



# BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS WORK SESSION AGENDA AND MINUTES

8:30 – 9:30 a.m. Thursday, August 24, 2023

Forest Run MetroPark, 1976 Timberman Road, Hamilton, Ohio 45013

**Board of Park Commissioners**

Daryl Nelson, President  
Cynamon T. Trokhan, Vice-President  
Larry Gersbach, Member

**Executive Director**

Jacqueline O'Connell

**Deputy Director**

D. Chadwick Smith

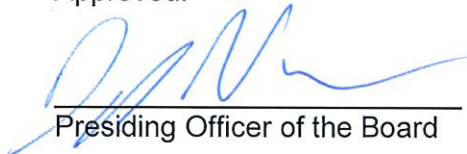
The board had a discussion on MetroParks' perceived Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOTS).

There was also a discussion on the board members' short and long-term priorities. Priorities include completion of the Great Miami Riverway Trail, communication, interpretive signage, and play areas.

The board discussed what they would like to see at monthly meetings. Meetings will be structured so there is more opportunity for education and updates for the board, as well as more opportunities for feedback from the board to staff. Financial reporting is also being reviewed.

Adoption: The above minutes are a true and accurate record of the meeting as adopted by the Board of Park Commissioners, MetroParks of Butler County.

Approved:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Presiding Officer of the Board

Attest:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jacqueline O'Connell,  
Executive Director/Secretary

1019.23  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

METROPARKS OF BUTLER COUNTY  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
Thursday, August 24, 2023

---

The MetroParks of Butler County Board of Park Commissioners met in regular session on Thursday, August 24, 2023, at the Forest Run MetroPark – Timberman Ridge Area, Conference Room 1976 Timberman Road, Hamilton, Ohio 45013.

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 9:42 a.m. by Mr. Nelson.

**I: Roll Call and Agenda**

Members present: Daryl Nelson, Larry Gersbach, Cynamon Trokhan

Staff present: Zeb Acuff, Rhiana Barrero, Joe Bruns, Tony Carpenter, Scott Gaviglia, Jaime Kimbrough, Jackie O'Connell, Amy Pellman, Suzanne Roth, Shelly Schultz, Chad Smith

**III. Approval of Minutes**

Approval of the June 15, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes

Mr. Gersbach moved to approve; Ms. Trokhan seconded.

Motion Passed. Vote: Aye: Mr. Nelson, Ms. Trokhan, Mr. Gersbach

**VI. Finance**

Ms. Shelly Schultz was introduced as the new Director of Finance.

**a. Schedule of Payables – June**

There was a question on an expenditure for refund. This was a refund to a tournament organizer due to cancellation for inclement weather.

Ms. Trokhan moved to approve; Mr. Gersbach seconded.

Motion Passed. Vote: Aye: Mr. Nelson, Ms. Trokhan, Mr. Gersbach

*Resolution No. 13.23*

**b. Schedule of Payables – July**

Ms. Trokhan moved to approve; Mr. Gersbach seconded.

Motion Passed. Vote: Aye: Mr. Nelson, Ms. Trokhan, Mr. Gersbach

*Resolution No. 14.23*

**c. Monthly Revenue & Expense Report – June & July**

Question on revenue journal entry to correct how restitution shows on the budget.

**d. Quarterly Stander Report**

The new report format shows all of the expenditures and reimbursements since the start of the fund. A discussion regarding spending the remaining funds in the Riley/Indian Creek area. Staff is getting concepts and quotes on a pedestrian bridge at Indian Creek.

**VII. Administrative Reports**

**Development:** Mr. Chad Smith updated on the water mitigation proposal at Hueston Farm. Soil testing showed the property is not feasible for mitigation.

FOC Scholarship applications are coming in. Currently working on creating or updating MOU's with all of the Friends/Special interest groups. Recently, Friends of MetroParks president, Bill Walker stepped down. Roger Koch has stepped in as acting president.

As part of the FC Cincinnati agreement, MPX has one additional clinic remaining. MPX will continue the relationship with 17 Strong and have a clinic at Marcum Park which will also include the Hamilton High School soccer team.

Mr. Smith stated the organizer of the Christmas Light show at VOA has decided to push the event to 2024. He will work with the organizer on a contract this winter.

**Human Resources:** Ms. Jaime Kimbrough gave an update on current vacancies. Human Resources recently worked with Lakota School System's intern program and hosted an intern for a week at Voice of America MetroPark. MPX currently has a CHIPS (Citywide Hamilton Internship Program) intern working for us focusing on Marketing. Volunteerism is gearing up for the fall – they are seeing some success with allowing volunteers to sign up for service days through the new software.

Ms. Kimbrough distributed water bottles to the Board that were given to staff on July 21, for Park Professionals Day.

**Operations:** Mr. Tony Carpenter gave a brief update on the Voices of America Country Music Festival. He stated that the trash in the Athletic Complex wasn't any worse than a soccer tournament. There were some ruts within the Complex that were caused by semi-trucks making deliveries for the event, that are to be repaired by the contract holder. Mr. Carpenter reviewed the quarterly report and reported on the new trail at Sycamore Bluffs. He also included a flyer from the Mill Race hike that Senior Natural Resources Manager Joe Dumyahn recently led for the Miami Valley Chapter of Wild Ones.

**Planning:** Mr. Zeb Acuff was introduced as the new Director of Planning. Mr. Bruns gave a quick update on current projects at Governor Bebb MetroPark and Forest Run MetroPark.

**Police:** Chief Gaviglia updated on the Voices of America Country Music Fest. Stated that there were some learning curves, but overall, the event went smoothly. Parking at VOA MetroPark was full all three nights but emptied within 40 minutes each night. Chief stated that the communication between all of involved the agencies was great. MetroParks had six officers scheduled over the weekend. Chief displayed the new uniforms that will be rolled out on September 5. The bike uniforms will be a little different and will offer high visibility when on the trails.

**Programming & Education:** Ms. Suzanne Roth reviewed the report. A short discussion followed on recent special events canceled and the move to more mission-based events. Ms. Roth stated the division is reaching more schools. Public programming and event attendance was down a bit due to not being fully staffed for a portion of the year. Upcoming events include Fun on the Farm, Pioneer Life, the Howl, and Cider in the Village (evening event at Gov. Bebb MetroPark). Staff is meeting with community partners to build/rebuild relationships. Ms. Roth recently met with 17 Strong, Pyramid Hill, and the Hamilton Parks Conservancy.

**Visitor & Event Services:** Ms. Rhiana Barrero referred to the report and the increase in facility usage and visitors in the second quarter.

In July, communications moved to Visitor & Event Services. A brief discussion followed on the increased use of social media and the recent addition of the CHIPS intern.

Feedback from the DPL tournament was very good. Recently hosted a FC Barcelona clinic. Hosted 4 outside special events at Rentschler, Voice of America, and two at Bicentennial Commons.

Gave a quick update on the creation of a permitting policy for smaller special events/weddings/family reunions.

Updated on the Abner management of the Lodge at Voice of America MetroPark. Abner Group will provide a profit and loss report soon. A Board member asked if we could send a marketing email to previous users to announce the new arrangement. Currently, looking into having food trucks at fall



tournaments. Discussion on how many, where to park, etc. Info will be posted on our website and food truck pages to put the call out.

**Administration:** Ms. Jackie O'Connell stated that the organizer of the Voices of America Music Fest has already announced next year's date. A short discussion followed on the event. The complex was used for parking for four days and the UC Health Fieldhouse was used for a week to facilitate will-call.

MetroParks recently completed an ADA Assessment. Training for all staff regarding ADA guidelines and transition will take place in October. The planning team will begin prioritizing projects for implementation.

Recently attended a meeting for the USS Cincinnati project. MetroParks will formalize the maintenance and land use with West Chester who will in turn formalize with the project leads. The group is still planning to begin construction in 2024. A short discussion on the new entrance area at Tylersville, restrooms, and the overall visual approach followed. There is the possibility that MetroParks and West Chester would be able to apply for State capital funding to assist with the project.

Recently received an estate disbursement; the plan is to use the funds for a community grant program and to catch up on deferred maintenance and capital items.

## **IX. New Business**

### **a. Authorization to Purchase Rock Salt from the Butler County Engineer's Office**

Mr. Nelson moved to approve; Mr. Gersbach seconded.

Motion Passed. Vote: Aye: Mr. Nelson, Ms. Trokhan, Mr. Gersbach

*Resolution No. 15.23*

### **b. Clean Ohio Grant Access Improvements at Davidson Woods**

The application is due in early September. The grant would cover the driveway and parking and help stretch the ARPA dollars.

Ms. Trokhan moved to approve; Mr. Gersbach seconded.

Motion Passed. Vote: Aye: Mr. Nelson, Ms. Trokhan, Mr. Gersbach

*Resolution No. 16.23*

### **c. Clean Ohio Grant Application for Bypass Wetlands addition to Gilmore MetroPark**

Short discussion on the location of the property, which is south of the Miami 2 Miami trail, alongside Bypass 4. This land would add to MetroParks' holdings on a conservation corridor being created.

MetroParks currently leases the property from the City of Hamilton. One of the highlights of the area is the eagle's nest that is visible from Bypass 4.

Mr. Gersbach moved to approve; Mr. Nelson seconded.

Motion Passed. Vote: Aye: Mr. Nelson, Ms. Trokhan, Mr. Gersbach

*Resolution No. 17.23*

### **d. Amendment of UC Health and MetroParks of Butler County Sponsorship, Development and Marketing Agreement**

The 2015 agreement was for \$75,000 per year to end in 2028. The new agreement would end in 2026, less \$125,000. The concert series and Regatta (both since discontinued) were tied to the prior agreement, and also allowed UC to have exclusive use of the trainer's room. Amending the agreement allows MetroParks the opportunity to end the agreement sooner and search for a new sponsor.

Mr. Gersbach moved to approve; Mr. Nelson seconded.

Motion Passed. Vote: Aye: Mr. Nelson, Ms. Trokhan, Mr. Gersbach

### **e. Redesign of Legacy Program (Memorial Trees/Benches)**

Mr. Smith discussed the proposed new program. Staff will use GIS to indicate where the donor's site is. In lieu of plaques, information will be placed on the website. The new program is planned to launch this fall. This will allow a more manageable and standardized approach and operation.

### **f. Authorization to Amend Budget for Receipt of ARPA Funds**

Ms. Schultz stated that we received \$2.5 mil for GMRT and \$450,000 for Davidson Woods. This

resolution allows us to amend the budget to accept the funds.  
Mr. Gersbach moved to approve; Mr. Nelson seconded.  
Motion Passed. Vote: Aye: Mr. Nelson, Ms. Trokhan, Mr. Gersbach  
*Resolution No. 18.23*

**X. Commissioner Reports –**

A short discussion occurred on the Miami Woods agreement with the Hamilton Parks Conservancy that has expired. MetroParks would like a new agreement with the Hamilton Parks Conservancy to include mutually beneficial mission-based programs such as trail maintenance, programming, and service projects.

**XI. Executive Session -**

The Board, by consensus, determined there was no need to enter into Executive Session.

**XII. – Adjournment**

Mr. Nelson moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:10 a.m., Mr. Gersbach seconded.  
Motion Passed. Vote: Aye: Mr. Nelson, Ms. Trokhan, Mr. Gersbach

Adoption: The above minutes are a true and accurate record of the meeting as adopted by the Board of Park Commissioners, MetroParks of Butler County.

Approved:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Presiding Officer of the Board

Attest:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jacqueline O'Connell,  
Executive Director/Secretary

*10/19/2023*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date