

**Minutes
Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority
Board of Commissioners
Thursday, April 13, 2017**

A regular meeting of the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority's Board of Commissioners was held at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, April 13, 2017 at Indian Springs Metropark at the Environmental Discovery Center.

Commissioners Present: John C. Hertel
 Anthony V. Marrocco (arrived at 10:45am)
 Robert W. Marans
 Steven E. Williams (participated via phone)
 Bernard Parker
 Jaye Quadrozzi
 Timothy J. McCarthy

Staff Officers:
Director George Phifer
Deputy Director Dave Kirbach
Chief Financial Officer Michelle Cole

Other Attendees:
Steve Mann Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, PLC
Chris Tatham ETC Institute.

Chairman Hertel called the April 13, 2017 meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

1. Chairman's Statement

Commissioner Hertel said although he was out of town for the event, he heard five commissioners attended the recognition dinner, which is great for the organization. He also said he appreciated the paper handed out at the tollbooth for the dashboard that said he was not a paying member and was there for an official meeting and liked the attention to detail.

2. Public Comments

Jason Kulongowski, President HCMA Employees Association, said the employees appreciated the board members attending the appreciation dinner and that it didn't go unnoticed.

3. Approval – March 9, 2017 Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Marans, support by Commissioner Parker that the Board of Commissioners' approve the March 9, 2017 regular meeting minutes as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Approval – April 13, 2017 Amended Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Quadrozzi, support by Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners' approve the amended April 13, 2017 amended agenda as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

5. Approval – March 9, 2017 Consent Agenda

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

- a. Approval – March 2017 Financial Statements and Payment Registers
- b. Approval – March Appropriation Adjustments
- c. Purchases
 1. Police Vehicle Install, Various Locations
 2. Outdoor Supplies / Furnishings, All Locations
 3. All Terrain Litter Vacuum, Lower Huron / Willow / Oakwoods Metroparks
 4. Utility Vehicle, Kensington Farm Center Metropark
 5. Wheel Loader, Natural Resources Crew, Kensington Metropark

- 6. Loader/Backhoe, Lake Erie Metropark
- 7. New Holland Workmaster 50 Tractor, Stony Creek Metropark
- 8. FECON Track Loader, Lower Huron / Willow Oakwoods / Lake Erie Metroparks
- d. Report – Purchases over \$10,000
- e. Approval – Exemption of Taxes Subject to Capture
- f. Approval – Kitchen Remodel, Administrative Office
- g. Bids – Eastwood Beach Sand, Stony Creek Metropark
- h. Bids – EDC Event Room A/C Units, Indian Springs Metropark
- i. Bids – Nature Center Bathroom Remodel, Kensington Nature Center
- j. Approval – Underground Storage Tank Insurance Renewal

Commissioner Marans requested the new item (5-c-8: *Purchase for FECON Track Loader*) be removed from the consent agenda for discussion.

Chairman Hertel removed item 5-c-8 from the consent agenda.

Commissioner Parker requested approval of the consent agenda before discussion on the purchasing item (5-c-8).

Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion: Commissioner Marans asked for an update regarding the purchase. Director Phifer said staff discussed regarding the addition of a new track loader. This item was originally budgeted for \$115,000. The original two items purchased were similar to the item now requested and were a MI CAT type of loader. There has been issues with one of the machines. The item requested to purchase is a medium size land-clearing machine and can get into larger areas that needs attention. While the item is \$108,000 over budget, funds are available in the capital equipment account and the additional funding would not need to come from the Fund Balance.

Commissioner McCarthy asked how the equipment was moved. Director Phifer said the parks have trucks and equipment to move the track loader from one park to another.

Commissioner Parker asked why there was such a large price difference. Director Phifer said the track loader being requested is a much larger piece of equipment than was originally budgeted.

Commissioner Parker asked if this type of machine has been used before. Director Phifer said yes. Commissioner Parker also asked if this the first time the parks have had one this size. Director Phifer said yes.

Commissioner Hertel asked if there were any other issues with the current vendor. Director Phifer said yes, that staff did not receive the expected cooperation with the manufacturer regarding an electrical issue with one of the machines and could not be determined if the origin of the fire was internal or external. The current equipment is great for the areas smaller areas; however, a larger machine will reduce the amount of time needed for large jobs to control invasive species.

Commissioner Marans asked if that was the primary goal for the machine. Director Phifer said yes.

Motion by Commissioner Quadrozzi, support by Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners' approve item 5-c-8 – Purchase of a FECON Track Loader for Lower Huron, Willow, Oakwoods and Lake Erie Metroparks.

Motion carried unanimously.

Regular Agenda

6. Reports

A. Administrative Office

1. Approval – Community Outreach / Marketing Coordinator Job Description

Motion by Commissioner Marans, support by Commissioner Parker that the Board of Commissioners' approve the Community Outreach/Marketing Coordinator Job Description as recommended by Director Phifer George Phifer and staff.

Discussion: Director Phifer said this item was being brought back to the Board for approval. The job description was sent to all the commissioners requesting feedback. Staff received information provided by the commissioners, which is included in the updated job description.

Motion carried unanimously.

6. Reports

A. Administrative Office

2. Approval – Proposed Land Sale to Green Oak Township

Motion by Commissioner Parker, support by Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners (1) authorize staff to proceed with the sale of 13.02 acres of land located at Huron Meadows Metropark in the amount of \$142,000 (includes \$2,000 for appraisal); and (2) authorize staff to proceed with coordinating a closing date for the sale of the property with Green Oak Township as recommended by Director Phifer and staff.

Discussion: Director Phifer updated the Board on the proposed land sale. The land requested is approximately 13.02 acres and is near Huron Meadows Metropark. Two land appraisals were conducted – one was done by the Metroparks and came in at \$140,000 and one done by Green Oak Township, which came in at \$156,000. Staff recommends selling the property to Green Oak Township for \$140,000 with an additional \$2,000 for the appraisal. Additional items that will be included in the sale agreement will be easement rights for the Metroparks, first right of refusal if Green Oak Township decides to repurpose or sell the land. If Green Oak Township does decide to sell or repurpose the land, they must receive approval from the Metroparks. Green Oak Township will be taking the proposal to their Board for approval on April 19, 2017 and staff would like to move forward with the sale of this property contingent upon the approval from the Green Oak Township Board. In addition, Green Oak Township will cover the closing costs.

Commissioner Hertel said normally he would have Commissioner Williams make a motion for all the work and effort he put into bringing this item to the Board. However, because of the Open Meetings Act and since Commissioner Williams was participating by phone, he will need a motion from a Board member present.

Commissioner Parker said he was pleased that the Board was offering to sell the property at the lower appraisal price and that it shows the Metroparks commitment to Green Oak Township.

Director Phifer said Green Oak Township was present and he wanted to recognize the representatives from the township.

Commissioner Hertel said it was good to work with everyone and liked the cooperation and wished the township luck on the project.

Commissioner Williams thanked his fellow commissioners, Director Phifer and staff for working hard to on the project. He said he admires the parks and this is the right thing to do.

Motion carried unanimously.

6. Reports

B. Planning Department

1. Report – Recreation Survey Plan Results

Motion by Commissioner Quadrozzi, support by Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners' receive and file the Five-Year Recreation Plan Public Survey Results report and presentation as recommended by Manager of Planning Nina Kelly and staff.

Discussion: Manager of Planning Nina Kelly updated the Board on the Recreation Survey and introduced Mr. Chris Tatham with the ETC Institute who conducted the survey.

Mr. Tatham reviewed the results and said 3 percent of survey participants have attended a public meeting. He reviewed the methodology, said the city of Detroit was surveyed separately; survey accuracy is +/- 2 percent; 2,620 surveys were completed with good demographic results.

Mr. Tatham said 80 percent of residents have used the Metroparks over the past year and that trail usage was up since the last survey. He also said that many people said they did not know about the Metroparks and that is why they do not use our parks. The biggest unmet needs for facilities are paved trails, beaches, pools and kayak rentals. The biggest unmet needs for programming include farmers markets, movies in the parks, concerts and pet friendly programs.

Mr. Tatham said there was high level of support for using tax dollars to fund renovations for restrooms, nature centers, paved trails and picnic shelters. He also said there are opportunities to increase park usage through communication

Commissioner McCarthy said the need for farmers markets was a surprise to him. Mr. Tatham said it's not uncommon to see that response. Ms. Kelly said a farmers market opened at Kensington Metropark last year and will continue again this summer. Director Phifer said he had discussions with staff and there has been a positive response to adding more farmers markets.

Commissioner Quadrozzi said it was good information and was also surprised about the farmers markets. She said it is good data and that it looks like the Metroparks are doing the right stuff.

Commissioner Marans said he didn't a break down by region. Mr. Tatham said that they could do data comparisons for the region and would supply the information.

Commissioner Parker said he didn't see dog parks on the survey and said it is beneficial to dog owners to be able to socialize with their pets.

Commissioner McCarthy said dog parks are a big deal.

Commissioner Hertel said that he noticed in the report was the tremendous interest in beaches. He said the one thing he remembers most about growing up on the east side and the Metroparks was the sandy beach at Lake St. Clair Metropark. He said he wanted to mention this in regards to the present and the future. He said there was an opportunity when Sen. Spencer Abraham was in the senate and that he was able to get a \$10 million appropriation from the U.S. Senate (approved by Congress and signed by the president), to take all of the sand created from the wave action of Lake St. Clair. He said because of the wave action, the sand was moved out and away from the beach area and made into a sand bar, which unfortunately became a collection area for E.coli. Commissioner Hertel said two negatives happened by this action – the Metroparks lost the sandy beach and ended up with the sand bar that collects E.coli. He said Sen. Abraham received appropriation funding to move the sand from the sand bar; however, the Michigan DNR put a halt to the project because a rare species "perch" did well in the area surrounding the sand bar.

Commissioner Hertel said he brought the topic of the beach up because of what was in the recreation survey report about beaches. He said with the new federal administration talking about infrastructure and the infrastructure includes recreation. The Metroparks are in a situation where we have gone approximately seven months without a legislative representative and that the Board should begin to consider finding a new legislative representative that does well with dealing with both Lansing and Washington, D.C. As there might be another opportunity to solve the problem and recreate the beach, which will bring more people to Lake St. Clair Metropark to enjoy the sandy beach.

Motion carried unanimously.

6. **Reports**

C. **Engineering Department**

1. **Change Order Approval – Playground Redevelopment, Lake St. Clair Metropark**

Motion by Commissioner Marrocco, support by Commissioner Quadrozzi that the Board of Commissioners' approve a Change Order to contract 502-15-666 in the amount of \$140,000 as recommended by Manager of Engineering Mike Brahm-Henkel and staff.

Discussion: Mr. Brahm-Henkel updated the Board on the project and said the change order encompasses the main section of concrete and the need for replacement. It will also replace a new electrical line from the park office to the par 3 area.

Commissioner Hertel asked if any trees would be affected. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said no.

Motion carried unanimously.

2. **Update – Camp Rotary Bridge Replacement, Wolcott Mill Metropark**

Motion by Commissioner Marrocco, support by Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners' receive and file the update on the Camp Rotary Bridge Replacement Project as recommended by the Manager of Engineering Mike Brahm-Henkel and staff.

Discussion: Mr. Brahm-Henkel updated the Board on the project; said staff recently completed the wetland delineation and has been working with a design consultant in order to maintain the character of the current bridge. He also said the bridge does not meet codes and standards. Staff is putting together an RFP, which will go out for bid soon for the design and construction is targeted for the spring 2018.

Commissioner Marrocco said there is a "swinging" bridge in the thumb area and that staff should visit the city of Croswell to see the bridge for the structural aspects, which may be helpful.

Motion carried unanimously.

3. **Bids – Tot Lot / Skate Park / Shelter Demolition, Willow Metropark**

Motion by Commissioner Marans, support by Commissioner Quadrozzi that the Board of Commissioners' award Contract No. 710-17-173 to the low responsive, responsible bidder, Anglin Civil in the amount of \$26,000 as recommended by Manager of Engineering Mike Brahm-Henkel and Staff.

Discussion: Mr. Brahm-Henkel updated the Board on the project and the reasoning behind demolishing the buildings such as poor usage of the facilities.

Motion carried unanimously.

7. **Other Business**

None

8. **Staff Officer Update**

1. **Administrative Report**

Chief Financial Officer Michelle Cole updated the Board on the financial aspects of the Metroparks for the first quarter of 2017, which included updates on budget amendments, revenue and expenditures and the Fund Balance.

Director Phifer reviewed employee information, which included employment applications and through the online hiring system JAZZ and recent Metroparks job fairs. He said there have been many responses with the online employment application process. Director Phifer reviewed Metropark employees, including employees that are at retirement age or near retirement age. He reviewed major projects and current projects in progress.

Hilary Simmet, community relations specialist, reviewed social media including Facebook analytics and posts, twitter and Instagram posts.

Katie Kowalski, volunteer services supervisor, updated the Board on volunteers and the value they provide to the Metroparks.

Director Phifer updated the Board on grants the Metroparks has received and grants that are pending. He said the grant writer is working to complete additional grants.

2. Updates (con't)

Director Phifer said an internal candidate had been selected to fill the inventory Coordinator/Central Stores Supervisor position at Kensington Metropark. Director Phifer also let the Board know that Ryan Colliton had been promoted to the Natural Resources and Environmental Compliance Manager.

Mr. Colliton thanked the Board and Director Phifer for the opportunity and gave a brief update on his background. He said he had extensive knowledge in fire ecology and invasive species control.

Director Phifer thanked Eastern District Park Superintendent Mike Lyons and staff for hosting the recognition dinner. Director Phifer also extended his appreciation to the employee association thanked Jason Kulongowski and Garnet Potter and said the open lines of communication has helped transform the organization and we're moving in the right direction. At the recognition dinner, he said more than 160 employees attended as well as 26 community partners.

9. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Hertel said that he lives in northern Macomb County and it seems like he is driving far out west for the meeting today. However, when there is a meeting like the one today, he wanted to acknowledge staff for their work from Michelle's excellent financial report, Julie's work on the Foundation, Katie's updates on the volunteer program, Hilary's comments, Nina's updates, Jason's attendance at meetings. He said in all the years he has been here he has not seen the enthusiasm that he sees and hears now. He said we are getting results and getting quality results. He said the Board appreciates the spirit and attitude of the staff and it makes him feel good about arriving at meetings. He also said this has been the most cooperative board and works well together and that it's good for all the counties represented.

Commissioner Marans asked if there is any information on geographic areas of the volunteers (i.e. where they come from). Ms. Kowalski said she would look in the tracking system and provide an update.

Commissioner Quadrozzi thanked staff for the dinner and the three desserts.

Commissioner McCarthy said he found the controlled burn very interesting.

Commissioner Parker said the presentation was very informative and thanked staff for the dinner. He also said he would like to see something more widely circulated about the 75th Anniversary and that perhaps the Metroparks could offer a free day as a way to give back to the community.

Commissioner Parker also said he would like to hear about WiFi accessibility at the parks and perhaps staff can look into companies that can offer the service at no charge to the Metroparks.

Commissioner Hertel said he agreed with Commissioner Parker and that staff should look into a free day at the parks and the Metroparks would receive a lot of media attention.

Commissioner Marrocco apologized for being late. He said he wanted to discuss the Fund Balance and asked if the Metroparks money was secure in the credit unions. Ms. Cole said yes, the funding was secure and that staff adheres to the Board approved financial policy for investments and banking.

Commissioner Marrocco also inquired about the late addition item on the agenda for the purchase of the track loader and asked why staff was moving away from CAT machines. Director Phifer reviewed

the issues with the manufacturer and explained that area in the parks need a lot of attention for invasive species control and that a larger piece of equipment was needed.

Commissioner Hertel said the Metroparks have done business with the company for several years and they didn't want to correct issues that came up with the equipment.

Commissioner Marrocco suggested the Metroparks go to the counties to see about volunteers. He also asked if the Metroparks had a lobbyist. Commissioner Hertel said no.

Commissioner Marrocco also said the April meeting would most likely be his last meeting, thanked the other Board members and thanked staff for their hard work.

Commissioner Hertel expressed his gratitude for Commissioner Marrocco's tenure.

10. Motion to Adjourn

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

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Shawn M. Athayde
Recording Secretary