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said there would also be more work to the parking lot, which could affect the area. Commissioner Marrocco asked if another restroom facility could be built. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said yes.

Commissioner Hertel asked if the accessible dockage could be changed. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said yes.

Commissioner McCarthy said in order to keep the project moving, have the Board approve the design aspect with the exception of the location of the accessible dock.

It was moved by Commissioner McCarthy, supported by Commissioner La Belle that the Board of Commissioners' award Contract 502-15-662 to LaBelle Development for the project design excluding the accessible dockage location to be discussed at the next meeting.

Motion carried unanimously.

## **7. Reports**

### **B. Stony Creek Metropark**

#### **1. Approval – Boat Launch Redesign Professional Services**

Motion by Commissioner Quadrozzi, supported by Commissioner Marrocco that the Board of Commissioners' accept the proposal from Anderson, Eckstein and Westrick (AEW) dated August 12, 2015 in the amount of \$105,500 for engineering and architectural design services for the redevelopment of the Stony Creek Metropark boat launch site as recommended by Manager of Engineering Mike Brahm-Henkel and staff.

Discussion: Mr. Brahm-Henkel updated the Board on the project and that staff has asked for a design to expand the building add a concession area and that is ADA compliant.

Commissioner Quadrozzi asked that the building also be an all-purpose weather design and not just for use in the summer months.

Motion carried unanimously.

## **7. Reports**

### **C. Administrative Office**

#### **1. Approval – Lake Erie Hawk Watch Exhibit Contract**

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy, supported by Commissioner Quadrozzi that the Board of Commissioners' approve contract No. 15-052 with Exhibit Concepts in the amount of \$27,620 as recommended by Interpretive Services Manager Jennifer Hollenbeck and staff.

Discussion: Director Phifer updated the Board on the project and said a Request for Proposal was approved by the Board at the Sept. 10, 2015 meeting and staff was requesting approval of the contract. The director said the Metroparks Foundation funded the project and that legal counsel has reviewed and approved the contract.

Commissioner Marrocco asked if the contract was just for the construction or if it included maintenance as well. Director Phifer said it was only for the construction, however, Molly Bell, director of development, was seeking donors to fund the maintenance as well.

Motion carried unanimously.

## **2. Approval – Administrative Office Redesign**

Motion by Commissioner Marrocco, supported by Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners' (1) issue a Purchase Order to the low responsive, responsible bidder, Office Max in the amount of \$50,767.34; and (2) transfer \$50,768 from the Administrative Office Unallocated account to the respective operations accounts for Engineering, Planning, Graphics, Purchasing and Natural Resources to cover the cost of the project recommended by Manager of Engineering Mike Brahm-Henkel and staff.

*Discussion:* Director Phifer updated the Board on the proposed Administrative Office redesign and that the funds were available, and would come from, the Administrative Office addition budget. Director Phifer said the office redesign was a short-term fix while staff researches other options including building a new building.

Commissioner Hertel asked if there was an encumbrance on the 30 acres of land that staff was looking at to build a new building. Director Phifer said yes, and because the land was purchased with a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) grant, the Metroparks has to go through property conversion (exchange equivalent or greater property value for recreational use to replace the 30 acres). The state also has to approve the concept and design for any proposed project.

Commissioner Parker asked if there was a way to argue the point that a new administrative office on the 30 acres could be considered recreational property. Director Phifer said yes, that the new building would be closer to the public and that existing hike-bike trails would run next to the property, which could be connected to other area trails.

Commissioner McCarthy asked why sewer and water are already on the property. Director Phifer replied the 30 acres was originally planned for a park entrance before I-96 was expanded. Director Phifer also said a property conversion has to be contiguous to existing property.

Commissioner Marrocco asked that discussion on the proposed development of the 30 acres of land be moved to other business on the agenda.

Commissioner Quadrozzi asked if there were any constraints on the property where the administrative building is currently located. Director Phifer said no.

## **8. Other Business**

None.

## **9. Staff Officer Update**

1. Director Phifer updated the Board on the purchase of draft horses, which were approved at the Dec. 10, 2015 meeting. Director Phifer stated that the two new teams are working out well and thanked Commissioner Hertel for his assistance and advice with the purchase of the horses.

Commissioner Hertel thanked staff for finding horses locally and not going to a show to purchase horses.

2. Director Phifer congratulated Commissioner Hertel on his recent appointment as chair for the Detroit Metro Convention and Visitors Bureau and also for receiving a three-year contract extension with SMART.

3. Director Phifer introduced Interpretive Services Manager Jennifer Hollenbeck and said she has been evaluating the Interpretive Department during the past year to determine what would be the appropriate structure for this unit.

Ms. Hollenbeck updated the Board on her evaluation and outlined initiatives she would like to implement including reallocating resources and restructuring the department. She said a new position would be created per park district and would include an interpreter with adding a community outreach component to the position. She said staffing levels would remain the same with 18 full-time and 30 part-time employees. She said each district currently had two full-time interpreters, and the new structure would have one full-time interpreter and one community outreach position per district.

Commissioner Quadrozzi said she liked how staff handled the matter and came up with a solution.

Commissioner Parker asked how the community outreach positions would get the Metroparks name out to communities. Ms. Hollenbeck said the community outreach positions would be going out to schools, senior centers and churches to promote all the parks and will also take part in special events both in the parks and throughout the area.

Commissioner Marrocco asked why the Mobile Learning Center was only operated in the Western and Southern districts. Ms. Hollenbeck said Mobile Learning Center is used for activities for all the parks; however, the newest Mobile Learning Center is stationed in the Southern District and focusing on outreach in Wayne County. The Foundation is working to find donors to purchase a third Mobile Learning Center.

4. Director Phifer updated the Board regarding the I.T. Department and said the I.T. manager has been out the past several months and he would like to hire a department manager on a temporary basis to begin and potentially hire on as full-time once the status of the current I.T. manager is determined.

Commissioner McCarthy said that filling this position is extremely important and supports the recommendation.

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy, support by Commissioner La Belle that the Board of Commissioners' support and approve the Director hiring an I.T. Manager on a temporary basis with the possibility of the position becoming permanent if the current I.T. Manager does not return.

Motion carried unanimously.

5. Controller Franchock thanked staff for the hard work on the budget and the new financial system. She said the Government Finance Officers Association awarded the Metroparks a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for 2014. Ms. Franchock was also happy to announce that revenue for 2015 was going to approximately \$800,000 than originally anticipated.

#### **10. Commissioner Comments**

Commissioner La Belle thanked everyone for the kindness given to his family during the last month. He also said that the Board is in a good position and has great institutional knowledge. He said the Foundation is doing well and is at least two years ahead of schedule on initiatives.

Commissioner La Belle also asked if the organization chart was consistent with staff expectation over the next several years. Commissioner Hertel said things have smoothed out and that it would be a good time to look at the organization chart.

Motion by Commissioner La Belle, supported by Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners' approve the Director reevaluating the organizational chart and bring recommended changes to the Board.

Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner McCarthy said there would be a Foundation Board meeting today and a formal presentation to the Board at the March meeting. However, he wanted everyone to know he is happy with the direction the Foundation is headed and that he now has official financial statements done in QuickBooks. He also said that in 2015 the Foundation raised more than \$386,000 in total revenue, which includes memberships, major gifts and grants. The Foundation also has more than \$100,000 available for spending this year. Commissioner McCarthy said the Foundation is off to a good start and that Molly Bell is doing a great job, and that the financial numbers are better than he expected.

Commissioner Parker said he would like to see a formal marketing and outreach plan for 2016.

Commissioner Hertel said that he and Director Phifer were going to meet with Berline to review plans for 2016 and that a media/outreach specialist needed to be hired. Commissioner Parker asked if Berline would be involved in the hiring and selection process. Director Phifer and Commissioner Hertel said no.

Commissioner Parker asked if the parks use educational kiosks. Director Phifer said yes, and that kiosks were helping to spread information to the general public. He also said that's why it's critical to fill the I.T. position and that staff is in the process of setting up QR Codes.

Commissioner Marrocco wished everyone a happy new year and apologized for missing the last two meetings.

Commissioner Marans asked where staff was on live streaming meetings. Director Phifer said staff is still researching options and that more staff would be needed to handle the technology. More discussions with Board members are needed and that one option would be to tape meetings for viewing on public access channels.

Commissioner Marans also asked about the status of the deputy director search. Director Phifer said he has interviewed seven people and that he is still seeking applicants.

Commissioner Quadrozzi said she recently read an article on playgrounds for senior citizens and asked staff to look into options for the parks. Director Phifer said staff would research options and that this information was good to have when staff looks at master plans for the parks.

Commissioner Marrocco asked if the parks had adult tricycles. Director Phifer said no, however, regular bikes and tandem bikes were available for rental in the southern district.

Commissioner Marans said stand up bikes are popular in neighborhood parks and Asia.

Commissioner Hertel said that Commissioner McCarthy was chair for the Detroit Metro Visitors and Convention Bureau a few years ago and that Detroit hotel usage is up 40 percent and that Detroit Metropolitan Airport is the second best airport in the country. He said his biggest desire while chair is to highlight the Metroparks as a tourism option.

## **11. Motion to Adjourn**

Motion by Commissioner Quadrozzi supported by Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners' adjourn the regular meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 11:33 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shawn M. Athayde". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S'.

Shawn M. Athayde  
Recording Secretary