

Minutes
Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority
Board of Commissioners
Thursday, July 9, 2015

The regular meeting of the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority's Board of Commissioners was held at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, July 9, 2015 at Indian Springs Metropark at the Environmental Discovery Center.

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

Chairman Hertel called the July 9, 2015 meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

1. Chairman's Statement

Chairman Hertel said it has taken awhile and that the organization is in a good place in terms of diversity with Board members and staff and that it is beneficial to everyone. He also said this five-county Board is an example of government that works. He also stated that while economic times were better, and the economic affairs overseas is worrisome, affordable recreation is still the Board's goal and that they (the Board) would continue to provide the citizens of southeast Michigan the best possible recreation options.

2. Public Comments

Barb Harrison, Waterford, said she read the article about the sharpshooters who could not tell the difference of what they were shooting and would not be coming back to the parks because the albino deer was gone.

Jason Kulongowski, Metroparks employee, thanked the Board and staff for approving the BCBS restabilization plan and that it meant a lot to employees to providing some relief relating to health care costs.

Jim Ridley, Brighton, brought pictures of the albino deer and stated he could see this deer from more than 300 yards away and wanted to know how anyone could shoot and kill this deer; especially a sharpshooter.

Carl Sams, Milford, said he's a wildlife photographer and has seen many deer at the Metroparks. He also said he worked with Metropark staff in the past on deer culls and that he felt betrayed because he was told deer would not be culled near the golf course. He asked that the Board and staff look at the policies related to deer management.

Toni Spears, Dexter, said Jennifer Hollenbeck held the first Community Advocate Network (CAN) meeting last month and that it was a good meeting, presentation and outreach. She also said she supports the deer culls at the parks. Spears asked the Board to complete an assessment of the areas required for a High Ropes Adventure Course and review for stewardship efforts.

Pete Bowers, Milford, said he lives near Kensington and loves nature. He said the parks could have marketed the white deer and used it to increase revenue.

Lou Waldock, Howell, said the Metroparks has a lot of diversity in nature at the parks and that the white deer was a gift, which was squandered and that the deer culls goes against the Metroparks mission statement. He also said he used to be able to find a lot of deer, wildlife and wildflowers in the parks, but not anymore. He also said the Board should reassess what is happening in the park system.

Gayle Mitchell, Commerce Township, said she was the sister of the gentleman mentioned in the news articles and that he was mesmerized by the white deer. She said he gave a copy of a photo he took to the nature center and that he was devastated when he heard about the death of the deer. She also said the parks need to manage and own up to the mistake made.

3. Minutes – June 11, 2015 Regular Meeting and Closed Session

Motion by Commissioner Marans, supported by Commissioner Marrocco that the Board of Commissioners' approve the June 11, 2015 regular meeting and closed session minutes as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Approval – July 9, 2015 Agenda

Motion by Commissioner La Belle, supported by Commissioner Quadrozzi that the Board of Commissioners' approve the July 9, 2015 agenda as submitted.

Motion carried unanimously.

5. Approval – July 9, 2015 Consent Agenda

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

- a. Vouchers – June 2015
- c. Financial Statements – June 2015
- d. Update – Purchases over \$10,000
- e. Approval – First Quarter Appropriation Adjustments
- f. Bids – Tollbooth Replacement, Lake St. Clair Metroparks

Discussion: Commissioner Marrocco asked about golf revenue and if the revenue indicated on the park statistics included concession revenue as part of the golf revenue. Controller Rebecca Franchock replied concession revenue is not a separate item in park statistics, but staff would look into clarifying revenue for the future. Commissioner Marrocco said he would like more information on concessions and revenue.

Commissioner Parker said revenue is down approximately \$500,000 from last year and asked if there was a plan to increase revenue for the remainder of the year. Director Phifer replied that park activities are weather driven and that staff is looking at other revenue generating activities. Commissioner Parker asked if there are discounts for large groups such as church or school groups. Commissioner Hertel said there are group discounts for permit sales. Director Phifer said there are no large group discounts for activities, but staff is willing to work

with groups. Commissioner La Belle said charitable organizations and non-profit groups may request a 50 percent reduction in stated fees for building use Monday through Friday.

Motion carried unanimously.

Regular Agenda

6. Legislative Report

Motion by Commissioner Marans, 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 updated the Board on legislative activity in Lansing including the Senate passing their version of a transportation package before the Independence Day holiday. He also updated the Board on two new bills that directly impacting the Metroparks:

1. HB 4052 was signed into law by the governor as Act 105, which prohibits local units of government from imposing conditions of employment on vendors and contractors. The basis for the legislation was prevailing wage, minimum wage and living wage requirements. HCMA was "grandfathered" in the existing policies.
2. HB 4182 passed the House and referred to the Senate Committee on Elections and Government Reform. This bill, reintroduced by Rep. Price (R-89) requires the physical presence of public officials to comply with the state's Open Meetings Act. The House passed version was amended to apply to only "elected" boards, committees and commissions, which then allows HCMA to continue using its own policies and procedures.

Motion carried unanimously.

7. Reports

A. Administrative Office

1. Approval – Employee Wellness Program

Motion by Commissioner Quadrozzi, supported by Commissioner La Belle that the Board of Commissioners' accept and approve the proposal to fund and implement the 2015 Wellness Program that will include a biometric screening in the Fall of 2015 for all full-time employees as recommended by Human Resources Manager and staff.

Discussion: Human Resources Manager Randy Rossman updated the Board on a proposed wellness program for Metropark employees including goals, creation of a wellness committee and biometric screenings.

Commissioner Quadrozzi said she thinks this is a fantastic idea and promotes health and wellness for everyone.

Commissioner Parker said he also likes the program and asked if there were discounts for employees for to exercise? Mr. Rossman replied there were no incentives in place at this time.

Commissioner Marans said it was a great program and asked when the program would begin. Mr. Rossman said the program would begin in July. Commissioner Marans also asked for a report on programs metrics so the Board has an idea of employee involvement and how well the program is doing. Director Phifer said staff would provide a report to the Board.

Motion carried unanimously.

7. Reports

A. Administrative Office

2. Update – High Ropes Adventure Course

Motion by Commissioner Quadrozzi, supported by Commissioner Marrocco that the Board of Commissioners' support and approve the High Ropes Adventure Course Update as recommended by Interpretive Services Manager Jennifer Hollenbeck and staff.

Discussion: Interpretive Services Manager Jennifer Hollenbeck updated the Board on the proposal for a High Ropes Adventure Course. She said a team consisting of Paul Muelle, Nina Kelly and Mike Brahm-Henkel visited a course in West Bloomfield and Cleveland, Ohio. Staff is seeking an outside vendor to design, construct and run the course. Ms. Hollenbeck said there are certain course requirements for trees and that Kensington, Stony Creek and Lower Huron currently meet those requirements.

Commissioner Parker asked about liability. Director Phifer said the outside vendor would cover insurance and liability.

Commissioner Marrocco said a park with lower attendance such as Wolcott Mill should also be explored, which would then build attendance. Director Phifer said Kensington and Stony Creek have a captured audience; however, staff would look into opportunities for other parks.

Commissioner Hertel asked that everyone keep an open mind and look at other parks.

Commissioner Quadrozzi asked what the timetable was for the project. Director Phifer said if the Board approves, staff would develop a Request for Proposals (RFP), fee structure, review natural resources in the parks and bring a recommendation to the Board.

Commissioner Marans asked if an environmental assessment would be completed. Ms. Hollenbeck said yes.

Commissioner La Belle said he concurred with other commissioner comments and suggested looking at other parks such as a medium park and a large park.

Motion carried unanimously.

3. Approval – 2016 Fees and Charges

Motion by Commissioner La Belle, supported by Commissioner Parker that the Board of Commissioners' table the 2016 Fees and Charges until the August meeting.

Discussion: Commissioner Hertel asked that the item be tabled so the Board had more time to examine the changes.

Commissioner Parker asked for an analysis on what expected revenue if fees were increased.

Motion carried unanimously.

8. Staff Officer Report

Director Phifer asked Manager of Assets and Development Mike Brahm-Henkel to update the Board on an issue that occurred at Lake St. Clair Metropark. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said there was a power outage at Lake St. Clair on Friday, June 26. He said staff did well managing the situation and that generators were brought in for temporary electric service. He said one of

the primary conductors melted and needed to be torn out and replaced, He said the entire infrastructure needs to be replaced since it is extremely old and outdated.

Commissioner Marrocco commented on the *New York Times* article "Let's Fix Our National Parks, Not Add More" which was handed out to Board members and said fees and charges could still offset costs associated with fixing infrastructure.

Commissioner Quadrozzi said shelter rental prices seemed high, but that they are still renting. She said if we provide desirable shelters in the proper location, people would pay for the facilities.

Commissioner Hertel said staff should only add shelters if they are in the right spot. He also said he would like an item added to the August agenda regarding forming a committee to review land acquisitions/divestitures.

Commissioner Marrocco asked how much a picnic shelter cost to build. Mr. Brahm-Henkel said approximately \$60,000.

Commissioner Quadrozzi asked if the parks charge people when they bring in bounce houses. Director Phifer said no, patrons only pay for the shelter rental.

Commissioner Parker said the Board and staff needed to review the deer management policies in light of the public comments.

9. Other Business

None

10. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner La Belle thanked Commissioner Hertel for taking over as chair.

Commissioner Marans asked staff to provide the Board with an update regarding the deer management program.

Commissioner Parker said he was pleased to see a Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART) bus bringing children to the park. Commissioner Parker also said he would like to explore opportunities to bring Detroit area kids to the parks.

Commissioner Marrocco said he has been on this Board for 10 years and he did not know there was an albino deer at the parks until today. He suggested staff should take measures to protect these animals in the future. Commissioner Marrocco also said he was a grandfather and was traveling to North Carolina to watch his grandson play baseball.

11. Motion to Adjourn

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

The meeting adjourned at 11:32 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Shawn M. Athayde
Recording Secretary