

METROPARKS OF BUTLER COUNTY
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
WORK SESSION & REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, August 21, 2025

The MetroParks of Butler County Board of Park Commissioners met in work session and regular session on Thursday, August 21, 2025, at Timberman Ridge MetroPark, 1976 Timberman Road, Hamilton, Ohio 45013.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:28 a.m. by Ms. Trokhan

I. Roll Call and Agenda

Members present: Cynamon Trokhan, Larry Gersbach

Staff present: Zeb Acuff, Rhiana Barrero, Jaime Kimbrough, Jackie O'Connell, Amy Pellman, Scott Reeve, Suzanne Roth, Shelly Schultz

III. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the July 17, 2025 Work Session & Regular Meeting Minutes

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

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

VI. Finance

a. Schedule of Payables – July 2025

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

A brief discussion was held regarding the credit card invoice. The Board agreed that, going forward, any charges exceeding \$5,000 will be noted in the footnotes of the Payables Report.

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

Resolution 21.25

b. July YTD Revenue & Expense Report

Ms. Schultz reported that revenue was down. Ms. Roth noted that the cancellation of several programs, including a weeklong program, contributed to the decrease.

VII. Administrative Reports

Human Resources: Ms. Jaime Kimbrough shared information about the MetroParks Legacy Foundation's *Lunch and Legacy* fundraiser scheduled for September 21, 2025 at Chrisholm MetroPark. The event will include a luncheon, education interactive displays, tours of the Augspurger house and barn, and a silent auction. The guest list will include community partners and elected officials. Following the distribution of invitations, the event will be promoted on social media for the general public.

Programming: Ms. Suzanne Roth shared that Programming and Education partnered with MidPointe Library, four fitness groups, and the 17Strong Community Bike Ride. The *Nature in a Blink* programs were fully booked, while the ID70 programs saw lower participation. Ms. Roth observed that participants appear to prefer immersive, interactive programming over informational sessions.

Looking ahead, *Pioneer Life* is scheduled for the end of September, along with *The Howl* and additional community partner events such as *Trunk and Treat* with 17Strong and the Hamilton Parks Conservancy. Staff are currently training and preparing for fall field trips.

Ms. Roth also reported that staff participated in the City of Hamilton's summer food truck program, which was well attended, exceeding last year's numbers. She further shared that Hamilton City Schools have lost their field trip funding for this school year, so it is uncertain how that will impact future field trip bookings.

Lastly, Ms. Roth noted that *Fun on the Farm* will take place this Saturday from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., featuring games, animals, vendors, and other activities.

Planning: Mr. Acuff provided a brief update on the submarine project and distributed a current site photo. He reported that the submarine pieces are expected to arrive within the next few weeks. Construction on the parking area and driveway is anticipated to begin after Labor Day.

Visitor & Event Services: Ms. Rhiana Barrero reported that the USAT event returned after a two-year hiatus, drawing over 800 athletes from 47 states. The Visitors Bureau estimated a \$5.2 million economic impact to the surrounding area. The event was well-received, and the organizer has expressed interest in returning.

The following week, the VOACMF took place. Aside from a few heat-related incidents, the event went smoothly. The second payment from Further Festivals is still pending. Ms. Barrero commended the MetroParks Police and Operations staff for their preparation. Post-event surveying revealed significant damage to the new Tylersville trail. Staff will work with Further Festivals to remediate the damages.

Ms. Barrero also shared that she met with Sportsman’s Solutions and expects to receive a proposal for staff to review within the next month or two.

Administration: Ms. O’Connell reported that July was National Parks and Recreation Month. She distributed recent articles and noted that at the July County Commissioners meeting, the Commissioners declared July as Parks and Recreation Month in Butler County and presented proclamations to MetroParks and other local parks and recreation entities.

She shared that MetroParks, with the assistance of Human Nature, has hosted eight stakeholder meetings with 2–9 participants on each call. Feedback from these meetings was overwhelmingly positive, with several key insights identified.

Ms. O’Connell also provided an update on the Tylersville traffic light project. The County Commissioners committed \$300,000 in TIF funds, which was less than the \$500,000 requested. West Chester previously committed \$200,000 and has asked MetroParks to consider contributing more than its original \$100,000 offer. Ms. O’Connell advised that MetroParks would need to wait until the end of the year to determine if excess funds are available for additional contribution. With the current commitments, the project remains \$200,000 short. The Board agreed that if West Chester sends a letter to the Commissioners requesting either an increase in TIF funding or an explanation for the reduced contribution, MetroParks will offer its support.

A brief discussion was also held regarding property that West Chester wishes to transfer to MetroParks, previously owned by the County. The most recent correspondence requested that MetroParks amend the deed to allow easements not currently in place. The Board agreed not to pursue this change. The parcel, along with other parcels not previously owned by the County, will be preserved as conservation areas.

IX. New Business

a. Approval of Application for Clean Ohio Grant Access Improvements-M2M Trail at Firebird Drive – Resolution

Mr. Gersbach moved to approve; Ms. Trokhan seconded.
Motion Passed. Vote: Aye: Ms. Trokhan, Mr. Gersbach
Resolution 22.25

X. Commissioner Reports

XII. Adjournment

Mr. Gersbach moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:07 a.m., Ms. Trokhan seconded.
Motion Passed. Vote: Aye: 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:

Attest:

Presiding Officer of the Board

Jacqueline O’Connell,
Executive Director/Secretary

Date