

**Minutes  
Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority  
Board of Commissioners  
Thursday, January 8, 2015**

The regular meeting of the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority's Board of Commissioners was held at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, January 8, 2015 at the Administrative Office.

Commissioners Present:

John E. La Belle  
John C. Hertel  
Anthony V. Marrocco  
Robert W. Marans

Absent:

Commissioner  
Commissioner  
Commissioner

Harry E. Lester  
Jaye Quadrozzi  
Timothy J. McCarthy

Staff Officers:

Interim Director  
Deputy Director  
Controller  
Recording Secretary/Corporation Counsel

Gregory J. Almas  
George Phifer  
Rebecca Franchock  
Joseph W. Colaianne

Other Attendees:

George Carr, Legislative Consultant  
Steve Mann, Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, PLC

Chairman La Belle called the January 8, 2015 meeting to order at 10:35 a.m.

**1. Chairman's Statement**

Chairman La Belle said it has been a pleasure working with Greg Almas and George Phifer during the past month.

La Belle gave the floor to Deputy Director Phifer who introduced two new employees – Randy Rossman as the new Human Resources Manager and Mr. David Struck as the new Manager of Planning with both beginning employment on Jan. 12. Mr. Rossman thanked the Board for the opportunity to work for HCMA and looked forward to working everyone. David Struck also said he looked forward to working with the organization.

Commissioner Hertel said he was pleased with the number of applicants that applied for both positions and pleased with the background of both applicants.

Chairman La Belle said St. Clair County has a major interest in both the tourism and agriculture industry and welcomed both to HCMA.

**2. Public Comments**

None.

**3. Minutes – December 11, 2014 Regular Meeting and Closed Session**

Motion by Commissioner Hertel, supported by Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners' approve the Dec. 11, 2014 regular meeting and closed session minutes as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

**4. Approval – January 8, 2015 Agenda**

Motion by Commissioner Marans, supported by Commissioner Marrocco that the Board of Commissioners' approve the January 8, 2015 agenda as recommended.

Motion carried unanimously.

## 5. **Approval – January 8, 2015 Consent Agenda**

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

- Purchases – Maintenance vehicles for Kensington and Lower Huron Metroparks, and sign router for Kensington Metropark;
- Approval – TIFA exemptions – City of Wyandotte Brownfield Redevelopment Authority;
- Update – UST to AST Project at Hudson Mills Metropark;
- Update – Water Slide Restoration and Repairs at Kensington Metropark; and
- Approval – Pollution Legal Liability 2015 - 2019 Policy Renewal.

Motion carried unanimously.

## **Regular Agenda**

### 6. **Update – 2014 Capital and Major Maintenance Summary**

Motion by Commissioner Marrocco, supported by Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners' receive and file the Capital and Major Maintenance Summary as presented by Asset and Development Manager Mike Brahm-Henkel.

*Discussion:* Mike Brahm-Henkel reviewed 2014 capital improvements and major maintenance projects highlighting that 220 projects were completed. Mr. Brahm-Henkel presented before and after pictures of the major projects; and for 2015 said staff would be setting priorities, placing emphasis on maintenance, paving, taking inventory and determining maintenance needs.

Commissioner Marans requested a copy of the capital improvements and major maintenance working list.

Commissioner Hertel requested a meeting be scheduled with Macomb County to discuss the possible paving of Wolcott Road near Wolcott Mill and the Farm Center.

Commissioner Marrocco inquired if assessments were done in-house or if consultants were used. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said generally assessments were done in-house; however, assessments for the bridges were bid out and done by a consultant due to the complexity of the rules and regulations pertaining to bridges.

Motion carried unanimously.

### 7. **Legislative Report**

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

*Discussion:* Carr said the Legislature returns to work on Jan. 8. He noted many bills passed during the lame duck session and that a number of vetoes from the governor were expected. Carr also said bills that affect the Metroparks may be reintroduced during new session including TIFA exemptions, transportation and road funding.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

### 8. **Reports**

#### **A. Hudson Mills Metropark**

##### **1. Approval – Power Pedestal**

Motion by Commissioner Marrocco, supported by Commissioner Hertel that the Board of Commissioners' award Contract No. 508-14Q to the low responsive, responsible bidder, Corby Energy Services, Inc., in the amount of \$32,497.00 and defer the current 2015 access walk project in the amount of \$30,000 to offset the cost and transfer \$3,400.00 from Capital Fund Balance to cover the cost of the project, as recommended by Manager of Assets and Development Mike Brahm-Henkel and staff.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

## 8. Reports

### B. Administrative Office

#### 1. Update – Development Activities

Motion by Commissioner Marans, supported by Commissioner Hertel that the Board of Commissioners' receive and file the Development Activities update as presented by Director of Development Molly Bell.

*Discussion:* Molly Bell, Director of Development provided a year-end report for the Foundation noting revenue is just shy of \$70,000; and that memberships make up the bulk of the revenue received. Bell also handed out new Foundation brochures and advised the Board that she was working on a grant proposal to assist with repairs at the Wolcott Mill Historic Center.

Commissioner Marans asked if there were target numbers for 2014. Ms. Bell replied not for a partial year, but that she was working on target numbers for 2015.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

#### 2. Renewal – 2015 Property and Liability Insurance

Motion by Commissioner Marrocco, supported by Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners' approve renewing the property and liability insurance with the Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority for 2015.

*Discussion:* Controller Franchock advised the Board that costs were up approximately 5 percent (\$33,851) in 2014; however, because the Metroparks are new to MMRMA, it is hoped that costs should level out in 2015. Franchock also said the Metroparks are now eligible to participate in MMRMA's net asset distribution program and the Metroparks will receive a \$39,000 payment.

Commissioner La Belle briefly updated the Board and staff of his involvement with MMRMA.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

#### 3. Budget Reductions

##### a. Community Relations Position

Motion by Commissioner Hertel, supported by Commissioner Marrocco that the Board of Commissioners' eliminate funding for the position of Community Relations and authorize the Interim Director to prepare a severance agreement to be approved by the Chair.

*Discussion:* Interim Director Gregory Almas advised the Board that he proposed eliminating the Community Relations position before he left in 2012 and said he believes it was, and still is the appropriate course of action for a sustainable Metroparks. Commissioner Marans asked how the job duties would be distributed. Deputy Director Phifer responded the job responsibilities would be divided amongst the Administrative Office staff and park staff.

##### b. In-House Corporate Counsel

Motion by Commissioner Marrocco, supported by Commissioner Hertel that the Board of Commissioners' eliminate funding for the position of In-House Corporate Counsel and authorize the Interim Director to prepare a severance agreement to be approved by the Chair.

*Discussion:* Interim Director Almas advised the Board that it would be more cost effective if the function of Corporate Counsel was performed by outside counsel.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

## 8. Reports

### B. Administrative Office

#### 4. Proposal – Outside General Counsel

Motion by Commissioner Hertel, supported by Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners' approve hiring Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, P.L.C. as the general counsel for the Metroparks for a fee of \$6,250 per month or \$75,000 annually.

Discussion: Commissioner Hertel said the Metroparks has a long history with Miller Canfield and believes the Metroparks are receiving a bargain for the public and that the Board needs to be mindful of the public.

Motion Carried Unanimously.

## 9. Staff Officer Report

- a. Deputy Director Phifer introduced Natural Resources and Environmental Compliance Manager Paul Muelle who gave an update on an article in Pipeline Magazine that featured Lake St. Clair Metropark and the parking lot and marsh restoration projects taking place at the park.

Commissioner Marans requested copies of the article be sent to the former chief of engineering and chief of planning.

Motion by Commissioner Hertel and supported by Commissioner Marrocco that the Board of Commissioners' receive and file the update given by Natural Resources and Environmental Compliance Manager Muelle.

Motion carried unanimously.

- b. Interim Director Almas wished everyone a happy New Year.

## 10. Other Business

None

## 11. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner La Belle thanked Hertel for his advice and counsel during the past month.

Commissioner Hertel said he hoped everyone would contact Commissioner Lester with well wishes. He also complimented Commissioner La Belle on the hard work he has accomplished during the past several months. Hertel also said he would like a report on the annual auction at the next meeting.

Commissioner Marrocco also thanked Commissioner La Belle for his hard work during the past several months. Marrocco also inquired why vehicle entries and shelter reservations were down for 2014. Deputy Director Phifer replied it was a challenging year weather wise, which affects park use overall.

Commissioner Marans also thanked Commissioner La Belle for his hard work and said the Board needs to seriously begin thinking about what happens once the interim director's contract ends. Commissioner La Belle said he believes we have the talent and right people inside the organization when looking for a director.

## 12. Motion to Adjourn

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

The meeting adjourned at 11:33 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shawn M. Athayde  
Executive Administrative Support Specialist