

Minutes of the 921th meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners of the Columbus and Franklin County Metropolitan Park District, held on August 16, 2022 at 3:00pm at the Beech Maple Lodge, Blacklick Woods Metro Park, 6975 East Livingston Avenue, Reynoldsburg, OH 43068.

Present

Commissioners: Mr. Alex, Mr. McCue

Staff: Mr. Moloney, Mr. Peck, Mr. McGivern, Ms. Telfer, Mr. Studenmund, Mr. Kaderly, Mr. Laughbaum, Mr. Kasnyik, Ms. Ingram, Ms. Christian, Mr. Bugh, Mr. Ramsey, Mr. Storts, Ms. Bergman

Legal Counsel: Mr. Franzmann

Mr. Alex 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 July 19, 2022 Board Meeting

Mr. McCue made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 19, 2022 Board Meeting. Mr. Alex seconded the motion and the minutes were approved.

Disbursement Resolution #6020

Mr. Alex moved for the approval of the Disbursement Resolution for the July 2022 invoices. Mr. McCue seconded the motion and the Board approved the resolution. A copy of Resolution No. 6020 is attached to these minutes as part hereof.

Public Comment:

None.

Staff Reports

Administration

Mr. Moloney stated that his staff had received a letter from the Columbus City Council regarding the ongoing Zimmer development adjacent to Scioto Audubon Metro Park. Metro Parks continues to be in communication with various project stakeholders regarding that development.

RAPID5 is hosting one of its first large-scale events this month, a river clean-up that Metro Parks will host in partnership with RAPID5 and Keep Columbus Beautiful. This event will take place along the Alum Creek Trail, one of the Greenway trails Metro Parks manages in partnership with municipalities. The river clean-up is scheduled for August 27.

Mr. Moloney also updated the Board on Metro Parks' efforts at the Scioto South property, which has been officially named Great Southern Metro Park. Staff is working hard on site to address several challenges, including invasive species, flood effects and

trespassing. Plans for the site include opening it as the twenty-first Metro Park and connecting Great Southern to Scioto Audubon Metro Park via a multi-use trail. Metro Parks' plans for the site are not yet available for public comment, but partnerships with local groups and interested parties are developing.

Operations

Metro Parks' staff continues to work with American Electric Power (AEP) on building a partnership at the newly-named Great Southern Metro Park property. Metro Parks has been working on a temporary easement with AEP, granting AEP an easement to rebuild downed poles on Metro Parks' property in return for a trail easement on AEP's property, for several months.

Mr. Peck introduced the Board to Blacklick Woods' staff, including Tim Bugh, the Assistant Park Manager of Blacklick Woods. Mr. Bugh provided updates on Blacklick Woods' year and current projects; Blacklick Woods' staff has caught up on repairs with the help of a dedicated seasonal staff, the Canopy Walk project near the extant Nature Center is underway and part of Blacklick Woods' forest was just inducted into the Old Growth Forest Network, a national network of protected old-growth forests.

Mr. Peck also provided updates on several events. Paddlefest at Prairie Oaks was a success, as was WAG!Fest, also held at Prairie Oaks, which recorded its highest-ever attendance this year. Over 22,000 visitors enjoyed WAG!Fest with over 13,000 dogs. SciotoFest, an annual celebration of Scioto Audubon Metro Park, is scheduled for late September.

Metro Parks' 2022 Summer Day Camp and Columbus Schools Internship programs have concluded for the year and were successful.

Finance

The Finance Department processed three payroll periods in July. The Blacklick Woods Golf Course has shown a profit of over \$100,000 as of August 1, 2022. The IT department is busy with several projects, and the audit process with the State of Ohio is underway. Metro Parks has submitted its audit and is waiting for State review.

Human Resources

Ms. Telfer updated the Board on Human Resources; end-of-summer recruitment is in full swing. HR is in the process of filling five full-time Park Technician positions and has posted several ranger and naturalist vacancies as well.

Human Resources is also in the process of updating policies and procedures for employees. Hiring is being conducted with a focus on community engagement.

Manager of Park Operations Report

Mr. Josh Laughbaum, one of Metro Parks' Managers of Park Operations, presented the Board with information about the Blacklick Woods Golf Course, which is one of Metro Parks' unique properties. The Golf Course features two reservable event spaces, a nine-hole course, an eighteen-hole championship course and a driving range.

Metro Parks has managed the Golf Course for many years. As the popularity of golf started to decline in the mid-2000s, Metro Parks developed a strategic plan for the Golf Course in 2010-2011 to keep Franklin County residents interested in the Golf course and aware of its benefits for taxpayers.

In order to modernize and streamline the Golf Course, Metro Parks made several decisions in recent years, including the decision to make the nine-hole course free to play for Franklin County residents, renovating the Pro Shop and the Banquet Room, the construction of Eagleview, a new event space that is Metro Parks' largest facility and fairway improvements to remain competitive for local golfers.

A focus on hosting community events has also brought several thousand visitors to the Golf Course.

Metro Parks also made investments in the next generation of golfers by partnering with the First Tee program, which operates from the Pro Shop and focuses on using golf to teach school-aged children life skills, core values and healthy habits. The Golf Course has also become the home course for several area middle and high school golf programs.

As a result of these efforts, last year the Golf Course turned a profit for the first time in several years and as of August 2022, the Golf Course has brought in over \$100K in revenue.

Resolutions

- #6021** AUTHORIZING ENTERING INTO A CONTRACT FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A SHELTER PAVILION AT PICKERINGTON PONDS METRO PARK
This resolution was tabled and no action was taken.
- #6022** AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF A RESTROOM FOR THE BURNING LAKE AREA AT PICKERINGTON PONDS METRO PARK
The Board authorized Metro Parks to purchase and a restroom for the newly-opened Burning Lake Area at Pickerington Ponds Metro Park.

#6023 AUTHORIZING ENTERING INTO A CONTRACT FOR CONSTRUCTION OF AN EVENT CENTER AT QUARRY TRAILS METRO PARK
This resolution was tabled and no action was taken.

#6024 AUTHORIZING ENTERING INTO A CONTRACT FOR CONSTRUCTION OF AN OFFICE COMPLEX AT QUARRY TRAILS METRO PARK
This resolution was tabled and no action was taken.

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