

Minutes of the 905th meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners of the Columbus and Franklin County Metropolitan Park District, held on at 3:00pm on May 18, 2021 at the Maintenance Shop, Glacier Ridge Metro Park, 9801 Hyland-Croy Rd, Plain City, OH 43064.

Present

Commissioners: Mr. McCue, Mr. Hadden, Mr. McGregor

Staff: Mr. Moloney, Mr. Peck, Mr. McGivern, Mr. Kasnyick, Ms. Telfer, Mr. Studenmund, Mr. Mader, Ms. Ingram, Ms. Segers, Mr. Shier, Ms. Shepherd, Ms. Allely, Ms. Albers

Legal Counsel: Mr. Franzmann

Guests: Ms. McGregor

Mr. McCue asked if all of the notice requirements of Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code and the rules of the Board regarding open meetings had been met. Mr. Moloney confirmed that all of those requirements and rules had been met.

Minutes of the March 16, 2021 Board Meeting

Mr. McGregor made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 20, 2021 Board Meeting. Mr. Hadden seconded the motion and the minutes were approved.

Public Comment

None.

Disbursement Resolution #5904

Mr. McGregor moved for the approval of the Disbursement Resolution for the April 2021 invoices. Mr. Hadden seconded the motion and the Board approved the resolution. A copy of Resolution No. 5904 is attached to these minutes as part hereof.

Staff Reports

Administration

Mr. Moloney updated the Board on the status of Metro Parks' pandemic operations; after 435 days in Incident Command Management (ICM), Metro Parks will be leaving ICM on Friday, May 21, 2021 and returning to more normal operations. Mr. Moloney thanked Metro Parks' staff for all of their hard work during the pandemic and credited their efforts with keeping park visitors safe.

Mr. Moloney further updated the Board on Metro Parks' changing operations. As state and local restrictions are lifted, Metro Parks is also updating its operations and guidance to visitors. Vaccinated visitors will be permitted to gather without masks, all reservable facilities are reopening and reopening plans are being developed for other indoor areas, including Nature Centers and ranger stations, that have been closed since March 2020.

The multi-agency Rapid 5 project is currently in its design phase with a high level of community engagement. Metro Parks continues to provide input during this phase.

Three baby bison have been born at Battelle Darby Creek Metro Park as part of the conservation program with the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium. All three are in good health and have been welcomed enthusiastically by park visitors. More calves are expected.

Metro Parks has also received a Covenant-Not-to-Sue from Marble Cliff, LLC pursuant to Resolution No. 5900 and regarding environmental cleanup and a Volunteer Action Program (VAP) at Quarry Trails Metro Park.

Mr. Moloney also provided more information on House Bill #63, a bill moving through the State legislature that would limit the ability of park districts and similar agencies to use eminent domain to acquire property. HB #63 is moving forward in the State legislature but now only impacts park agencies in counties beneath a certain population threshold. Metro Parks will not be affected.

Finally, Mr. Moloney stated that Metro Parks has filed a petition to intervene with the Ohio Power Siting Board regarding the proposed Invenergy solar project adjacent to Battelle Darby Creek Metro Park. Metro Parks has several concerns regarding the project, including stormwater impacts, noise, habitat disruption, aesthetic impacts and others. Filing a petition to intervene with the Siting Board allows Metro Parks to be heard during the siting process.

Operations

Mr. Peck introduced the Board to Mr. Ryan Mader, Park Manager of Glacier Ridge Metro Park, Homestead Metro Park and Heritage Trail.

Mr. Mader introduced his own staff to the Board and provided updates on Glacier Ridge. The park has experienced record attendance through 2020 and in to 2021, driven in part by several new housing developments in the area. Over the course of the summer, Glacier Ridge staff plan to build a new covered shelter, perform trail maintenance and remove invasive species from the park. Glacier Ridge's hours are expanding to meet visitor need; Glacier Ridge has been a "dark park" previously but will now be open until 10:00pm.

Mr. Peck updated the Board on Operations. Parks remain busy. The Blacklick Woods Nature Center project will go out to bid soon. Development at Quarry Trails is ongoing and moving quickly, with several contractors on site to prepare the park for a Fall 2021 opening.

High visitation at the parks has led to a number of minor incidents. The parks are seeing several different types of use, from hiking and fishing to kayaking and backpacking. Battelle Darby Creek's new Backpacking Trail has opened and has received positive

feedback from users. Naturalist programming and special events are moving forward with Summer 2021 plans.

Finance

Mr. McGivern provided updates to the Board on the Finance Department. Metro Parks is doing well financially; revenues are up over projected estimates, due in part to conservative estimates during the budgeting process, an increase in YTD revenue and some unexpected sources of income, such as the Ohio Department of Transportation's payment to help Scioto Audubon Metro Park relocate its dog park to make room for ODOT's I-70/I-71 project.

2021 expenditures are also down, largely due to slowed seasonal hiring. Metro Parks is in good shape for the rest of 2021.

Human Resources

Ms. Telfer elaborated on Mr. McGivern's statement regarding hiring; Metro Parks, like many organizations, has not yet filled all of its open seasonal positions. Several seasonal employees have been hired and moved through the orientation process over the last few weeks.

Ms. Telfer also updated the Board on the Customer Service Manager position. Ms. Sarah Ramey, the previous Customer Service Manager, has resigned. HR is nearing the end of the process to hire a new Customer Service Manager. Ms. Ramey has agreed to stay on in a limited capacity to assist with essential functions of the position as a new manager is trained.

Other Business

Mr. McGregor brought up the possibility of Metro Parks purchasing the development rights for properties in areas of Central Ohio that are experiencing high development pressure in order to establish a strong boundary around existing parklands and to balance development needs against environmental needs.

Mr. Peck and Mr. Moloney shared Metro Parks' use of conservation easements and life estate agreements to accomplish the same goal; Metro Parks does not often purchase development rights but often utilizes conservation easements to limit development pressure around sensitive ecological areas.

Resolutions

#5905 AUTHORIZING THE GRANT OF AN EASEMENT TO OHIO POWER COMPANY FOR PROPERTY LOCATED ALONG THE BLACKLICK CREEK GREENWAY TRAIL
The Board authorized Metro Parks to grant an easement to Ohio Power Company for a piece of property along the Blacklick Creek Greenway Trail near US-33.

- #5906** AUTHORIZING THE GRANT OF AN EASEMENT TO COLUMBIA GAS OF OHIO FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT GLACIER RIDGE METRO PARK
The Board authorized Metro Parks to grant an easement to Columbia Gas of Ohio for a subsurface utility line. This easement will go around the periphery of Glacier Ridge Metro Park.
- #5907** AUTHORIZING ACCEPTING A DONATION OF LAND FROM SURRY COURT AT D'ADRIAN MEADOWS, LLC ALONG THE BLACKLICK CREEK GREENWAY NEAR SHANNON ROAD
The Board accepted a donation of floodplain land from a residential complex near Shannon Road along the Blacklick Creek Greenway.
- #5908** AUTHORIZING ENTERING INTO A CONTRACT FOR ROADWAY PAVING IMPROVEMENTS AT BURNING LAKE AREA, PICKERINGTON PONDS METRO PARK UTILIZING THE STATE OF OHIO COOPERATIVE PURCHASING PROGRAM WITH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
The Board authorized Metro Parks to enter into a contract with Kokosing Construction Company to complete paving at the new Burning Lake Area of Pickerington Ponds Metro Park.
- #5909** AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF SITE IMPROVEMENTS AT BURNING LAKE AREA, PICKERINGTON PONDS METRO PARK
The Board authorized Metro Parks to purchase equipment and services for the Burning Lake Area of Pickerington Ponds Metro Park, including play equipment, benches, play surface and sidewalks.
- #5910** AUTHORIZING ENTERING INTO A CONTRACT TO INSTALL PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE ABUTMENTS AND STEEL BRIDGE STRUCTURES FOR QUARRY TRAILS METRO PARK
The Board authorized Metro Parks to enter into a contract with The Righter Company, Inc. for the installation of pedestrian bridge abutments and steel bridges at Quarry Trails Metro Park.
- #5911** AUTHORIZING ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURES WITH BURGESS & NIPLE, INC. IN CONJUNCTION WITH ENGINEERING SERVICES AT QUARRY TRAILS METRO PARK
The Board authorized additional expenditures to Burgess & Niple, Inc. for engineering services at Quarry Trails Metro Park, at which multiple development projects are ongoing.
- #5912** AUTHORIZING THE GRANT OF AN EASEMENT TO OHIO POWER COMPANY FOR PROPERTY LOCATED AT QUARRY TRAILS METRO PARK
The Board authorized Metro Parks to grant an easement to Ohio Power Company for property at Quarry Trails Metro Park. This easement will provide power to both the Wagonbrenner development and Quarry Trails Metro Park when completed.

#5913 AUTHORIZING ENTERING INTO A DESIGN/BUILD CONTRACT FOR A CANOPY WALK AT BLACKLICK WOODS METRO PARK

The Board authorized Metro Parks to enter into a contract with Setterlin Building Company for a canopy walk at Blacklick Woods Metro Park. This canopy walk is part of the new Nature Center project.

#5914 AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF REAL ESTATE OWNED BY DAVID AND JULIE MORaine FOR PROPERTY LOCATED ADJACENT TO BATTELLE DARBY CREEK METRO PARK, FRANKLIN COUNTY

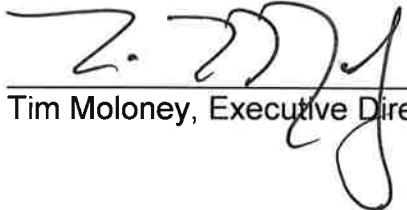
The Board authorizes Metro Parks to purchase approximately 17 acres of land along the Big Darby Creek adjacent to Battelle Darby Creek Metro Park.

Adjournment


The meeting adjourned at 3:41 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by the Board of Park
Commissioners



Tim Moloney, Executive Director



Chair