

Minutes
Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority
Board of Commissioners
Thursday, October 8, 2020

At a regular meeting of the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority's Board of Commissioners was held on Thursday, Oct. 8, 2020 at 1:00 p.m. The meeting was held at Indian Springs Metropark at the Environmental Discovery Center and via remote attendance by commissioners and members of the public due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Commissioners Present:	Robert W. Marans Jaye Quadrozzi (remote) Kurt Heise Steve Williams (remote) John Paul Rea
Staff Officers Present:	
Director	Amy McMillan
Interim Deputy Director	Michael Lyons
Chief of Finance	Rebecca Franchock
Absent:	
Commissioner	Bernard Parker
Commissioner	Timothy J. McCarthy
Others:	
Miller, Canfield, Paddock & Stone	Steve Mann

1. Call to Order

Commissioner Marans called the meeting to order at 1:09 p.m.

2. Chairman's Statement

None.

3. Public Participation

None.

4. Approval – September 10, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Rea, support from Commissioner Heise that the Board of Commissioners approve the Sept. 10, 2020 regular meeting minutes as submitted.

Motion carried unanimously.

5. Approval – October 8, 2020 Full Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Heise, support from Commissioner Rea that the Board of Commissioners approve the October 8, 2020 agenda as presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

6. Approval – October 8, 2020 Consent Agenda

Motion by Commissioner Heise, support from Commissioner Rea that the Board of Commissioners approve the October 8, 2020 consent agenda as presented:

- a. Approval – September 2020 Financial Statements
- b. Approval – September 2020 Appropriation Adjustments
- c. Report – September Planning and Development Update
- d. Bids – Boat Launch Road Culvert Replacement, Lake Erie Metropark
- e. Report – Purchases over \$10,000

Motion carried unanimously.

7. **The Trust for Public Land – Economic Study Presentation**

Motion by Commissioner Rea, support from Commissioner Heise that the Board of Commissioners receive and file the Economic Benefits report as presented.

Discussion: Director McMillan introduced Jennifer Plowden with The Trust for Public Land and recapped the scope of the project for the Board.

Ms. Plowden reviewed the mission of The Trust for Public Land, the studies they have conducted across the country and the economic benefits of park systems. She said the economic benefits of the Metroparks includes generating more than \$90 million each year, improves health, increases property value and reduces air pollution.

Ms. Plowden said enabling active and passive recreation results in a \$62.3 million benefit to residents who enjoy the Metroparks and that many people visit the parks at least once a year with 5.6 million people visiting annually. Active use lowers healthcare costs (\$30.3 million annual savings). She also said parks capture precipitation and slow runoff and can reduce the cost of stormwater management. Parks also help to reduce air pollution (\$2.5 million air pollution removal benefit annually), bolsters tourism (\$92.4 million in direct visitor spending) and propels economic development.

Commissioner Marans asked where the data came from. Ms. Plowden said a lot of the data was collected from the Metroparks and supplemented from a professional survey.

Commissioner Marans asked if the data was from the survey the Metroparks did a couple of years ago. Ms. Plowden said it was from a TPL survey.

Commissioner Marans said he would like more information on the survey.

Commissioner Rea thanked Ms. Plowden and said it was interesting on how the data was used.

Motion carried unanimously.

8. **Reports**

A. Finance Department

1. Report – September General Fund Financial Review

Motion by Commissioner Rea, support from Commissioner Heise 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 and expenses comparing 2020 with 2019, summarized operating revenue to date, golf revenue, food and beverage revenue along with expenses. Ms. Franchock said at the beginning of 2020 the Metroparks was projecting a \$2.7 million reduction in fund balance and now the Metroparks may have a \$3 million increase to fund balance.

Commissioner Marans said there could be carryover into next year and it will be good to compare 2019 to 2020.

Ms. McMillan said it has been a good time for people to rediscover the Metroparks, golf has done extraordinarily well, and the new point of sale system will also increase data collection.

Motion carried unanimously.

2. Report – September Capital Project Fund

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

Motion carried unanimously.

8. Reports

B. Administrative Department

1. Approval – New Model for Catering Services

Motion by Commissioner Heise, support from Commissioner Rea that the Board of Commissioners approve the recommended new catering model and pricing for 2021 and 2022 as presented by Deputy Director Michael Lyons and staff.

Discussion: Interim Deputy Director Michael Lyons updated the Board and said the Metroparks have received a 17 percent commission on food and beverage from catered events. To make up for the reduced catering commission revenue staff is recommending an increase in catered facility rental fees for 2021 and 2022. Staff also believes that the new proposed catering model will increase facility rentals due to the increased flexibility of patrons being able to use the caterer of their choice.

Commissioner Rea asked who would be approving caterers. Ms. McMillan said each venue would have a checklist and park staff would approve caterers.

Commissioner Heise asked if this change was related to the issues the Metroparks has with the current caterer. Ms. McMillan said staff expected more bidders; however, because of the current environment, it is difficult to predict, and it seemed the best solution for the parks. Staff recommends a two-year trial in order to give staff time to evaluate the process.

Commissioner Marans asked when the last time there was an increase in venue pricing. Ms. McMillan said several years ago.

Commissioner Quadrozzi said she supports the idea of letting people decide.

Motion carried unanimously.

2. Approval – Factory Detroit, Inc. Contract Extension

Motion by Commissioner Rea, support from Commissioner Heise that the Board of Commissioners approve a one-year contract extension with Factory Detroit, Inc. for brand development services in the amount of \$120,000 as recommended by Chief of Marketing and Communications Danielle Mauter, and staff.

Discussion: Chief of Marketing and Communications Danielle Mauter updated the Board on the projects that Factory Detroit has assisted staff with during the past year.

Commissioner Marans asked the time frame for the contract. Ms. Mauter said the contract extension was for one year.

Motion carried unanimously.

3. Report – August Marketing Update

Motion by Commissioner Rea, support from Commissioner Heise that the Board of Commissioners receive and file September 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 the summer marketing campaign, she reviewed updated marketing goals including DEI collaboration efforts and said the fall campaign was underway.

Commissioner Marans asked how many billboards were in use. Ms. Mauter said there are five to seven throughout the region.

Motion carried unanimously.

8. Reports

B. Administrative Department

4. Report – September DEI Update

Motion by Commissioner Rea, support from Commissioner Heise that the Board of Commissioners receive and file the September DEI update as presented by Chief of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Artina Sadler and staff.

Discussion: Chief of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Artina Sadler updated the Board on the status of DEI efforts and said the Metroparks are currently in the “Forming” stage of the DEI plan. Training resumes Oct. 15; “Boosts” are used to stay in touch with staff and keep DEI-related learning moving forward outside our established training schedule (October-April); and special projects include Reclaiming Restorative Spaces (funded by RWJF) as well as providing recreation, education opportunities and expose members of underrepresented groups to environmental and conservation careers.

Ms. Sadler reviewed cross-developmental work being done with each department and said staff continues to gather data.

Commissioner Rea said he is interested in the work being done for “able-ism” and would like to collaborate efforts with Macomb County.

Commissioner Marans said he is impressed with scope of work and how it is explained. He also asked how advertising would be different for ethnic groups. Ms. Sadler referred to Danielle Mauter, chief of marketing and communications who said messaging/imagery would be different.

Commissioner Quadrozzi said she was impressed with the report and that it was easy to read and the content was good.

Motion carried unanimously.

5. Report – Interpretive Services Update

Motion by Commissioner Rea, support from Commissioner Heise that the Board of Commissioners receive and file the Interpretive Services update as presented by Chief of Interpretive Services Jennifer Jaworski and staff.

Discussion: Chief of Interpretive Services Jennifer Jaworski updated the Board on Interpretive Services and said programming had to be redone for the Impact 100 grant and recipients due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In-person, outdoor programming began in June for the farm centers and COVID precautions are in place. She reviewed the types of programming – walk up registration and pre-registration; the different types of school programming – live (synchronous), pre-recorded (asynchronous), in-person/outdoor programming.

Commissioner Marans asked if staff was working with other groups for green schools. Ms. Jaworski said Oakland County has a strong green school program and dedicated coordinator.

Motion carried unanimously.

8. Reports

C. Planning Department

1. Report – Permit Scanning Analysis

Motion by Commissioner Rea, support from Commissioner Heise that the Board of Commissioners receive and file the September 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.

Motion carried unanimously.

8. Reports

D. Engineering Department

1. Bids – Willow Park Office

Motion by Commissioner Heise, support from Commissioner Rea that the Board of Commissioners (1) award Contract No. 510-17-311 to the low responsive, responsible bidder, North American Construction Enterprises LLC in the amount of \$2,191,600; and (2) authorize the transfer of \$200,000 from the Lake St. Clair Electrical Grid replacement project to cover the cost of the project 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 at the Oct. 10, 2019 Board meeting, staff was authorized to move forward with the full design for a new park office building that will service Willow, Oakwoods and Lower Huron Metroparks based on the presented concept. Items incorporated into the design include, natural lighting, location and access to sensitive police and money operations, visual sight lines in the building to the lobby area, separation of police and operational functions, sight lines to the existing tolling area, employee work areas in the main common area to save space and cost, storage, mechanical efficiencies and systems controls, information technology disaster recovery area, public areas and restroom facilities.

Motion carried unanimously.

D. Engineering Department

2. Bids – Pasture Fence Replacement, Phase II, Wolcott Farm Center

Motion by Commissioner Rea, support from Commissioner Heise that the Board of Commissioners award Contract No. 513-20-145 to the low responsive, responsible bidder, RMD Holdings, LTD d/b/a Nationwide Construction Group in the amount of \$23,792.20 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 This second phase of the project came in over budget and the project scope was reduced to meet the current budgeted amount. The existing pasture fence at the Wolcott Mill Farm is in poor condition and needs to be replaced. Park staff are having a hard time maintaining the integrity of the existing fencing due to the condition of the existing posts and fencing material. This project will remove and dispose of the existing fence and install new posts and fencing as requested by park staff.

Motion carried unanimously.

9. Other Business

None.

10. Staff Leadership Update

Ms. McMillan thanked the Board for their flexibility regarding the meeting process and said there should be a legislative update on the topic soon; body cameras for the Police Department is up and running and that there has already been an interaction with an officer and patron; still need feedback from Board members regarding the speaker series; the TPL report was released to media outlets; the November meeting would be robust and include the 2021 preliminary budget, a presentation on the RecTrack, the new point of sale system; and a trail has been identified at Kensington honoring Dave Kirbach. Ms. McMillan also thanked Mike Lyons for stepping into the deputy director position.

Commissioner Heise asked about the process for hiring a permanent deputy director. McMillan said Randy Rossman would be bringing a process for board approval to hire a search firm and that staff engagement would be a part of the process.

Commissioner Marans asked if there would be open interviews with candidates. Ms. McMillan said the process was still evolving.

Commissioner Marans asked that Board members be advised when interviews would take place in case anyone wanted to sit-in on the interviews.

11. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Williams thanked staff for everyone's continued hard work.

Commissioner Marans asked if the November meeting would be in person. Ms. McMillan said she would know more once the legislature made a decision on rules for remote meetings and that the November meeting would most likely be a hybrid meeting.

12. Motion to Adjourn

Motion by Commissioner Rea, support from Commissioner Heise that the Board of Commissioners adjourn the regular meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Shawn M. Athayde
Recording Secretary