

Minutes of the 955th meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners of the Columbus and Franklin County Metropolitan Park District, held at 3:02 pm on Tuesday, March 18, 2025 at the Grove Lodge at Scioto Grove Metro Park, 5172 Jackson Pike Grove City, Ohio 43123.

### **Present**

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

Staff: Mr. Bruch, Mr. Domiano, Mr. Eutsey, Mr. Fortman, Mr. Kasnyik, Mr. Kelly, Mr. McGivern, Mr. Moloney, Mr. Peck, Mr. Saul, Mr. Studenmund, Ms. Willer

Guests: Jessica Bennett, Kwesi Kambon

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 February Board Meeting**

Mr. Alex made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 2025 Board Meeting. Mr. McCue seconded the motion and the minutes were approved.

### **Public Comment**

Jessica Bennett of Jeremiah's Corner, a consulting firm focused on disability advocacy in Central Ohio, came to the February 2024 Board Meeting to request that the Board and Metro Parks' administration staff consider the development of more inclusive playgrounds. Over the last year, Metro Parks has worked extensively with Ms. Bennett on a new inclusive playground at Blendon Woods, set to open with a dedication ceremony on April 10, 2025. Ms. Bennett thanked the Board and Administration, stating that the process and the finished product has been an amazing experience. Her son loves it and organizations within the disability community are excited to have a place for the children and adults they serve to play and explore.

Tim Moloney thanked Ms. Bennett and expressed his excitement for the new playground. He stated that the District is trying to write the script on this kind of programming, including creating a new job to build out programming around the playground for different ages and abilities. Reservations for the new playground are already being taken in advance of it's opening next month.

Kwesi Kambon, member of the Friends of Metro Parks Board, also thanked the Metro Parks Board for taking Ms. Bennett's request to heart. He also thanked Ms. Bennett for lighting the spark on this project. Her expertise has proven immeasurable.

### **Disbursement Resolution No. 6235**

Mr. Alex moved for the approval of the Disbursement Resolution for the February 2025 invoices. Mr. McCue seconded the motion and the Board approved the resolution. A copy of Resolution No. 6235 is attached to these minutes as part hereof.

## **Staff Reports**

### **Administration**

Tim Moloney gave an update on administrative projects. He met with the adjacent landowners near Great Southern to discuss Scioto River access agreements. Mr. Moloney also announced a collaboration with The Impact Group from Cleveland whose goal is to help Metro Parks tell our story effectively. He is excited for the partnership.

Mr. Moloney has also been working with leadership from the Mt. Air area of Highbanks to discuss growth to the River Bluff area.

He finished his report with the discussion of easements used by utility companies. Metro Parks currently has 22 open easements and in turn Steve Studenmund has been spending a lot of time working on them. The simplest easement request can take 15 hours, but usually take up to 50 hours to complete. Chris Franzmann, legal counsel for Metro Parks, is working on a plan to charge for these easements. The utility companies tend to see it as throw away land and not a public park. Mr. Moloney brought this to the attention of the board because it might not be well received by these utility companies.

### **Operations**

Larry Peck introduced Kurt Fortman, Park Manager of Scioto Grove. He discussed the ongoing projects at the park, including a 40-acre prairie burn, invasive removal, and building a shade structure at the drone field. Backpacking sites open in April.

Mr. Peck announced that it has been a successful burn season so far with 180 already burned this Spring. The Park Road Trail project is open for now, with strike teams cutting in a trail near Headquarters.

He told the Board that Kevin Kasnyik has been working with the new owners of Trapper John's Canoe Livery regarding use of the Alkire Road Canoe Access Area. Ideally, we would like to get canoeing out of this area as it is very sensitive ecologically.

Finally, Mr. Peck announced that the Quarry Trails restroom is almost ready. Mr. Moloney mused that "we can build a playground in less than a year but it takes three years for a restroom."

### **Finance**

Rick McGivern updated the Board on projects happening within the Finance department. A new Purchasing Manager has been hired to replace Kay French, who is retiring in April.

### **Human Resources**

JJ Domiano provided updates on the HR department. HR has conducted 120 interviews for seasonal, part-time, and full-time positions. We received over 50 applications for the CSI program and interviews will be starting soon.

### **Resolutions**

- #6236 AUTHORIZING EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS AT SHARON WOODS METRO PARK  
The Board approved this resolution to enter into various contracts in the amount up to \$300,000.
- #6237 AUTHORIZING EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS TO CONSTRUCT PUBLIC USE FACILITIES AT HOMESTEAD METRO PARK  
The Board approved this resolution to enter into various contracts in the amount up to \$250,000.

### **Other Business**

None.

### **Adjournment**

The Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 3:26pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved by the Board of Park  
Commissioners:

  
Tim Moloney, Executive Director

  
Chair

  


