

**MINUTES
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
HURON-CLINTON METROPOLITAN AUTHORITY
THURSDAY, JUNE 7, 2012**

The regular meeting of the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority's Board of Commissioners was held at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, June 7, 2012 at the Nature Center at Kensington Metropark. The meeting was convened in pursuance to a call thereof by the Executive Secretary and due notice to the HCMA Board of Commissioners.

Present: Commissioners: Anthony V. Marrocco
John E. La Belle
John P. McCulloch
Harry E. Lester
Robert W. Marans

Staff Officers:
Director Vacant
Deputy Director Gregory J. Almas
Controller David L. Wahl
Executive Secretary George Phifer

Absent: Commissioners John C. Hertel
Timothy J. McCarthy

Others: Legislative Consultant George Carr

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Marrocco at 10:32 a.m.

1. Chairman's Statement

Chairman Marrocco asked everyone to go out and enjoy the parks since the weather was so nice.

2. Public Comments

Toni Spears, HCMA volunteer, said she has driven through several of the parks and noticed that staff is doing very well in terms of providing good service to park patrons. Spears said looking at item 6-G-1 which was the reorganization plan; it reflects a 28 percent reduction in staff. Spears said that the parks are nice, clean and safe and she is afraid the parks will be compromised by these reductions. Spears also said the plan needs to be amended in order to maintain the Chief of Natural Resources position. Spears continued to say that the MDNR recently awarded the Metroparks with a \$15,000 grant to study Eastern Massasauga rattlesnake; and that the Natural Resources position is critical for managing the deer population, controlling invasive species and supporting recreation and stewardship programs in the parks.

Ken Spears, HCMA volunteer, said the parks offer programs such as canoeing, hiking and biking. Spears said he knows that HCMA is facing a budget crunch and that HCMA assets need to be evaluated over the next five to 20 years. Spears said as HCMA looks at its momentum, the short-term and long-term goals need to be evaluated. The Chief of Natural Resources and Chief of Interpretive Services needs to be maintained; that people need increased interpretive education, and that when momentum is lost, it's very hard to reverse.

Barb Jenson, Milford resident, said she had three questions regarding the reorganization plan: (1) why the extreme restructuring, (2) how were the decisions arrived at, and (3) how do staff and the Board plan to meet the mission of the parks. Jenson said she finds there's a disconnect with what or where our food comes from because our kids don't know where food comes from. Jenson also asked how HCMA plans to support the mission of the parks with all of these cuts.

Kelly Turner, area resident, said she enjoys the parks and the last five years have been of concern for her. Turner said staff and the Board needs to look at park assets such as personnel as well as maintaining natural resources; and that Board decisions are not what's in the best interest of the parks.

Bill Johnstone, HCMA retiree, commended Chairman Marrocco for being reappointed to his position. Johnstone said he recently worked for the Metroparks and sees the current reorganization plan as a conundrum. Johnstone said he was pleased to see the reorganization plan come to fruition, and that he has never worked with a group of more dedicated employees than those at the Metroparks. Johnstone said he hopes the Board will look at the long range plans and to please consider you (the Board) has a group of dedicated employees.

3. Minutes

A. Regular Meeting – May 10, 2012

B. Closed Session – May 10, 2012

C. Special Meeting – May 17, 2012

It was moved by Commissioner Lester, supported by Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners approve the May 10, 2012 regular meeting minutes, the May 10, 2012 closed meeting minutes and the May 17, 2012 special meeting minutes as submitted by Executive Secretary Phifer and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Vouchers – May 2012

It was moved by Commissioner Marans, supported by Commissioner Lester that the vouchers for May 2012 (0223466 through 0223546) be approved as submitted.

Motion carried unanimously.

5. Purchases

Purchasing Manager Scott Michael requested that the Board approve the following purchase:

A. Generator – Stony Creek Metropark

- Award ITB 12-015 to the low responsive, responsible bidder, CDIMS in the amount of \$48,527.00, 2 percent net 10 days, as recommended by Janice Schlitters, C.P.P.B., Food Service Administrator and staff.

It was moved by Commissioner La Belle, supported by Commissioner Lester that the Board of Commissioners approve the purchase as recommended by Purchasing Manager Scott Michael and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

6. Reports

A. Wolcott Mill

1. Report – Golf Course

Deputy Director Almas reported that as directed by the Board, at the Special meeting conducted on May 17, 2012, staff has prepared a report to facilitate an informed decision by the Board as to the future of Wolcott Mill Metropark Golf Course.

Almas said Metropark staff would invite potential concessionaires through a Request For Proposals (RFP) for the total operations and maintenance of the course and related facilities on a long term contract beginning in the 2013 season. Staff would: (1) prepare RFP for Board review and approval at the July meeting, (2) advertise the RFP and invite potential golf concessionaires, and (3) return results of RFP and make recommendation to the Board at the September meeting.

Discussion was held on the RFP process.

Commissioner Marrocco said he would want a minimum amount of what the Authority would like to get paid added to the RFP

It was moved by Commissioner La Belle, supported by Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners receive and file the Wolcott Mill Golf Course report; and that staff be directed to prepare a Request for Proposal for Board review and approval, and subsequently solicit

proposals from operators qualified to operate and maintain the golf course at Wolcott Mill Metropark beginning in the 2013 season as recommended by Deputy Director Almas and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

6. Reports

B. Stony Creek

1. Bids – Hike-Bike Trail Infrared Pavement Repairs

Chief Engineer Michael Arens reported that the project includes asphalt pavement repairs by infrared heating method of approximately 150 areas of hike-bike trail and incidental work. Areas to be repaired are located between the south trail entrance and the 26 Mile Road Bridge. Localized major cracks and deterioration of hike-bike trail pavement pose potential safety issues at numerous areas of the trail, particularly in cases where spot patching and crack filling are ineffective. In-place repairs of asphalt pavement by infrared heating and reconditioning provides a successful, cost-effective alternative to pavement removal and replacement.

It was moved by Commissioner Lester, supported by Commissioner McCulloch that the Board of Commissioners award Contract No. 709-12L to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder, Asphalt Management, Inc., in the amount of \$13,999.50 as recommended by Chief Engineer Arens and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

2. Bids – Hike-Bike Trail Resurfacing and Repairs

Chief Engineer Arens reported that the project includes resurfacing of approximately 3,400 lineal feet of hike-bike trail pavement, including areas of pavement reconstruction, along with topsoil placement and turf establishment. Areas to be resurfaced and repaired are located between the 26 Mile Road Bridge and the traffic circle area. Existing pavement surfaces are deteriorated, beyond repair and poses potential safety issues.

It was moved by Commissioner Lester, supported by Commissioner McCulloch that the Board of Commissioners award Contract No. 709-12K to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder, T&M Asphalt Paving, Inc., in the amount of \$53,305.00 as recommended by Chief Engineer Arens and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

3. Report – Cooperative Projects with the Macomb County Department of Roads

Chief Engineer Arens reported HCMA staff has recently had discussions with the Macomb County Department of Roads (MCDR) on two projects of mutual concern at Stony Creek Metropark. Staff's intent is to continue discussions, and we ask the Board to authorize staff to do so.

Arens reported that regarding the Hike-Bike Trail Connector, 26 Mile Road Trail to Stony Creek Trail – that for several years, the Macomb County Planning Department has expressed interest in developing a trail connector extending from Macomb County's existing trail along 26 Mile Road into Stony Creek Metropark. Informal discussions on this subject have taken place occasionally in the past. Recently, staff has resumed discussions with the MCDR. The proposed trail would extend approximately 1,600 feet from MCDR's trail (which terminates at the TRW entrance drive), across Stony Creek's easterly boundary line, to HCMA's hike-bike trail just south of the toll area.

Arens said this trail connector will provide Stony Creek Metropark with a direct link to the Macomb Orchard Regional Trail that crosses 26 Mile Road at Mound Road, approximately one-half mile to the east of the proposed trail connector. Macomb County has been actively pursuing the development of a countywide trail network that will connect communities and recreational resources, similar to the Utica trail connection that will ultimately connect Stony Creek Metropark to Lake St. Clair Metropark.

Arens reported that regarding the Stormwater Drainage Improvements, Inwood Road at Stony Creek Bridge - HCMA and MCDR have recently been in discussion regarding stormwater runoff

from Inwood Road into the Stony Creek waterway, at the roadway bridge over the Creek, north of the Nature Center.

Arens said the spillage, erosion and stormwater discharge process has in turn increased the amount of sediment loading into Stony Creek. As a result, water quality in the Creek and upper Stony Lake areas has become markedly degraded. HCMA staff has expressed its concerns regarding this situation to MCDR, and MCDR is moving forward to address the issue. Based on preliminary discussions, MCDR plans to improve the roadside ditches and implement design stormwater controls to improve the conveyance, detention and treatment of stormwater prior to its discharge into the Stony Creek.

Arens said HCMA and the MCDR have worked together on a number projects in the past, at Stony Creek, at Wolcott Mill and at Lake St. Clair Metroparks. As with other Macomb County agencies, the MCDR's cooperation has been invaluable to HCMA in providing numerous improvements of mutual benefit.

It was moved by Commissioner Marans, supported by Commissioner Lester that the Board of Commissioners authorize staff to continue discussions with the Macomb County Department of Roads on these cooperative improvement projects, as recommended by Chief Engineer Arens and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

6. Reports

C. Indian Springs

1. Proposal – Oil and Gas Lease

Chief of Engineering Arens reported on Sept. 8, 2011, the Board of Commissioners approved a Seismic Contract with Jordan Development, Inc. of Traverse City to explore the potential for oil and gas development within Indian Springs Metropark. The Seismic Contract allowed Jordan to perform seismic testing in the park, for which a charge of \$1,000 per mile of test line was assessed. Initial seismic testing is complete, and at this time Jordan believes there is good potential for development.

Arens said the proposed oil and gas lease, as tentatively agreed to by Jordan and staff and that the lease is similar in form to previous leases approved by HCMA, and revised by staff with assistance from the legal firm of Topp Law, PLC of Gaylord, Michigan.

Commissioner McCulloch commented that he met with Arens and that he was comfortable moving forward with the oil and gas lease.

It was moved by Commissioner McCulloch, supported by Commissioner La Belle that the Board of Commissioners approve the Oil and Gas Lease with Jordan Development, Inc. and receive in payment thereof an up-front bonus payment in the amount of \$47,400 as recommended by Chief Engineer Arens and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

2. Report – MDNR Habitat Improvement Grant

Chief of Natural Resources Paul Muelle announced the award of a grant to improve the habitat for the Eastern Massasauga rattlesnake at Indian Springs Metropark.

It was moved by Commissioner Lester, supported by Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners (1) receive and file the MDNR Habitat Improvement Grant report and, (2) approve the transfer of funds in the total amount of \$15,000 from the Reserve Account to cover the expenditures as recommended by Chief of Natural Resources Muelle and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

6. Reports

D. Kensington

1. Bids – Hike-Bike Trail Infrared Pavement Grant

Chief Engineer Arens reported that the project includes asphalt pavement repairs by infrared heating method of approximately 290 areas of hike-bike trail, approximately 710 lineal feet of crack sealing, and incidental work. Areas to be repaired are located between the Martindale and Shorefishing areas, in the Playfield area, and the West Boat Launch area. Arens said in-place repairs of asphalt pavement by infrared heating and reconditioning provides a successful, cost-effective alternative to pavement removal and replacement.

It was moved by Commissioner La Belle, supported by Commissioner Lester that the Board of Commissioners award Contract No. 704-12T to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder, Asphalt Management, Inc., in the amount of \$28,419.00 as recommended by Chief Engineer Arens and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

2. Bids – Hike-Bike Trail Repairs

Chief Engineer Arens reported that the project includes resurfacing and repairs of approximately 150 lineal feet of hike bike trail pavement, including pavement removal and replacement, topsoil placement and turf establishment. Areas to be repaired and resurfaced are located between the Boardwalk area and the former Wastewater Treatment Plant site. Existing pavement surface is deteriorated, beyond repair and poses potential safety issues.

It was moved by Commissioner La Belle, supported by Commissioner Lester that the Board of Commissioners award Contract No. 704-12S to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder, T&M Asphalt Paving, Inc., in the amount of \$10,405.00 as recommended by Chief Engineer Arens and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

E. Hudson Mills

1. Bids – Cart Path Bridge Replacement, Golf Course – Tornado Damage

Chief Engineer Arens reported the project included the removal and replacement of the existing cart path bridge located between No. 10 Green and No. 11 Tee on the Hudson Mills Golf Course. Work will include the fabrication, delivery and installation of a new pre-engineered steel truss bridge, along with removal and disposal of the existing bridge and related work. Existing steel truss bridge was irreparably damaged by the March 15 tornado. If a contract is awarded, an appropriation of funds in the amount of \$60,000 from the Reserves for Future Contingencies account will be necessary to cover the contract amount plus contract administration. Funds will be reimbursed from the storm damage claims settlement as negotiated with CNA Insurance.

It was moved by Commissioner La Belle, supported by Commissioner Lester that the Board of Commissioners award Contract No. 508-12L to the lowest responsive, responsible bidder, Brock & Associates, Inc., in the amount of \$55,900.00, and that an appropriation in the amount of \$60,000 from the Reserves for Future Contingencies account be made to cover the contract amount plus contract administration, as recommended by Chief Engineer Arens and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

2. Easement Agreement, Hudson Mills to Dexter Trail

Chief Engineer Arens reported that on Feb. 10, 2011, the Board of Commissioners approved a quit claim deed to transfer a 100-foot wide by approximately 480-foot long easement owned by HCMA to the village of Dexter. The purpose of the transfer of ownership was for the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission (WCPRC), in cooperation with Dexter, to construct the northerly portion of its 1,700-foot trail boardwalk that extends from Dexter's Warrior Park, across Mill Creek, under the Norfolk Southern Railway Bridge and into Westridge Subdivision.

Arens said HCMA's Hudson Mills-Dexter Trail will connect to the WCPRC/Dexter trail boardwalk at the southerly end of HCMA's Trail. It was intended that the two trail boardwalks would connect

precisely at the easement boundary. However, as the WCPRC/Dexter boardwalk was actually constructed, it lies inside of Dexter's easement, by within 25 feet of the easement boundary. Therefore an Easement Agreement is necessary to grant HCMA access to construct, own and maintain the short segment of HCMA's boardwalk within the (now) village of Dexter easement.

Arens also reported that the design of HCMA's three-mile Hudson Mills-Dexter Trail, which will connect HCMA's existing West Side Trail to the Village of Dexter trail, is nearly complete.

It was moved by Commissioner La Belle, supported by Commissioner Lester that the Board of Commissioners approve the Easement Agreement with the village of Dexter as recommended by Chief Engineer Arens and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

6. Reports

F. Willow

1. Approval – Vertical Threat, LLC (Rock the World) Request

Deputy Director Almas reported that Vertical Threat, LLC will be holding the "Rock the World" 5K run event at Willow Metropark on Sept. 29, 2012. Almas said the promoter anticipates several thousand people to participate in this running course which will have at least 12 different obstacles runners will need to negotiate. Runners will depart from the start area every 30 minutes beginning at 9:00a.m. with the last wave at 7:00p.m. Entertainment will be provided throughout the day by several bands and food will also be available.

Almas said to encourage a festival type atmosphere, Vertical Threat, LLC is requesting that the Board of Commissioners approve beer sales at the "Rock the World" event. Beer sales would be contained within one tent that would be surrounded by white fencing from 10:00a.m. – 9:00p.m. Beer would be available on tap or by the bottle and stored in a truck onsite until it is needed.

It was moved by Commissioner Marans, supported by Commissioner Lester that the Board of Commissioners approve beer sales for the "Rock the World" 5K run event at Willow Metropark on Sept. 29, 2012 and authorize staff to execute any necessary agreements as recommended by Deputy Director Almas and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

G. Administrative Office

1. Update – Reorganization Plan

Human Resources Manager Carol Stone reported that at the March 2011 Board meeting, the Board adopted a plan that restructured HCMA's full-time Park operation, interpretive, and maintenance workforce. Although not officially adopted by the Board, a restructuring plan for the Administrative Office was also developed at that time. The plans reduce full-time positions by 28 percent from a high of 254 in 2007 to a target goal of 185 and that these staffing reductions would be achieved through attrition. Stone said it is anticipated that with expected retirements, the target goal will be achieved in 2017.

The adoption of the early retirement window has expedited the attrition plan bringing the 2012 staffing level down from 220 to 205 employees with additional retirements anticipated. Many of these retirements have come from positions that are key to the operation of the Metroparks. At this time, staff is seeking approval to fill the following vacancies: *Promotions* – Maintenance Supervisors, Administrative Sergeant; *New Hires* – Police Officers, Police Support Specialist.

Further discussion was held.

It was moved by Commissioner McCulloch, supported by Commissioner Lester that the Board of Commissioners authorize staff to make temporary promotions for the three maintenance positions, and one administrative sergeant position and that staff is to lay out the fiscal cost and implications of all of the recommendation of the reorganization plan.

Motion carried unanimously.

6. Reports

G. Administrative Office

2. Donations

Deputy Director Almas requested the Board accept the May donations:

- Wilson Born made an \$8,000 cash donation to be used for landscaping at the Nature Center at Lake St. Clair Metropark.
- Marc Blum donated a disassembled windmill for display at Wolcott Mill Metropark; itemizing a value of \$8,000.
- David and Cynthia Moilanen made a \$350 cash donation to purchase tree to be planted at behind the ninth green at Huron Meadows Metropark Golf Course in memory of Douglas Morton.
- Cheryl Del Grosso made a \$300 cash donation for a memorial bench honoring Justin Gene Coffey to be placed on the new portion of the hike-bike trail at Kensington Metropark.
- Marjorie O'Donnel made a \$300 cash donation for a memorial bench honoring Ray Davio to be placed along bike trail at Kensington Metropark.
- John Minicvci made a \$300 cash donation for a disc golf basket for use at Stony Creek Metropark.
- Myra and Mel Jacobs made a \$300 cash donation for a bench to be placed along the hike-bike trail at Kensington Metropark.
- Jerry Pelton made a \$300 cash donation for bench to be placed along the nature trail at Kensington Metropark.

It was moved by Commissioner Lester, supported by Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners accept the donations and a letter of appreciation be sent to the donors as recommended by Deputy Director Almas and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

3. Legislative Report

Legislative Consultant George Carr reported that the legislature currently has five bills under active consideration that would have an immediate impact on the Authority.

- SB 1072 – the Personal Property Tax bill sponsored by the governor, passed the Senate with an amendment protecting “voter approved millages” in the required “hold harmless reimbursement to local units of government.
- HB 5196 – passed by the House on May 30 by a 110 – 0 vote with immediate effect. It was referred to the Senate Regulatory Reform Committee. It would require all public employers, including HCMA, to report any severance payments to any employee other than a general retirement benefit.
- HB 5274 – passed by the House on May 30 by a 110 – 0 vote with immediate effect. It requires all contracts by every local governmental unit of \$25,000 or more to be reported to the state or posted on the unit's website.
- HB 5364 – This is the annual appropriation for dispensing the money for Natural Resources Trust Fund projects. Included in the bill is an appropriation for the Kensington Pond Overlook Project for \$94,000. The Senate is opposed to additional MDNR land purchases and stripped out all the “Eco-Region” land acquisition projects totaling \$4,375,000. The bill is now back in the House where the MDNR is attempting to resolve the state land purchase issue, particularly in the Upper Peninsula. Carr said it is highly unusual, but not unprecedented, for the Legislature to amend or reject recommendation from the Trust Fund Board. The Authority's project is not in jeopardy but may be delayed for approval, possibly until this fall.
- HB 4059 – this bill dealing with employee paid time off for labor negotiations was reported from the Senate Regulatory Reform Committee.

It was moved by Commissioner Lester, supported by Commissioner La Belle that the Board of Commissioners receive and file the legislative report as submitted by Legislative Consultant Carr.

Motion carried unanimously.

8. Director Selection Process

Commissioner Marans asked how the Board plans to proceed with this.

Commissioner McCulloch said there are some short-term issues that need to be addressed.

Further Board discussion was held.

Commissioner La Belle said that everyone may have an opinion about this subject, but he wanted to stay local for the selection process.

Commissioner McCulloch said he wanted to update the Board on the status of the selection process for the Controller's position. McCulloch said he has spoken with Carol Stone and Les Pulver from Plante & Moran.

HR Manager Stone said the Authority has advertized locally, with the Michigan Municipal League (MML), Career Builders, the Detroit Free Press and other publications, and that 164 applications were received for the Controller's position. Stone said she would like the group to narrow down the list of applicants to a number the Board is comfortable with, and then present that list to the Board for possible interviews.

Further discussion was held on the Controller's selection process.

Commissioner Marrocco said he would like to see at least 20 applicants for the Board to consider.

Commissioner Lester said he would like to review all the applicants.

Commissioner Marans asked that Carol Stone contact each commissioner to get their criteria for the next meeting.

Commissioner La Belle said he hoped that Deputy Director Almas was a candidate.

9. Election of Board Officers

It was moved by Commissioner Lester, supported by Commissioner McCulloch that the Board of Commissioners keep the same officers in place from June 7, 2012 through June 2013.

Motion carried unanimously.

10. Deputy Director's Comments

Deputy Director Almas congratulated the Board officers on their appointments and that staff looks forward to working with everyone again.

Almas said camping at Lower Huron got off to a great start over the Memorial Day weekend with 21 of 27 campsites reserved.

Almas also said the Authority received a favorable ruling in the Court of Appeals in the matter of the Estate of Lisa Cox drowning case that occurred at Lake Erie Metropark in 2009.

Almas also invited the Commissioner to join staff at the clubhouse dedication at the golf course.

11. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner La Belle noticed that golf revenues are up this year; and that the courses were at \$1.4 million last year, compared to \$929,000 at the same time last year.

Commissioner Marans said he had mixed feelings about the Dunkin Donuts Passport. Marans said it is a great promotional items, but why donuts? The Metroparks are a recreational agency that should be promoting a healthier lifestyle.

Marketing Manager Kassie Kretschmar answered that the Dunkin Donuts mission is about getting people active and that Dunkin Donuts sent out flyers to 700,000 households.

Commissioner Marrocco said that with the upcoming challenges with the personal property taxes there are things that have to be done and that the Metroparks needs to be financially responsible.

12. Motion to Adjourn

It was moved by Commissioner Lester, supported by Commissioner La Belle that the Board of Commissioners adjourn the regular meeting.

Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 12:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



George Phifer
Executive Secretary