

Minutes of the 952nd meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners of the Columbus and Franklin County Metropolitan Park District, held at 3:06 pm on Tuesday, December 17, 2024 at the Innis House at Inniswood Metro Gardens at 940 S. Hempstead Road, Westerville, Ohio 43081.

Present

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

Staff: Mr. Beshuk, Ms. Boniface, Ms. Basset Smith, Ms. Defourny, Mr. Domiano Mr. Eutsey, Ms. Fleischer, Mr. Laughbaum, Mr. Kaderly, Mr. Kaysnik, Mr. Knowles, Mr. McGivern, Mr. Moloney, Mr. Peck, Ms. Power, Mr. Smelker, Ms. Snyder, Ms. Snyder, Mr. Studenmund, Ms. Tsang, Ms. Willer

Legal Counsel: Mr. Franzmann

Guests: Mr. Brown, Mr. Roseman, Mr. Litt, Ms. Litt, Mr. Mackey, Mr. Metzker

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 November 19, 2024 Board Meeting

Mr. Alex made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 2024 Board Meeting. Mr. Hadden seconded the motion and the minutes were approved.

Minutes of the December 2, 2024 Budget Board Meeting

Mr. Alex made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 2024 Budget Board Meeting. Mr. Hadden seconded the motion and the minutes were approved.

Public Comment

Mr. Litt, volunteer at Inniswood, visited Clear Creek Tulip Trail and enjoyed it immensely. The drive on Clear Creek Road, however is terrible. He understands that upkeep of the road is not a Metro Parks problem, but hoped that Mr. Peck could reach out to the township trustees to work on a solution.

Mr. Roseman, also a volunteer, thanked the Metro Parks for implementing honeysuckle removal at Sharon Woods. He requested trail signage improvements along the Greenway Trails, as it is easy to get lost. Mr. Roseman wondered what the endgame for the Park Road project will look like. He was concerned that the final path will cut through too much of the woodland areas.

Mr. Metzker spoke briefly on his travels to different park districts around the country and commended the Metro Parks, stating he has not come across a better maintained system. Columbus is lucky to have the Metro Parks.

Scott Brown, State Auditor liaison, presented Metro Parks with the State Auditor Award. 4,200 entities are audited each year, but only 10% qualify. He thanked the administration staff and finance departments for their fiscal responsibility.

Disbursement Resolution No. 6209

Mr. Alex moved for the approval of the Disbursement Resolution for the November 2024 invoices. Mr. Hadden seconded the motion and the Board approved the resolution. A copy of Resolution No. 6209 is attached to these minutes as part hereof.

Staff Reports

Administration

Tim Moloney spoke about collaboration with the community, in particular the development on the Whittier Peninsula. In summation, the developers on this project claimed to have exhausted all options in terms of working with Metro Parks, then recently complained that we were not working with them. While Metro Parks is willing to negotiate on the Whittier Peninsula project, it is important to protect Scioto Audubon for what it is today and what it will be tomorrow. We have asked for details repeatedly and not received anything in return.

Operations

Larry Peck introduced "The Best Public Garden Manager in the District" Bryan Knowles, manager of Inniswood, the only Metro Garden in the district. Mr. Knowles in turn introduced his staff. He updated the board on the rose trellis replacement project. Mr. Alex asked if it would be ready for pictures in the Spring and Mr. Knowles said it will be ready for roses to grow in March. The trellis project was funded in part by the Innis Garden Society, who donated \$10k, and funding from the Columbus Foundation.

Mr. Peck also introduced John Metzker, former Deputy Director of Metro Parks. He thanked him for his contributions to the district.

Finance

Mr. McGivern gave an update on the Finance Department. They were busy with three pay periods in November.

Human Resources

Mr. Domiano provided updates from the Human Resources department. A number of full-time ranger hires will take place soon. HR also worked with Fort Hayes High School on mock interviews.

Franklin County Probate Judge Jeff Mackey attended the meeting to reappoint Mr. Alex for another three-year term on the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Alex resoundingly agreed to a new term and Mr. Mackey thanked the board for being a great team.

Resolutions

- #6210 REQUESTING TAX ADVANCES FOR 2025
The board approved this resolution, which allows Metro Parks access tax funds as soon as they are available.
- #6211 AUTHORIZING AN APPROPRIATION INCREASE FOR THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS FUND (FUND 29) TO ACCOUNT FOR OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PAVING IMPROVEMENTS
The board approved this resolution. The ODOT grants are no expense to Metro Parks, but are reported in our assets.
- #6212 AMENDING THE BYLAWS OF THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS OF THE COLUMBUS AND FRANKLIN COUNTY METROPOLITAN PARK DISTRICT
The board approved this resolution.
- #6213 AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF TRACTORS AND HEAVY EQUIPMENT
The board approved equipment purchases for Bank Run and Scioto Audubon Metro Parks, as well as equipment for the Resource Management team.
- #6214 AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF VEHICLES
The board approved the purchase of trucks for Blendon Woods, Highbanks, Slate Run, and Blacklick Woods and an SUV for the 2nd shift supervisor.

Other Business

None.

Adjournment

The Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 3:31pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by the Board of Park
Commissioners:


Tim Moloney, Executive Director


Chair

