

**Minutes
Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority
Board of Commissioners – Work Session
Thursday, September 12, 2019**

A work session of the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority's Board of Commissioners' was held on Thursday, September 12, 2019 at 9:30 am at the Kensington Metropark Nature Center.

Commissioners Present:	Robert W. Marans Jaye Quadrozzi Bernard Parker Steve Williams John P. Rea (arrived at 10am)
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Staff Officers:	
Director	Amy McMillan
Deputy Director	David Kirbach
Chief of Finance	Rebecca Franchock

Other Attendees:	
EPIC-MRA	John Cavanaugh
EPIC-MRA	Kelly Sullivan
Miller Canfield	Steve Mann

Absent:	
Commissioner	Kurt L. Heise
Commissioner	Timothy J. McCarthy

1. Call to Order

Chairman Marans called the work session to order at 9:30 a.m.

2. EPIC-MRA Poll Survey Results and Discussion

Discussion: Director McMillan said John Cavanaugh and Kelly Sullivan with EPIC-MRA would be updating the Board on the recent polling survey they conducted over the summer.

Mr. Cavanaugh reviewed the methodology used in the survey and said 1,500 total surveys were completed with a live operator, 40 percent of interviews were completed using a cell phone, interviews averaged 15 minutes, respondents were included only if they visited a park at least once in the last year, respondents were pre-stratified to correspond to the population of adult residents (18 years old or older), 250 subjects per jurisdiction were interviewed and the margin of error is ± 6.2 points.

Mr. Cavanaugh said individuals were also asked which parks they visited (without mentioning the Metroparks) with 4.4 percent of respondents saying they have visited a regional park system, most have visited a park similar to the Metroparks and that travel time plays an important role in parks they visited (traveled at least 30 minutes or more).

Mr. Cavanaugh said the top three barriers to visiting a park was too far away, no interest in looking for others and lack of motivation.

Commissioner Marans asked if the barriers were looked at for the Detroit data. Mr. Cavanaugh said yes, and it was broken out into six jurisdictions. Ms. McMillan said the Metroparks scored higher than Detroit parks because of poor maintenance.

Mr. Cavanaugh said 82 percent of respondents were aware of the Metroparks, the top three parks respondents recognized are Kensington, Lake St. Clair and Stony Creek with 21 percent of

respondents unable to name a Metropark. He also said most people that participated in the survey visited Kensington, Stony Creek and Lake St. Clair regularly.

Mr. Cavanaugh said 50 percent of respondents were aware of the \$10 daily permit fee, 71 percent of respondents said they paid the daily fee in the past two years, 32 percent said the fee was too high, 65 percent said it was about right and 71 percent reassessed their opinion after listening to amenities and the number of parks located across five counties.

Commissioner Marans asked how Mr. Cavanaugh interpreted that information. He said a more in-depth interpretation could be found in the question by question analysis. He said he believes it has to do with a cross-tabulation of people who are aware of the Metroparks versus the people that about right/too high responses.

Mr. Cavanaugh said 23 percent of respondents were more likely to visit if the daily fee was lower. Fifty-five percent said they were aware of the annual fee, 47 percent said they paid it, 25 percent said the fee was too high, 8 percent said it was much too high. Respondents were asked if increasing the annual pass from \$35 to \$40 would influence their decision to purchase an annual permit, 4 percent said they were less likely, 14 percent they were more likely, and 57 percent said it would not influence their decision.

Mr. Cavanaugh said respondents listed the top sources of information about the parks was word of mouth, the internet/online and personal experience. Social media and television were at the bottom of the list.

Commissioner Quadrozzi asked how social media differs from the internet. Mr. Cavanaugh said it was a way to quantify the answer.

Commissioner Rea arrived at 10:00 a.m.

Commissioner Parker said that if people only 4 percent receive information from television, is there not enough advertising on TV or if it just doesn't have an influence. Mr. Cavanaugh said it is hard to determine based on the question and that it could be a lack of saturation or people may not look at the TV as a source of information.

Mr. Cavanaugh said his take on the survey answers was that the marketing efforts and advertising is well placed. Raw data was also turned over, which can be refined to determine what areas need more attention.

Commissioner Marans asked if the data could be broken down into more detail. Ms. McMillan said yes, and that more information will be brought to the Board in the next few months, which will help with marketing efforts.

Ms. McMillan said Wayne County and the city of Detroit might have an inflated number of people visiting parks because the survey only dealt with people that visited a park. The data gives staff the ability to grow attendance at other parks and leverage more opportunities. Macomb County does not have a county or state park, which is good for the Metroparks. Washtenaw County has many good county and local parks, and the fact that most people use cars to visit parks is a good leverage point. She said there is still room for the Metroparks to grow with a lot of opportunities to promote the parks. She also said she was surprised that pricing didn't play as a bigger factor than it did.

Ms. McMillan said that staff is exploring ways for dynamic pricing or "Pop Up Pricing" for various facilities next year to give patrons a price break during the summer months on activities. Commissioner Marans said a lot more can be done with the raw tabulations by county breakdown. The analysis of some of the responses, by the different geographic areas, still need to be done.

Commissioner Maran also said the Metroparks draw people for special occasions such as concerts, family gatherings, etc. Ms. McMillan said that staff is looking at creating signature events for each park such as food and music events and that staff would bring a programming plan for the Board to review in the near future.

Commissioner Marans said the data is a good place for board members and staff to start thinking about questions that might be asked of the data that is not covered in the report, and those questions could be answered with additional analysis.

3. Public Participation

None.

4. Motion to Adjourn

Motion by Commissioner Parker, support from Commissioner Williams that the Board of Commissioners' adjourn the work session.

Motion carried unanimously.

The work session adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Shawn M. Athayde
Recording Secretary