

**Minutes
Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority
Board of Commissioners
Thursday, September 10, 2020**

At a regular meeting of the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority's Board of Commissioners was held on Thursday, Sept. 10, 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 2020-154.

Commissioners Present:

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

Staff Officers Present:

Director
Interim Deputy Director
Chief of Finance

Amy McMillan
Michael Lyons
Rebecca Franchock

Others:

Miller, Canfield, Paddock & Stone

Steve Mann

1. Call to Order

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

2. Chairman's Statement

Commissioner Marans said this would be the first meeting in a long time that Dave Kirbach was not in attendance and he will be missed; he also expressed condolences to the family of Ray Dean.

Commissioner Marans congratulated staff on receiving the *Outstanding Planning Project: Public Outreach award for the FAIR Play Coalition* from the Michigan Association of Planning.

3. Public Participation

Toni Spears, Dexter, said she wanted to express my deepest sympathy at the passing of Dave Kirbach. As a Metroparks volunteer, no words can truly adequately express my deepest regards and respect for Dave. He was always ready with a big smile, a greeting, and an interest in any particular project or issue at hand. He was here to provide leadership and a steadying foundation when we needed it at one of the most challenging times. Dave leaves a beautiful legacy and role model for the Metroparks. Thank you to Dave, for showing us the way to do things well, and thank you all for going forward in the best interests of the parks, as he did.

4. Approval – August 13, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Parker, support from Commissioner Williams that the Board of Commissioners approve the August 13, 2020 regular meeting and closed session minutes as submitted.

Motion carried unanimously.

5. Approval – September 10, 2020 Full Agenda

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy, support from Commissioner Rea that the Board of Commissioners approve the September 10, 2020 agenda as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

6. Approval – September 10, 2020 Consent Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Heise, support from Commissioner Rea that the Board of Commissioners approve the Sept. 10, 2020 consent agenda as presented:

- a. Approval – August 2020 Financial Statements

- b. Approval – August 2020 Appropriation Adjustments
- c. Report – August Planning and Development Update
- d. Report – Purchases over \$10,000

Motion carried unanimously.

7. Reports

A. Finance Department

1. Report – August General Fund Financial Review

Motion by Commissioner Quadrozzi, support from Commissioner Parker that the Board of Commissioners receive and file the August General Fund Financial Statement update as recommended by Chief of Finance Rebecca Franchock and staff.

Discussion: Chief of Finance Rebecca Franchock updated the Board on finances to date. She reviewed revenue comparing 2020 with 2019, summarized operating revenue to date, reviewed annual pass sales vs. daily pass sales and said the information reflects the daily permit trade up program – daily permit sales higher year-to-date but are now leveling off.

Ms. Franchock said the first week of September, which included the Labor Day weekend, continued with positive revenue trends; revenue outpaced the same period for 2019 by \$150,000 or 33 percent. Golf and tolling both drove these results as demand continues to be strong.

Ms. Franchock reviewed yearend projections and said the original 2020 budget had a planned use of \$2.7 million for Fund Balance. Projecting through to the end of the year, staff estimates that revenues will fall short of target but still exceed expenditures for the year by \$2 million. This is made possible because expenditures have declined by more a great deal more than revenue. Staff is currently estimating a positive variance of \$5.6 million on the expenditure side. To put this into perspective this is only \$500,000 higher than the positive budget variance from 2019. The net result is that if all assumptions hold true, fund balance would increase by \$4.7 million. If the 2021 budget is developed with revenues and expenditures being equal (i.e.: no planned use of fund balance) the unassigned fund balance will rise to \$29.4 million.

Commissioner Marans asked if the tolling numbers included both dailies and annual permits. Ms. Franchock said yes.

Commissioner Quadrozzi asked if permit sales were lower for July. Ms. Franchock said yes.

Motion carried unanimously.

2. Report – August Capital Project Fund

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy, support from Commissioner Williams that the Board of Commissioners receive and file the monthly Capital Project Fund report as submitted by Rebecca Franchock and staff.

Discussion: Chief of Finance Rebecca Franchock updated the Board on Capital Projects to date.

Motion carried unanimously.

B. Administrative Department

1. Report – Purchasing Policy Amendments

Motion by Commissioner Parker, support from Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners approve the amendments to the Purchasing Policy as recommended by Director McMillan and staff.

Discussion: Director McMillan updated the Board and said staff worked with Michelle Crockett from Miller Canfield to develop amendments to Purchasing Policy that will allow for consideration of local vendors as well as vendors providing their staff with a living wage and that have implemented a diversity, equity and inclusion plan in the bidding and contract award process.

Commissioner Williams said he cannot support the changes to the policy and doesn't believe it's the Metroparks duty to tell other organizations how to run their business. He said the Metroparks does not have a living wage and we cannot expect vendors to have one if the Metroparks do not.

Commissioner Heise said he cannot support the changes with the living wage provision and local preference should not be limited to just the five-county area the Metroparks serve.

Commissioner Marans asked what the difference was between the living wage and minimum wage. Ms. McMillan said the living wage is \$15 per hour.

Commissioner Marans called for a roll call vote.

Roll Call Vote:

Voting Yes: Parker, Quadrozzi, Rea, McCarthy, Marans

Voting No: Williams, Heise

Absent: None

Motion carried.

7. Reports

B. Administrative Department

2. Report – August Marketing Update

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy, support from Commissioner Williams that the Board of Commissioners receive and file August 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 Metroparks marketing efforts, and she said staff was preparing for the fall campaign. Ms. Mauter also reviewed digital and paid ads as well as the progress of building a photo library with a professional photographer.

Commissioner McCarthy asked what a paid search was. Ms. Mauter said the ads that come up at the top of a search engine is a paid advertisement.

Commissioner Marans asked what the duration and cost for the photographer. Ms. Mauter said the photographer is currently taking summer photos for a cost of \$16,000 and 200 photos.

Commissioner Marans asked if staff would be updating the five-county maps. Ms. Mauter said yes, the graphics department will be updating all maps and brochures.

Commissioner Parker asked if staff was still developing DEI initiatives into the marketing plan. Ms. Mauter said DEI initiatives would be incorporated into social media posts.

Commissioner Parker asked if staff would bring a plan to the Board for approval. Ms. Mauter said staff is developing a plan on how communications and marketing can assist with DEI efforts.

Commissioner Williams asked if the updated five-county maps could show paved roads as well as dirt roads. Ms. Mauter said she would look into adding these features.

Motion carried unanimously.

3. Approval – Resolution Supporting MNRTF Ballot Proposal

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy, support from Commissioner Rea that the Board of Commissioners approve the resolution supporting the ballot proposal amending the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund as recommended by Director McMillan and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

7. Reports

C. Planning Department

1. Report – Permit Scanning Analysis

Motion by Commissioner Rea, support from Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners receive and file the August 2020 Permit Scanning Report as recommended by Chief of Planning and Development Nina Kelly and staff.

Discussion: Chief of Planning and Development Nina Kelly updated the Board on permit scanning, reviewed data caveats and various locations where scanning took place.

Commissioner Quadrozzi asked if art pieces such as what is displayed with the DIA Inside|Out program at the parks could be incorporated at Maple Beach at Kensington. Ms. Kelly said staff was looking at incorporating more art in the parks.

Commissioner Parker noted that attendance numbers were low for citizens of Detroit and Pontiac.

Motion carried unanimously.

2. Approval – CRAMBA Memo of Understanding

Motion by Commissioner Heise, support from Commissioner Rea that the Board of Commissioners authorize staff to renew the Memorandum of Understanding with the Clinton River Area Mountain Bike Association (CRAMBA-IMBA) 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 partnership history between the Metroparks and CRAMBA.

Motion carried unanimously.

C. Planning Department

3. Approval – Beach Restoration Grant Project, Lake St. Clair Metropark

Motion by Commissioner Rea, support from Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners (1) approve a project agreement with the Department of Energy, Great Lakes, and the Environment (EGLE) under the Clean Michigan Initiative Nonpoint Source Pollution program for the Lake St. Clair Beach Restoration Project; and (2) approve the transfer of \$106,628.48 from the Willow Golf Course Culvert Project and increase the Lake St. Clair Beach Restoration Project grant revenue by \$300,000 as recommended by Chief of Planning and Development Nina Kelly and staff.

Discussion: Ms. Kelly updated the Board and said the project can begin as soon as the agreement is approved. She also said the grant match amount needed to be updated from \$100,000 to \$106,628.48.

Motion carried unanimously.

D. Engineering Department

1. Bids – Accessible Dock Renovations, Lake St. Clair

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy, support from Commissioner Heise that the Board of Commissioners award Contract No. 709-20-050 to the low responsive, responsible bidder, Z Contractors, Inc. in the amount of \$79,000 as recommended by Chief of Engineering Services Mike Henkel and staff.

Discussion: Chief of Engineering Mike Henkel updated the Board on the project and said as part of maintenance to both the upper and lower dam, areas were identified last year and added to the 2020 budget to be repaired. The repairs will address concrete surface cracking and spalling. The cracks and spalls are due to the weathering of the concrete surface. Smaller cracks will be pressure grouted, vegetation overgrowth will also be removed.

Motion carried unanimously.

8. Other Business

Ms. McMillan thanked Mike Lyons for stepping into the Deputy Director role and Gary Hopp for stepping into the Eastern District Superintendent role. She also thanked Paige Hasenbusch for the work she did on the tribute video for Dave Kirbach.

Ms. McMillan said the October agenda would be more robust as the Trust for Public Land would present the findings of the Economic Impact Study, an update on Body-Worn Cameras for the police department and the partnership agreement with the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy.

9. Staff Leadership Update

Ms. McMillan read the following statement related to the Metroparks DEI efforts.

Since issuing our statement in support of social justice following the death of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and so many others, I have had many conversations with staff and Board members about how the Metroparks can become a true ally in the fight against racism; how we can truly embrace diversity; how we can engage diverse audiences in our decision-making; and how we can focus on inclusion and diversity in our parks so that all residents of southeast Michigan can benefit equitably from access to our resources.

We have spent the past two years putting the building blocks in place to address racism, diversity, equity and inclusion internally and externally within the Metroparks.

While we are proud of these efforts and the leadership role we are playing in bringing issues of racism, diversity, equity and inclusion to the forefront of discussions within the public parks community in the state of Michigan, we know this is not enough.

It is not enough until we have eliminated every barrier to access to quality outdoor recreation experiences for every resident of Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Washtenaw and Livingston County.

It is not enough until we have eliminated every barrier to access to quality environmental education for every student in Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Washtenaw and Livingston County.

It is not enough until we have educated ourselves on how to eliminate racism in any way that visitors may experience in our parks.

And it is not enough until we have put into action all that we have learned.

So, whenever we bring a program, plan, project, report, or partnership that includes as its goals improving access, inclusion, diversity, and equity to the Board for approval, acknowledgment, or support, if you vote “yes,” I hope you will also remind us that there is more work to do by adding “but that is not enough” to your “yes” vote.

Today, I am asking you to vote “yes, but that is not enough” on a new initiative to develop a speakers series that will bring local, regional, and national level leaders to future Board meetings to speak on issues of racism, inclusion, diversity, access, and equity. As part of this program, we would also seek to make the speaker available for interactive discussions with staff as well as a presentation open to the public, with a particular emphasis on school-aged children where possible. We envision the first part of the series would take place remotely but hope circumstances will permit in-person presentations when safe to do so.

If supported by the Board, we will reach out to Board members, staff at all levels, and existing partners to identify speakers of interest, which we will bring back to the Board in October, along with a proposed budget for the program.

Beginning in October, we will also provide a monthly update to the Board on diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives and activities throughout the Metroparks.

And, in October, we will bring the proposed pilot (five-year) partnership agreement with the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy to the Board for its approval.

While I hope you will agree that these initiatives are a good first effort and will support them with your vote, when doing so, I hope you will remind us there is more work to do by adding, "but this is not enough" to your vote.

I am listening. I promise you.

Commissioner Marans asked if Ms. McMillan wanted to launch the speaker's series and if a motion was needed. Ms. McMillan said yes.

Motion by Commissioner Parker, support from Commissioner McCarthy that the Board of Commissioners approve staff moving forward with a Speaker Series as recommended by Director Amy McMillan and staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

10. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Rea congratulated staff for successfully pulling off the fireworks at Lake St. Clair, which gave the Metroparks a chance to showcase one of our parks.

Commissioner Heise expressed his condolences for the passing of Dave Kirbach.

Commissioner Parker said he was at Kensington on Labor Day and said he and his family enjoyed the day at the park. He also said he hopes staff reaches out to school age children as its important to help kids get outside and come to the parks.

Commissioner Parker commented on all the hard work Dave Kirbach did for the Metroparks and that the Board should dedicate a building or trail to Dave Kirbach.

Commissioner Marans suggested staff work with Dave's wife and bring suggestions to the board at the November meeting.

Commissioner Quadrozzi said staff needs to solve the computer and audio issues she is experiencing in order to effectively participate in the remote meetings.

Commissioner Williams said sound quality with Board meetings has been challenging. He thanked staff for sending presentations ahead of time, said he believes it is appropriate for the Board to approve dedicating something at the parks after Dave Kirbach. Commissioner Williams also said he would like to see greater expansion with the purchasing policy and how the changes will affect the Metroparks.

11. In Memoriam – Deputy Director David Kirbach

A video tribute was shown for Dave Kirbach.

12. Motion to Adjourn

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

The meeting adjourned at 2:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Shawn M. Athayde
Recording Secretary