

**Minutes**  
**Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority**  
**Board of Commissioners**  
**Thursday, March 10, 2016**

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A regular meeting of the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority's Board of Commissioners was held at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, March 10, 2016 at the Hudson Mills Metropark Activity Center.

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

Other Attendees:	
Steve Mann	Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, PLC
George Carr	Legislative Consultant
Paula Cunningham	AARP
Kim Bishop	AARP

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

**1. Chairman's Statement**

Commissioner Hertel said he was glad to see the spring weather.

**2. Public Comments**

Laurel Zoet, Metroparks employee, said she questioned the approval of the transfer from the Fund Balance for the farmers market at Kensington Metropark. She said it will be a losing venture and wanted to make sure the Board was fully informed before action was taken.

Toni Spears, Dexter, said she hoped everyone enjoyed the view on the drive into the park since many of the invasive species have been removed. Ms. Spears also commented on the proposed organizational and bylaw changes with the addition of a Chief Financial Officer (CFO) reporting to the Director and the Controller reporting to the CFO. She said there is no justification for the change and that the citizens deserve an independent financial system reporting to the Board. She strongly recommended the Board reconsider this change and not approve the changes.

**3. Minutes – Feb. 11, 2016 Regular Meeting**

Motion by Commissioner Marans, supported by Commissioner Parker that the Board of Commissioners' approve the Feb. 11, 2016 meeting minutes as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

**4. Approval – March 10, 2016 Agenda**

Motion by Commissioner Marrocco, supported by Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners' approve the March 10, 2016 agenda as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

**5. Approval – March 10, 2016 Consent Agenda**

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

- a. Approval – December 2015, January 2016, February 2016 Financial Statements and Payment Registers
- b. Approval – Appropriation Adjustments
  - 1. December 2015
  - 2. January 2016
  - 3. February 2016
- c. Purchases
  - 1. Gasoline, All Parks
  - 2. Shuttle Buses, Lake St. Clair Metropark
  - 3. Skid Steer, Wolcott Mill Metropark
  - 4. Ditch Bank Mower, Kensington Metropark
  - 5. Tractors, Wolcott Mill and Kensington Metroparks
- d. Update – Purchases over \$10,000
- e. Approval – Contract Addendum, DNR Central Reservation System
- f. Bids – Dry Boat Storage Chip Seal Surfacing, Stony Creek
- g. Approval – Underground Storage Tank Insurance Renewal
- h. Approval – Trail Maintenance and Repair Agreement, Milford Township
- i. Approval – Lake St. Clair Metropark Nature Center Recreation Passport Grant

Motion carried unanimously.

**Regular Agenda**

**6. Legislative Report**

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

*Discussion:* Legislative Consultant George Carr reported that the turnout for the Michigan primary elections was high. He said presidential politics and the ongoing Flint water issue will dominate the legislative calendar through the summer, which will encompass a continued legislative attack on local governments. Mr. Carr said a recent story by Mitch Bean, former director of the House Fiscal Agency highlighted the magnitude of Michigan's divestiture in local government. Mr. Carr also reported that the Flint water crisis controls nearly every aspect of the Legislature and will affect Michigan's political landscape for many years. In addition, Mr. Carr said the challenge before the Legislature adjourns for the summer will be to exempt the Authority from additional constraints as the Legislature looks for more revenue sources from local government agencies.

Motion carried unanimously.

**7. Organization Restructure**

Motion by Commissioner Marrocco, supported by Commissioner Parker that the Board of Commissioners' (1) approve the recommended Organizational Restructuring changes; (2) Amend the Bylaws authorizing the Director to hire and appoint a Chief Financial Officer (CFO); and (3) Authorize staff to transfer \$276,000 from the Fund Balance to cover the cost for hiring three new employees and the recommended organizational restructuring changes, as recommended by Director Phifer and staff.

Discussion: Director Phifer said he was asked to review the organization structure at the January 2016 Board meeting and has made a recommendation to Board to change key areas in the organization – Finance, Human Resources, Planning and Natural Resources. In addition, Director Phifer is also recommending adjusting positions in the parks as well as the Administrative Office.

Commissioner McCarthy said the job description for the CFO is too restrictive and he believes the CPA requirement is not necessary, as it would put too many restrictions on the position. He also said the bylaws are confusing and have not been updated/restated since the Board approved the changes for the Deputy Director. He said he disagrees with the proposed bylaw changes and that the Board should use the same structure as the federal government (executive, legislative) where the Director nominates a candidate and the Board confirms. In addition, he said the Board should not amend the bylaws at this meeting and that he would like the Director to work with legal Counsel, Miller Canfield, on updating/restating the bylaws and then bring a recommendation back to the Board for review and approval. He also said the purchasing authority has changed, which is not reflected in the bylaws and that the last two sections are vague and need to be changed.

Commissioner Marans said he had two similar questions – what is the justification for the CPA requirement and why do the bylaws need to be changed. He suggested changing the motion to separate out the bylaws and staff changes.

Commissioner Quadrozzi said she agrees with the CPA recommendation. She said as a lawyer, she hires experts for her cases and she looks for CPAs as they have a higher standard since they have to take rigorous tests. Commissioner Quadrozzi said the CFO should also have a CPA.

Commissioner Parker said he believes the CFO should also be a CPA and that with the high level of revenue coming into the parks, we need someone that can do forecasting. Commissioner Parker also said the previously approved changes should be incorporated into the bylaws and that the proposed restructuring changes should be approved today.

Commissioner La Belle (via teleconference) said the Board should approve the restructuring, authorize the Director to hire a CFO, adjust the bylaws language accordingly and bring it to the Board for approval at the next meeting.

Commissioner Hertel asked the Board if they wanted to accept the motion as presented by Director Phifer and include an amendment by Commissioner McCarthy to have the bylaw changes drafted by Miller Canfield and brought back to the Board at the next meeting.

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners amend the original recommendation to approve the organizational changes and amend the bylaws with changes provided by Miller Canfield.

Commissioner Quadrozzi asked if the CPA requirement was included.

Commissioner Marrocco said at minimum, a CPA was required for the CFO.

Commissioner McCarthy said he would withdraw the amendment if the Board consensus was to have a CPA requirement.

Commissioner Marrocco said he has several engineers on staff and only two or three Professional Engineers (PE). He also stated when he needs an expert; he uses an engineer who has a P.E.

Commissioner Parker asked if the Board was approving the reorganization changes with staff coming back to the Board with the bylaw changes. He said he didn't think who the CFO reports to right now makes a difference as it could take several months to find a candidate for the position.

Commissioner Marans suggested two separate motions.

The Board voted on the motion on the table – to approve the recommended organizational restructuring changes, authorize the director to select a CFO and that the candidate be required to have a CPA.

Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Commissioner Marans, supported by Commissioner Marrocco that the Board of Commissioners authorize Director Phifer to work with legal counsel, Miller Canfield to amend/update the current bylaws and bring the amended/restated bylaws to the Board for approval.

Motion carried unanimously.

## **8. Reports**

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

#### **1. Approval – South Marina Accessible Dock Location**

Motion by Commissioner La Belle, supported by Commissioner Parker that the Board of Commissioners' approve the location of the new accessible dock at Lake St. Clair Metropark as recommended by the Manager of Engineering Mike Brahm-Henkel and staff.

*Discussion:* Manger of Engineering Mike Brahm-Henkel updated the Board on the project and the request by the Board to have staff look into an alternate location for the accessible dock.

Motion carried unanimously.

At the request of Chairman Hertel, the AARP presentation (item 8-F-5) was moved up on the agenda as a courtesy for the representatives with AARP.

#### **Item 8-F-5**

##### **Presentation – AARP of Michigan**

Director Phifer introduced Paula Cunningham and Kim Bishop with AARP.

Paula Cunningham said she was enjoying the parks and that when you think of AARP you general thing of discounts for movies etc. However, AARP is much more than that with more than 1.4 million members in Michigan and well over 200 volunteers. Ms. Cunningham said she recently met Director Phifer and he shared his vision for the Metroparks. She said it's a good fit and that the Metroparks and AARP can support each other with resources, etc. Ms. Cunningham said AARP helps not only people over 50 and veterans, but everyone with quality

of life and care services. She said AARP is looking forward to working with Director Phifer and the Metroparks. She then introduced Kim Bishop, also with AARP.

Ms. Bishop said they are working on establishing a working relationship consisting of advocacy, outreach and education. She gave examples of partnership opportunities with the Metroparks such as sponsoring the Michigan Philharmonic concerts; working with the Metroparks Foundation on discounts for AARP members; bringing a program to the parks to help patrons learn how to walk safely (stretching, proper posture etc.); and ParkFit, which is a program that helps people understand the features and settings available in their vehicles.

Commissioner Quadrozzi thanked Director Phifer for meeting with AARP and said it's a great fit.

Director Phifer thanked Ms. Cunningham and Ms. Bishop for attending the meeting. He also said that he went to Lansing with staff and did a presentation to AARP that went well.

## **8. Reports**

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

#### **2. Bids – Playground Redevelopment**

Discussion: Manager of Engineering Mike Brahm-Henkel updated the Board on the background for the playground redevelopment; design changes made to the project and reviewed an engineering photo/rendering.

Commissioner Parker asked if the playground design was going to be more accessible. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said yes, and explained the accessible areas to the playground; the tennis courts would be revamped and the shuffleboard site would be reduced in size. In addition, the plan includes maintaining as many mature trees as possible and adding new plantings.

Commissioner McCarthy asked about adding Bocce Ball. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said there is a lot of green space, so it is a possibility.

Commissioner Marrocco wanted to delay the decision until he could make a site visit and look at the area.

Commissioner Hertel said he also wanted to do a site visit.

Commissioner Marans said he would like to see a better site plan and agrees with delaying the decision.

Item postponed, no action taken.

### **B. Kensington Metropark**

#### **1. Approval – Farmers Market**

Motion by Commissioner Quadrozzi, supported by Commissioner Marrocco that the Board of Commissioners' (1) approve a budget transfer from the Fund Balance in the amount of \$12,000 to Kensington Metropark Farm Center and (2) receive and file this report as recommended by Interpretive Services Manager Jennifer Hollenbeck and staff.

Discussion: Interpretive Services Manager Jennifer Hollenbeck updated the Board on the background and concept for the Farmers Market including the dates, times

and fees for the events; that it would include local artisans; and that she anticipates the Farmers Market will attract more people to the Farm Center at Kensington and educate more people on locally grown, fresh food.

Commissioner McCarthy said it looked like a long distance to walk through the market. Ms. Hollenback replied that it is actually a small area and is on the same side of the road as the Farm Center so people will not have to cross the road.

Commissioner Marans said he is concerned with parking and how people would be able to cross the road safely. He also said he thought it was a great idea.

Commissioner Quadrozzi said it's a great idea and mentioned a program in Detroit where you could use "Bridge Cards" and "double-up days" and asked if it was possible to do the same with this program. Ms. Hollenbeck said yes and that staff is researching the use of Bridge Cards.

Motion carried unanimously.

## **8. Reports**

### **C. Dexter-Huron Metropark**

#### **1. Approval – Letter of Intent, Washtenaw County Border-To-Border Trail**

Motion by Commissioner Marans, supported by Commissioner Parker that the Board of Commissioners' approve execution of the Memorandum of Understanding for Border-to-Border Trail Projects and letter of support to Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission (WCPARC) for grant applications as recommended by Director Phifer and staff.

*Discussion:* Manager of Planning Nina Kelly updated the Board on the MOU with Washtenaw County and requested Board support and approval for the grant application.

Commissioner Marans said it is an exciting program and that Washtenaw County is optimistic about receiving DNR support.

Motion carried unanimously.

### **D. Lower Huron Metropark**

#### **1. Approval – Wolverine Pipeline Easement Amendment**

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy, supported by Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners' approve the Wolverine Pipeline Easement Amendment to the existing easement as recommended by Manager of Engineering, Mike Brahm-Henkel and staff.

*Discussion:* Mr. Brahm-Henkel updated the Board on the background of the pipeline easement and Wolverine's proposed changes. He said staff did not agree with the proposed amendments when first approached by Michiana Land Services (acting on behalf of Wolverine Pipeline Company). Mr. Brahm-Henkel said Michiana came back to staff with an alternate proposal – to run the pipeline parallel to the existing one.

Commissioner Hertel asked if the pipeline would run through rivers or marshlands. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said yes; however, not on Metroparks property.

Commissioner Marrocco asked if there was an existing pipeline. Mr. Carl Meyer with Wolverine Pipeline said yes, one has been in place since 1953.

Commissioner Marrocco asked if the pipelines are examined. Mr. Meyer replied yes, the pipes are routinely inspective with state-of-the-art equipment.

Commissioner Marrocco asked what flowed through the pipelines. Mr. Meyer replied unrefined oil; however, not natural gas.

Commissioner Marrocco asked if it was possible to reduce the pipeline to 60 feet. Mr. Meyer said no and cited language from the Michigan Public Service Commission approval for the easement.

Commissioner Marans asked if this property was at one time proposed for the golf course. Southern District Superintendent Jim Pershing said no.

Commissioner Marans asked Natural Resources and Environmental Compliance Manager Paul Muelle if he was involved and updated regarding the effect on native species. Mr. Muelle said he was confident that everything was covered in the Notice of Agricultural Impact Mitigation Agreement. Director Phifer said the Natural Resources staff was involved with the decision making process.

Motion carried unanimously.

## **8. Reports**

### **E. Lower Huron Metropark**

#### **1. Approval – Plaza Steps Replacement**

Motion by Commissioner Parker, supported by Commissioner Quadrozzi that the Board of Commissioners' (1) award Contract No. 512-15-226 to the low responsive, responsible bidder, Hartwell Cement Company in the amount of \$28,183.75; and (2) transfer \$28,184.00 from the Lake St. Clair Unallocated Major Maintenance account to the Lake St. Clair Capital account as recommended by Manager of Engineering Mike Brahm-Henkel and staff.

Discussion: Mr. Brahm-Henkel updated the Board on the proposed changes including removing the existing concrete planter in order to open up the plaza for better access to the food bar area for patrons.

Motion carried unanimously.

## **8. Reports**

### **F. Administrative Office**

#### **1. Update – Natural Resources Department**

Motion by Commissioner Marans, supported by Commissioner Marrocco that the Board of Commissioners' receive and file the Natural Resources Update as presented by Natural Resources and Environmental Compliance Manager Paul Muelle and staff.

Discussion: Mr. Muelle updated the Board on the updated invasive species plan and introduced Ryan Colliton, stewardship coordinator, who would review the plan.

Mr. Colliton reviewed the invasive species plan with the Board, which highlighted how the plan would be used to combat invasive species, how priorities were set, as well as budget estimates. Mr. Colliton said this was a working document and would be updated continually. He also reviewed site activity for each of the parks. Mr. Muelle provided the Board with an update on Phragmites control.

Commissioner Hertel asked what was replacing the Phragmites? Mr. Muelle said some native species, frog bit and more Phragmites.

Mr. Muelle also updated the Board on the recently completed deer management program. He said no special deer were culled and all of the venison went to area soup kitchens. Mr. Muelle said the parks are reaching a maintenance phase with the deer numbers at 80 percent does and 20 percent males, which is what is required by the DNR. In addition, 80 percent of the deer were recently counted during an aerial inspection.

Commissioner Marans said it was a great report and asked if would be produced annually and if it was available on the website. Mr. Muelle said yes.

Commissioner Marans also requested that the before and after photos be added to the website for the public to see.

Commissioner Marans also requested the deer management update to be shared with the city of Ann Arbor.

Commissioner Hertel asked if staff was making progress with Phragmites control. Mr. Muelle said yes. Commissioner Hertel also asked if there were problems with wild cucumbers. Mr. Muelle said no.

Commissioner Hertel asked if there was an issue with invasive mammals and insects. Mr. Muelle replied said staff is working with the DNR to stay up to speed on invasives such as emerald ash borer and the gypsy moth.

Commissioner Hertel asked about domestic invasives. Mr. Muelle said there was an issue with wild pigs at Indian Springs, but it has been taken care of naturally (i.e. coyotes).

Commissioner Hertel also asked about the Massasauga Rattlesnake population. Mr. Muelle said the numbers are on the decline and may be federally listed as a protected species. In addition, Mr. Muelle said staff is working with the DNR regarding a possible grant and will bring the grant proposal to the Board for approval.

Motion carried unanimously.

## **8. Reports**

### **F. Administrative Office**

#### **2. Update – Planning Department**

Motion by Commissioner Quadrozzi, supported by Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners' receive and file the Planning Department update as presented by Manager of Planning Nina Kelly and staff.



Ms. Kelly updated the Board on the 2016 Planning Department Vision Plan highlighting assets; Metroparks land use; regional recreation; challenges moving forward; partnership opportunities; leadership and staff goals; and planning initiatives.

Ms. Kelly also let the Board know the next public input meeting would be held on Saturday, April 2 at the Stony Creek Nature Center.

Commissioner Marans asked about individual park master plans; what is planned and how is previous data being used. Ms. Kelly said previous analytics would be included in the master plans.

Commissioner Marans said he would like the Board notified when steering committee meetings would take place to give commissioners the opportunity to get involved regarding their respective parks.

Motion carried unanimously.

## **8. Reports**

### **F. Administrative Office**

#### **3. Update – Development Activities**

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy, supported by Commissioner Marrocco that the Board of Commissioners' receive and file the Development Activities Update as presented by Director of Development Molly Bell.

Ms. Bell updated the Board on fund development activities highlighting sponsors, revenue and sponsorship opportunities. In addition, Ms. Bell said 2015 outcomes exceeded the overall goal.

Commissioner Hertel said there are organizations that have money and would be willing to sponsor electronic signage and that we need to explore the opportunities for corporate sponsors. Ms. Bell said she would work towards identifying sponsors.

Commissioner Marans inquired about expanding the Foundation Board. Ms. Bell said she would add the item to the next Foundation meeting, which is to be held in June 2016.

Commissioner Hertel invited Commissioner Marans to attend the June Foundation meeting.

Commissioner McCarthy let the Board know that Ms. Bell informed him that Ford Motor Company asked her to submit a grant application for a substantial amount of funding and that the grant was due on March 11, 2016.

Motion carried unanimously.

#### **4. Report – 2015 Financial Review**

Motion by Commissioner Marrocco, supported by Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners' receive and file the 2015 Financial Review as presented by Controller Franchock.

Ms. Franchock reviewed the 2015 financial review with the Board highlighting the increase in revenue due in part to a \$2.07 million increase in other revenue due to donations and the BCBS premium refund. She said operating revenue was higher in 2015 with golf revenue at \$7.47 million with tolling revenue at \$5.35 million. Ms. Franchock said expenditures for 2015 were at \$45.6 million with the bulk of the amount in park operations. She said the Fund Balance trend is on the rise and up from \$31.1 million in 2010 to \$39.6 million in 2015. Ms. Franchock said she would like to see a separate capital expenditure fund in order to better track capital projects, funding and expenditures.

Commissioner Hertel said he would like to see the areas in the system that involves cash handling and what the process and procedures are for those areas. Ms. Franchock replied the Board approved for a consultant to do an internal audit and that she would like to move forward and find a consultant to complete the task.

Commissioner Marans said he would like to see operating expenses versus revenue and how it has changed over time.

Commissioner Quadrozzi praised the increase in the Fund Balance and its continual growth.

Commissioner Marrocco said the supplemental major maintenance fund has gone down significantly and wanted to know if oil and gas revenue is down. Ms. Franchock said yes, that we are receiving less revenue as oil and gas production is down.

Commissioner Marrocco asked if we receive a percentage or royalty. Ms. Franchock said a percentage.

Commissioner Marrocco also commented on the change/difference in the interest rates.

## **9. Other Business**

None

## **10. Staff Officer Update**

Director Phifer recognized new/transfer/part-time employees including: Allan Frazher, Park Support Specialist at Lower Huron; Paige Karrick, Graphic Designer/Event Specialist at the Administrative Office; Matt Mulak, Equipment Maintenance Worker at Kensington; Carla McAfee, Multimedia Graphic Design Specialist at the Administrative Office; Brad Felder, Multimedia Webmaster at the Administrative Office; Gerrad Godly, Civil Engineer at the Administrative Office; Johnathon Nadeau, Equipment Maintenance Worker at Lake Erie; Lisa Parsons, Western District Outreach Interpreter; Justin Smith, Southern District Outreach Interpreter; Charlie Shelton, Eastern District Outreach Interpreter; Michelle Nichols, part-time Grant Writer; Brandon Maddick, Golf Services Superintendent; and Kelsey Taylor, part-time Graphic Designer.

Director Phifer said he continues to look for sponsorship opportunities for the annual fireworks displays and Michigan Philharmonic concerts and recently received \$25,000 from First State Bank.

Director Phifer thanked Garner Potter and Jason Kulongowski with the Employee Association and Randy Rossman with Human Resources for working with him on the restructuring. He also thanked staff for all their hard work.

Director Phifer thanks the Board for their patience during the long meeting.

Director Phifer stated he would continue to monitor other areas in the organization and will bring recommendations to the Board as needed.

Commissioner Hertel welcomed all the new employees, congratulated staff on transfers and thanked the Association and Mr. Rossman for their efforts with the restructuring.

#### **11. Commissioner Comments**

Commissioner Marans said it was a good meeting.

Commissioner Quadrozzi said Tiger's opening day was in one month and one day!

Commissioner Parker said he is still concerned about low-income children (and families) not being able to get to the Metroparks. He said he would like staff to look into a transportation program that would assist low-income families reaching the parks throughout the five counties.

Commissioner Marrocco said he read an article in The Detroit News that the city of Detroit found \$50 million in unspent money and that it would be use to upgrade city parks.

#### **12. Motion to Adjourn**

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

The meeting adjourned at 12:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Shawn M. Athayde  
Recording Secretary