

**GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
January 10, 2012**

The regular meeting of the Geauga Park District Board was held on January 10, 2012 at the Donald W. Meyer Center, Chardon, Ohio. The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. Board members John Leech, James Patterson and Michael Petruziello were present.

Employees Present:

Thomas Curtin, Executive Director  
Keith McClintock, Deputy Director  
Kathy Hanes, Executive Secretary  
Barb Emch, Administrative Assistant  
Matt Farrar, Maintenance Tech.  
Gloria Freno, Accountant  
Steve George, Construction Supervisor  
Tami Gingrich, Field Naturalist  
Shawn Harry, Foreman (North Operations)  
John Hayhurst, Ranger Lt.  
Paige Hosier, Marketing & Administrative Services Dir.  
Bob Lange, Land Steward  
Don Lombardy, Information Technology Manager  
John Oros, Operations Director  
Michele Pennell, Chief Financial Officer  
Robin Pilarczyk, Human Resources Manager  
Paul Pira, Natural Resource Management Director  
Eileen Smith, Administrative Services Coordinator  
Jack Snyder, Foreman (South Operations)  
Amanda Stith, Development Associate  
Robert Urban, Chief Ranger  
Diane Valen, Naturalist Services Director  
Sandy Ward, Communications Specialist  
Aaron Young, Planning Director

Guests:

Jim Dvorak, Burton Township Trustee  
Steve Gallowan  
Judge Timothy Grendell, Probate Judge  
John Karlovec, *The Maple Leaf*  
Pat Leech  
David Ondrey, Thrasher, Dinsmore & Dolan  
John Ralph  
Iola Skinner  
Tom Sterlekar  
Dorothy Stinchcomb  
Sandy Woolf

**APPOINTMENT OF BOARD MEMBER**

Mr. Leech read the journal entry from Judge Timothy Grendell appointing Michael Petruziello to a three-year term on the Board of Commissioners commencing January 1, 2012.

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

	)	JUDGE TIMOTHY GRENDALL
<b>THE APPOINTMENT OF A</b>	)	
<b>PARK BOARD MEMBER TO THE</b>	)	
<b>GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT</b>	)	JOURNAL ENTRY

On this 30<sup>th</sup> day of December 2011, the Court appoints Michael John Petruziello, 8564 Camelot Drive, Chesterland, Ohio, 44026, to a three year term on the Geauga County Park District Board commencing January 1, 2012 and ending on December 31, 2014.

Before entering upon the performance of his duties, said Commissioner shall take an oath to faithfully perform his duties of office and shall post bond for the faithful performance of the duties of office in a sum of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00). Such bond shall be approved and filed with the auditor of Geauga County.

The Commissioner herein appointed shall serve without commission, but shall be allowed actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of duties. This appointment is made in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 1545.05.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

TIMOTHY J. GRENDALL, PROBATE JUDGE

Mr. Leech and Mr. Patterson welcomed Mr. Petruziello to the Board.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS –OFFICE OF PRESIDENT**

Mr. Leech asked for nominations for Office of President.

Mr. Leech moved to nominate Mr. Patterson as President.

Mr. Petruziello seconded the motion.

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

Mr. Petruziello	Yes
Mr. Patterson	Abstain
Mr. Leech	Yes

Mr. Patterson expressed his appreciation to Mr. Leech and Mr. Petruziello for their support and thanked those in the audience for attending.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS – OFFICE OF VICE-PRESIDENT**

Mr. Patterson opened the floor for nominations for the Office of Vice-President.

Mr. Patterson moved to nominate Mr. Leech for the Office of Vice-President.

Mr. Petruziello seconded the motion.

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

Mr. Petruziello	Yes
Mr. Patterson	Yes
Mr. Leech	Abstain

Mr. Leech thanked Mr. Patterson and Mr. Petruziello and all those in attendance for their support.

Judge Grendell expressed his appreciation to the Commissioners for their work and dedication to the Park District and to the citizens of Geauga County. Mr. Patterson thanked Judge Grendell for his support of the Park District, not only as a Judge, but also as a former state representative and state senator who assisted with land acquisitions in the past.

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

Mr. Leech moved to adopt the agenda for the meeting.

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

Mr. Petruziello	Yes
Mr. Patterson	Yes
Mr. Leech	Yes

**ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES**

Mr. Leech moved to adopt the minutes of December 13, 2011 as written.

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

Mr. Petruziello	Yes
Mr. Patterson	Yes
Mr. Leech	Yes

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

Mr. Curtin welcomed staff members and all visitors in attendance.

Steve Gallowan, a resident of Burton Village, mentioned that he is interested in the Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist (OCVN) Program.

**PRESENTATION OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

<b>Geauga Park District</b>		
<b>FINANCIAL STATEMENT MONTH ENDED</b>		
<b>DECEMBER 31, 2011</b>		
<b><u>GENERAL FUND</u></b>		
<b>BEGINNING FUND BALANCE DECEMBER 1, 2011</b>		<b>4,589,370.60</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES &amp; OTHER USES</b>		<b>461,889.31</b>
Personnel	302,198.46	
Medicare	4,993.19	
Dental /Hospitalization	43,636.31	
PERS	44,139.42	
Vouchers	66,921.93	
<b>REVENUES &amp; OTHER SOURCES</b>		<b>19,476.62</b>
<i>General Tax Collections</i>		
- State Reimbursed Personal Property Tax	790.18	
<i>Investment Income</i>		
	78.21	
<i>Gifts &amp; Donations</i>		
	751.81	
- Patrons - General/program donations (\$501.81)		
- Kinder - In memory of K. Kinder (\$50)		
- Imhof - In memory of D. Imhof (\$100)		
- McCullough - In honor of R. McCullough (\$100)		
<i>Fees</i>		
- Camping	40.00	
- Lodge heat fee	1,190.00	
- Workshops - General - Public program	389.00	
- Programs - General - Public Program	4.00	
<i>Sales</i>		
- Tapper's Treasures - MC	186.28	
- Tree Tops - TWW	3,550.72	
<i>Other Receipts</i>		
- Swine Creek house - Harry	400.00	
- Burton Wetlands house- Kolar	400.00	
- Hyde house - McKinnon	400.00	
- Chickagami house - Mast	400.00	
- Citation Disbursement	20.00	
- Recycling Proceeds - Steel/Aluminum	72.10	
- Refunds- Other - Carter Lumber, return/Auditor, misc. med.	512.38	
- Local Government Funds	5,853.57	
- Auction Proceeds - 2002 GMC Sonoma	4,213.37	
- Miscellaneous Receipts	225.00	
Mill Creek/Lake Cnty Soil - Regional Parks Conference fee		
<b>ENDING FUND BALANCE AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2011</b>		<b>\$ 4,146,957.91</b>
<b><u>LAND IMPROVEMENT FUND</u></b>		
<b>BEGINNING FUND BALANCE DECEMBER 1, 2011</b>		<b>1,493,936.11</b>

<b>EXPENDITURES &amp; OTHER USES</b>		<b>336,746.15</b>
Vouchers	336,746.15	
<b>REVENUES &amp; OTHER SOURCES</b>		<b>4,457.12</b>
<i>Investment Income</i>	26.47	
<i>Gifts &amp; Donations</i>	4,025.50	
- Cleveland Foundation – Bessie B. Metzenbaum Fdn. (\$423.50)		
- Observatory Park - Wilhelm/Neubauer (\$3,602)		
<i>Royalties/In-Lieu Fees</i>	405.15	
- Farley, Troyer, Kuhns, Kovacs, Hehmeyer, Hart, Sunnybrook, Swine Creek, Stinchcomb		
<b>ENDING FUND BALANCE AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2011</b>		<b>\$ 1,161,647.08</b>
<b>RETIREMENT RESERVE ACCOUNT</b>		
<b>BEGINNING FUND BALANCE DECEMBER 1, 2011</b>		<b>82,315.12</b>
<b>REVENUES &amp; OTHER SOURCES</b>		<b>1.37</b>
<i>Investment Income</i>	1.37	
<b>ENDING FUND BALANCE AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2011</b>		<b>\$ 82,316.49</b>

**VOUCHER RESOLUTION NO. 01-12**

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. 01-12, a copy of which is on file in the Park District office.

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

Mr. Petruziello	Yes
Mr. Patterson	Yes
Mr. Leech	Yes

**COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD**

Mr. Curtin shared the following communications with the Board:

- A note from Maureen Stern, Youth Services Assistant at Bainbridge Library, thanking Naturalist Linda Gilbert for a “Scat, Tracks, and Animal Facts” program she presented at the library recently.
- A letter from Susan Guy of Garrettsville expressing appreciation to the Naturalist Staff and the volunteers for hosting the Hound Hikes, Maple Town Tune Traders, Winter Solstice, and Saps-a-Risin’.
- A note from a patron thanking the Park District for providing a “great series” of 50/50 Hikes.

**OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

Iola Skinner introduced herself as a long-time volunteer for the Park District and said she had some questions about statements made by Mr. Petruziello in a recent newspaper article. She asked Mr. Petruziello how many baseball fields he feels are necessary. Mr. Petruziello replied that his township, Chesterland, has only one town ball field and the rest are donated by Eddy’s Fruit Farm. He said West Geauga Schools would not allow the federation to use the ball fields because of union difficulties in maintaining the fields; therefore, he would like to see the parks used more for recreational purposes.

Mrs. Skinner also asked if he feels the shelters or picnic facilities are overcrowded. Mr. Petruziello responded that they are not. Mr. Petruziello went on to say that while the Park District currently has passive nature parks and preserves, his definition of a “passive” park is one that includes horseshoes, volleyball, “pick-up” baseball or football, swings for kids, and picnicking opportunities.

John Ralph, a Chardon resident, told the Board that he participates in the deer management program, thinks it is very successful and hopes that the Commissioners will continue supporting it.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **PARK UPDATES**

#### **Park Projects**

Mr. Curtin reported on the following:

- A series of meetings will be held with departmental representatives to discuss potential plans for upgrades to Eldon Russell Park, the Ellerin property and the Hyde-Kaplan property. Once conceptual plans are developed, public meetings will be held to gather input from residents.
- The Planning Department and Natural Resource Management Dept. are coordinating the expansion of wetlands at Frohring Meadows.
- The engineering firm is currently surveying two sections of the railroad right-of-way which will connect the northern and southern portions of The Maple Highlands Trail. Once construction drawings are complete, the Park District will seek funding for the project.
- Meetings have been held with Middlefield Village officials to discuss expansion of The Maple Highlands Trail through Middlefield.
- A draft master trail plan is being developed for Observatory Park. There have been quite a few people walking on the planetary path since its completion. The cable-pulley system for the observatory roof needs to be repaired. It malfunctioned during a recent program held at the park for Hawken Middle School students. The contractor has been notified.
- The Natural Resource Management and Operations Departments are reviewing plans for additional plantings at Orchard Hills Park.

Mr. Leech asked about the status of the loop trail connections at Frohring Meadows and Mr. Curtin indicated that they are complete.

#### **Resolution Honoring Dr. Mark Rzeszotarski**

Mr. Curtin distributed a draft copy of a resolution honoring Dr. Mark Rzeszotarski for his many years as Park Board Commissioner. Dr. Rzeszotarski will be honored at the Volunteer Brunch in the spring.

#### **Snowbelted Exhibit**

Mr. Curtin provided the board with attendance figures for the *Snowbelted* Exhibit being held at The West Woods. Attendance to-date is 8,900 (November and December – 7,861 and January – 1,039).

#### **Deer Management Program**

Mr. Curtin updated the board on the deer management program. To date, 20 deer have been harvested in seven parks. A final report will be issued in April.

Mr. Leech commented that he thought the numbers seemed low and John Oros, Operations Director, indicated that numbers are down state-wide. This could be due to Ohio’s cold, wet spring which led to lower procreation rates.

### **2012 IRS Mileage Reimbursement Rate**

Mr. Curtin advised the Board the 2012 IRS mileage reimbursement rate will remain the same (\$0.55 per mile). No approval from the Board was necessary, as the Board adheres to guidelines established by the Internal Revenue Service.

### **ODNR Fish Management Agreement**

The Park District has entered into a five-year agreement with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) to provide a fisheries management program at Walter C. Best Preserve and Bass Lake Preserve. ODNR will provide management services (surveys, data compilation, recommendations and fish stocking) at no charge to the Park District.

Mr. Patterson asked if there are parameters in place to measure fish populations. Paul Pira, Natural Resource Management Director, explained that a population netting study was done at Bass Lake last fall. The ages of the fish will be analyzed and population estimates will be reconstructed based on the results.

### **Donation of Gallery One Prints**

Mr. Curtin reported that he received notification that a number of Gallery One prints have been bequeathed to the Park District from the estate of Robert Ragley and that an inventory of the prints will be sent shortly.

### **Record Retention**

At the end of each year the Park District follows the record retention procedures set forth in the Ohio Revised Code. Mr. Patterson, as President of the Board, will be serving on the Records Retention Committee.

### **Western Reserve Land Conservancy Baseline Documentation Report**

The final baseline documentation report from the Western Reserve Land Conservancy (WRLC) has been received for the McDonald property in Munson Township. The Park District and WRLC are co-grantees of the 40-acre conservation easement. The Commissioners asked if there were any restrictions on usage of the property. Mr. Curtin replied that normal "non-permitted" usage includes no mining, no alteration of the land, etc.

### **GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT FOUNDATION**

Amanda Stith, Development Associate, updated the Board on fundraising efforts by the Foundation during 2011. She reported that \$543,000 was raised for the Observatory Park Capital Campaign; \$98,000 was raised for the Annual Campaign; and over \$11,000 has been donated to the Chip Henry Institute for Outdoor Adventure.

The Foundation has developed a strategic plan and a mission and vision statement and is currently undergoing a change in IRS status from a 509(a) (3) organization to a 509(a) (1) organization. The status change will provide for greater eligibility for donations to the Foundation.

Mr. Leech thanked the Foundation volunteers for the successful job they have done raising funds during difficult economic times.

### **CONTRACT REVIEW**

All projects are substantially complete; punch list and warranty items are being addressed at Orchard Hills Park and Observatory Park.

## NEW BUSINESS

### **APPOINTMENT OF LEGAL COUNSEL, RESOLUTION NO. 02-12**

As required by the Ohio State Auditor, legal counsel must be appointed each year. The Board agreed to reappoint Thrasher, Dinsmore and Dolan as Geauga Park District legal counsel for 2012. The current rate for all legal services is \$175.00 per hour and will remain the same for 2012. Mr. Curtin reported that law firms typically charge clients anywhere from \$225.00 to \$390.00 per hour. Requests for proposals for legal services for 2013 will be sent out in December 2012.

Mr. Leech made a motion to appoint Thrasher, Dinsmore and Dolan as legal counsel for 2012 at the rate of \$175.00 per hour for all legal work.

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

Mr. Petruziello	Yes
Mr. Patterson	Yes
Mr. Leech	Yes

### **2012 SMALL RESEARCH GRANT PROPOSALS, RESOLUTION NO. 03-12**

Each year research grant proposals are solicited from academics and serious researchers to build upon the Park District's scientific database. Mr. Curtin explained that the grant committee, comprised of Park staff, reviewed the 2012 grant proposals and recommended awarding funding for three proposals:

- Grant Proposal #1: Lisa Rainsong  
Project Title: *Crickets and Katydid of Frohring Meadows in 2012: how four years of meadow and wetland maturation has encouraged them, and how different meadow management practices may affect them.*  
Grant Request: \$1,500
- Grant Proposal #2: Dr. Timothy Matson, Cleveland Museum of Natural History  
Project Title: *Amphibian Declines in Northeastern Ohio (ongoing study looking at attributable factors such as metal toxicity, chytrid fungi, pathogenic bacteria, and ranavirus)*  
Grant Request: \$3,000
- Grant Proposal #3: Dr. Robert Krebs, Cleveland State University  
Project Title: *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*  
Grant Request: \$3,000

The Commissioners discussed the proposals and made the following general comments:

- Mr. Petruziello would like to see baseline comparisons for the proposals.
- Mr. Petruziello would like mercury and lead added as a component to Proposal #2. Paul Pira commented that the researchers would definitely be willing to customize their research.
- Mr. Leech commented that any proposal that is funded should benefit the Park District. Mr. Curtin explained that the data collected will benefit GPD and will be shared with other conservation agencies which will help with land preservation efforts.
- Mr. Petruziello asked if the data would be used to determine potential land acquisition. Mr. Curtin explained that the Natural Resource Management Department collects data that is used in an environmental index to rate potential land acquisitions that the Park District may be considering.



Mr. Pira commented that the Park District is fortunate to have top researchers from local universities working on these issues in the parks.

Mr. Patterson asked if the schools are involved in any of the projects. It was explained that one of last year's grants was written by a school group and that other school groups have participated in the past. Mr. Petruziello commented that it was good to see that the funds are kept in the community.

Mr. Leech made a motion to approve the three grant proposals for a total grant award of \$7,500. Mr. Patterson seconded the motion and the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Mr. Petruziello	Yes
Mr. Patterson	Yes
Mr. Leech	Yes

#### **2012 FITNESS REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM, RESOLUTION NO. 04-12**

The Board was presented with the 2012 Fitness Reimbursement Program approved by the Geauga County Commissioners on January 5, 2012. The Board was also provided with information that documents the benefits of the program (County Commissioners Journal, December 16, 2010).

Mr. Curtin explained that the program is part of a comprehensive wellness program offered by the County which keeps health care rates down. The program provides a \$30.00/month reimbursement to all full-time county employees toward a Fitness Club or Weight Watchers Membership. Fitness Club participants are required to submit quarterly attendance/exercise reports (a minimum of 24 sessions lasting a minimum of 30 minutes). Weight Watchers participants must average 12 meetings per quarter and document twelve, 30-minute sessions of exercise (walking, running, jogging).

Robin Pilarczyk, Human Resources Manager, reported that there were seven Geauga Park District employees that participated in the program in 2011 and that the Park District is responsible for the reimbursement costs.

Mr. Leech made a motion to approve Geauga Park District's participation in the Geauga County 2012 Fitness Reimbursement Program.

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

Mr. Petruziello	Yes
Mr. Patterson	Yes
Mr. Leech	Yes

#### **NEWSLETTER PRINT AND MAIL CONTRACT RENEWAL, RESOLUTION NO. 04-12**

The Board was presented with the newsletter print and mail contract renewals from Premier Printing Corporation (for printing services) and Direct Marketing Solutions (for mailing services).

Paige Hosier, Marketing & Administrative Services Director, explained that in 2010 the Marketing Department advertised an invitation to bid for the printing and mailing of the newsletter. The invitation to bid was sent to all printers who had previously requested notification, including Geauga County printers. No Geauga County print vendors opted to submit a bid. Mrs. Hosier explained that it is difficult for some of the smaller businesses to post a bid bond, as required by the Ohio Revised Code.

Because of the excellent service with both vendors, Ms. Hosier recommended renewing the contract with Premier Printing in the amount of \$30,196.00 and Direct Marketing Solutions in the amount of \$33,062.00.

Mr. Leech made a motion to approve the 2012 newsletter print and mail contract renewals. Mr. Petruziello seconded the motion and the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Mr. Petruziello	Yes
Mr. Patterson	Yes
Mr. Leech	Yes

Mr. Petruziello thanked Ms. Hosier for including Geauga County print vendors in the bid process.

#### **COMMISSIONERS' TIME**

- Mr. Leech thanked staff and visitors for attending the meeting.
- Mr. Petruziello commented that he would like the Park District to continue working with local businesses and school groups as much as possible.

#### **QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Steve Gallowan commented that he felt the Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist program is a good program which involves a commitment of time on the part of the participant. Participants must go through training to receive their certification and also must participate in continuing education.

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

Mr. Leech moved to go into Executive Session at 4:46 p.m. for the purpose of discussing land acquisition and discipline of a public employee.

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

Mr. Petruziello	Yes
Mr. Patterson	Yes
Mr. Leech	Yes

The Board, along with David Ondrey, Park Legal Counsel, returned from Executive Session at 5:26 p.m. There were no items brought forward for resolution.

#### **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

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 meeting.

##### Miscellaneous

Mr. Curtin mentioned that participation in the Fitness Reimbursement Program should be limited to a maximum of ten employees (as it was in 2011). Mr. Leech questioned if it would be beneficial to increase the eligibility number to encourage greater employee participation. After some discussion, the Board agreed to leave the number at ten but increase it if the need arises.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:40 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 Curtin, Executive Director

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James Patterson, President