

**GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
January 11, 2011**

The regular meeting of the Geauga Park District Board was held on January 11, 2011 at the Donald W. Meyer Center, Chardon, Ohio. The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. Board members Mr. John Leech, Mr. James Patterson and Dr. Mark Rzeszotarski were present.

Employees Present:

Thomas Curtin, Executive Director  
Keith McClintock, Deputy Director  
Kathy Hanes, Executive Secretary  
Gloria Freno, Accountant  
Paige Hosier, Marketing & Admin. Services Dir.  
Sandy Klepach, Communications Specialist  
Michele Pennell, Chief Financial Officer  
Robin Pilarczyk, Human Resources Manager  
Paul Pira, Park Biologist  
Aaron Young, Planning Director

Visitors Present:

Glen Miller, *The Maple Leaf*

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

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

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

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

Mr. Patterson	Yes
Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes

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

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

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

Mr. Patterson	Yes
Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	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. Patterson	Yes
Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes

**ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES**

Mr. Leech moved to adopt the minutes of December 14, 2010 as amended.

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

Mr. Patterson	Yes
Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

Mr. Curtin welcomed Glen Miller from *The Maple Leaf*.

**PRESENTATION OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

Geauga Park District		
FINANCIAL STATEMENT MONTH ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2010		
<b><u>GENERAL FUND</u></b>		
<b>BEGINNING FUND BALANCE DECEMBER 1, 2010</b>		<b>3,405,683.04</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES &amp; OTHER USES</b>		<b>568,669.75</b>
Personnel	324,344.97	
Medicare	4,903.67	
Dental /Hospitalization	48,504.44	
PERS	47,042.28	
Vouchers	143,874.39	
<b>REVENUES &amp; OTHER SOURCES</b>		<b>16,742.55</b>
<i>Investment Income</i>	407.60	
<i>Gifts &amp; Donations</i>	5,564.93	
- Exhibit (\$5194.93)		
- Critter care donations - Patrons (\$50)		
- General (\$205)		
- Program (\$15)		
- In Honor of R. McCullough (\$100)		
<i>Fees</i>		
- Programs - Schools - Out-of-county	240.00	
- Lodge heat fee	100.00	

<u>Sales</u>		
- Tapper's Treasures - MC	83.84	
- Tree Tops - TWW	701.83	
<u>Other Receipts</u>		
- Swine Creek house - Harry	400.00	
- Burton Wetlands house- Kolar	400.00	
- Hyde house - McKinnon	400.00	
- Chickagami house - Mast	400.00	
- Recycling Proceeds - Steel/Aluminum	457.84	
- Local Government Funds	7,271.51	
- Miscellaneous Receipts	315.00	
- Regional Parks Conference - Various agencies (\$315)		
<b>ENDING FUND BALANCE AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2010</b>		<b>\$ 2,853,755.84</b>
<b><u>LAND IMPROVEMENT FUND</u></b>		
<b>BEGINNING FUND BALANCE DECEMBER 1, 2010</b>		<b>1,788,684.22</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES &amp; OTHER USES</b>		<b>611,039.55</b>
Vouchers	288,784.21	
Vouchers - Grant Tracking (OH 319 Grant)	322,255.34	
<b>REVENUES &amp; OTHER SOURCES</b>		<b>2,728.49</b>
<u>Investment Income</u>	303.79	
<u>Gifts &amp; Donations</u>	458.00	
- Affelder Trust - Cleveland Foundation \$458		
<u>Royalties</u>	1,966.70	
- Farley, Troyer, Kuhns, Kovacs, Hehmeyer, Hart, Sunnybrook, Swine Creek, Stinchcomb		
<b>ENDING FUND BALANCE AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2010</b>		<b>\$ 1,180,373.16</b>
<b><u>RETIREMENT RESERVE ACCOUNT</u></b>		
<b>BEGINNING FUND BALANCE DECEMBER 1, 2010</b>		<b>82,252.24</b>
<b>REVENUES &amp; OTHER SOURCES</b>		<b>9.60</b>
<u>Investment Income</u>	9.60	
<b>ENDING FUND BALANCE AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2010</b>		<b>\$ 82,261.84</b>

#### **VOUCHER RESOLUTION NO. 01-11**

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

Mr. Leech moved to adopt Voucher Resolution No. 01-11, a copy of which is on file in the Park District office.

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

Mr. Patterson	Yes
Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes

## **COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD**

Mr. Curtin received a phone call from Kathleen Curtis who expressed her appreciation to the Park District for the well-maintained facilities and grounds at Frohring Meadows Park.

Don Winton sent an email thanking the Park District for grooming The Maple Highlands Trail for cross-country skiing.

Dr. Rzeszotarski suggested sending out a news release on winter activities offered by the Park District and to inform patrons that the trails are being groomed for cross country skiing.

## **OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

There were no comments from the public.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **AFFIRMATION OF 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 tracks 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."

Mr. Leech moved to reaffirm the Park District's Mission and Philosophy statements. Dr. Rzeszotarski seconded the motion and the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Mr. Patterson	Yes
Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes

**PARK UPDATES**

Bridge Inspections

The Planning Department sent out six Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for 2011-12 bridge inspections.

Camp Chickagami, Phase III

Plans for the perimeter hiking trail have been prepared and forwarded to the Operations Dept. who will be constructing the trails in 2011.

Observatory Park

Phase II is substantially complete.

Nassau Astronomical Observing Station

Awaiting construction drawings for renovation of the facility.

Ohio Parks and Recreation Association (OPRA)

Mr. Curtin reported that OPRA is undertaking a grassroots campaign to maintain the level of local government funding. They are working with various organizations to raise the \$60,000 needed to finance the campaign.

OPRA is requesting financial assistance in the amount of \$10,000 from park districts in Ohio. So far three park districts have pledged \$500 each to the campaign.

After some discussion, the Board decided to table the issue.

Public Records Request

Mr. Curtin informed the Board that a public records request was received requesting information on employee wages.

Centennial Oak Tree

Davey Tree Company is donating their services to assess the condition and make recommendations regarding the historic Centennial Oak Tree located across the street from the Union Chapel site. A report will be forthcoming.

Recreational Opportunities Survey

Mr. Curtin distributed a copy of the results of an informal survey which was conducted to determine the number and types of recreational opportunities available in Geauga County. The survey was developed in response to a request from local resident Charles Osborn who had asked the Park District to offer "active" recreation opportunities (such as baseball, soccer, basketball, football) to park-goers. Those surveyed included Geauga County townships and villages, local non-profits and businesses.

Mr. Curtin reported that the survey indicates that there are numerous recreational opportunities available to Geauga County residents throughout the year. Some of these opportunities include soccer, hockey, baseball, swimming, basketball, volleyball, golfing and skating.

The survey also included questions taken from a Geauga County Planning Commission survey conducted in 1998 and again in 2010. Both surveys indicate that County residents desire additional passive recreation activities such as walking and jogging trails. Dr. Rzeszotarski mentioned that it was interesting to note that 51% of respondents thought “the recreational facility or opportunity needed most in their community was trails for walking/running/biking.”

Mr. Leech asked that a copy of the survey be sent to Mr. Osborn along with a letter inviting him to meet with the Board to discuss the survey results.

Record Retention Policy

Because the Park District can no longer store records at the County Archives Department, the Park District must develop their own procedure for records retention. Mr. Curtin reported that a record retention schedule is in the process of being developed.

Excessive Cleaning Fee, Resolution No. 07-11

The Board was asked to consider implementing an excessive cleaning fee of \$50.00 for shelters and lodges that require more than the “standard” one hour cleaning following an event. Mr. Curtin explained that there haven’t been many instances when excessive cleaning was needed, but that it would be a good idea to have a fee in place.

The Board discussed the fee and Dr. Rzeszotarski recommended that guidelines be developed describing what constitutes an excessive cleaning fee and what measures will be taken for restitution if park property is damaged or destroyed during use.

Mr. Leech moved to adopt the excessive cleaning fee in the amount of \$50.00, contingent upon the development of procedural guidelines.

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

Mr. Patterson	Yes
Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes

Social Networking Policy

Mr. Curtin reported that revisions to the Social Networking Policy are in progress.

Controlled Hunt Program

The Board reviewed the current results of the 2010-11 Controlled Hunting program.

2010 Workplace Accident/Injury Final Report

The Board reviewed the 2010 Workplace Accident/Injury report. Robin Pilarczyk, Human Resources Manager, explained that the majority of reported employee injuries were from bee stings and that bee sting kits are kept on hand to treat injuries.

### Geauga County General Plan Survey Results

A general plan survey was conducted by Geauga County Planning Commission officials in 2010. The Board discussed the survey results and noted that there was a very positive response by respondents who expressed their desire for more passive public parks, such as walking trails and/or nature preserves. In addition, the majority felt that the construction of walkways, trails and bikeways should be encouraged in the County.

### GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT FOUNDATION REPORT

Mr. Curtin distributed a copy of the 2010 Development Office Giving Report. It was noted that giving trends were up in the last quarter and indicators reflect increased donor confidence in the economy.

The next Foundation meeting is scheduled for January 20, 2011 at The West Woods.

### CONTRACT REVIEW

Pursuant to Article XI of the Geauga Park District By-laws, the Planning Department provided the Board with the construction costs for current park projects.

Mr. Curtin reported that the asphalt improvements, Chickagami Park (Phase II), and Bass Lake projects are complete. The Park District is awaiting final payouts on the Observatory Park (Phase II) and Orchard Hills (Phase I) projects. The Board asked when 2011 projects would be going out for bid and Mr. Curtin advised them that bid advertising begins on February 7, 2011.

### NEW BUSINESS

#### 2011 SMALL RESEARCH GRANT PROPOSALS

The Board was asked to review and approve the 2011 small research grant proposals.

Mr. Curtin explained that each year grants are awarded to local university and independent researchers to conduct research in the parks.

After review by GPD staff members, five proposals were recommended for approval:

*Updating the distribution and locating rare odonate species in Geauga Park District lands and nearby streams*

Researcher(s): Larry Rosche, Judy Semroc

One-year grant, \$1500

*Interconnectivity of the mussel fauna in the Geauga County highlands:  
A study of the adjacent headwater streams within the Chagrin, Cuyahoga  
and Grand River watersheds*

Researcher: Dr. Robert Krebs

Two-year grant, \$5,983

(\$2,991.50 in 2011, \$2,991.50 in 2012)

*Interactions among top-down regulators and their influences on structure and function  
of detrital forest-floor food web resources*

Researcher: Dr. Cari-Ann M. Hickerson

Two-year grant, \$6,000

(\$3,000 in 2011, \$3,000 in 2012)

*The Effects of Controlled Burning on the Crickets and Katydid  
at Burton Wetlands*

Researcher: Lisa Rainsong  
One-year grant, \$1,500

*History and Ecology of the Sharon Conglomerate Ledges of Geauga County*

Researchers: Shawn Cooper, Clay McMullen, Zak Kucera  
One-year grant, \$1,000

Dr. Rzeszotarski commented that the proposals were very worthwhile and suggested scheduling public programs so the researchers could share their results of the research with the public.

Dr. Rzeszotarski moved to accept the 2011 Small Research Grant proposals.

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

Mr. Patterson	Yes
Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes

**2011 CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS**

Mr. Curtin distributed the construction documents for Orchard Hills, Observatory Park and Meyer Center re-roofing projects, all going out to bid in 2011.

The Board reviewed the following plans:

**Orchard Hills, Phase II**

Phase II will include development of amenities associated with winter activities, such as a small picnic shelter, restroom and parking lot. The Board discussed the proposed location of the pavilion and parking lot in relation to the sledding hill. Mr. Patterson suggested moving the parking lot across the street to prevent the possibility of sled riders running into the parking lot and pavilion. Discussion continued regarding safety of patrons crossing the entrance road to get to the sledding hill if the parking lot were moved across the street. The Board agreed that the priority was to make the area as safe as possible for patrons and asked the Planning Department to work with the designers to move the parking lot to another location.

The Board also discussed the availability of water wells on the property. The Board expressed a desire to use one of the existing wells on the property to provide water to the pavilion in the future.

A discussion was held regarding the remediation of trails throughout the property. The plans call for removal of the asphalt and replacing it with aggregate because it is easier to maintain. After some discussion, the consensus of the Board was to remediate the trails using aggregate.

**Observatory Park, Phase II**

The Board was shown the conceptual plans for the trees and aggregate to be used on the Planetary Path at Observatory Park. Mr. Curtin informed the Board that a contract has been signed for the manufacture of the constellation sculpture which will be located in the Central Plaza.



Meyer Center Roofing

Mr. Curtin reported that the roof at the Meyer Center needs to be replaced in 2011. Ice guards will be utilized on the eaves and valleys.

Having no further questions and voicing no objections to the proposed projects, the Board agreed to accept the 2011 construction bid documents for Orchard Hills (Phase II), Observatory Park (Phase III) and the Meyer Center re-roofing project.

**FITNESS REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM, RESOLUTION NO. 03-11**

The Board was presented with a proposal for participation in Geauga County’s fitness reimbursement program.

The County is offering all full-time employees \$30/month toward a Fitness Club or Weight Watchers Membership. Participants must submit a quarterly attendance/exercise report, listing the date, fitness club, and approximate length of activity. Attendance documentation of a minimum of 24 sessions per quarter lasting thirty (30) minutes/session shall be required per quarterly reporting period to qualify for fitness reimbursement. Weight Watcher participants averaging 12 meetings per quarter must also complete and document twelve, 30-minute sessions of exercise (walking, running, jogging) per quarterly reporting period.

Mrs. Pilarczyk reported that fifteen GPD employees indicated their interest in the fitness reimbursement program. The cost to the Park District would be \$5,000 per year and the money would come from the Health Care account. The purpose of the program is to hold down health care costs by encouraging a healthy lifestyle. After some discussion, the Board agreed to participate in the program, limiting participation to fifteen employees.

Mr. Leech made a motion to adopt the 2011 Fitness Reimbursement Program.

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

Mr. Patterson	Yes
Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes

**2011 HEALTHCARE WAIVER & OVER-AGE DEPENDENT HEALTHCARE, RESOLUTION NO. 04-11**

The Board was presented with the 2011 health care waiver and the overage dependent healthcare rates as provided by the Geauga County Commissioners:

2011 Healthcare Waiver:

<u>Type of Coverage</u>	<u>Full Coverage Waiver Amount</u>	<u>Medical/RX Only</u>
Single	\$ 792.00	\$ 720.00
Family	\$ 2088.00	\$ 1884.00

According to ORC 305.171, a cash payment to an officer or County employee in lieu of providing health insurance must not exceed twenty-five percent of the cost of premiums or payments that otherwise would be paid by the County. When both husband and wife are eligible for coverage under the County group plans, both shall either carry single coverage or if there are more than two dependents, both shall be covered by one family plan. The waiver option will not apply.

2011 Overage Dependents:

<u>Type of Coverage</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>26-28 years of age</u>
Basic	\$234.86/Monthly	\$117.43/bi-weekly
Enhanced	\$266.40/Monthly	\$133.20/bi-weekly

This is an additional bi-weekly employee payroll deduction. Affidavits must accompany employee's enrollment form for this coverage. This coverage is mandated by the State of Ohio.

Dr. Rzeszotarski moved to adopt the Healthcare Waiver and the Overage Dependent Healthcare costs for 2011.

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

Mr. Patterson	Yes
Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes

**APPOINTMENT OF LEGAL COUNSEL, RESOLUTION NO. 02-11**

As required by the Ohio State Auditor, legal counsel must be appointed each year. In December 2009, RFPs were sent out for legal services and after review, Thrasher, Dinsmore & Dolan was appointed as GPD legal counsel for 2010.

The rate for services for 2011 is \$175.00 per hour for general legal work. Mr. Curtin mentioned that this rate is considerably less than the standard rate charged for such services by Thrasher, Dinsmore & Dolan and recommended the Park District continue with them as legal counsel in 2011.

Mr. Leech made a motion to appoint Thrasher, Dinsmore & Dolan as legal counsel for 2011.

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

Mr. Patterson	Yes
Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes

**AUTHORIZATION FOR LWCF/NATUREWORKS FUNDS, RESOLUTION NO. 05-11**

The Board was presented with Resolution No. 05-11 for authorization to apply for funds under the NatureWorks and Land and Water Conservation Fund for the BAK project in the Village of Middlefield:

WHEREAS, the State of Ohio through the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Administers financial assistance for public recreation purposes through the NatureWorks program and the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund program; and

WHEREAS, Geauga Park District desires financial assistance under the NatureWorks and Land and Water Conservation Fund programs for its project in the Village of Middlefield;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by Geauga Park District:

1. that Geauga Park District approves filing applications for financial assistance to both NatureWorks and the Land and Water Conservation Fund.
2. that Keith McClintock is hereby authorized and directed to execute and file applications with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and to provide all information and documentation required to become eligible for possible funding assistance.
3. that Geauga Park District does agree to obligate the funds required to satisfactorily complete the proposed project and become eligible for reimbursement under the terms of the NatureWorks and Land and Water Conservation Fund programs.

Mr. Leech moved to adopt Resolution No. 05-11 authorizing Geauga Park District to apply for funds under the NatureWorks and Land and Conservation Fund for the BAK project in the Village of Middlefield.

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

Mr. Patterson	Yes
Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes

#### **COMMISSIONERS' TIME**

Dr. Rzeszotarski asked if the April board meeting date could be changed due to a scheduling conflict. The Board agreed to change the date from April 12<sup>th</sup> to April 19<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Leech complimented Paige Hosier and the Marketing Department on the financial article in the *Voices of Nature* newsletter.

#### **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There were no questions from the public.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION – ROLL CALL**

Dr. Rzeszotarski moved to go into Executive Session at 6:20 p.m. for the purpose of discussing land acquisition and employee compensation.

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

Mr. Patterson	Yes
Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes

The Board returned from Executive Session at 6:54 p.m. The following item was brought forward for resolution:

Land Negotiation – Burton and Claridon Townships

Dr. Rzeszotarski moved to authorize the Executive Director to negotiate for land located in Burton and Claridon Townships.

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

Mr. Patterson	Yes
Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes

**REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD**

Tuition Reimbursement, Resolution No. 06-11

Mr. Curtin asked the Commissioners to consider increasing the employee tuition reimbursement schedule which is currently set at \$3,000 per year. Dr. Rzeszotarski stated that it is important to provide continuing education for employees. Mr. Leech commented that he felt raising the amount to \$3,500 would be appropriate. Although there has not been a limit set on the number of employees that could participate in the program, the Board stated that tuition reimbursement each year is contingent upon available funds in the annual budget and at the Executive Director’s discretion.

Dr. Rzeszotarski moved to raise the tuition reimbursement rate for Geauga Park District employees to \$3,500 per year.

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

Mr. Patterson	Yes
Mr. Leech	Yes
Dr. Rzeszotarski	Yes

**REPORTS FROM OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES OF THE BOARD**

Departmental reports for the month of December were submitted to the Executive Director and a summary sheet was forwarded to the Board prior to the Board meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

**SUNSHINE LAW COMPLIANCE**

It is declared that notification of this meeting and any business conducted therein by the Geauga Park District Board of Commissioners was in compliance with Ohio’s Sunshine Laws.

Respectfully submitted,

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Thomas G. Curtin, Executive Director

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Dr. Mark Rzeszotarski, President