

**MINUTES  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
HURON-CLINTON METROPOLITAN AUTHORITY  
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2010**

The regular meeting of the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority's Board of Commissioners was held at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, Nov. 11, 2010 at the Administrative Offices. 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:**               Harry E. Lester  
  Peter S. Walters  
  Robert W. Marans  
  Anthony V. Marrocco  
  Warren C. Evans  
  John C. Hertel  
  John E. La Belle

**Staff Officers:**  
                  Director                               David C. Moilanen  
                  Deputy Director                       Vacant  
                  Controller                               David L. Wahl  
                  Executive Secretary               Gregory J. Almas

Absent:                                       None

Others:        Legislative Consultant       George Carr

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

**1. Chairman's Statement**

Chairman Lester called for a moment of silence in observance and honor for veterans who have served in the United States armed services and in remembrance of Marie Hertel, mother of Commissioner John Hertel.

Chairman Lester commented on the outstanding quality and dedication of the Metropark's Board of Commissioners, staff personnel and field personnel and requested all to keep up the good work.

**2. Public Comments**

Toni Spears, Metropark volunteer, commented favorably regarding the draft Strategic Plan. Spears suggested further emphasis regarding educational programming and environmental stewardship.

**3. Minutes – October 2010**

It was moved by Commissioner Marans, supported by Commissioner Walters that the Board of Commissioners approve the Oct. 14, 2010 minutes as submitted.

Commissioner La Belle requested the Strategic Plan be placed on the December 2010 agenda.

Motion carried unanimously.

**4. Financial Statements – October 2010**

**5. Vouchers**

It was moved by Commissioner Walters, supported by Commissioner Hertel that the financial statements for October 2010 and vouchers for October 2010 (0213664 through 0213963) be approved as submitted.

Motion carried unanimously.

## 6. Purchases

It was moved by Commissioner Marans, supported by Commissioner Evans that the following item be approved as recommended by Purchasing Manager Scott Michael and staff.

ITB-10-138: Brine Storage Tanks

Motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Commissioner Walters, supported by Commissioner Hertel that the following item be approved as recommended by Purchasing Manager Scott Michael and staff.

State of Michigan MiDeal contract Number: 071B1300013: Truck Cab and Chassis

Motion carried unanimously.

## 7. Appointments by the Board of Commissioners

It was moved by Commissioner Evans, supported by Commissioner Hertel that the Board of Commissioners appoint Gregory Almas to the position of Deputy Director.

Commissioner Marans commented regarding the lack of discussion regarding consideration of candidates outside the organization.

Commissioner Walters commented on the lack of transparency in the process.

Commissioner Marrocco commented on the last minute nature of the item.

Commissioner Lester commented on the need to fill the position, selection consultant Ted Flickenger's recommendation that the best candidate was internal and that the item was on the advance agenda.

It was moved by Commissioner La Belle, supported by Commissioner Marrocco that the regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners recess for 15 minutes.

Motion carried unanimously.

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners reconvened at 10:59 a.m.

Commissioner Lester called the question on the motion.

Voting Yes: Commissioners Hertel, La Belle, Evans, Marrocco, Lester

Voting No: None

Abstaining: Commissioners Walters, Marans

Motion carried.

It was moved by Commissioner Evans, supported by Commissioner Hertel that the Board of Commissioners appoint George Phifer to the position of Executive Secretary.

Voting Yes: Commissioners Hertel, La Belle, Evans, Lester

Voting No: None

Abstaining: Commissioners Walters, Marans, Marrocco

Motion carried.

## 8. Reports

### A. Metro Beach

#### 1. Report – Fall Boat Show

Director Moilanen reported The Michigan Boating Industries Association (MBIA) conducted its first annual Boating and Outdoor Recreation Festival at Metro Beach Sept. 22 – 26 grossing \$157,557 and HCMA's portion being \$33,411.50 plus park vehicle entry fees.

Metro Beach Park Superintendent Pershing reported approximately 9,000 people attended and both exhibitors and attendees had generally positive comments about the show. Pershing also said that for the first time at any "boat show" at Metro Beach, beer and wine was sold and there were no problems associated with the sale of alcoholic beverages.

## **2. Intergovernmental Agreement – Lake St. Clair Coastal Restoration Grant**

Chief of Natural Resources Muelle reported that In January 2010, The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) awarded \$1.42 million Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant to Macomb County for the "Lake St. Clair Coastal Restoration Project" located at Metro Beach Metropark and that on Sept. 15 the EPA signed the contract with Macomb County releasing funds for the project.

Muelle stated the purpose of the restoration project is to improve the various habitat and ecological functions of the coastal wetlands at Metro Beach and preparations to move forward with the project have begun. Muelle also said that Macomb County will be responsible for all contract administration for the project.

Muelle presented an Intergovernmental Agreement to address the mutual responsibilities of Macomb County and the Metroparks for the duration of the marsh restoration grant project and act as a guideline for activities initiated and supervised by Macomb County during the planning and construction phase of the grant.

It was moved by Commissioner Evans, supported by Commissioner Marrocco that the Board of Commissioners approve the Intergovernmental Agreement for the Lake St. Clair Coastal Restoration Grant project and authorize the Director to execute subordinate agreements related to this project, as recommended by Chief of Natural Resources Paul Muelle and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

## **3. Path Maintenance Agreement, Harrison Township**

Director Moilanen presented a proposed Path Maintenance Agreement for snow plowing, grass cutting on path margins and sweeping of the hike/bike trail located contiguous to Metro Beach in Harrison Township for the period of Nov. 1, 2010 through Oct. 31, 2011 for the following rates:

- Full-Time employee grass cutting and snow plowing wages at \$51.10 per hour;
- Seasonal employee grass cutting and sweeping at \$12.32 per hour and \$18.48/OT;
- Equipment wages at \$85.00 per 8-hour period; and
- Salt prorated at \$43.00 per ton.

It was moved by Commissioner La Belle, supported by Commissioner Evans that the Board of Commissioners approve the Path Maintenance Agreement with the Charter Township of Harrison for the period of Nov. 1, 2010 through Oct. 31, 2010 as recommended by Director Moilanen and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

## **8. Reports**

### **B. Stony Creek**

#### **1. Agreement – 26 Mile Road Maintenance, Macomb County Road Commission**

Director Moilanen presented a maintenance agreement for the Authority to maintain grass and weed control for the 26 Mile Road median from Stony Creek Metropark to M-53 roundabouts effective Nov. 1, 2010 through Oct. 31, 2011 for the amount of \$7,990.00.

It was moved by Commissioner Marrocco, supported by Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners approve the Maintenance Agreement with the Board of County Road Commissioner of Macomb County for maintenance of the 26 Mile Road median for the period of Nov. 1, 2010 through Oct. 31, 2011 as recommended by Director Moilanen and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

## 8. Reports

### C. Indian Springs

#### 1. Report – DTE Solar Currents project

Chief Engineer Arens reported staff and representatives of DTE Energy are currently discussing the possibility of developing a photovoltaic energy project at Indian Springs Metropark under DTE's SolarCurrents program. Arens said the proposed photovoltaic project would be approximately 250 kilowatts (kW) in capacity and owned by DTE Energy, and would potentially occupy approximately 1.5 acres of land under an easement to be granted to DTE by the Authority.

Arens also said the program offers two options for customer participation: customer-owned systems (ranging from 1 kW to 20 kW), and utility-owned systems (100 kW to 500 kW) and stated the utility owned option would be preferred.

Arens reported DTE's preliminary proposal is for an up-front payment of \$5,000, and their annual payment of \$5,000 for each year of the 20-year contract term.

Arens said if the Board of Commissioners directs staff to continue discussions with DTE on this project, the parties will identify a preferred site, agree on certain design and construction details, and negotiate the terms of the Solar Power Easement Agreement which would be brought back to the Board for consideration.

It was moved by Commissioner Walters, supported by Commissioner Evans that the Board of Commissioners authorize staff to continue negotiations with DTE Energy toward an agreement for a utility-owned SolarCurrents project at Indian Springs Metropark as recommended by Chief Engineer Arens and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

## 8. Reports

### D. Administrative Office

#### 1. Legislative report

Legislative Consultant George Carr noted the monumental Republican shift in the recent elections. Carr presented a comprehensive election summary for the five counties served by the Metroparks.

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

#### 2. Preliminary 2011 Budget Estimates

Controller Wahl presented the Preliminary 2011 Budget Estimates reporting a proposed balanced budget is projected at \$73,600,000 nearly the same level as the 2010 budget of \$74.5 million.

Wahl also reported the Preliminary 2011 Budget Allocation were guided by the basic objectives of the May 2010 update to the 2009 Revised Five-Year Plan to (1) maintain park services, quality maintenance and secure parks; (2) to defer more capital improvement projects, and (3) to build up the Authority's Reserve for Future Contingencies account.

Wahl observed Metropark employees have embraced these objectives demonstrated by the fact that 2010 park operating expenses are projected to come in \$1.2 million (3.5 percent) under budget, that 2011 park operation expenditures are expected to increase only \$0.3 million (0.8 percent) over 2010 estimated actual expenditures, and that many 2011 cost increases are being absorbed by changing operating practices and not filling positions, that equipment replacements for 2011 have been pared down to \$1.1 million from \$2.4 million in 2010 and that seven full-time positions that were funded in 2010 will not be funded in 2011 (attrition).

Wahl also reported that new revenues coming to the Authority in 2011 are projected to decline \$4.6 million (9.1 percent) to \$46.3 million resulting mainly from a decline in the net tax revenues of \$3,250,000 (9.4 percent) to \$31,350,000 and a projected decline in park operating revenues to \$14,250,000 from 2010 estimated actual of \$14,500,000; that Capital and Reserve account funds predicted to carry over from 2010 should total \$27.3 million, about \$3.7 million more than in 2010. Funding for park operations at \$32.7 million represents only a \$277,000 (0.8 percent) increase over projected 2010 actual expenses; that capital improvement project funding is at \$6.95 million and land acquisition at \$5.9 million; and that Administrative Office expenditures are scheduled at \$6.25 million.

Wahl further noted staff is recommending that \$1.45 million of 2011 funds be retained in the Reserve account to position the Authority to absorb a minimum of two more years of significant tax revenue declines.

Wahl requested the Board give staff direction on the preliminary 2011 Budget estimates.

There was Board discussion regarding the nature of positions being eliminated through attrition, the reductions in wild-life management and the funding of communication improvements.

It was moved by Commissioner Marrocco, supported by Commissioner Evans that the Board of Commissioners receive and file the preliminary 2011 budget estimates as recommended by Controller Wahl and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

## **8. Reports**

### **D. Administrative Office**

#### **3. Marketing Report**

Director Moilanen provided a comprehensive marketing report describing and outlining current marketing and communication efforts for 2010 and tentative budget and plans for 2011. Moilanen said that in 2010, the major focus was on launching the Metroparks Web site and training staff on how to use it, driving visitors to the new Web site, expanding the email list, developing an e-newsletter, and enhancing social media marketing efforts.

Moilanen reported that in 2011, staff plans to establish a marketing committee that would focus on developing a more comprehensive, longer range marketing plan for the Metroparks and that would work to implement the marketing strategies identified in the strategic plan.

Moilanen observed the tentative 2011 budget has marketing funds increasing another \$100,000, that the Marketing and Communications department budget for marketing materials, supplies, services and outside consultants would be \$269,400, and that park marketing budgets would include a total of \$35,000 for general park marketing, \$40,000 for marketing golf courses, \$46,600 for promotional brochures and another \$30,000 for miscellaneous marketing expenditures. Total marketing expenses for 2011 are projected at \$421,000.

It was moved by Commissioner Marans, supported by Commissioner Hertel that the Board of Commissioners receive and file the marketing report as recommended by Director Moilanen and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

#### **4. Hiring Full-time Marketing person**

It was moved by Commissioner Marrocco, supported by Commissioner Walters that the item Hiring Full-Time Marketing person be taken up.

Motion carried unanimously.

It was moved by Commissioner Hertel, supported by Commissioner La Belle that the Board of Commissioners hire a full-time Director of Marketing and in addition to developing a marketing program, this person would also be responsible for the procurement of sponsors, the attraction

and procurement of groups, corporations and organizations to conduct special events, and the creation and promotion of our own Metropark special events which would be paid for by sponsors; that the position be responsible to the Director with contact with the Board of Commissioners regarding sponsorship and event leads; and that the position be compensated at \$95,000 to \$105,000 dependent upon experience.

Without objection the motion was amended as offered by Commissioner Marrocco to include the position within the Marketing and Communications department.

Without objection, the motion was amended as offered by Commissioner Marans that the position be offered as a three-year employment contract.

The motion as amended carried unanimously.

## **8. Reports**

### **D. Administrative Office**

#### **5. 2011 Fees and Charges**

Director Moilanen presented the proposed list of Metroparks 2011 Fees and Charges. Suggested changes are in interpretive programming fees, boat rentals and changes in the wave pool fees at Lake Erie to reflect a shift in operations so that raft rentals are included in the entry fee price.

Moilanen also reported that upon review, staff is recommending golf course rates remain the same as 2010 rates.

It was moved by Commissioner Marans, supported by Commissioner Evans that the Board of Commissioners approve the 2011 Fees and Charges as recommended by Director Moilanen and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

#### **6. 2011 Commission Meeting Schedule**

Director Moilanen noted that all meetings on the proposed 2011 Board of Commissioners meeting schedule are on the second Thursday of each month.

Without objection, Commissioner Marrocco requested the schedule be amended to change the June 9 meeting to June 16, 2011.

It was moved by Commissioner La Belle, supported by Commissioner Marans that the Board of Commissioners approve the 2011 Commission meeting schedule as amended.

Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Hertel indicated that at the December 2010 Board of Commission meeting he intended to make a motion that the Metroparks implement a pilot project to privatize the maintenance at one Metropark golf course for one year.

Commissioner Marrocco requested staff provide the Board of Commissioners a report of golf course expenditures.

Commissioner Hertel exited the meeting room.

#### **7. 2011 Awards Banquet Allocation**

It was moved by Commissioner La Belle, supported by Commissioner Evans that the Board of Commissioners approve a subsidy of \$8,000 for the 2011 awards banquet as recommended by Director Moilanen and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

## **8. Reports**

### **D. Administrative Office**

#### **8. Medicare Part D Subsidy**

Human Resources Officer William Johnstone reported the Authority received a payment of \$21,071.82 as reimbursement for Medicare Part D, prescription drug subsidy for the period of April – June 2010.

It was moved by Commissioner La Belle, supported by Commissioner Marrocco that the Board of Commissioners approve the transfer of \$21,071.82 to the Retiree Health Care Trust Fund as recommended by Human Resource Officer Johnstone and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

#### **9. Donations**

It was moved by Commissioner Evans, supported by Commissioner Marrocco that the following donations be accepted and that a letter of appreciation be sent to the donors as recommended by Director Moilanen and staff.

- A \$300 bench donation made by the Walker, Lebrato, Scheib and Rose families for use at Indian Springs Metropark.
- A \$300 bench donation made by Lori Sullivan for use at Dexter-Huron Metropark.
- A \$350 bench donation made by Charles Krieg to be used at the Lake Erie Metropark.
- A \$350 bench donation made by Ryan Griffor to be used at Lake Erie Metropark.
- A \$500 "Wear the Gear" donation made by CNA.
- A \$519 donation made by the Thomas Welsh Foundation for plants at the Stony Creek Nature Center.
- A \$4,000 donation made by the Thomas Welsh Foundation for deck restoration at the Stony Creek Nature Center.
- A Rainbow Trout donation made by Deborah Green for use at the Environmental Discovery Center at Indian Springs Metropark.
- Heron, Egret, Sandhill Cranes, sunset pictures made by Michele Olzaek for use at the Kensington Park office.

Motion carried unanimously.

## **9. Park/Department Presentation**

### **a. Police Department**

Chief Phifer presented a report regarding the police department including in part the duties, staffing levels, calls for service, training and other issues confronting the department.

It was moved by Commissioner Walters, supported by Commissioner La Belle that the Board of Commissioners receive and file the police department report as recommended by Chief Phifer and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Evans exited the meeting room.

## **10. Director's Comments**

Director Moilanen reported on the NRPA conference including the NRPA accreditation process, the intent of staff to report to the Board at a future date on the progress of the marketing, maintenance and programming plan documents.

Moilanen also thanked the Board, on behalf of staff, for approving the subsidy for the March 19, 2011 Employee Recognition dinner and wished the Board a Happy Thanksgiving.

**11. Commissioner Comments**

Commissioner Walters commented on the application of Kristopher Tobbe for the position of Executive Secretary.

Commissioner Marrocco noted that privatizing golf course operations may result in the layoff of Metroparks personnel.

Commissioner Marans commented he was surprised by the motion to fill the Executive Secretary position and questioned precedent, the combination of the position with Chief of Police and if senior staff was consulted.

Commissioner Lester commented he always operated in the open and will always return telephone calls.

Commissioner Walters requested specific detail in the description of future agenda items.


**12. Motion to Adjourn**

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

Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 12:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Gregory J. Almas  
Executive Secretary