

Minutes
Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority
Board of Commissioners
Thursday, November 12, 2015

The regular meeting of the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority's Board of Commissioners was held immediately following the Public Hearing for the 2016 Budget on Thursday, Nov. 12, 2015 at the Administrative Office.

Commissioners Present:	John C. Hertel Timothy J. McCarthy Robert W. Marans Bernard Parker Jaye Quadrozzi
Staff Officers:	
Director	George Phifer
Controller	Rebecca Franchock
Absent:	
Commissioner	Anthony V. Marrocco
Commissioner	John E. La Belle
Other Attendees:	
	Steve Mann with Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, PLC
	Carlito H. Young with Johnson, Rosati, Schultz, Joppich, PC
	Michael Rosati with Johnson, Rosati, Schultz, Joppich, PC

Chairman Hertel called the Nov. 12, 2015 meeting to order at 11:03 a.m.

1. Chairman's Statement

Chairman Hertel said the Metroparks has existed since 1940 in its present form (seven members) and that former governor appointee George Trendle served under three governors (1941 – 1957). He said this Board has created a system along the Huron and Clinton rivers and has grown to 13 parks. Commissioner Hertel also said he has been on the Board since 1983 and that the Metroparks has quality parks, which have survived through good and bad economic times and work under a millage that cannot be changed due to legislation and Headlee constraints.

2. Public Comments

Nancy Shiffler, Sierra Club Huron Valley Group, said a letter signed by area Sierra Club chapters and other organizations was recently sent to Board members and staff regarding mowing at the Metroparks. She said the mowing does not let seeds set for future wildflower growth and that the current mowing practices at the Metroparks are both damaging and costly. She said the Metroparks Environmental Management Plan should be revised to better support stewardship efforts.

Jerry Sicja, Sterling Heights, said it may be time to look into combining with the state parks since the Metroparks are having a hard time with resources. He also suggested redeveloping the Sheldon Estate at Stony Creek and replanting trees that were destroyed last year during a storm.

Toni Spears, Dexter, said when the Metroparks began its volunteer program several years ago to clear invasive species at Hudson Mills it was a success and staff has done well controlling the areas. However, Spears said a new invasive shrub, the Japanese hedge parsley, is now spreading in the area adjacent to the prairie field and that annually mowing

the field needs to end as the sticky seeds are carried along by the mowers and spreads the Japanese hedge parsley.

3. Minutes – Oct. 8, 2015 Regular Meeting

Motion by Commissioner Marans, supported by Commissioner Parker that the Board of Commissioners' approve the Oct. 8, 2105 regular meeting minutes as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Approval – Nov. 12, 2015 Agenda

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy, supported by Commissioner Quadrozzi that the Board of Commissioners' approve the Nov. 12, 2015 agenda as presented.

Commissioner McCarthy requested item 8-A-2 – Update on Development Activities be removed from Nov. 12, 2015 agenda and deferred to the Dec. 10, 2015 meeting.

Motion carried unanimously.

5. Approval – Nov. 12, 2015 Consent Agenda

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

- a. Financial Statements and Payment Register (Vouchers) – October 2015
- b. Purchases
 - 1. Hawk Watch Interpretive Kiosk Panels, Lake Erie Metropark
 - 2. Water Slide, Stony Creek Metropark
 - 3. Maintenance Vehicle Vans, Kensington and Stony Creek Metroparks
- c. Update – Purchases over \$10,000
- d. Approval – Third Quarter Appropriation Adjustments
- e. Approval – 2016 Property and Liability Insurance Renewal
- f. Approval – 2016 Fiduciary Liability Insurance Renewal
- g. Approval – MMRMA Member Self Insured Retention Fund Payment
- h. Update – 2016 Fireworks Schedule
- i. Bids – Camping Dump Station, Lower Huron Metropark
- j. Approval – Amended 2016 Fees and Charges
 - 1. Daily Permit Rate
 - 2. Cross Country Skiing
 - 3. Boat Storage
 - 4. Boat Dockage

Motion carried unanimously.

Regular Agenda

6. 2016 Preliminary Budget

Motion by Commissioner Marans, supported by Commissioner Quadrozzi that the Board of Commissioners' approve the 2016 Budget and Resolution as recommended by Controller Franchock and staff.

Discussion: Commissioner Parker asked how much was going to be taken out of the fund balance. Controller Franchock said \$4.5 million bringing the balance to \$37 million at the end of 2016.

Commissioner Quadrozzi asked staff to look at golf courses and if there is a need to continue upkeep of all the courses and perhaps it's time to look at closing courses.

Motion carried unanimously.

7. **Legislative Report**

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy, supported by Commissioner Parker 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 Legislature has adjourned for the Thanksgiving break and will come back for approximately six days before adjourning for the remainder of the year. Before leaving Lansing, the Legislature approved a Transportation Funding package and an Energy package; both bills were sent to the governor for signature.

Commissioner Marans asked if the Metroparks was on the radar for any of the representatives in the five counties. Mr. Carr replied no, since the Metroparks don't receive direct funding from the state and most of the issues the Metropark faces is governance related.

Motion carried unanimously.

8. **Reports**

A. **Administrative Office**

1. **Approval – Pension Committee Recommendation for ICMA 457 Plan Fund Change**

Motion by Commissioner Marans, supported by Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners' approve the recommendation of the Pension Committee to replace the Vantage Trust T. Rowe Price Small-Cap Value Fund as recommended by Controller Franchock.

Motion carried unanimously.

9. **Closed Session**

At the regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners' held on Nov. 12, 2015 there was a motion by Commissioner McCarthy, supported by Commissioner Quadrozzi that the Board of Commissioners adjourn to a closed session to consider a legal opinion from outside counsel within the attorney-client privilege – [Section 8 \(h\) of the Michigan Open Meetings Act M.C.L. 15.268 \(h\)](#) and to consult with attorneys regarding pending litigation – [Section 8 \(e\) of the Michigan Open Meetings Act M.C.L. 15.268 \(e\)](#).

ROLL CALL VOTE

Voting yes: Quadrozzi, Marans, Parker, McCarthy, Hertel

Voting no: None

Absent: Marrocco, La Belle

The regular meeting adjourned at 11:26 a.m.

Chairman Hertel reconvened the regular meeting at 11:49 a.m.

Motion by Commissioner Quadrozzi, support by Commissioner Parker that the Board of Commissioners' accept the recommendation of legal counsel for the two litigation cases presented in closed session.

Motion carried unanimously.

10. **Other Business**

1. Volunteer Services Supervisor Katie Kowalski updated the Board on her first month at the Metroparks and said she is currently focusing on two areas – standardizing volunteer applications and the policy and procedures handbook (currently under review by staff). Ms. Kowalski also said she is working on recruitment for natural resources, golf and

interpretive services. In addition, she is working on recruiting volunteers for Heritage Holidays at Wolcott Mill and currently has approximately 150 volunteers from local high schools. She is also working with staff at Huron Meadows and Hudson Mills on cross country initiatives.

10. Other Business

2. Stewardship Coordinator Ryan Colliton updated the Board on the Environmental Management Plan and reviewed processes and procedures, the history on mowing and patterns, Natural Resources goals and how the Natural Resources department decides on what is maintained.

Commissioner Hertel asked if the NRC volunteer coordinator talks with Ms. Kowalski; Mr. Colliton replied yes.

Commissioner Hertel asked if only 8 percent of Metroparks land was wetlands. Paul Muelle, natural resources and environmental compliance manager said yes and that most of the wetland areas was at Lake St. Clair and that the Wolcott Mill project would increase the wetland percentage.

Commissioner Quadrozzi asked to be included on the newsletter distribution list.

Commissioner Hertel requested that all of the commissioners receive the newsletter.

Commissioner Marans asked if staff was working with the DNR; Mr. Colliton replied yes. Commissioner Marans also requested that the presentation be posted on the Metroparks website. In addition, Commissioner Marans said in light of the changing nature of the environment, staff needs citizen input for the Five-Year Recreation Plan and that a question be added to the survey about the public's perception of the natural environment at the Metroparks.

11. Staff Officer Update

Director Phifer thanked Controller Franchock and staff on the hard work completing the 2016 Budget and said the Metroparks goal was to be fiscally responsible and give employees the tools needed to do their jobs. Director Phifer also said the administrative building did not have adequate space for current staff and in while looking at adding an addition to the building, staff is also looking into other options within the park system.

Director Phifer said there are infrastructure issues with facilities and that expenditures should level off. He also said he wants to continue to be forward thinking and thanked the publics for their comments.

Director Phifer introduced Mr. Michael Reese as the new police chief. He said after interviewing approximately 14 people, he hired Mr. Reese and said he believes he will bring fresh, new ideas to the park.

Mr. Reese introduced himself and said he is coming from Sterling Heights and has more than 37 years' experience in law enforcement. He thanked the Board for the opportunity and said he looks forward to working at the Metroparks.

Commissioner Hertel thanked Director Phifer for handling both positions. He also said he spoke with Macomb County Executive Mark Hackel regarding Mr. Reese and that Mr. Hackel had the highest regard for Mr. Reese and that the Metroparks would be please with Mr. Reese.

12. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Parker asked staff to look into bring an outreach coordinator on staff and that many of the citizens in the five county area do not know about the Metroparks.

Commissioner Marans said the position should be a broad public relations position.

Director Phifer said that the Wolcott Farm Center parking lot is now paved and that staff spoke with Ray Township officials and staff may be able to do some paving at the Wolcott Mill Historic Center.

Commissioner Hertel inquired if the photos of past commissioners were new. Director Phifer replied no; however, a few of the plaques were updated.

Commissioner Marans said that the comment about streaming the meetings was a good idea and that it is worth looking into.

Commissioner Quadrozzi said she is asking staff to send her emails on “Five Good Things” that happens in the parks.

13. Motion to Adjourn

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

The meeting adjourned at 12:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Shawn M. Athayde
Recording Secretary