

Minutes of the 920th meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners of the Columbus and Franklin County Metropolitan Park District, held at 3:02pm at the Maintenance Building, Glacier Ridge Metro Park, 9801 Hyland-Croy Road, Plain City, OH 43064.

Present

Commissioners: Mr. Hadden, Mr. Alex, Mr. McCue

Staff: Mr. Moloney, Mr. Peck, Mr. McGivern, Ms. Telfer, Mr. Studenmund, Mr. Kaderly
Ms. Christian, Mr. Laughbaum, Mr. Kasnyik, Mr. Strosnider, Ms. Sheridan

Legal Counsel: Mr. Kibbey

Guests: Mr. Brian McDaniel

Mr. Hadden 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 June 21, 2022 Board Meeting

Mr. Alex made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 21, 2022 Board Meeting. Mr. McCue seconded the motion and the minutes were approved.

Disbursement Resolution #6013

Mr. Alex moved for the approval of the Disbursement Resolution for the June 2022 invoices. Mr. McCue seconded the motion and the Board approved the resolution. A copy of Resolution No. 6013 is attached to these minutes as part hereof.

Public Comment:

Mr. Brian McDaniel, a resident of Grove City, addressed the Board, following up on his comment to the Board from the June 21, 2022 meeting regarding his request to install a fixed bridge at Scioto Grove Metro Park over Grant Run to expand access to the southern tier of that park. Mr. McDaniel wanted to know if staff had reviewed his proposal, and when he could expect the Board to take action on the item.

Mr. Alex thanked Mr. McDaniel for speaking before the Board. He described his own experiences at Scioto Grove Metro Park and described the current bridge over Grant Run as a unique feature that is popular with park visitors, though Mr. Alex did acknowledge that some visitors may prefer to use the stepping stones across Grant Run instead of the current bridge.

Mr. Peck provided some information about how new projects are reviewed and prioritized before an action item is brought to the Board; in budgeting for Capital Improvement Projects, such as a bridge, the Operations department reviews park priorities with park staff, then forms a budget, then bids or contracts new projects. The Board typically signs off on a resolution regarding a project after a project has been bid or contracted.

Mr. Peck stated that the current priorities and budget for Scioto Grove Metro Park have been set through the rest of the fiscal year, but that the FY2023 budgeting and project prioritization process will begin soon. Park staff will review the need for and feasibility of a fixed bridge during this process.

Mr. Moloney added that the agenda items for Board meetings are typically determined by Operations and Administrative staff, but that the Board can also direct an item be added to the agenda if needed. He supported Mr. Alex's position, stating that the current bridge over Grant Run is a popular and unique feature at the park, and added that he believed that the challenge was more about accessibility to the southern tier of the park than the current bridge itself; all of Grant Run and the southern tier are in the floodplain of the Scioto River, making access to the southern tier throughout the year a consistent challenge that a new bridge alone may not solve.

Draft Board Policy on Ownership Rights

Mr. Moloney shared a draft policy with the Board regarding Metro Parks' property rights and how those rights should be preserved and exercised as requests for easements and agreements with other entities increase.

Metro Parks is receiving requests from municipalities, developers, utility companies and others on a weekly basis, and staff expects the pace of these requests to increase as development in Central Ohio continues to grow. Mr. Moloney believes that an established policy issued from the Board is necessary to provide guidance to park staff and to safeguard Metro Parks' property rights and its obligation to its taxpayers.

The Board thanked Mr. Moloney for the first draft of this policy and plans to further discuss said policy during the August Board meeting.

Scioto Audubon

Mr. Moloney updated the Board on the ongoing Zimmer development adjacent to Scioto Audubon Metro Park. The development proposal was brought before the City of Columbus Zoning Commission this month and the project was approved to move forward. Mr. Moloney and other Metro Parks staff attended the Zoning meeting and Mr. Moloney spoke outlining Metro Parks' concerns regarding the project.

Metro Parks is not interested in giving up any property at Scioto Audubon Metro Park to a private developer without a clearly defined public good for park visitors and the taxpayers of Franklin County. He expressed concern that the City of Columbus did not differentiate between easements Metro Parks had granted in the past that served public good, including easements that allowed Metro Parks to build trails, connect park facilities to public utilities and others, with granting an easement to a private developer for a private use. Mr. Moloney then asked the Board for direction.

All three members of the Board commended Mr. Moloney and Metro Parks' staff for their work on this project. Mr. McCue stated that passion on both sides is not a bad thing and may be conducive to further dialogue regarding this project.

Mr. McCue also stated that he hoped that the relationship between Metro Parks and the City of Columbus can be repaired and that Metro Parks will be able to continue discussions regarding this project.

Mr. Alex weighed in and said that he was concerned that Metro Parks' interests and concerns are not being addressed or heard by the City. He expects similar conversations to continue as development pressure in the region increases. He advocated for the development of an official Board policy to address this and similar conversations, and also advocated for increasing both the pace of Metro Parks' land acquisitions and the pace of building partnerships earlier in project development to be proactive.

Mr. Hadden thanked both Commissioners for their input and stated that the Board needs to think not only of the park district's current needs, but its future needs in ten or twenty years as Central Ohio continues to grow.

Mr. Moloney thanked the Board for their comments and reiterated that his primary concern was in some of the comments made by City Council and their apparent confusion over the difference between a public good and a private good. He stated that Metro Parks needed strong advocacy now.

Staff Reports

Administration

Mr. Moloney stated that Metro Parks' Outdoor Adventure Team worked with the RAPID5 team in June to host free kayaking and paddling on the Scioto River as part of the Columbus Arts Festival.

Operations

Mr. Peck introduced the Manager of Glacier Ridge and Homestead Metro Parks, Jerry Strosnider, who in turn introduced his staff and updated the Board on several projects at Glacier Ridge and Homestead.

Several playground updates are underway at Homestead Metro Park, including a new ADA-accessible playground and a new ninja action course. A new swingset was installed at Glacier Ridge, and staff is hard at work maintaining the park, which contains a popular dog park and an obstacle course.

Mr. Peck also updated the Board on upcoming events in Metro Parks, including PaddleFest in late July and WAG!Fest in August. Staff also hosted a very successful Outdoor Adventure Day event at Highbanks Metro Park in late June. The popular Metro

The Board authorized Metro Parks to enter into a contract with Kokosing Construction Company for paving projects at Battelle Darby Creek and Three Creeks Metro Parks, using the 101G State contract through the ODOT Cooperative Purchasing Program.

#6017 AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF REAL ESTATE FORMERLY OWNED BY DEREK T. PHELPS THROUGH THE FRANKLIN COUNTY SHERIFF

The Board authorized Metro Parks to acquire property through a real estate auction hosted by the Franklin County Sheriff's Office for property located in the Mt. Air area near Highbanks Metro Park.

#6018 AUTHORIZING THE AMENDMENT TO RECIPROCAL EASEMENT AND COMMON AREA AGREEMENT AT SCIOTO SOUTH PROPERTY

The Board authorized Metro Parks to grant a reciprocal easement to LDG Development, LLC, to relocate utility and access easements at the Scioto South property to support future use of the property.

#6019 AUTHORIZING THE GRANT OF A TEMPORARY EASEMENT FOR UTILITY IMPROVEMENTS ON PROPERTY LOCATED AT SCIOTO SOUTH PROPERTY

The Board authorized Metro Parks to grant a temporary easement to AEP at the Scioto South property in the Far South Side, in order to allow AEP to begin restoration work on powerlines damaged by spring storms. In return, AEP has granted Metro Parks an easement to build a multi-use trail on AEP property.

Other Business:

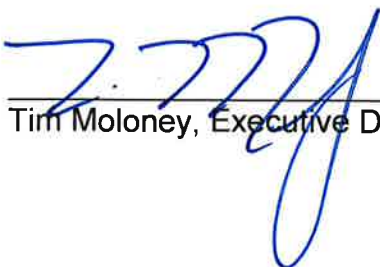
None.

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 4:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by the Board of Park
Commissioners:



Tim Moloney, Executive Director



Chair