

**Minutes**  
**Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority**  
**Board of Commissioners**  
**Thursday, June 11, 2020**

---

A special meeting of the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority's Board of Commissioners was held on Thursday, June 11, 2020 at 1:00 p.m. The meeting was held via remote attendance by commissioners and members of the public due to the Coronavirus pandemic pursuant to Executive Order 2020-75.

Commissioners Present:

Robert W. Marans  
Jaye Quadrozzi  
Bernard Parker  
Kurt Heise  
John P. Rea  
Steve Williams  
Timothy J. McCarthy

Staff Officers Present:

Director  
Deputy Director  
Chief of Finance

Amy McMillan  
Dave Kirbach  
Rebecca Franchock

**1. Call to Order**

Commissioner Marans called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

**2. Chairman's Statement**

Commissioner Marans welcomed everyone to the call.

**3. Public Participation**

None.

**4. Approval – May 11, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Commissioner Rea, support from Commissioner Quadrozzi that the Board of Commissioners approve the May 11, 2020 regular meeting minutes as submitted.

Motion carried unanimously.

**5. Approval – June 11, 2020 Full Agenda**

Motion by Commissioner Williams, support from Commissioner Rea that the Board of Commissioners approve the June 11, 2020 agenda as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

**6. Election of Board Officers**

Motion by Commissioner Heise support from Commissioner Heise that the Board of Commissioners appoint the current officers for an additional 12 months.

Motion carried unanimously.

**7. Approval – June 11, 2020 Consent Agenda**

Motion by Commissioner Heise, support from Commissioner Heise that the Board of Commissioners approve the June 11, 2020 consent agenda as presented:

- a. Approval – May Financial Statements
- b. Approval – May Appropriation Adjustments
- c. Report – May Planning and Development Update
- d. Report – Janitorial and Hygiene Product Supply Levels
- e. Report – Purchases over \$10,000
- f. Purchases
  1. Tractor, Willow Metropark

Motion carried unanimously.

## 8. Reports

### A. Finance Department

#### 1. Report – May General Fund Financial Review

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy, support from Commissioner Rea that the Board of Commissioners receive and file the May 2020 General Fund Financial Statement Review as recommended by Chief of Finance Rebecca Franchock and staff.

*Discussion:* Chief of Finance Rebecca Franchock updated the Board on the financial status of the Metroparks through the end of May. She said revenue was strong in May and that revenue for the first week of June is good and that the Metroparks are slated to meet revenue expectations for the month.

Motion carried unanimously.

#### 2. Report – May Capital Project Fund

Motion by Commissioner Williams, support from Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners receive and file the May Capital Projects Report as recommended by Chief of Finance Rebecca Franchock and staff.

*Discussion:* Chief of Finance Rebecca Franchock updated the Board on the status of capital fund projects to date and said there was not anything significant to note as projects have been slow due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Motion carried unanimously.

### B. Planning Department

#### 1. Approval – Border-to-Border Trail Segment D3 Joint Permit Authorization

Motion by Commissioner Williams, support from Commissioner Rea that the Board of Commissioners authorize staff to execute the joint permit application (JPA) authorization letter for segment D3 of the Border-to-Border Trail as recommended by Chief of Planning and Development Nina Kelly and staff.

*Discussion:* Chief of Planning and Development Nina Kelly updated the Board on the project and said the project needs to go through the complete design process with the township. Ms. Kelly also reviewed the concept plan to relocate Skip's Canoe Livery.

Commissioner Marans said the B2B trail is a popular trail system at the Metroparks.

Motion carried unanimously.

### C. Administrative Department

#### 1. Report – May Marketing Update

Motion by Commissioner Williams, support from Commissioner Parker that the Board of Commissioners receive and file May Marketing Report as recommended by Chief of Marketing and Communications Danielle Mauter and staff.

*Discussion:* Chief of Marketing and Communications Danielle Mauter updated the Board on marketing efforts since the COVID-19 pandemic began, which included increased social media use, high car counts in the Eastern district, improved media relations and creating social distancing signage. She said the current marketing goals are no longer achievable since almost all large events have been cancelled and that the summer branding campaign is running with adjusted content. Ms. Mauter also reviewed social media results for Facebook, Instagram etc.

Commissioner McCarthy asked what the engagement was for Instagram. Ms. Mauter said any time someone likes or shares one of the Metroparks posts.

Ms. Mauter said You Tube saw a rise in viewers, the golf campaign was doing well and that all paid digital social media posts have done well during the pandemic.

Motion carried unanimously.

## 8. Reports

### C. Administrative Department

#### 2. Approval – Summer 2020 Concert Series Cancellation

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy support from Commissioner Heise that the Board of Commissioners approve canceling the summer concert series at Lake St. Clair and Stony Creek Metroparks for the summer 2020 as recommended by Director Amy McMillan and staff.

*Discussion:* Director McMillan updated the Board on staff's request to cancel the rest of the summer concert series due to COVID-19 and proper social distancing protocols.

Commissioner Parker asked what the rationale was for continuing to pursue having a Michigan Philharmonic concert and not the summer concert series. Ms. McMillan said the Philharmonic concert is a stand-alone event and there is more room to spread out so people can maintain social distancing. She said staff was also pursuing having a drive-in type concert where people could listen to the concert from their vehicles.

Commissioner Parker asked if staff has offered the same alternatives to the concert series performers. Ms. McMillan said no, the concert location at Lake St. Clair and Stony Creek are high traffic areas.

Commissioner Parker said all concerts should be canceled, including the Michigan Philharmonic concerts and requested a roll call vote.

#### **ROLL CALL VOTE**

Voting yes: Quadrozzi, Rea, Williams, McCarthy, Heise, Marans

Voting no: Parker

Absent: None

Motion carried.

#### 3. Report – Reopening Metropark Farm Centers

Motion by Commissioner Williams support from Commissioner Rea that the Board of Commissioners receive and file the Reopening Metropark Farm Centers report as recommended by Chief of Interpretive Services Jennifer Jaworski and staff.

*Discussion:* Ms. McMillan updated the Board on the reopening plan for the Kensington and Wolcott Farm Centers. She said many interpretive facilities are back online, Jennifer Jaworski, chief of interpretive services has been working with operations staff to develop an opening plan for the interpretive facilities.

Motion carried unanimously.

## 9. Other Business

Deputy Director Dave Kirbach updated the Board on the status of opening aquatic facilities. He said the aquatic facilities will use a three-tier system for admission that will include the use of different colored wrist bands and all prices will be \$4.00 per person. The Red Cross is not sanctioning training unless the Metroparks receives an approval letter from county health officials. Staff was hoping to have most facilities open by July 1, although lifeguards are the biggest need and currently the parks only have half of the lifeguards needed.

Commissioner Marans asked if staff has considered keeping aquatic facilities open after Labor Day. Mr. Kirbach said if the weather is good, it's a possibility to keep aquatics open a few days longer; however, we begin to lose employees since a lot of staff are college kids.

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy, support from Commissioner Williams that the Board of Commissioners receive and file the aquatics update as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

## 10. Staff Leadership Update

Ms. McMillan updated the Board on an open letter created to address issues taking place around the United States and read the following statement:

*The days following the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and too many others as well as protests and demonstrations across our region, state, country, and world calling for an end to racism and for the creation of a fair, equitable, and just society for all human beings, have brought many opportunities for deeper conversations at the Metroparks around the issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion not only within our organization and work lives, but in our world.*

*In addition to our continuing internal conversations, we believe the time has come for a public statement affirming the Metroparks' commitment to actively listening, learning, and being part of the solution.*

*Over the course of the last several days, DEI Chief Artina Sadler, Marketing and Communications Chief Danielle Mauter, and I have worked with Sara Wurfel and her team at Truscott Rossman to develop an open letter to our visitors and our region.*

Ms. McMillan read the letter prepared for the Board to endorse:

*There is no question we are living in a time of profound challenge, hurt, anger and frustration. From the coronavirus health pandemic that hit Michigan, our region and communities of color hard, to the horrific incidents and images that show us the underlying racial injustice far too prevalent in our society. It's been heartbreaking to see the pain and trauma over these injustices unfold across our communities here in Michigan and nationwide.*

*We are all struggling for the right words, but we can't let that hold us back from talking – and acting. It's as important as ever that we step up, speak out and stand together for what's right. That includes us – your Huron-Clinton Metroparks.*

*The core of our Metroparks mission is to provide exceptional outdoor recreation and educational opportunities for all who call Southeast Michigan home. All means all – regardless of race, age, gender, sexual orientation, income level, ethnicity, or ability. Everyone should always feel safe, welcome and respected in the Metroparks.*

*But for too many, that feeling can be a challenge as our fellow citizens are unjustly attacked simply because of the color of their skin. They cannot go for a run or visit the park to birdwatch without fear or anxiety. While many of us will never know what that feeling is like, we are horrified by it. It's on all of us to condemn it and to stop it.*

*Our Metroparks message to every Michigander of color is simple: you belong here and you are welcome here. They're YOUR Metroparks.*

*Access to nature, parks, playgrounds, public lands and outdoor recreation opportunities are part of what defines us as a people and a state. They connect us and make us better, stronger and healthier – whether you are black, brown or white, whether you live in an urban city, suburb or rural area and no matter your age, background, creed, ethnicity, or socio-economic status.*

*That's why the Metroparks is deeply committed to actively listening, learning and being part of the solution.*

*Simply saying it is not enough. We must live that ethic every day. One way we're doing that at the Metroparks is with ongoing and meaningful diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives and training. We must ensure we're not only the best stewards of our parks system but of the public trust. While we strive hard to be representative of the incredibly diverse region we're honored to serve, we know we can and must do better.*

Commissioner McCarthy asked how the letter would be distributed. Ms. McMillan said it would be sent to media outlets as a press release, posted on social media sites and posted on the Metroparks website.

Commissioner Parker said it's a good letter that could have been written a year ago or more with the Metroparks desire for inclusion and our opposition to the social injustice that is taking place in society. We are in a unique time now and for us not to recognize where we are at right now and the injustices that are taking place to African American people, the killing of African American people and very few white officers convicted of it. At one time, the phrase "Black Lives Matter" was viewed as negative. Mr. Parker said its encouraging to see so many people, himself included, marching. The Metroparks needs to do better and not make a statement saying what we are doing or what we plan to do.

Commissioner Parker said this is an all-white organization, serving predominantly white patrons from the suburbs. Those are the people we need to reach out to and not the black people in inner cities. The real problem is the racism that persists in the suburbs of Detroit and around the country. If the Metroparks makes a statement highlighting what we're going to do or what we are doing – it doesn't make anyone do anything.

Commissioner Parker relayed an incident to the Board about when he was graduating from high school and he went to Kensington with several friends. He said the police came right to them because they were African American and made them get out of their cars and get on the ground for no reason. He said it sends a message that you are not welcome and that continues today. For us (the Metroparks) to ignore that and act like it doesn't happen or do anything extreme to make people aware of what is taking place is a disservice to the people we serve.

Commissioner Marans suggested having a special meeting to address racial injustice.

Commissioner Quadrozzi said she would like to see more done and that the Metroparks has made great progress with hiring a DEI chief but there is more to do.

Commissioner Williams wants to make sure the letter is sent out on behalf of the Board. Ms. McMillan said the letter would be from the Board and staff.

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy, support from Commissioner Quadrozzi that the Board of Commissioners approved endorsing the open letter as presented.

#### **ROLL CALL VOTE**

Voting yes: Quadrozzi, Rea, Williams, McCarthy, Heise, Marans

Voting no: Parker

Absent: None

Motion carried.

#### **11. Commissioner Comments**

Commissioner Rea thanked staff for their continued hard work.

Commissioner Quadrozzi thanked staff for their hard work.

Commissioner Heise thanked everyone for being nimble and accommodating and that the Metroparks are an important resource in this region for people.

Commissioner Parker recognized the people killed throughout the United States through racial injustice: Trayvon Martin, Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Laquan McDonald, Tanisha Anderson, Akai Gurley, Tamir Rice, Jerame Reid, Natasha McKenna, Eric Harris, Walter Scott, Freddie Gray, William Chapman, Darrius Stewart, Janet Wilson, Alton Sterling, Philando Castille, Troy Robinson, Jordan Edwards, Aaron Bailey, Stephan Clark, Anton Rose, Botham Jean, Michael Dean, Breonna Taylor and George Floyd.

Commissioner Williams recognized the Metroparks police department and staff for their continued hard work.

**12. Motion to Adjourn**

Motion by Commissioner Parker, support from Commissioner Williams that the Board of Commissioners adjourn the regular meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Shawn M. Athayde  
Recording Secretary