

**Minutes  
Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority  
Board of Commissioners  
Thursday, October 12, 2017**

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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, October 12, 2017 at the Hudson Mills Metropark Activity Center.

Commissioners Present:	Timothy J. McCarthy Robert W. Marans Kurt L. Heise John Paul Rea Steve Williams Bernard Parker
Staff Officers:	
Acting Director/Chief of Police	Michael Reese
Deputy Director	David Kirbach
Absent:	
Commissioner	Jaye Quadrozzi
Other Attendees:	
Steve Mann	Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, PLC
Chris Barnett	Orion Charter Township Supervisor
Michael Gingell	Oakland County Board of Commissioners Chairman

Chairman McCarthy called the Oct. 12, 2017 meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

**1. Chairman's Statement**

Commissioner McCarthy said good morning and said Commissioner Quadrozzi had an emergency with a client and would not be at the meeting.

**2. Public Participation**

Jason Kulongowski, HCMA Employee Association president, said it has been a tumultuous past few years. What has been consistent is that the employees have gotten up every day and put forth their best work possible and made sure the Metroparks were something to be proud of and that patrons could enjoy. The employees didn't do it for notoriety or politics, they did it because of their love of the Metroparks and what it stands for to the surrounding communities. Mr. Kulongowski said as the Board begins its search for a new director, our hope is you don't forget to look at the people sitting next to you today. With you today is the same staff that devoted their career to the Metroparks and have done so without politics, ego, respect for the environment, community and the employees.

**3. Approval – September 14, 2017 Public Hearing and Regular Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Commissioner Marans, support from Commissioner Parker that the Board of Commissioners' approve the September 14, 2017 meeting minutes as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

**4. Approval – October 12, 2017 Agenda**

Motion by Commissioner Rea, support from Commissioner Heise that the Board of Commissioners' approve the October 12, 2017 agenda as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

**5. Approval – September 14, 2017 Consent Agenda**

Motion by Commissioner Marans, support from Commissioner Heise that the Board of Commissioners' approve the consent agenda consisting of the following:

- a. Approval – September 2017 Financial Statements and Payment Registers
- b. Approval – September 2017 Appropriation Adjustments
- c. Report – Purchases over \$10,000
- d. Approval – 2018 Board Meeting Schedule
- e. Approval – Employee Recognition Dinner Subsidy
- f. Report – 2018 Fireworks Dates
- g. Bids – Wave Breakers, East Boat Launch, Kensington Metropark
- h. Approval – East Boat Launch Accessibility Walkway Installation, Kensington Metropark
- i. Approval – Appointment of New Retirement Plan Trustee
- j. Approval – Appointment of Retiree Health Care Trust Plan Administrator

Commissioner Parker said he attended the employee recognition dinner last year for the first time and said it was a nice event and well attended. He said he believed the employees appreciated having commissioners at the event and hoped everyone would try to attend.

Commissioner McCarthy said staff was considering changing the date as he and Commissioner Marans will be out of town.

Motion carried unanimously.

**Regular Agenda**

**6. Orion Township Presentation**

Commissioner McCarthy introduced Chris Barnett and Mike Gingell to speak on behalf of Orion Township.

Orion Charter Township Supervisor Chris Barnett thanked the Board for allowing them to speak at the meeting. He said he spoke at the February 2017 meeting, but that no action was taken at that time. He said the Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA) area is located near Great Lakes Crossing in Auburn Hills and the plan should increase revenue for the Metroparks. Mr. Barnett said there is blight on the Orion Township side of the road and the solution is to build up the area and to increase property value. He said Orion Township is only seeking a 50 percent tax capture on the increase, that there is no risk to the Metroparks and that all the other taxing authorities are on board with the project.

Mike Gingell, Oakland County Commissioners Board Chair, said along with being the chairman for the Oakland County Board of Commissioners, that he is also a long-time resident of Orion Township and that this CIA is one of the only ones that Oakland County has opted into. He also said this is a closed end CIA project with a set timeframe.

Mr. Barnett said the Metroparks Board has had previous discussions on taxing authorities and referred to an item brought before the Board in May 2013. He asked the Board to reconsider their position and opt into the CIA for Orion Township.

Commissioner McCarthy said the item is not on the agenda today; however, it would be added to a future agenda for discussion.

Commissioner Marans said the Board has not dealt with CIA's before. Mr. Barrett said a CIA is similar to a Taxing Increment Financing Authority (TIFA).

Commissioner Parker asked that staff do research and analysis on the subject before the item is added to an agenda.

## 7. Reports

### A. Administrative Department

#### 1. Approval – Park Entry for Disabled Veterans

Motion by Commissioner Rea, support from Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners' approve allowing vehicles with the Disabled Veteran license plate from the state of Michigan entry into the Metroparks at no charge as recommended by Deputy Director Kirbach and staff.

*Discussion:* Commissioner Parker said he is not opposed to this item. He said he is concerned with tollbooth operators leaving the tollbooth to look at vehicle license plates and suggested giving patrons with the appropriate license plate a sticker to enter the parks.

Commissioner McCarthy said there are not a lot of disabled license plates within the state of Michigan (Livingston County – 13, Oakland County – 36, Macomb County – 34, Wayne County – 66, Washtenaw County – 9).

Commissioner McCarthy also acknowledged Gary Simon, a disable vet and advocate, who brought the issue regarding free entry to the Metroparks for disabled veteran with the state plates to the attention of the Board.

Commissioner Heise asked Mr. Simon if the state of Michigan required a special designation on his driver's license. Mr. Simon said no, not on his driver's license. He said the Veteran's Administration does issue a separate card.

Commissioner Heise said he was trying to think of a way to meet Commissioner Parker's suggestion half way and have patrons present the ID card.

Commissioner Williams said you can ask to have veteran's identification listed on a driver's license. He also said the numbers were low because the state of Michigan disabled veteran plates are limited to 100 percent disability.

Motion carried unanimously.

#### 2. Approval – 2018 Fees and Charges

Motion by Commissioner Marans, support from Commissioner Williams that the Board of Commissioners' approve the 2018 Fees and Charges as recommended by Acting Director Reese and staff.

*Discussion:* Supervisor of Budgeting of Payroll Rebecca Franchock said modest changes were made to the 2018 fees and charges, which included eliminating the \$15 special event fee.

Commissioner McCarthy said the fee was not fair to patrons coming to the parks that were not necessarily there for a special event.

Commissioner Parker asked how the full year dry boat storage would affect the storage situation currently at Stony Creek. Ms. Franchock said the space is underutilized and if there was a demand for storage, a lottery could be held if needed.

Commissioner Parker also asked how many slots were available. Eastern District Park Superintendent Mike Lyons said 100 slots.

Motion carried unanimously.

## 7. Reports

### B. Engineering Department

#### 1. Approval – Retention of Legal Counsel for Cell Tower Negotiations, Wolcott/Stony Creek

Motion by Commissioner Williams, support from Commissioner Rea that the Board of Commissioners' approve staff to move forward in conjunction with legal counsel to seek specialized legal consultation services for the negotiation of the renewal of the current cell tower leases as recommended by Manager of Engineering Mike Brahm-Henkel and staff.

*Discussion:* Manager of Engineering Mike Brahm-Henkel said staff has been researching outside consultants and legal counsel to help negotiate some of the nuances that are in the existing cell tower agreements. He said there a lot of issues that can be addressed in the current contracts, which will be beneficial to the HCMA. Mr. Brahm-Henkel requested Board approval for retaining outside legal counsel to assist staff in negotiating cell tower agreements.

Commissioner Parker asked why staff was only negotiating with one company instead of doing an RFP. Mr. Brahm-Henkel replied that an RFP can be done if the Board chooses. He said there are only a couple of people that specialize in this field in the state – one is semi-retired and the other is located on the other side of the state.

Commissioner McCarthy said this is a firm Miller Canfield has experience with regarding this issue and the bylaws do not require we (Board) do an RFP for professional services agreements.

Commissioner Parker said by doing an RFP it makes pricing more competitive and HCMA could get a better rate.

Motion carried unanimously.

#### 2. Approval – Park Office Replacement Strategy, Kensington/Lower Huron Metroparks

*Discussion:* Mr. Brahm-Henkel said staff has been working on park office replacement at Kensington and Lower Huron and while a design has been completed for the administrative office, nothing has been planned. He said once Kensington has a new building, it would be possible to relocate staff from the administrative office to the Kensington office to make space at the administrative office. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said once a central design has been adopted, it could be used for both park offices, which would save money on design services. He also said Lower Huron needs a more centrally located park office and staff was researching the possibility of relocating the park office to Willow Metropark. Staff is suggesting work on a Kensington and Lower Huron office replacement strategy and not include the administrative office as the pricing is near the \$4-5 million range.

Manager of Planning Nina Kelly addressed issues regarding encumbered land as well as land conversion. She said the footprint for the proposed design for both the Kensington and Lower Huron park office is larger than what the state allows for park and would require a land conversion and that staff has been in communication with the DNR regarding this issue. Ms. Kelly said staff would need confirmation from the DNR stating a land conversion would not be necessary before moving forward with the Lower Huron/Willow park office. Staff would like to move in the direction of replacing the park offices. Lower Huron is scheduled to be replaced before Kensington; however, they would be done sequentially using a similar design if possible.

Commissioner McCarthy asked if land conversion was an issue if the administrative office location was moved to the piece of land near I-96. Ms. Kelly said staff received a letter from the state that said it would be ok to move the office and that it would not be considered a conversion. She said staff was hoping for a similar letter regarding Kensington and Lower Huron.

Commissioner McCarthy said moving the office from Lower Huron to Willow makes sense and building a new administrative office is a huge cost that is hard to justify. Moving personnel out of the administrative office to the Kensington office makes sense as it would free up office space. Also, regarding record retention, all the original land and historic files are currently in the Acting Director's office. We (Board/staff) should consider offsite storage and digital storage as HCMA is at risk. There is a record retention policy, which is being followed, but the policy doesn't address relocating files or digitizing files.

Commissioner Parker asked if there was a cost projection for a new Kensington office. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said the cost likely would be approximately \$2 million.

Commissioner Parker said moving the Kensington office to the current administrative office and building a new administrative office near the expressway would cost \$2 million. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said constructing a new administrative office would be approximately \$4-5 million. The current administrative office is approximately 10,000 square-feet, which is much larger than what Kensington needs for a park office.

Commissioner Parker said building a new administrative office would not really be a \$4 million expense, only a \$2 million expense. Commissioner McCarthy said it would be an incremental \$2 million and that does not include site preparation or parking, which would be approximately an additional \$250,000. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said all new utilities would need to be added if constructing a new building which in turn adds to the cost.

Commissioner Parker said he would like to see an analysis from staff on what the additional costs for building a new administrative office along with advantages and disadvantages. He said moving the administrative office to the area near I-96 would make the office more visible to the public.

Commissioner Williams said the Metroparks may be sending the wrong message by building a new administrative office building, especially since there have been fee increases in the past couple of years.

Commissioner Marans said the relocation to the Lower Huron/Willow site has been discussed with the staff and they've been working with Ply Architecture on the design. He asked if the design could be adapted to the new site. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said yes, that the discussions with Ply were mainly regarding office space, structure, the flow of people etc. Metroparks staff generally does a lot of the site design space internally. He also said more road work would be needed if the building was to be built at the Haggerty Road location.

Commissioner Marans asked what the implications would be for public traffic if the park office was moved to Willow and if people could still buy permits at Lower Huron. Ms. Kelly said Willow is more of a year-round park compared to Lower Huron. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said Lower Huron would still have tollbooths and patrons could still buy permits at the tollbooth. Ms. Kelly said the proposed location for the new park office at Willow is near the tollbooths as well.

Commissioner Marans also asked if staff anticipates working with Ply for the design of the Kensington park office. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said design services would be sent out for bids and Ply would be able to bid on the project if they chose to and once that process was complete, staff would bring a proposal for design services to the Board for approval.

Commissioner Marans asked when staff planned to bring the proposed design to the Board for approval. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said staff would like to have the design completed in 2018, start in January or February 2018, with construction in 2019.

Commissioner McCarthy asked staff if this was a receive and file item. Ms. Kelly said staff needed approval of the overall strategy moving forward to focus on the Lower Huron and Kensington Park office's and not the administrative office.

Motion by Commissioner Marans, support from Commissioner Rea that the Board of Commissioners' approve the overall park office replacement strategy for only Lower Huron and Kensington Metroparks, excluding the administrative office, as recommended by Manager of Engineering Mike Brahm-Henkel, Manager of Planning Nina Kelly and staff.

Commissioner Parker asked that a cost comparison associated with the Lower Huron, Kensington and administrative office buildings be part of the strategy.

Commissioner Marans asked Ms. Kelly if staff needed approval to move ahead in order to deal with the state. Ms. Kelly said staff needed approval to do an RFP for architectural services to move through the conceptual phase to a full design.

Commissioner Marans said the issue Commissioner Parker raises is a bigger issue and if the Board decided to move in the direction of building a new administrative office it would change a lot of things. Ms. Kelly said yes it would. She also said thinking, a new \$4 million administrative office plus a new \$2 million Lower Huron/Willow park office is \$6 million; compared to \$4 million for a new Kensington office on the existing site and \$2 million for a Lower Huron/Willow park office, which is about a \$2 million cost savings.

Mr. Brahm-Henkel said the Lower Huron park office needs to be addressed now, staff already has the conceptual design and staff would like to move forward with Lower Huron. Things are more complicated with costs for the administrative office and Kensington park office.

Commissioner Marans amended the original motion.

Motion by Commissioner Marans, support from Commissioner Parker that the Board of Commissioners' (1) approve staff moving forward with the design strategy for a Lower Huron/Willow park office with the assumption the design might be adaptable for other park offices; and (2) have staff bring a cost analysis to the Board for a new administrative office and Kensington park office.

Motion carried unanimously.

## **7. Reports**

### **C. Finance Department**

#### **1. Report – ERP Financial System**

Motion by Commissioner Rea, support from Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners' receive and file the ERP Financial System update as provided by Rebecca Franchock and staff.

Discussion: Supervisor of Budgeting and Payroll Beki Franchock updated the Board on the ERP system, reviewing the financial system pre-ERP, the history of the project, where staff was at today with the project and the next steps in the project.

Commissioner McCarthy said he was very concerned that budgeting was done annually and not done monthly and that budgeting monthly was not possible with the old system. He said it will be possible with the new system.

Commissioner Marans said the system was antiquated when Ms. Franchock began the process four years ago both at the administrative office and in the parks. He said having people such as Robert Rudolph, information technology manager of the Metroparks come on board has been critical.

Commissioner Parker asked if the software for the financial system is the most up-to-date technology. Ms. Franchock said yes and that one of the changes staff made was moving to an active platform that has frequent software updates. Staff chose New World Systems for the ERP system, who was bought by Tyler Technologies.

Commissioner Marans said staff should think about how board members can be tied into the system to eliminate a lot of paper work. Mr. Rudolph said staff is looking into document management as well as providing digital technology for distributing Board packets.

Motion carried unanimously.

## **8. Closed Session**

At the regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners' held on Oct. 12, 2017 there was a motion by Commissioner Rea, support from Commissioner Williams that the Board of Commissioners adjourn to a closed session for the purpose of discussing material, which is exempt from discussion or disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, this is a permissible purpose for closed session pursuant to Section 8(h) of the Open Meetings Act.

### **ROLL CALL VOTE**

Voting yes: Marans, Williams, Rea, Parker, Heise, McCarthy

Voting no: None

Absent: Quadrozzi

Motion carried unanimously.

The regular meeting adjourned at 11:28 a.m.

Commissioner McCarthy reconvened the regular meeting at 11:43 a.m.

## **9. Other Business**

### **1. Foundation Review**

Discussion: Commissioner McCarthy said he had a meeting with Julie Hein, Beki Franchock and Michael Reese to discuss the Foundation. He said the Foundation was formed in 2003, was inactive for several years and then was reactivated in early 2014. He said having a Foundation is good as some organizations and donors require support through a 501(c)(3). Mr. McCarthy said the Foundation is controlled by the Metroparks and there is an open seat on the Foundation Board.

Commissioner McCarthy called for a motion to nominate Commissioner Marans to the Foundation Board.

Motion by Commissioner Parker, support from Commissioner Williams that the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority Board of Commissioners nominate Robert Marans to the Huron-Clinton Metroparks Foundation Board of Directors.

Commissioner Marans said he was concerned about the whole function of the Foundation since it was established. He said he had no idea as a board member where the money came from, how much comes and what the funding is used for. He said he would like to see a report from staff on the function of the Foundation.

Commissioner McCarthy said an audit was just completed on the Foundations financials and a copy would be provided to all Board members. He also said staff would provide a Foundation report at the Dec. 14 meeting and a Foundation meeting would take place after the regular commission meeting.

Commissioner Heise asked if all the paperwork was in order. Commissioner McCarthy said staff was in the process of changing the Foundation status from a 501(c)(3) type III, to a 501(c)(3) type I.

Commissioner Marans asked if the Authority Board could decide to dissolve the Foundation. Commissioner McCarthy replied yes.

Motion carried; Commissioner Marans abstained from the vote.

## 9. Other Business

### 2. Process for Filling Executive Director Position on Permanent Basis

Human Resources Manager Randy Rossman reviewed the five executive search firms contacted for the process of hiring a director – kpCompanies, St. Louis Park, Minnesota, Kerry Laycock, Ann Arbor, The Hunter Group, Bloomfield Hills, Hiring Solutions LLC, Okemos and RWK Consulting, Troy. Mr. Rossman said his suggestions was to use either Hiring Solutions LLC or RWK Consulting.

Commissioner McCarthy said there are basically two options, which could be addressed a couple of different ways. One option was to decide on a firm/person or the other option was to have the prospective companies come before the Board and then we (board members) could ask questions.

Commissioner Marans said he would like to see at least three options and that his preference is to hire Kerry Laycock as he has worked with the Metroparks before on structural changes for the Metroparks.

Commissioner Parker said the Board could bring in the people to interview them, although he has dealt with search firms before and they all tend to work the same way. He said he prefers going with the lower cost option.

Commissioner Rea said we need to bring in as much capacity as possible when looking at executive level search firms and that the credentials of the organization can enhance this process. He asked if HR had a job description, and if so, could it be posted online to see what happens. Mr. Rossman said yes, it's possible and could be done within a week. He said the difference between handling the search internally and having a firm conduct the search would be that HR would not solicit for the position. He said it could take up to four weeks to get candidates and begin the vetting process. Mr. Rossman said conducting the search internally would save on the consulting fee.

Commissioner Rea said if the Board is looking to get this process started and the position filled, there needs to be a deep pool of candidates as he thinks this will be a transformational hire and said he hopes that is the hope of the Board as well.

Commissioner Marans said the Board may want to tweak the job description to make sure it has everything the Board wants.

Commissioner Parker said he is concerned with confidentiality with doing the search internally as candidates may not want current employers knowing they are looking for another position.

Commissioner Williams asked if HR would have time to conduct the search. Mr. Rossman said yes and that a timeline could be given to candidates on what to expect.

Commissioner Williams asked what were the lessons learned from previous searches. Commissioner McCarthy said he has not been through the process before. The director that was here when he came on board retired and then the Board promoted a commissioner; that person left and the deputy director was then promoted.

Commissioner Williams asked if there were debates on whether there was a perfect candidate or one person should be chosen over another. Commissioner McCarthy said no, there was no debates in the processes he's been involved in.

Commissioner Marans said with his history with the organization, there was one national search where four applications were received. He said the Huron-Clinton Metroparks Authority does not have a great reputation nationally on how the Board has dealt with directors. Looking at the history over the last decade, he says that is working against the Metroparks and there has been a lot of turnover.

Commissioner McCarthy said his concern with doing the search internally is that it is for the executive director and that there may be conflicts as internal candidates may apply. The other

conflict is a subcommittee recommending hiring their boss. He inclined to agree with Commissioner Parker that an outside firm should be used and he suggests Hiring Solutions. Commissioner McCarthy said he understands Commissioner Marans point with using Mr. Laycock and it could be an option to use Mr. Laycock for the organizational structure and not the hiring aspect. He said he has no problem eliminating the Hunter Group and or kpCompanies. He said he recognizes that the Hunter Group doesn't have park experience, but they do have municipal experience.

Commissioner Heise said an organization isn't going to take on the task without a job description and looking at it from a timeline perspective, in order to move the process along the Board needs to see a job description, review it and decide if it needs to be changed, which now puts decisions at the November meeting to decide on a job description and hiring off the search firm list. He said he is ready to hire someone today.

Commissioner Williams said the search firm can assist with the job description if needed.

Commissioner Marans said Mr. Laycock assisted with the job description for Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation.

Commissioner Parker said the one of the responsibilities is to put together a job description for review and by that point the person is already on board.

Commissioner Heise said the Board needs to hire to do this and it shouldn't be done internally as you are ultimately hiring your boss, which is awkward.

Motion by Commissioner Parker that the Board of Commissioners retain Hiring Solutions to conduct the search for the executive director.

No support.

Motion failed.

Motion by Commissioner Heise, support from Commissioner Rea that the Board of Commissioners hire Kerry Laycock to conduct the search for the executive director.

Commissioner Rea asked how the structure would work? Would Mr. Laycock work directly with HR or the Board. Commissioner Marans said he believes he would want to work directly with the Board.

Commissioner Heise asked if the Board would have a work session with Mr. Laycock. Commissioners Marans and McCarthy said yes and it could be done relatively soon.

Commissioner Parker said the only issue was the price and if the Board wanted to spend \$40,000.

Commissioner Marans asked if the price could be negotiated; Mr. Rossman said he would try.

Motion carried.

Commissioner Parker voted no.

Commissioner McCarthy said staff would survey the Board for work session dates in order to schedule a meeting soon and have Mr. Rossman contact Mr. Laycock and send him the current job description. He said the work session would be to discuss the job description and any other comments he would like to make.

Commissioner Marans said one of the items Mr. Laycock could do is adjust the job description based on some of the challenges the Metroparks faces moving forward, which could be part of the working session.

Commissioner McCarthy said since the meeting was running long, the marketing update would be deferred until the next meeting unless there was an objection.

**9. Other Business**

**3. Summer Fun Update**

Manager of Interpretive Services Jennifer Hollenbeck reviewed the 2017 Summer Fun program listing statistics, overall participation and showed a promotional video.

Commissioner Marans asked who made the video. Volunteering Services Supervisor Katie Kowalski said the video was produced by Assembly Line Productions LLC.

Commissioner Heise asked who sees the video. Ms. Hollenbeck said sponsors and it is available on the Metroparks website.

Commissioner Heise asked if the Metroparks provides transportation. Ms. Hollenbeck said the Metroparks has provided transportation from the organizations to the Metroparks for the event.

Commissioner Parker asked if staff has looked at using school busses to reduce costs. Ms. Hollenbeck said yes. However, the cost for using a school bus depends on the distance a bus has to travel. The cost for a school bus traveling from Detroit to Indian Springs would be more than \$500. The cost for bus transportation was \$595.

Commissioner Parker suggested adding more information about the parks in the video and what is available at each park and not limiting it to just the Summer Fun activities.

Commissioner Heise said this is a good opportunity for Board members to reach out to their communities about teaching opportunities regarding storm water resources management. He said all the communities have storm water permits and all the storm water permits have some sort of education requirement. This program could help communities comply with their environmental mandates as well as adding an environmental component to the program.

Commissioner Marans asked for the community participation by location and not zip code.

**10. Staff Leadership Update**

Deputy Director Dave Kirbach introduced two new full-time employees. Brittney Roger – Park Support Specialist for Kensington/Indian Springs Metroparks and Efrin McDonald – Park Maintenance Specialist at Lower Huron Metropark.

**11. Commissioner Comments**

Commissioner Marans said he will not be able to attend the November meeting as he will be out of town.

Commissioner Williams told staff to keep up the good work.

**12. Motion to Adjourn**

Motion by Commissioner Marans, support from Commissioner Heise that the Board of Commissioners' adjourn the regular meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Shawn M. Athayde  
Recording Secretary