

**MINUTES
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
HURON-CLINTON METROPOLITAN AUTHORITY
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2013**

The regular meeting of the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority's Board of Commissioners was held at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, October 3, 2013 at the Hudson Mills Metropark Activity Center. The meeting was convened in pursuance to a call thereof by the Executive Secretary and due notice was given to the HCMA Board of Commissioners.

Present:	Commissioners:	John E. La Belle Timothy J. McCarthy Robert W. Marans (arrived at 11:30am) Harry E. Lester Anthony V. Marrocco (arrived at 10:46am) Jaye Quadrozzi (arrived at 10:42am)
	Staff Officers:	
	Director	John P. McCulloch
	Executive Secretary	George Phifer
Others:	Legislative Consultant	George Carr
Absent:	Commissioner	John C. Hertel (with notice)

Chairman La Belle called the meeting to order at 10:46 a.m.

1. Chairman's Statement

Chairman La Belle said he wanted to commend staff and the director for pulling together preliminary numbers for the budget. La Belle also said the service we provide at the Metroparks is critical to the citizens of southeast Michigan.

2. Public Comments

Toni Spears, HCMA volunteer read a written statement: "The agenda today included preliminary budget estimates for 2014, with lots of data compiled, and I'd like to thank Rebecca and her staff for that information. As the board reviews, there are several items that have increased significantly from 2013 and would benefit from a more detailed explanation."

"For the administrative budget, marketing has increased approximately 4-times, from about \$105,000 to \$428,000 and employee group insurance has increased to \$225,000 to more than \$1 million, an increase of \$810,000 and a factor of more than four. That's \$1 million out of a \$49 million total parks budget. A more detailed explanation of these increases is in order."

"The administrative budget for the Engineering/General planning department also covers the Natural Resources function. For better public information on this mission related function, the Natural Resources budget should be listed clearly as a separate line item."

"Regarding park budgets, total operation expense shows very little change for 2014. Of note, however, is a decrease of more than \$100,000 for Hudson Mills, although there will be more than two miles of new trail to maintain next year. One of the learnings from the opening of the Dexter-Huron section of the trail this last year is that invasive species readily move in on the barren trail berms, so rapid detection and early response are essential to avert further degradation of our remaining natural areas. Funding for staff for trail maintenance at Hudson Mills should be adequate to assure aggressive control of invasives in this new area."

"The agenda also include the golf consultant final report for 2013. What is the Metroparks vision for the golf program? The golf report states that the sport is in oversupply and declining demand, yet recommends significant additional staffing, an addition one-year contract for more than \$100,000 and potential additional funding for redesign of Willow, price tag TBD. The priority and scope of this

proposal as well as the cost and benefit of any further contract work should be well-understood, and in alignment with a vision statement, particularly with the other current staffing and funding constraints on all other areas of the Metroparks.”

Larry Noodén, Clinton Huron Environmental Coalition (CHEC), said economics are important to the Metroparks. Forbes magazine rated Michigan number 47 in career opportunity and financial investments. Everyone is struggling and people need to place to get away and that the Metroparks has an important role in the region.

3. Minutes - September 23, 2013 Regular Meeting and Board Retreat

It was moved by Commissioner McCarthy, supported by Commissioner Quadrozzi that the Board of Commissioners approve the Sept. 12, 2013 regular and Board Retreat meeting minutes as submitted by Executive Secretary Phifer and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

4. Approval – October 3, 2013 Agenda

Commissioner Lester requested that the HCMA vehicle policy be added to the agenda.

Commissioner La Belle said the vehicle policy would be added as item 9(c).

Director McCulloch stated that at the September Board meeting, the August vouchers were reviewed but not approved and requested the approval of the August vouchers be added to the October 3 consent agenda as item (g).

It was moved by Commissioner McCarthy, supported by Commissioner Lester that the Board of Commissioners approve the Oct. 3, 2013 agenda.

Motion carried unanimously.

5. Approval – October 3, 2013 Consent Agenda

It was moved by Commissioner Quadrozzi, supported by Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners approve the Oct. 3, 2013 consent agenda to include the following: 2013 Pension Plan Contribution; 2013 Retiree Health Care Trust Contribution; Purchases – Metropark Brochures; Proposal for Dam Safety Management; Intergovernmental Maintenance Agreements, Lake St. Clair and Stony Creek Metroparks – Metro Parkway Maintenance Agreement, Macomb County Dept. of Roads, Pathway Maintenance Agreement, Harrison Township, Pathway Maintenance Agreement, Clinton Township, 26 Mile Road Maintenance Agreement, Macomb County Department of Roads; donations and vouchers – August.

Motion carried unanimously.

Regular Agenda

6. Legislative Report

Legislative Consultant George Carr reported that the governor signed three bills into law on Oct. 2 expanding the use of state and county roads to off-road vehicles (ORVs). As signed into law, the statewide regulations only apply to county roads and state highways except interstate freeways. Townships, villages and municipalities all have a say in any initiative to open county roads to ORVs. While many of the Metroparks are either bordered or crossed by county roads, nothing in the new laws preempts the Metroparks from regulating ORV use or prohibition on park roads or property. The provision for the new ORV law will require some degree of monitoring by the Metroparks as applications are filed with the counties of the Metropark system. The use of county roads by ORVs is not automatic and requires specific county and/or local government approvals in several cases. Law enforcement will need additional training on enforcement of the new laws as they pertain to the Metroparks jurisdiction on county roads.

Carr also reported on discussions held about the Personal Property Tax which will have no impact on the Metroparks. There has also been discussion about eliminating the Industrial Property Tax.

Corporation Counsel Joseph Colaianne provided the Board with an update on meetings he and Carr had with state Rep. Eileen Kowall (R-44) regarding TIFAs, DDAs and various tax-exempt programs being used by various communities.

It was moved by Commissioner Lester, supported by Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners receive and file the Legislative Report as presented by George Carr.

7. Update – Park Superintendents

Kim Jarvis, Western Park District Superintendent, Mike Lyons, Eastern Park District Superintendent and Jim Pershing, Southern Park District Superintendent provided the commissioners with updates on various programs and events that occurred at parks in their districts.

It was moved by Commissioner McCarthy, supported by Commissioner Quadrozzi that the Board of Commissioners receive and file the updates given by the District Park Superintendents.

Motion carried unanimously.

8. 2014 Preliminary Budget Projections

Chief Accountant Rebecca Franchock provide the Board with an update on the status of the 2014 budget informing the commissioners that budget reviews would begin the week of October 7 with the parks and administrative office. The 2014 preliminary budget expenditures are consistent with the initial 2013 budget. Overall, there is an anticipated net decrease of \$1 million; capital equipment requests are down by \$0.5 million; 2014 park operation expenditure requests reflect a 2 percent increase from the initial 2013 budget; 2014 Administrative Office expenditure requests are up \$600,000 from the 2013 budget; and property tax revenue is expected to remain flat. Districts have projected most revenue sources near the 2013 level with the exception of tolling which should produce an additional \$1.6 million in revenue due to the fee increase for daily and annual permits.

Further discussion was held on this item.

It was moved by Commissioner McCarthy, supported by Commissioner Quadrozzi that the Board of Commissioners receive and file the 2014 Preliminary Budget report as presented by Chief Accountant Franchock and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

9. Reports

A. Wolcott Mill

1. Update – Operations Development Plan

Chief Planner Susan Nyquist provided the Board with an update on the Business Plan for Wolcott Mill Metropark. Nyquist said faced with rising deficit spending in 2012, staff prepared a business plan for the development, maintenance, and operations of Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm Center. The plan included goals and recommendations that would reduce expenses and increase visitation and revenue. A new directive is to develop a business plan for all of Wolcott Mill Metropark including development, maintenance, and operations of the Farm, Historic Center (Mill), Camp Rotary, and the golf course. The attached report is a draft of phase 1 and is the groundwork for a final plan. In order to complete the plan, phase 2 will be a cost recovery analysis that will include input from the Board of Commissioners, administrative office staff, park staff, local government officials, and perhaps most importantly the public.

Discussion was held on this item.

It was moved by Commissioner Lester, supported by Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners receive and file the Wolcott Mill Operations and Development Plan Update as recommended by Chief Planner Sue Nyquist and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

9. **Reports**

B. Administrative Office

1. Resolution – SAW Grants

Asset and Development Manager Michael Brahm-Henkel provided the Board with an update on the SAW Grant application process stating the Resolution authorizing the SAW Grant Agreement will be provided by the state of Michigan with the SAW Grant application materials available October 1. Staff believes the form resolution will be substantially similar to the standard resolution utilized for the S2 Grant Program. The Grant is capped at \$2 million dollars with a 10 percent local match for the first \$1 million and a 25 percent local match for the second million. Projects identified in the grant must proceed within three years of grant award or face repayment of the grant plus interest at a rate not to exceed 8 percent per year. The Grant covers the design and planning costs not construction costs. The intent of the SAW Grant Program is to accelerate the statewide use of asset management planning practices as well as improve water quality. The SAW Grant covers three distinct areas which include storm water, asset management, and wastewater. Staff recommends HCMA submit two (2) applications, one for storm water and one for wastewater. The recommendation for two applications is based on the fact that the Grant process is based on a first come first serve basis and any questions that arise from the review of the application will automatically place the applicant into the next years round of grant funding. The construction costs associated with the grant are estimated at \$2.2 million dollars. If the grant is awarded and accepted, staff will have to budget these costs in future fiscal years.

Further discussion was held on this item.

It was moved by Commissioner Marans, supported by Commissioner Marrocco that the Board of Commissioners approve the resolution authorizing a SAW Grant Agreement and designation of John P. McCulloch, Director and Michael Brahm-Henkel, Manager of Assets and Development as the HCMA authorized representatives for purposes of the SAW Grant Agreement.

Chairman La Belle called for a roll call vote.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Voting Yes: Commissioners Lester, Marrocco, Quadrozzi, Marans, McCarthy, La Belle
Voting No: None
Absent: Commissioner Hertel

Motion carried unanimously.

2. ROI Golf Consultant Final Report

Chief Planner Nyquist reported that the company Return On Investment Golf Management (ROI) was retained to analyze individual course operations as self sustaining assets. Principals Bill Fountain and Bruce Matthews went to each Metropark golf course, met with park and course maintenance and operations staff, and followed up with recommendations impacting all the courses as well as recommendations for individual courses; and that their observations, conclusions, and recommendations were included in the report to the Board.

Bill Fountain and Bruce Matthews with ROI provided the Board with an update on the status of Metropark golf courses.

Further discussion was held.

It was moved by Commissioner Marans, supported by Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners receive and file the ROI Golf Report.

Motion carried unanimously.

9. Reports

**C. Changes to Agenda
Employee Vehicles**

Commissioner Lester discussed various concerns he had regarding the HCMA vehicle policy.

Further discussion was held on this item; no action was taken.

10. Director's Report

None

11. Other Business

None

12. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Lester said the founding fathers were visionaries when they set up the park system and represented rich and poor families who wanted to come to the parks. He said he believes the parks focused more on making a profit rather than providing a service. He said he will continue to represent the needs of the people of Wayne County.

14. Motion to Adjourn

It was moved by Commissioner Quadrozzi, supported by Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners adjourn the regular meeting.

Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 1:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



George Phifer
Executive Secretary