

**Minutes**  
**Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority**  
**Board of Commissioners**  
**Thursday, October 13, 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, October 13, 2016 at Kensington Metropark at the Farm House Grille.

Commissioners Present:	John C. Hertel Anthony V. Marrocco Bernard Parker Jaye Quadrozzi Timothy J. McCarthy Robert W. Marans Steven E. Williams
Staff Officers: Director	George Phifer
Other Attendees: Ron Liscombe	Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, PLC

Chairman Hertel called the Oct. 13, 2016 meeting to order at 10:34 a.m.

**1. Chairman's Statement**

Commissioner Hertel said it was a beautiful Michigan morning and welcomed everyone to Kensington Metropark. He introduced Steve Williams as the new Livingston County representative. Commissioner Hertel also said he was on the Board when they made the decision to move the headquarters from Detroit to Livingston County. Commissioner Hertel also said that he and Commissioner Williams share the same passion for livestock and that he recently read an article about domestic livestock becoming an endangered species. He said that the Wolcott Farm Center had three breeds of cattle that are on the endangered species list.

**2. Public Comments**

Paul Gilson, former Metroparks part-time employee, said worked at Hudson Mills for 17 years and was a loyal employee. He filled in when needed and said he loved his job. He was told he would receive a golf card and that was the only benefit he would receive. He said there were adjustments to the gold/silver card policy over the years and he sees no benefit to ending the policy.

Ken Dean, former Metroparks part-time employee, said he worked at Kensington for 37 years starting as a starter and ending as a manager. Said it used to be easy to hire workers for the golf course because people were told they would receive a silver card. He said he believes Kensington is having a hard time hiring workers because of the elimination of the silver card. He urged the Board to reconsider reinstating the silver card.

Rita Harp, former Metroparks part-time employee, said she worked Hudson Mills for 11 years in the kitchen area so she could receive the silver card and was upset to learn that the silver card was going to be ending. She said she believes the Metroparks should honor its commitment to employees and silver card holders.

Thomas Harp, former Metroparks part-time employee, said he worked at Hudson Mills for 11 years, two years as a volunteer. He said he wanted to persuade the Board to reconsider eliminating the silver card or grandfather in the current silver card recipients.

Janet McAlpine, former Metroparks part-time employee, said she worked at Kensington for 37 years, enjoyed the job and felt regretful that the silver card is will be eliminated.

David Pardy, American Sailing Institute, said he is with a sailing club that meets at Kensington and Stony Creek. Mr. Pardy thanked Kim Jarvis for her years of service and looked forward to working with Dave Kirbach as well as continuing to work with Mike Lyons.

Jack Witek, former Metroparks part-time employee, said he encouraged the Board to reinstate the silver card benefits. He said he enjoyed working at the parks and that without the silver card perks, he would be visiting the parks less and less. He said it's beneficial to have seasoned, trained employees.

Frank Campbell, former Metroparks part-time employee, said they were loyal employees and would like the silver card reinstated.

Fred Metzler, Brighton resident, said he walks at Kensington thanked park staff for keeping up with the mowing and cutting back invasive plants and said that the park looks good.

Jason Kulongowski, Metroparks Employee Association president, said that the employee association met with the director and HR this past week to discuss the rising cost of health care. He said it was a productive meeting with open dialogue and that it is something that continues to benefit everyone. He said it was obvious at the meeting the time and efforts the director, HR and staff put forth in vetting out solutions to the health care plans. The effort in finding a plan that works within the Metroparks budget, but also accounts for the employees and their families is something that does not go unnoticed. Mr. Kulongowski said there is an open door policy with the director and the employee association and that its appreciated knowing that when there are concerns, the employees can meet and discuss issues.

Barb Jenson, Metroparks volunteer, thanked Kim Jarvis for her years of service at the parks and that she helped to create an exceptional park system in the 40 years she has been with the parks.

Toni Spears, Metroparks volunteer, thanked Kim Jarvis for her years of service with the parks and wished her well in retirement. She also commented on the 2017 preliminary budget and how expenditures were expected to be up 25 percent over 2016 expenditures. She said the budget needed to be looked at thoroughly line-by-line; and that having a 40 percent reduction in the Fund Balance by the end of 2017 is not a sustainable practice.

### **3. Approval – September 8 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Commissioner Marrocco, supported by Commissioner Parker that the Board of Commissioners' approve the Sept. 8, 2016 meeting minutes as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

### **4. Approval – October 13, 2016 Agenda**

Motion by Commissioner Marrocco, support by Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners' approve the Oct. 13, 2016 agenda as presented.

Commissioner McCarthy requested to amend the agenda as he wanted to make his commissioner comments at the beginning of the regular agenda instead of at the end of the meeting as he had time constraints.

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy, supported by Commissioner Marrocco that the Board of Commissioners' amend the regular agenda and move Commissioner McCarthy's comments to the beginning of the regular agenda.

Motion as amended carried unanimously.

## 5. Approval – October 13, 2016 Consent Agenda

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

- a. Approval – September 2016 Financial Statements and Payment Registers
- b. Approval – September 2016 Appropriation Adjustments
- c. Purchases
  1. Vehicles
  2. Audio/Visual System, Lake St. Clair Metropark
  3. Chaise Lounges, Lower Huron Metropark
- d. Approval – Renegotiated Kosch Concessionaire Contract
- e. Update – Purchases over \$10,000
- f. Bids – Golf Course Fiber Optic Communication Lines, Lake Erie Metropark
- g. Approval – 2017 Employee Recognition Dinner Subsidy
- h. Approval – 2017 Proposed Board Schedule
- i. Update – 2017 Fireworks Dates
- j. Approval – Amended GoApe Adventure Contract

Director Phifer requested the item 5-f: Approval – Renegotiated Kosch Concessionaire Contract be removed from the consent agenda.

Commissioner Marrocco amended the motion.

Motion by Commissioner Marrocco, support by Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners' approve the amended consent agenda removing item 5-f for the approval of the renegotiated Kosch contract.

Motion as amended carried unanimously.

## Regular Agenda

Commissioner Marrocco left the meeting at 11:10am.

Commissioner McCarthy made the following comments regarding the Silver Card policy.

*As you will recall, the staff has proposed to eliminate the golf privileges currently enjoyed by part-time HCMA employee retirees that hold a Silver Card. That proposal has caused a fair number of effected retirees to comment about it during the "public comment" period of several of our Commission meetings. At the August meeting I requested that the Commission table the proposal until I could look into the program and report back at today's meeting. I have now spent some time with the staff looking into the program and I have also discussed the program with several retirees. I want to thank the staff and those retirees for the time they spent with me during my review.*

*First, let me provide some history:*

*HCMA formally put in place the Gold Card (for full-time employee retirees) and the Silver Card (for part-time employee retirees) in 2006. Prior to that, the program existed, but informally. Retirees earn a card if they meet certain criteria in terms of age and years of service at time of retirement.*

*Both Gold and Silver card retirees receive free annual park passes and have free golf privileges. Having a card permits a retiree and a guest to play golf for free – but significantly, only during off-peak hours. Retirees and guests that use a golf cart pay a \$5 fee rather than the standard fee of \$15.*

Seventy-five (75) retirees hold Gold cards with approximately 12 of them playing more than five rounds a year.

There are 80 retirees hold Silver cards, approximately 39 of which are steady golfers. So the Silver Card retirees, many of which worked at one of our golf courses, are, not surprisingly, much heavier users of the free golf privilege.

Silver Cards are no longer issued to part-time employees who retire after Dec. 31, 2015. As a result of discontinuing the program, we are dealing with a finite number of part-time retirees who access our golf courses for free. Through normal attrition due to aging and death, the 39 users will eventually go to zero.

Because the number of Silver Card holders will only diminish, slowly I hope, I see no compelling reason to eliminate the Silver Card golf privilege at this time. There is no incremental cost to HCMA resulting from a retiree playing golf DURING OFF-PEAK HOURS. And it should be noted that Silver Card holders typically bring with them up to three (3) additional golfers, who use golf carts, buy beer, and pay full fees for their rounds. However, I do believe some modifications to the free golf privilege should be made. I cannot see any reason why HCMA should be hosting a retiree's NON-SPOUSAL GUEST to a free round of golf nor should we be discounting the cart fee paid by that guest. I believe that is true for guests of both Silver AND Gold Card retirees. I believe retiree spouses should still qualify for the free golf privilege and the discounted cart fee. In addition, there IS an incremental cost related to the use of golf carts. Thus, I believe both the retiree and the retiree's spouse should pay \$10 per person for the use of a cart. As I understand it, the \$5 has been in place for a very long time. Carts and the gas to power them have certainly become more expensive over the years.

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy, support by Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners' approve the following effective at the beginning of the 2017 golf season (1) that the free golf privileges afforded to Gold and Silver Card holders be limited to the retiree and the retiree's spouse; and (2) if a cart is used by either the retiree or spouse, a \$10 fee should be paid by each cart user.

Discussion: Commissioner Marans said he sympathizes with the public comments and that the rationale behind Commissioner McCarthy's statements makes sense. He would like to table the item for one meeting to hear what staff's response is and to suggest changes.

Commissioner Parker supported tabling the item and said he would like to see comparisons with discussion.

Commissioner Williams asked if the amount paid for the carts were by user or by the cart? Director Phifer said by the user.

Commissioner McCarthy withdrew his motion.

Motion by Commissioner Marans, support by Commissioner Parker that the Board of Commissioners table the Gold and Silver Card policy decision until the Nov. 10, 2016 meeting in order to have discussion with staff, further discussions and evaluations.

Motion carried.

## **6. 2017 Preliminary Budget**

Motion by Commissioner Quadrozzi, support by Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners' receive and file the 2017 Preliminary Budget as recommended by Controller Franchock and staff.

Director Phifer said the budget numbers have not been reviewed with the staff and were only preliminary budget numbers.

Controller Franchock gave a brief summary on the 2017 preliminary budget highlighting estimated revenue and expenditures for 2016, estimated revenue and expenditures for 2017, 10-year expenditure trends, staffing levels and Fund Balance historical trends. Ms. Franchock also reviewed concerns related to the budget forecast, which included non-capital costs close to exceeding revenue on an annual basis and that a significant amount of infrastructure that is dated and will need to be removed or replaced in the future. She also said there is still a substantial Fund Balance and that reaching a broader audience is boosting attendance.

Commissioner Marans asked if park revenue was up due to tolling? Ms. Franchock said yes, tolling was the largest factor as well as the increase in the annual permit fee. Director Phifer said the increased revenue is above what was originally estimated due to higher visitation levels. Ms. Franchock said staff would be reviewing and adjusting the numbers over the next month.

Commissioner Marans said the Board adopted a rolling Five-Year-Plan several years ago and asked if staff looked at projects for 2018 and beyond. Director Phifer said yes, projects are routinely reviewed with staff projecting out several years.

Commissioner Marans suggested the Five-Year-Plan should be a discussion item when meeting individually with commissioners.

Motion carried.

## **7. Reports**

### **A. Planning Department**

#### **1. Approval – Wolcott Mill Metropark Master Plan**

Motion by Commissioner Marans, support by Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners' approve the 2016 Wolcott Mill Metropark Master Plan as recommended by Manager of Planning Nina Kelly and staff.

*Discussion:* Manager of Planning Nina Kelly updated the Board on the details of the Master Plan and explained the process and posting for feedback.

Commissioner Hertel asked about public input. Ms. Kelly said there were two public meetings and after the Sept. 8, 2016, meeting the draft master plan was added to the Metroparks website for review. She said 220 response were received online and that the staff Wolcott attended the public meetings and were very engaged in the process.

Commissioner Marans asked if copies of the Master Plan would be available for the public at Wolcott. Ms. Kelly said the Master Plan would be made available online and hard copies would be available.

Motion carried.

### **A. Planning Department**

#### **2. Approval – Building Demolition at Stony Creek and Kensington Metropark**

Motion by Commissioner Quadrozzi, support by Commissioner Parker that the Board of Commissioners' (1) approve the demolition of the buildings at Baypoint Beach located at Stony Creek Metropark and Maple Beach located at Kensington Metropark; and (2) authorize staff to proceed with the bid process as recommended by Manager of Engineering Mike Brahm-Henkel and staff.

Discussion: Manager of Engineering Mike Brahm-Henkel updated the Board on the condition of the buildings and said it was less expensive to demolish the buildings than to try to make the necessary repairs and bring the buildings up to code.

Commissioner Parker asked if there was a plan for the space. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said staff has had discussions with the director and that adding picnic shelters for a large number of people is an option.

Commissioner Parker asked if restrooms were available in the current buildings. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said not at this time.

Director Phifer said staff would bring recommendations to the Board when a plan for replacing the buildings was developed.

Commissioner Quadrozzi asked if it was possible to make restrooms available. Director Phifer replied yes.

Motion carried.

## **7. Reports**

### **B. Lake St. Clair Metropark**

#### **1. Approval – DTE Power Line Relocation Easement**

Motion by Commissioner Parker, support by Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners' approve granting an easement to DTE for the relocation of power lines at Lake St. Clair Metropark as recommended by Manager of Planning Nina Kelly and staff.

Discussion: Manager of Planning Nina Kelly updated the Board on the project and the history of issues related to power outages at the park.

Commissioner Hertel said there have been considerable problems with the power lines over the years since the poles run through the marsh and the poles fall during storms. It has been a long road to find a solution with DTE and this will help with power outages at Lake St. Clair Metropark.

Motion carried.

### **C. Wolcott Mill Metropark**

#### **1. Approval – Historic Center Gravel Parking Lot**

Motion by Commissioner Parker, support by Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners' award Contract No. 513-15-130 to the low responsive, responsible bidder, James P. Contracting in the amount of \$65,431.75 as recommended by Manager of Engineering Mike Brahm-Henkel and staff.

Discussion: Manager of Engineering Mike Brahm-Henkel updated the Board on the project, which is to construct a gravel parking lot for 10 spots and two paved accessible parking spots with a paved walkway to the historic center. He said the project would improve the existing employee parking area and accessibility to the Historic Center. Development of a gravel trail from the farm to the historic center is still in the planning process with Ray Township; however, the Ray Township Planning Commission has approved the gravel parking lot.

Commissioner Hertel said the area currently used for parking becomes hard to use when there is poor weather. Ray Township has not been helpful with any of the upgrades staff would like to do at Wolcott. Adding the gravel parking lot is only a minor improvement, but it is an improvement.

Commissioner McCarthy said he attended a Foundation event at Wolcott last year, that the parking area was bad and he supports the improvement.

Motion carried.

## 7. Reports

### C. Wolcott Mill Metropark

#### 2. Bids – North Branch Clinton River Riparian Corridor Restoration

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy, support by Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners' award Contract Number 513-15-128 to the low responsive, responsible bidder, Preiss Companies LLC in the amount of \$189,700 as recommended by Manager of Natural Resources and Regulatory Compliance Eric Ellis and staff.

*Discussion:* Manager of Natural Resources and Regulator Compliance Eric Ellis updated the Board on the project history and requested approval for the contract.

Commissioner Marans asked how long the project would take. Mr. Ellis said according to the contractor, 10 days.

Motion carried.

### D. Stony Creek Metropark

#### 1. Bids – Vault Latrines

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy, support by Commissioner Quadrozzi that the Board of Commissioners' approve staff to issue a purchase order to CXT concrete buildings under National Joint Powers Alliance (NJPA) contract #022113-CXT for the procurement of four prefabricated concrete vault latrines in the amount of \$187,480 as recommended by Manager of Engineering Mike Brahm-Henkel and staff.

*Discussion:* Mr. Brahm-Henkel updated the Board on the project and said the new units will replace two of the old vault latrines at Stony Creek (Lakeview and North Dale) and two units at Kensington (Spring Hill and Island Road). The new units are prefabricated, constructed from reinforced concrete, durable, long-lasting and available with many options. Similar units were installed on the Lake Erie golf course in 2010 and have had no issues.

Commissioner Williams asked if the units would have solar power for lighting. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said yes.

Motion carried.

## 7. Reports

### E. Administrative Office

#### 1. Approval – Retiree Medicare Health Benefits

Motion by Commissioner Marans, support by Commissioner Quadrozzi that the Board of Commissioners' accept and approve the proposal to make an appropriate change to the Medicare eligible retiree medical insurance to help offset the overall health insurance program renewal rate increase of 23.35 percent.

*Discussion:* Human Resources Manager Randy Rossman updated the Board on the rising health care costs for employees and retirees and that the new plan would be a better policy for retirees. He said health care costs have risen 23.35 percent since last year and that staff is looking for options for employees and retirees to help lower costs.

Commissioner Marans asked where Veripro was located. Mr. Rossman said Grand Rapids.

Motion carried.

## 7. Reports

### E. Administrative Office

#### 2. Update – Summer Fun at the Metroparks

Motion by Commissioner Quadrozzi, support by Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners' receive and file the update on Summer Fun at the Metroparks as presented by Interpretive Services Manager Jennifer Hollenbeck and staff.

*Discussion:* Director Phifer said Commissioner Marans requested a report after the summer program and introduced Interpretive Services Manager Jennifer Hollenbeck who updated the Board on the overall program and reviewed demographics and statistics.

Director Phifer thanked the interpretive staff for their efforts with the event.

Commissioner Quadrozzi said she was very happy with how the program turned out.

Commissioner Marans said it was a great report and asked for specific demographics on attendance for each park that hosted events.

Motion carried.

#### 8. Other Business

None.

#### 9. Staff Officer Update

Director Phifer congratulated Kim Jarvis on her retirement, and introduced Adam Haberkorn as the new Western District Maintenance Supervisor replacing Dave Kirbach, who is taking over for Kim Jarvis.

Director Phifer said staff was updating the Grassland Management Plan and would bring the plan to the Board review.

Director Phifer thanked the Board for their continued support and good working relationship.

Director Phifer thanked the Employee Association for their efforts and working together on health care costs.

#### 10. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Hertel thanked Maria for her years of service and wished her well in retirement.

Commissioner Marans reiterated everything he heard about Kim Jarvis and wished her well in retirement. He said he also wanted to hear the comments about the Massasauga rattlesnake.

Natural Resources and Environmental Compliance Manager Eric Ellis said that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has listed the eastern massasauga rattlesnake as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act, which will affect the parks. He said the earlier in the month, the Metroparks signed on to a Certificate of Inclusion from the MDNR to participate in a Candidate Conservation Agreement. Mr. Ellis also said staff would be have a report for the Board at the Nov. 10, 2016 meeting.

Commissioner Hertel asked where the snakes were located. Mr. Ellis said Stony Creek, Kensington, Indian Springs and Hudson Mills Metroparks.

Commissioner Marans asked if staff could provide maps of the locations for the Board. Director Phifer said yes.



Commissioner Williams thanked everyone for the warm welcome.

Commissioner Parker said he was looking forward to the Nov. 10, 2016 meeting, as the elections would be over.

Director Phifer said he is in the process of filling key positions and would like to modify the requirements for the CFO position; and that the position require either a CPA or master's degree.

Commissioner McCarthy said the requirement for having both a CPA and a master's degree is one of the reasons staff is having a hard time filling the position.

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy, support by Commissioner Parker that the Board of Commissioners" approve modifying the job description to prefer a CPA and master's degree, but only require one.

Commissioner Quadrozzi said she strongly recommends the candidate be a CPA.

Commissioner Williams asked what the area of study for the master's degree. Commissioner McCarthy said an MBA.

Motion carried.

Commissioner Hertel said he has seen many employees come and go and said one of the very best is Kim Jarvis because she always delivers.

Kim Jarvis thanked staff and coworkers and said looking at how everyone worked together and collaborated on the Summer Fun event was what the parks are all about.

**11. Motion to Adjourn**

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

The meeting adjourned at 12:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Shawn M. Athayde  
Recording Secretary