

**GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
January 12, 2010**

The regular meeting of the Geauga Park District Board was held on January 12, 2010 at the Donald W. Meyer Center, Chardon, Ohio. The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. President Robert McCullough was in the Chair. Board members Dr. Mark Rzeszotarski and Mr. Leech were present.

Employees present:

Tom Curtin, Executive Director
Keith McClintock, Deputy Director
Kathy Hanes, Executive Secretary
Brett Bellas, Maintenance Manager
Sherry Bosworth, Business Affairs Director
Cindy Ford, Communications Manager
Tami Gingrich, Field Naturalist
Paige Hosier, Marketing Director
Robin Pilarczyk, Human Resources Manager
Diane Valen, Naturalist Services Director
Aaron Young, Planning Director

Visitors Present:

Glen Miller, *The Maple Leaf*
Nora Stanton, Ohio Horseman's Council

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

President Robert McCullough relinquished the chair to Mr. Curtin for the purpose of conducting election of officers.

Mr. Curtin asked for nominations for the Office of President.

Mr. Leech moved to nominate Mr. McCullough for Office of President.
Dr. Rzeszotarski seconded the motion.

Mr. Curtin asked for nominations for the Office of Vice-President.

Mr. Leech moved to nominate Dr. Rzeszotarski for the Office of Vice-President.
Mr. McCullough seconded the motion.

There being no further nominations, the Chair declared the nominations closed. The roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes
Mr. McCullough	Yes

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Mr. Leech moved to adopt the agenda for the meeting.
Dr. Rzeszotarski seconded the motion and the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes
Mr. McCullough	Yes

ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 8, 2009

Mr. Leech moved to adopt the minutes of December 8, 2009 as written.

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

Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Abstained
Mr. McCullough	Yes

ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 14, 2009

Mr. Leech moved to adopt the minutes of December 14, 2009 as written.

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

Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes
Mr. McCullough	Yes

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Curtin introduced Nora Stanton, representing the Ohio Horseman’s Council.

PRESENTATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENT

**Geauga Park District
FINANCIAL STATEMENT MONTH ENDED
DECEMBER 31, 2009**

GENERAL FUND

BEGINNING FUND BALANCE DECEMBER 1, 2009	2,526,552.68
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EXPENDITURES & OTHER USES	700,090.70
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Personnel	325,379.16
Medicare	4,960.08
Dental /Hospitalization	41,939.68
PERS	47,202.37
Vouchers	280,609.41

REVENUES & OTHER SOURCES	82,017.49
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<i>Investment Income</i>	269.25
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<i>Gifts & Donations</i>	52,372.40
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- Snake care TWW - Kinder (\$50)
- Exhibit donation - Various (\$195.40)
- General donation -Various (\$426)
- Nature Scopes - GPDF and Kinetico (\$1,701)
- Frohring Meadows development –
Paul & Maxine Frohring Foundation (\$50,000)

Fees

- Camping	120.00
- Lodge heat fee	925.00
- Workshops - General - Public program	766.00

Sales

- Tapper's Treasures - MC	12.04
- Tree Tops - TWW	1,088.37
- Credit Card - All facilities	3,136.99

Other Receipts

- Swine Creek house - Harry	400.00
- Burton Wetlands house- Kolar	400.00
- Hyde house - McKinnon	400.00
- Chickagami house - Mast	400.00
- Citation Disbursement	14.00
- Recycling Proceeds	20.80
- Local Government Funds	7,087.71
- Miscellaneous Receipts	14,604.93
Insurance reimb - Tractor, Ranger Explorer (\$8,853.15)	
RPC registration - Various (\$5,662)	
Payment overage returned - Western Reserve Office (\$20.47)	
Postage reimb - GPDF (\$69.31)	

ENDING FUND BALANCE AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2009 **\$1,908,479.47**

LAND IMPROVEMENT FUND

BEGINNING FUND BALANCE DECEMBER 1, 2009 **3,297,649.85**

EXPENDITURES & OTHER USES **56,497.00**

Vouchers 56,497.00

REVENUES & OTHER SOURCES **28,165.55**

Investment Income 332.37

Gifts & Donations 26,035.68

- Observatory Park - GPDF (\$25,556.18)
- Affelder Trust - Key Bank (\$479.50)

Royalties

- Hall & Horning - Stinchcomb property	88.19
- Oxford Oil Co - Swine Creek property	1,073.85
- Cedar Valley Energy - Hehmeyer property	391.90
- Power Gas - Farley property	243.56

ENDING FUND BALANCE AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2009 **3,269,318.40**

VOUCHER RESOLUTION NO. 01-10

The Board asked for clarification on a few of the voucher items. All questions were answered satisfactorily.

Dr. Rzeszotarski moved to adopt Voucher Resolution No. 01-10, a copy of which is on file in the Park District office.

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

Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes
Mr. McCullough	Yes

COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD

Mr. Curtin shared the following communications with the Board:

- A note was received from WomenSafe Shelter thanking the Park District for use of the Cherry Room for their Volunteer Appreciation party, with special thanks to Eileen Smith for all she did to accommodate the group.
- Laura Libbe from The American Cancer Society sent a note of appreciation for GPD’s contributions to the Cancer Society from the Turkey Bowl and Pie Sale.
- Western Reserve Land Conservancy commended Geauga Park District on the development of Sunnybrook Preserve.
- The Buckeye Trail Association thanked Diane Valen and the Park District for the opportunity to participate in the Regional Parks Conference.
- An email was received from T. Parkinson who contacted the editor of *The Maple Leaf* to express his concerns regarding recent comments made by Sophie Horvath in her Munson News column. Mr. Parkinson felt the article was an opinion piece rather than a news item and that it belonged in the Letters to the Editor section.

Mr. Leech thanked the Park Staff for cards he received and expressed his appreciation to the Park District staff for their efforts in making GPD “the best park district in the state.”

Mr. McCullough received a letter from Keith Landies which included several pictures of grouse observed at the Pinebrook property.

OPEN TO PUBLIC

There were no comments from the public.

Dr. Rzeszotarski asked Nora Stanton to convey best wishes for a happy new year from the Board to the Ohio Horseman’s Council.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

READING OF THE MISSION STATEMENT AND PARK PHILOSOPHY

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Geauga Park District is to preserve, conserve and protect the natural features of Geauga County and to provide the opportunity for people to enjoy and appreciate those resources.

PHILOSOPHY

Gauga Park District was created for the purpose of conserving natural resources. The parks are usually large undeveloped tracts of land devoted to conserving and preserving the forests, grasslands, wetlands, geological features, rivers, streams, lakes and ponds, and the plants and animals associated therewith. Prime consideration is given to protecting the natural aesthetic values and scenic landscapes. Only a small percentage of the area is physically developed, and then only when this is not in conflict with the objectives of protection and conservation.

Development in the parks provides the opportunity to use and enjoy the natural resources without diminishing their quality for future visitors. Recreation is primarily limited to passive trail-oriented activities. Most developments should provide an opportunity to learn more about the parks, the plant and animal life and other natural features.

Programs are offered to increase the public's knowledge of the natural and cultural heritage of Geauga County. Programs may be presented anywhere in the county, but will usually be scheduled in the parks.

Gauga Park District strives to maintain clean, safe parks which are enjoyable to visit and which protect valuable natural resources for the benefit of present and future generations. We believe that we are, and we intend to remain, "the best Park District in Ohio."

The Board affirmed the Mission Statement and Park Philosophy.

PARK UPDATES

2010 Budget

Mr. Curtin distributed draft copies of the 2010 budget for the Board's review. Official action on the budget will be taken at the February board meeting. Mr. Curtin thanked Sherry Bosworth, Michele Pennell and supervisors for all their work on the budget.

Speaker Series

Mr. Curtin reported that Western Reserve Land Conservancy and the Park District are working together to find funding for a seminar on land preservation as a tool for economic development.

Cutter Oil Request

Cutter Oil has requested permission to drill an oil well at Bessie Benner Metzenbaum Park. The Board reaffirmed their previous position that they are not in favor of drilling on park lands.

Trail Grooming

Mr. Curtin reported that the trails at The Maple Highlands Trail in Chardon and at Orchard Hills Park are being groomed by volunteers for cross country skiing.

Collaboration with Great Lakes Science Center

The Park District is working with the Great Lakes Science Center in Cleveland to co-sponsor the premiere showing of the movie, *Hubble*, at the Science Center's OmniMAX theatre. Staff, volunteers and park supporters will be invited to the event which is scheduled for March 19, 2010 at 7:00 p.m. The fee for the movie and parking is \$15.00. Prior to the movie, Mr. Curtin will be giving a short presentation on Observatory Park.

Ohio Parks and Recreation Association (OPRA) Legislative Update

Mr. Curtin updated the Board on several issues relating to park districts:

- Ohio's projected budget deficit may negatively affect park districts.
- The legislature passed a bill which will allow coal mining beneath Burr Oak State Park. The bill was supported by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) as they felt it would have less environmental impact on the park by mining underneath rather than creating a new portal. However, OPRA is seeking a discussion with ODNR as to why public hearings were not held.
- Senate Bill 151, which authorizes park districts to create their own building departments, has passed the Senate.
- ODNR may be permitted to seek Clean Ohio funding.

Donation from Estate

Mr. Curtin reported that the Park District will receive a donation of approximately \$50,000 in unrestricted funds from the estate of Constance Thomas. Dr. Rzeszotarski suggested contacting family members to see if they would like the money designated for Observatory Park.

GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT FOUNDATION REPORT

The Foundation meeting has been rescheduled to January 28, 2010 at 5:00 p.m.

CONTRACT REVIEW

There were no documents to review.

Mr. Curtin reported that 2010 projects will go out for bid on February 8 and that bid openings are scheduled for March 2, 2010. Projects for 2010 include asphalt improvements, Bass Lake Lodge, Observatory Park Phase II, Orchard Hills Park Phase I and Chickagami Park Phase II improvements.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S CONTRACT

The Board was presented with the Executive Director's contract for their signature. Changes to the contract were approved at the December 14, 2009 board meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

APPOINTMENT OF LEGAL COUNSEL, RESOLUTION NO. 02-10

A letter was sent to five law firms seeking proposals to provide general legal services to GPD during 2010. The services requested included public sector law, land acquisition, human resources (including bargaining), risk management and special litigation. The firms were chosen based on their area of specialty as identified in the Martindale-Hubbell Law Directory.

Three firms (Thrasher, Dinsmore & Dolan, Wiles, Boyle, Burkholder & Bringardner, and Ulmer & Berne) responded with proposals. After reviewing the proposals and taking into consideration their fee structures and prior experience with the Park District, the Board agreed to continue using the law firm of Thrasher, Dinsmore & Dolan in 2010.

Mr. Leech moved to enter into an agreement with Thrasher, Dinsmore & Dolan to provide legal services for 2010.

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

Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes
Mr. McCullough	Yes

PERSONNEL POLICY REVISION, EMERGENCY DAYS – RESOLUTION NO. 03-10

Mr. Curtin recommended that a minor change be made in paragraph one of Geauga Park District’s Emergency Days Policy, Section 506.1. The current policy reads as follows:

Fulltime, non-exempt employees who are required to work on an emergency day will receive pay at their time and one-half rate of pay for hours worked during the emergency period.

It was recommended that the phrase “fulltime” be stricken from the policy.

Dr. Rzeszotarski moved to accept the revision to the Emergency Days Policy, Section 506.1.

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

Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes
Mr. McCullough	Yes

2010 SMALL RESEARCH GRANTS

After reviewing six 2010 Small Research Grant proposals which were submitted, the Natural Resources Management Department asked the Board to approve the following small research grants for 2010:

Survey of Groundwater-Surface Water Interaction Zones and Ostracode Fauna in and around Geauga Park District

Two-year study - \$5,996.00

Submitted by Alison J. Smith and Donald F. Palmer, Kent State University

The Crickets and Katydid of Burton Wetlands: Effects of Controlled Burnings in the Meadows and a Baseline Species Study

One-year study - \$1,000.00

Submitted by Lisa Rainsong

Moth Species Inventory of Observatory Park

One-year study - \$2,950.00

Submitted by Phyllis Fuchsman, ENVIRON International Corporation

Day-flying Insect Survey at Observatory Park

One-year study - \$3,000.00

Submitted by Erik Neff

Mr. Leech moved to approve the 2010 Small Research Grant proposals.

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

Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes
Mr. McCullough	Yes

2010 IRS MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT RATES

Mr. Curtin advised the Board that beginning January 1, 2010, the standard business IRS mileage reimbursement rate is now 50 cents per mile. The 2009 rate was 55 cents per mile.

No action was taken by the Board, as the Park District adheres to the guidelines established by the Internal Revenue Service.

COMMISSIONERS' TIME

Mr. Leech reported that he, Tom Curtin and John Oros met with Faith Pescatore regarding hunting on park lands at The West Woods. Also in attendance at the meeting were Jim Mueller (Russell Township Trustee) and Russell Township's Chief of Police. Ms. Pescatore is supportive of Geauga Park District, but she does not think parks should be open during hunting. She also asked that neighbors and township officials be notified when a hunt is taking place in the parks. Mr. Oros and Mr. Curtin explained the Park District's deer management policy concerning testing for all hunter participants, restrictive hunting locations for each park, notification of neighboring residents prior to the hunting periods, etc. Mr. Leech said he would recommend to the other two Commissioners that the following be included in the Park's deer management policy: 1) parks would be closed when hunting takes place 2) the local police chief and township trustees in each township where hunting will take place will be notified before the hunting period and 3) the Park District will continue notifying the surrounding neighbors in writing prior to the hunt to warn them to stay out of the park when hunting is taking place. Mr. Leech explained these items to the other two Commissioners who agreed to modify the Park District's deer management policy to include all three items.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – ROLL CALL

Mr. McCullough moved to go into Executive Session at 4:20 p.m. for the purpose of discussing land acquisition only, as there were no personnel items to be discussed.

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

Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes
Mr. McCullough	Yes

The Board returned from Executive Session at 4:49 p.m. The following was brought forward for resolution:

Land Negotiations – Thompson and Newbury Townships

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

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

Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes
Mr. McCullough	Yes

Dean Property, Montville Township, Resolution No. 04-10

Dr. Rzeszotarski made a motion to approve the purchase of real property located in Montville Township owned by Jeffrey and Monica Dean, consisting of approximately 16.1 acres, for the purchase price of \$62,350.00, contingent upon the seller’s approval of the lot split survey.

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

Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes
Mr. McCullough	Yes

Mr. McCullough signed the purchase agreement on behalf of the Board.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD

There were no reports from committees of the Board.

REPORTS FROM OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE BOARD

Departmental reports from the Supervisors were submitted for the month of December 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 5:00 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,

Thomas G. Curtin, Executive Director

Robert McCullough, President