

GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT  
MINUTES  
May 10, 2005

The regular meeting of the Geauga Park District Board was held on May 10, 2005, at the Park District office, Chardon, Ohio. The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. President Robert McCullough was in the chair. Board members Betty Cope and Mark Rzeszotarski were present.

Employees present were:

Tom Curtin, Executive Director  
Keith McClintock, Deputy Director  
Les Bednar, Development Officer  
Sherry Bosworth, Business Affairs Director  
Barb Emch, Executive Secretary  
Cindy Ford, Marketing Assistant  
Paige Hosier, Marketing Director  
Robin Pilarczyk, Human Resources Manager  
Eileen Smith, Administrative Assistant

Foundation Representative: Jacqueline Samuel

Guest Present: Gil Kostelec, Claridon Township

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

Miss Cope moved to accept the agenda as revised for the meeting.  
Dr. Rzeszotarski seconded the motion and the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes
Miss Cope	Yes
Mr. McCullough	Yes

**ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF APRIL 12, 2005**

Miss Cope moved that the minutes of April 12, 2005, be approved as amended.  
Dr. Rzeszotarski seconded the motion and the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes
Miss Cope	Yes
Mr. McCullough	Yes

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

Paige Hosier introduced Cindy Ford as the new Marketing Assistant. Jacqueline Samuel, Geauga Park District Foundation Trustee was introduced by Les Bednar. Mr. Curtin acknowledged Mr. Gil Kostelec of Claridon Township who stated that he wanted to observe the Board meeting.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT  
FOR THE MONTH ENDING  
April 30, 2005

**GENERAL FUND**

**BALANCE APRIL 1, 2005**

**1,743,032.33**

**EXPENDITURES**

**485,421.34**

Personnel	214,556.25
Medicare	2,527.71
Dental /Hospitalization	30,124.27
PERS	29,127.83

Unemployment Transfers	1,861.00	
Worker's Compensation	27,646.86	
Vouchers	179,577.42	
<b>RECEIPTS</b>		<b>414,332.30</b>
General:		
State Reimburse Tax	371,638.33	
Fees:		
Out of County School Program Fees	408.00	
- Camping	40.00	
- Shelters	75.00	
Bid Plans	150.00	
- Bass Lake Heat	80.00	
- Rookery Heat	120.00	
Administrative Fees - From GPD Foundation	2,500.00	
- Workshops - General - public program	108.00	
- Programs - General - public program	217.00	
Rental Properties		
- Harry- Swine Creek house	350.00	
- Kolar - Burton Wetlands House	350.00	
- McKinnon - Hyde House	350.00	
Sales:		
Sales: Gift Cart - Meyer Center	648.93	
Sales: Tree Tops	972.38	
Sales - Credit Cards	563.83	
(\$46.38 - Meyer Center, \$517.45 Tree Tops)		
Sales: Water Vending Machine Sales - TWW	12.00	
Other:		
Citation Disbursement	125.00	
Parking Ticket Collections	10.00	
Refunds- Other - Geauga County Auditor Tax refund- exempt property	22,852.91	
Donations:	250.00	
- GPD Volunteers - Training donation		
Local Government Funds	6,607.84	
Interest earned	5,878.04	
Other Miscellaneous - OPBA copies of minutes	25.04	
<b>BALANCE AS OF APRIL 30, 2005</b>		<b>1,671,943.29</b>
<b>CONSTRUCTION FUND</b>		
<b>BALANCE APRIL 1, 2005</b>		<b>2,303,962.75</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>		<b>752,107.69</b>
Vouchers	752,107.69	
<b>RECEIPTS</b>		<b>5,326.84</b>
Interest Earned	3,215.25	

Donations	825.00
- In memory of Paul Jacobs (\$325)	
- In memory of Preston Yaecker (\$500)	
Other	501.06
Royalties: Oxford Oil Co	217.01
Royalties: Cedar Valley Energy	524.82
Royalties - Power Gas	43.70
<b>BALANCE AS OF APRIL 20, 2005</b>	<b>1,557,181.90</b>

**VOUCHER RESOLUTION NO. 16-05**

Dr. Rzeszotarski moved the adoption of the voucher resolution, a copy of which is on file in the Park District office, so marked Resolution No. 16-05.

Mr. McCullough seconded the motion and the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes
Miss Cope	Yes
Mr. McCullough	Yes

**COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD**

Mr. Curtin read a note of thanks from the staff to the Board for the Wellness Day event held on April 21, 2005. He also read a note from staff member Eileen Smith acknowledging the positive leadership of the Board in providing this opportunity for the staff. Mr. McCullough mentioned that he participated in the activities of the day which resulted in great esprit de corps.

Mr. Curtin shared an invitation to the Board which he received from Alan Siewert, Urban Forester, to attend an air knife demonstration on May 19, 2005 at 12:00 p.m. at The West Woods Nature Center. The air knife loosens the soil and encourages plant growth in heavily compacted soil. Geauga Park District Park Worker and Certified Arborist, Debbie Palmisano, worked with Mr. Siewert to use The West Woods as an experimental site for this demonstration.

**SAVE OUR STREAM PROJECT PLAQUE PRESENTATION**

Karoline McMullen, Angela Primbas, and Amanda Weatherhead, students from Hawken School, presented the Board with a plaque from their *Save our Stream* project in thanks for the help and guidance which they received. They expressed special thanks to John Oros, Natural Resource Director, for his support of their project involving brook trout. John Oros and the students recently returned from Washington D.C. where they were honored among other students with the President Environmental Youth Award.

**GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT FOUNDATION UPDATE**

Jaqueline Samuel shared greetings from the Geauga Park District Foundation. She stated that the Development Committee will be submitting a final list of prospective trustees for review. The Foundation is looking at fundraising events for the Frohring Meadows prairie project. The Conservation Committee is developing a new brochure which will be available by the end of the summer. The Foundation is engaged in an analysis of strengths, challenges, opportunities, and threats as part of its strategic planning process. New stationery and a new marketing piece for memorial gifts were reviewed at the April quarterly meeting. The Foundation members will be selling raffle tickets at the Nature Arts Festival as one of their fundraising efforts this year.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN**

Tom Curtin opened discussion of the draft of the strategic plan S.C.O.T. analysis (Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, and Threats) distributed at the April 12, 2005 meeting. Dr. Rzeszotarski asked about the strategic planning document that he worked on several years ago. Mr. Curtin stated that we are looking at that document and will use it along with the S.C.O.T. analysis documents to guide and direct a new narrative statement. He asked the Board to review the documents and suggested that a Board retreat be held to discuss it further. Dr. Rzeszotarski agreed that this was a good start and that a retreat would allow the Board to look at the old strategic plan and see where we are now, where we are going, and develop a draft for the executive summary.

## **PARK UPDATES**

Mr. Curtin updated the Board on the following:

### **The Maple Highlands Trail-Central**

Mr. Curtin shared photographs of the bridge over the Cuyahoga River which is now completed. Construction has begun on the bridge at Taylor Wells Road after an agreement was reached with Claridon Township Trustees and a highway use permit was issued by the Geauga County Engineer's office. The agreement states that the Park District will maintain the bridge and the Geauga County Engineer's office will inspect the bridge and furnish a report to the Park District. A meeting will take place next week with Chardon City Council to discuss the road closure issues involving the bridge construction on Aquilla/Claridon Road. Work continues on the southern quarter where a total of 10 culverts have been installed to date. Change orders will be required for work required beyond the original scope due to the issues of traffic detours and road closures for two of the bridges.

### **Council of Park Districts**

Mr. Curtin reported that the first meeting of the Council of Park Districts of Geauga, Portage and Summit Counties took place on May 17, 2005 at The West Woods Nature Center. The Council approved a Request for Proposal to seek consultants to do wetlands delineation projects within the jurisdiction of the park districts.

### **Biofuels**

Tom Sterlekar, Park District Operations, has been researching the possibilities of the Park District switching to more environmentally beneficial fuels. As a result, the Park District will begin using bio-diesel fuel in certain equipment next year and continue to research the type of vehicles that use alternative fuels. Tom Sterlekar and Matt Cross will begin to draft an overall energy policy.

### **Frohning Family**

Mr. Curtin reported the sad news of the death of Heidi Frohning, daughter of Glen Frohning. Ms. Frohning was a zoologist working for the Seattle Zoo. The Park District will dedicate a bench at Frohning Meadows in her memory.

### **Biohabitats**

All in-stream and bank work is completed. Planting is scheduled to begin on May 23, 2005. The issue of the pedestrian bridge still has to be worked out with the contractor.

### **Mountain Run Station**

We are waiting for the Army Corps of Engineers to complete their reviews. The contractor can perform site survey activities at this time and earth moving activities can begin once the Army Corp of Engineers review is complete.

### **Observatory Project**

The Natural Resource Department continues to work on the site inventory. A state and federally endangered species, the swamp red currant, was discovered on the property. Work continues on the Request for Qualifications for the design and engineering of the project.

### **Directors' Meeting**

Mr. Curtin and Mr. McClintock recently attended a park directors' meeting on the subject of tax reform and the effect on budgeting. The Park District currently receives one dollar for each person in the county in Local Government Funds which constitutes approximately \$91,895.00 (Ninety One Thousand Eight Hundred Ninety-Five Dollars). The tax reform involves a twenty percent reduction in that amount and will eventually eliminate Local Government Funding entirely. Personal tangible property taxes will also be reduced and personal income tax will be reduced by twenty-one percent. Other elements of the tax reforms are increases in the cigarette tax and the beer and alcohol tax. Increases will be seen in the rate that is paid for utilities. The Ohio Parks and Recreation Association (OPRA) is lobbying to get a gradual reduction in the tangible personal property tax over ten years to allow parks to arrange for other funding. Some park districts in the state are funded only by Local Government Funds.

### **Affelder House**

The electrical contract work is at 50% completion. Jim Ziemnik, Landscape Architect, met with a supplier of geosynthetic material for the parking area.

### **Frohling Meadows**

The 2.2 mile trail has been staked in anticipation of the archaeological survey. Three firms were contacted to submit proposals for the archaeological survey. One of the three firms contacted submitted a proposal. The proposal from Mercyhurst Archaeological Institute was at a cost of \$9,967.69 (Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Sixty-Seven Dollars and Sixty-Nine Cents) which will come out of the \$70,000.00 (Seventy-Thousand Dollars) grant received from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Recreation Trail Program. Seven Requests for Proposals (RFP's) for the design of Frohling Meadows were sent. Four responses were received from the following firms:

Cawrse & Associates  
Behnke & Associates  
Kerr & Boron Associates  
Environmental Design Group Inc.

We will interview all four firms and have a recommendation for the Board at their June, 2005 meeting. A public meeting for the neighbors of Frohling Meadows is scheduled for May 11, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. at The West Woods Nature Center to inform them of the project plans.

### **Grandview Survey**

The survey company returned to the site on May 6, 2005 to define the right-of-way in the field that was retained by the railroad and also staked the portion that reverted to Grandview Golf Club. We are now awaiting the final plan and legal description.

### **Chagrin River Watershed Partners**

Mr. McClintock informed the Board that Newbury Township received a Nature Works grant for trails behind their elementary school. We provided some help to them in this effort.

### **Endowment Fund**

Les Bednar and Keith McClintock met with Michael Grzesiak of The Cleveland Foundation to clarify a point on the original documents which established the fund and pertained to disbursement of funds should Geauga Park District cease to exist.

### **Storm Damage**

Mr. McClintock reported that the recent heavy snow storms required over 240 hours of staff time in clean-up. Some damage occurred in all parks but no structural damage was sustained. A new protocol was established which will require that every trail be viewed after a storm by a staff person or ranger. A staff member was slightly injured when a log that was being cut hit him in the helmet. He was treated and released thanks to his helmet and the help of his partner on the job.

**Kostelec Property**

Mr. Curtin shared the information contained in a letter from Alan Siewert, Urban Forester, after his review of the Gilbert Kostelec property and the adjacent right-of-way. His recommendation was to do nothing for two growing seasons to observe the re-growth. He suggested reviewing the area in August or September of 2006 and hand planting seedlings in 2007 if needed. Mr. Kostelec joined the discussion by stating that his primary interest was regarding the altering of the view of the right-of-way from his property. He stated that he thought the original plan was to clear only twenty to thirty feet and the adjacent areas were to be left wild. He added that his understanding was that the Park District would not clear to the adjacent property line. Mr. Kostelec stated that he has requested compensation for damages. The Board will consider the recommendation of Mr. Siewert and the comments from Mr. Kostelec. Mr. Curtin stated that we have received a letter from the attorney representing Peter and Darlene Kostelec regarding their request for damages due to the loss of a tree on their property adjacent to the right-of-way. Dr. Rzeszotarski stated that he would like to view the site and resume discussion of the matter at the next Board meeting.

**RESCIND RESOLUTION NO.12-05 – RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR DIVISION OF WATERCRAFT MARINE PATROL GRANT**

At the April 12, 2005 meeting of the Board, Resolution No. 12-05 (*Geauga Park District Minutes*, April 12, 2005, Book 6, Page 275) was approved in support of the grant application for the Ohio Division of Watercraft- 2005 Marine Patrol Grant. The grant application has since been withdrawn due to the Park District’s inability to fill the position of marine patrol ranger for this season given the time frame for the required training. We will apply again next year and have been given assurances that we will likely be funded.

Dr. Rzeszotarski moved to rescind Resolution No. 12-05, approved at the April 12, 2005 meeting, due to the withdrawal of Geauga Park District’s application for the Marine Patrol Grant. Miss Cope seconded the motion and the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes
Miss Cope	Yes
Mr. McCullough	Yes

**RESCIND RESOLUTION NO. 21-95 RANGER COMMISSION AND NO. 02-05- APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF RANGER**

Miss Cope moved to rescind Resolution No. 21-95, dated October 11, 1995 (*Geauga Park District Minutes*, October 11, 1995, Book 4 Page 439) pertaining to the appointment of Michael Fabian as a Ranger and Resolution No. 02-05, dated January 11, 2005 (*Geauga Park District Minutes*, January 11, 2005, Book 6, Page 251) pertaining to the appointment of Michael Fabian as Chief Ranger, due to his resignation effective May 6, 2005.

Dr. Rzeszotarski seconded the motion and the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes
Miss Cope	Yes
Mr. McCullough	Yes

**RESOLUTION OF THANKS FOR ALEX BERGMAN-BAT COLONY BUILDER**

Mr. Curtin asked the Board to approve a motion of thanks to Alex Bergman for his work in constructing the bat condo structure on the Krehlik property at Union Chapel.

Mr. McCullough made the following motion in recognition of the effort and achievement of Alex Bergman:

WHEREAS, Alex Bergman did freely give of his time and expertise in constructing the Bat Condo; and,

WHEREAS, Alex Bergman demonstrated extraordinary carpentry and craftsmanship skills in the quality and workmanship of the Bat Condo; and,

WHEREAS, Alex Bergman played a key role in ensuring that the colony of bats at the Krehlik property will have a safe and secure roost for years to come; and,

WHEREAS, Geauga Park District and the Geauga County community will benefit from the educational opportunities and enjoyment received from the bat colony once they become established within the Bat Condo.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Commissioners of Geauga Park District express their sincere appreciation to Alex Bergman for his service to the people of Geauga County and Geauga Park District.

Dr. Rzeszotarski seconded the motion and the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes
Miss Cope	Yes
Mr. McCullough	Yes

#### **AMISH SAFETY COMMITTEE REQUEST**

The Old Order Amish Safety Committee has requested access from Burton Station north to State Route 322. Their request indicated that there are Amish families who live north of State Route 322. Tom has contacted the City of Akron as to using the service road for buggy access. Kim Coy, City of Akron, stated that they would consider the request. They have concerns about horse droppings. We need to take a look at the service road and the bridges and culverts to see if they would support buggy traffic. We would not plow during the winter months. Mr. McClintock stated that some parts of the road are narrow and would not permit buggies to pass. Mr. Curtin has asked the Ranger Department to think about the safety issues in pursuing this as an option for the Amish community.

#### **ROADWAY/TRAIL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT CONTRACT**

On April 22, 2005 sealed bids were opened for the Roadway/Trail Improvement Project involving three parks, Big Creek Park, Swine Creek Reservation and The Rookery. The work at Big Creek Park includes the Aspen Grove Parking Lot, the service circle at the rear of the Meyer Center and the carport area. The work at Swine Creek Reservation includes culvert work at the Lodge service drive as well as asphaltting the entire service road from Hayes Rd. to the rear of the Lodge. The work includes the installation of a small handicap parking lot and a handicap ramp into the Lodge. The work at The Rookery includes the chip and sealing of Woodcock Trail as well as asphaltting the walkways in front of the Great Blue Heron Lodge and restroom.

The project was estimated at \$84,500.00 (Eighty-Four Thousand Five Hundred Dollars). Bid information was sent to five paving companies. The low and only bid received was from Ronyak Brothers Paving of Burton with a bid of \$89,260.00 (Eighty-Nine Thousand Two Hundred Sixty Dollars). The additional dollars which are within ten percent of the estimate will come from the contingency fund.

Dr. Rzeszotarski made a motion to approve the awarding of the contract for the Roadway and Trail Improvement Project to Ronyak Brothers Paving in the amount of \$89,260.00 (Eighty-Nine Thousand Two Hundred Sixty Dollars) for the work as stated above.

Mr. McCullough seconded the motion and the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes
Miss Cope	Yes
Mr. McCullough	Yes

**GRAVEL CONTRACT**

Sealed bids were opened on May 2, 2005 for the delivery of gravel and crushed stone to three locations within Geauga Park District. The gravel will be used on trail projects at The West Woods and Swine Creek Reservation as well as on drainage projects at Beartown Lakes and Swine Creek Reservation. The following bids were received:

Arms Trucking Co.	\$29,691.50
Lakeside Sand & Gravel	\$22,652.50
Haueter Sand & Gravel	\$26,060.00
Clemson Excavating, Inc.	\$33,875.00

A recommendation was made by Rod Sharpnack, Operations Director, to award the contract to Lakeside Sand and Gravel as the lowest bidder in the amount of \$22,652.50 (Twenty-Two Thousand Six Hundred Fifty-Two Dollars and Fifty Cents).

Dr. Rzeszotarski made a motion to approve the awarding of the contract for the delivery of gravel and crushed stone for the projects stated above to Lakeside Sand & Gravel in the amount of \$22,652.50 (Twenty-Two Thousand Six Hundred Fifty-Two Dollars and Fifty Cents).

Mr. McCullough seconded the motion and the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes
Miss Cope	Yes
Mr. McCullough	Yes

**ENDOWMENT FUND MEETING DATES**

Mr. Curtin informed the Board that according to the by-laws of the Endowment Fund, the Trustees must meet at least twice during each calendar year. The Trustees include the three members of the Geauga Park District Board of Park Commissioners; the President, Treasurer, Secretary and At-Large Member of the Geauga Park District Foundation; and the Executive Director and Development Officer of Geauga Park District. He suggested that the meeting could take place on the same day as the Geauga Park District Board meeting in either July or August. Dates will be checked with Foundation members.

**SICK LEAVE BENEFITS**

The employee sick leave policy was approved by the Board on January 13, 2004 (*Geauga Park District Minutes*, January 13, 2004, Book 6 Page 153) as part of the Personnel Handbook. At that time a paragraph was inadvertently left off of the copies submitted for approval. Therefore, the following paragraph was submitted for Board approval at this time:

“Upon retirement or voluntary resignation, an employee with ten (10) or more years of public service is eligible for payment in cash for twenty-five percent (25%) of his/her accrued sick leave. The payment shall be at the rate of pay at the time of separation. Accepting the cash payment eliminates all remaining sick leave credit.”

Mr. McCullough moved that the above stated paragraph be approved as part of the employee sick leave policy.

Miss Cope seconded the motion and the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes
Miss Cope	Yes
Mr. McCullough	Yes

**BP CREDIT CARD APPLICATION**

The Administrative Department requested approval for a British Petroleum (BP) credit card for gasoline purchases. While fueling normally is done at the Big Creek and Swine Creek facilities, there is a need to have an alternative for circumstances such as travel. There is no annual fee and the card will be used for gasoline purchases only.

Miss Cope made a motion to approve the acquisition of a BP credit card for the purposes stated above.

Dr. Rzeszotarski seconded the motion and the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes
Miss Cope	Yes
Mr. McCullough	Yes

The Board took a break from 5:15p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. McCullough moved to go into Executive Session at 5:30 p.m. for the purpose of discussing land acquisition and personnel matters.

Miss Cope seconded the motion and the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes
Miss Cope	Yes
Mr. McCullough	Yes

The Board returned from Executive Session at 6:40 p.m. The following was discussed:

### **Recent Newspaper Articles**

A discussion took place regarding a recent article in the *Geauga Maple Leaf*, dated May 5, 2005 regarding comments by the Geauga County Commissioners during their meeting held on April 28, 2005 regarding the economic development and environmental issues of Geauga County. Some of the comments reflected negatively on the Park District. Mrs. Samuel stated that public officials realize that there is a need to diversify the tax base to support schools and encourage commercial development. She indicated that in her opinion the Geauga County Commissioners would find little difference of opinion with the Park District in how to accomplish this goal. Mrs. Samuel suggested that one way is to educate the public with facts regarding the accomplishments of the Park District. Dr. Rzeszotarski agreed that we should gather all facts, such as the number and percent of acreage actually owned or managed by the Park District. Mr. Curtin will work with Ms. Hosier on an appropriate letter of response to the editor of the *Geauga Maple Leaf*.

### **LAND ACQUISITION**

#### **Montville Township**

Dr. Rzeszotarski moved to authorize the Executive Director to enter into negotiations for real property located in Montville Township.

Mr. McCullough seconded the motion and the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes
Miss Cope	Yes
Mr. McCullough	Yes

**Hambden/Claridon Townships**

Dr. Rzeszotarski moved to authorize the Executive Director to enter into negotiations for real property located in Hambden and Claridon Townships.

Mr. McCullough seconded the motion and the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes
Miss Cope	Yes
Mr. McCullough	Yes

**CHANGE OF MEETING DATE FOR JULY BOARD MEETING**

Due to scheduling conflicts the Board meeting for July has been changed from July 12, 2005 to July 19, 2005.

**DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

Departmental reports from the Supervisors were submitted for the month of April to the Executive Director and a summary sheet was forwarded to the Board in their packets prior to the Board meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

**SUNSHINE LAW COMPLIANCE**

The rules of the Park Board were complied with by sending notice pursuant to the rules adopted by the Board.

Respectfully submitted,

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Thomas G. Curtin, Executive Director

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Robert McCullough, President