

**Minutes
Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority
Board of Commissioners
Thursday, October 9, 2014**

The regular meeting of the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority's Board of Commissioners was held at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, October 9, 2014 at the Huron Meadows Metropark.

Commissioners Present:

John E. La Belle
Timothy J. McCarthy
John C. Hertel
Jaye Quadrozzi
Anthony V. Marrocco

Absent:

Commissioner Lester (participated in Closed Sessions/Open Session via Telephone)
Commissioner Marans (participated in Closed Sessions/Open Session via Telephone)

Staff Officers:

Director	John P. McCulloch
Deputy Director	George Phifer
Controller	Rebecca Franchock
Recording Secretary/Corporation Counsel	Joseph W. Colaianne

Other Attendees:

Michael P. McGee, Miller Canfield Paddock & Stone, PLC
Jennifer L. Sabourin, Miller Canfield Paddock & Stone, PLC
George Carr, Legislative Consultant
Nancy Shiffler, Chairperson, Huron Valley Group Sierra Club
Toni Spears, Citizen, Dexter, Michigan
Laura Rubin, Exec Director, Huron River Watershed Council

Chairman La Belle called the October 9, 2014 meeting to order at 10:35 a.m.

1. Chairman's Statement

No statement.

2. Public Comments

- (a) Nancy Shiffler, Chairperson, Sierra Club Huron River Valley Group, presented a statement and letter dated October 9, 2014 signed by several organizations (see attached letter) expressing concerns with the mowing plan as part of the September 2014 Environmental Management Plan. On behalf of the various organizations, Ms. Shiffler requested that the "mowing plan" as presented be delayed and that the plan consider: (i) for certain open grasslands and/or prairies annual mowing may not be necessary; (ii) scheduling mowing on an as needed and late in the season for shrub control; (iii) different types of mowing for different areas in the parks (e.g. low-deck setting for picnic areas; high-deck settings in prairie areas); and (iv) the impact of certain mowing areas and the spreading of invasive species. Ms. Shiffler encouraged the Board to revise the mowing plan in the context of long-range plans for the Metroparks that supports appropriate stewardship of the its extensive natural values.
- (b) Toni Spears, Dexter, Michigan extended her support of the statement presented by Nancy Shiffler and requested that the Metroparks focus its resources on control of invasive species and not on owing additional areas. She also expressed the concern of spreading of invasive plants via mowing. In addition, Ms. Spears suggested that from a visitor perspective, mowing should be limited on weekends and holidays. Weekends and holidays are sometimes the only time someone can take time to visit the parks and would be good not to see or hear mowers operating.

(c) Laura Rubin, Executive Director, Huron River Watershed Council, expressed concern for water quality and the mowing policy. She noted that some areas are mowed to one-foot of the water's edge and encouraged the Board to consider a 50-foot vegetative buffer. She also noted and glad to see that the Metroparks, along with Townships of Green Oak and Hamburg are working together to continue funding the stream gauges. She noted that the information is vital to downstream communities. Finally, she expressed appreciation for the Metroparks' participation in the Border-to-border trail at Hudson Mills Metropark and the improvement of the water trail.

3. Minutes – September 11, 2014 Regular Agenda; August 14, 2014 Closed Session

Motion by Commissioner Hertel, supported by Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners' approve September 11, 2014 regular meeting minutes and August 14, 2014 closed session minutes as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Approval – October 9, 2014 Agenda

That the Board of Commissioners' approve the Oct. 9, 2014 agenda as recommended.

Motion carried unanimously.

5. Approval – October 9, 2014 Consent Agenda

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy, supported by Commissioner Hertel that the Board of Commissioners approve the consent agenda as revised consisting of the following: Vouchers – September 2014; Financial Statements – September 2014; Approval – TIFA Exemptions, Village of Fowlerville, City of Farmington Hills; Approval – 2014 Third Quarter Appropriation Adjustments; Bids – Pedestrian Bridge Timber Decking Replacement, Lower Huron/Willow Metroparks; Update – Wetland Restoration Grant, Wolcott Mill Metroparks.

Discussion: Commissioner Marrocco requested that items (c) Used Golf Carts, Hudson Mills Metropark, (e) Approval – Chief Pontiac Programs Committee – Amendment to Contract; and (g) Bids – Accessible Walks and Cart Paths, Stony Creek Metropark be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed on the Regular Agenda for consideration.

Motion carried unanimously.

Regular Agenda

Prior to proceeding with items on the Regular Agenda, Chairperson La Belle noted that Mr. McGee, was present, and that he would entertain a motion to proceed into Closed Session to consider material exempt from discussion or disclosure by state or federal statute, specifically written attorney-client privileged communication, pursuant to Section 8 (h) of the Michigan Open Meetings Act – M.C.L. 15.268 (h).

Motion by Commissioner Hertel, supported by Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners proceed in Closed Session to consider material exempt from discussion or disclosure by state or federal statute, specifically written attorney-client privileged communication, pursuant to Section 8(h) of the Michigan Open Meetings Act – M.C.L. 15.268(h).

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: La Belle, Hertel, McCarthy, Marrocco, Quadrozzi, Lester (via telephone), Marans (via telephone)
Nays: None

Closed Session began at approximately 10:50 a.m.

Motion by Commissioner Hertel, supported by Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners adjourn the Closed Session.

Closed Session ended at approximately 11:30 a.m.

OPEN SESSION

Commissioner Marans (via telephone) proposed taking up the matter of the employment of the Director and inquired whether the Board could proceed in Closed Session. Commissioner Quadrozzi, citing the Michigan Open Meetings' Act, indicated that the Board could only proceed in Closed Session to consider the dismissal, suspension, or disciplining of Director McCulloch, but only if Director McCulloch requests the closed session. Mr. Colaianne also noted the limitations regarding closed sessions under the Open Meetings Act. Mr. McCarthy asked, and Director McCulloch agreed, to proceed in Closed Session pursuant to Section 8(a) of the Michigan Open Meetings Act – M.C.L. 15.268(a).

Motion by Commissioner Hertel, supported by Commissioner McCarthy that the Board proceed in Closed Session to consider the dismissal and/or personnel evaluation of Director McCulloch, pursuant to Section 8(a) of the Michigan Open Meetings Act – M.C.L. 15.268(a).

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: La Belle, Hertel, McCarthy, Marrocco, Quadrozzi, Lester (via telephone), Marans (via telephone)
Nays: None

The Second Closed Session began at approximately 11:30 a.m.

Motion by Commissioner Hertel, supported by Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners adjourn the Closed Session.

The Second Closed Session concluded at approximately 11:55 a.m.

OPEN SESSION

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy, supported by Commissioner Marrocco that the Board of Commissioners terminate the employment of Director McCulloch without cause.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: La Belle, Hertel, McCarthy, Marrocco, Lester, Marans
Nays: Quadrozzi

Discussion: Commissioner Quadrozzi expressed extreme displeasure with the action of the Board of Commissioners to terminate Director McCulloch's employment with the Metroparks. She noted that there has been enormous amount of progress under his leadership, and believed this is the wrong decision of the Board and a wrong decision for the organization. Commissioner Quadrozzi stated that she has not heard one justifiable reason for the action being taken by the Board of Commissioners. Finally, she expressed that she is very concerned with the manner and process in which the Director's employment was terminated.

Commissioner McCarthy inquired whether there were any pressing matters that required the Board's action. After review of the remaining items on the agenda, Deputy Director Phifer indicated that there were no pressing matters.

Motion to Adjourn

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

The meeting adjourned at 12:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Joe Colaianne
Recording Secretary/Corporation Counsel