

**GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
January 3, 2013**

The regular meeting of the Geauga Park District Board was held on January 3, 2013 at the Donald W. Meyer Center, Chardon, Ohio. The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. President James Patterson was in the Chair. Commissioners Michael Petruziello and Nicholas Fischbach were present.

**Employees Present:**

Thomas Curtin, Executive Director  
Anna McDonald, Executive Secretary  
Gloria Freno, Accountant  
Paige Orvis, Marketing & Admin. Services Director  
Robin Pilarczyk, Human Resources Manager  
Michele Pennell, Chief Financial Officer  
Eileen Smith, Administrative Services Coordinator  
Dan Best, Senior Naturalist  
Aaron Young, Planning Director  
Scott Wilson, Chief Ranger  
Paul Pira, Natural Resource Management Director  
Amanda Stith, Development Associate  
Matt McClure, Sr. Park Planner  
Tami Gingrich, Field Naturalist  
Steve George, Construction Supervisor  
John Snyder, Maintenance Foreman  
John Oros, Operations Director  
Joel Firem, Land Steward  
Vicky Liptak, Graphic Designer  
Bob Lange, Land Steward

**Guests:**

John Augustine  
Glen Miller, *The Geauga Maple Leaf*  
Tom and Diane Jones, *Wind in the Woods Farm*  
Nora Stanton, *Ohio Horsemen's Council*  
Joy Keco, *Ohio Horsemen's Council*  
Jennifer Salo, *Ohio Horsemen's Council*  
Judge Timothy Grendell, *Geauga Probate Court*  
John A. Ralph, *Judge Grendell's Office*  
Iola Skinner, *GPD Volunteer*  
Bob and Esther Laczko, *Park Neighbors*

Board President James Patterson called the meeting to order.

**APPOINTMENT OF BOARD MEMBER**

Judge Grendell, Geauga County Probate Judge, swore in Nicholas E. Fischbach to a three-year term on the Board of Commissioners commencing January 1, 2012, pursuant the Judgment Entry dated December 28, 2012.

**IN THE MATTER OF:**

) CASE NO. 13092

)

**THE APPOINTMENT OF A  
PARK BOARD MEMBER TO THE  
GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT**

) JUDGE TIMOTHY J. GRENDALL

)

) JUDGMENT ENTRY

On this 28<sup>th</sup> day of December 2012, the Court appoints NICHOLAS FISCHBACH, 13959 East Center St., Burton, Ohio 44021, to a three year term on the Geauga County Park District Board commencing January 1, 2013 and ending on December 31, 2015.

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

Board President James Patterson reviewed the guidelines regarding public input at Park Board meetings.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS – OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT**

Mr. Patterson asked for nominations for Office of President.

Mr. Fischbach moved to nominate Mr. Patterson as 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. Fischbach	Yes
Mr. Petruziello	Yes
Mr. Patterson	Abstain

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

Mr. Patterson asked for nominations for Office of Vice President.

Mr. Fischbach moved to nominate Mr. Petruziello as Vice President.

Mr. Patterson 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. Fischbach	Yes
Mr. Petruziello	Abstain
Mr. Patterson	Yes

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

A revised agenda was presented to Board for approval, adding two items under New Business: item c. 2013 Newsletter Print & Mail Contracts and, item d. Resolution of Commendation No. 03-13 for John Leech.

Mr. Petruziello moved to adopt the agenda, as revised, for the meeting.

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

Mr. Fischbach	Yes
Mr. Petruziello	Yes
Mr. Patterson	Yes

**ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES**

Mr. Petruziello moved to accept the minutes of December 11<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting and December 18<sup>th</sup> Special Meeting as written.

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

Mr. Fischbach	Abstain
Mr. Petruziello	Yes
Mr. Patterson	Yes

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

Mr. Curtin welcomed GPD Staff and guests Esther and Bob Lacko, Iola Skinner, Jenifer Salo, Joy Kelso, Nora Stanton, John Augustine, Tom and Diane Jones, Judge Timothy Grendell, John Ralph and Glen Miller. Judge Grendell wished the Board and Park District the best in the coming year

**PRESENTATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

The Board was provided a copy of the December 2012 Financial Statement. The Board discussed the carryover with Mr. Patterson explaining that a portion of the carryover is set aside to cover 2013 expenses until the first tax distribution is received by the Park District and, that it is also comprised of monies for future Park District projects planned from 2013 thru 2019 that will be discussed for final approval at upcoming Board meetings.

**Geauga Park District  
FINANCIAL STATEMENT MONTH ENDED  
DECEMBER 31, 2012**

**GENERAL FUND**

<b>BEGINNING FUND BALANCE DECEMBER 1, 2012</b>	<b>5,185,206.54</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES &amp; OTHER USES</b>	
Personnel	213,694.01
Medicare	3,341.59
Dental /Hospitalization (including waivers)	40,089.86
PERS (Nov payment)	30,697.06
Vouchers	59,578.25
<b>EXPENDITURES &amp; OTHER USES</b>	<b>347,400.77</b>

**REVENUES & OTHER SOURCES**General Tax Collections

- State Reimbursed Personal Property Tax	91,752.12
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Investment Income

	453.55
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Gifts & Donations

	5,843.50
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- West Geauga Plaza - Earth Day Writer Award donation (\$110)
- Hixson donation - ornament sales(\$188.75)
- GPD Foundation - Nature Scopes donation transfer (\$4,719.75)
- Patrons - General donations for programs (\$825)

Fees

- Programs - Schools - Out-of-county	16.00
- Camping	300.00
- Utility fees	1,500.00
- Workshops - General - Public program	360.00

Sales

- Tapper's Treasures - MC	402.56
- Tree Tops - TWW	1,662.33

Other Receipts

- Swine Creek house - Harry	400.00
- Burton Wetlands house- Kolar	400.00
- Hyde house - McKinnon	400.00
- Chickagami house - Mast	400.00
- Refunds - McClintock rotary fees	243.00
- Local Government Funds	5,052.01
- Miscellaneous Receipts	574.74
- GPD Foundation - Postage reimbursement (\$329.45)	
- Recycling - Iron and waste materials (\$245.29)	

**REVENUES & OTHER SOURCES**

	<b>109,759.81</b>
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**ENDING FUND BALANCE AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2012**

	<b>4,947,565.58</b>
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**LAND IMPROVEMENT FUND****BEGINNING FUND BALANCE DECEMBER 1, 2012**

	<b>2,209,037.45</b>
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**EXPENDITURES & OTHER USES**

Vouchers	57,070.32
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**EXPENDITURES & OTHER USES**

	<b>57,070.32</b>
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<b>REVENUES &amp; OTHER SOURCES</b>	
<i>Investment Income</i>	184.88
<i>Gifts &amp; Donations</i>	108,750.00
- GPD Foundation Observatory Park donation transfer	
<i>Grants Payments - NEORS D Reimb grant - Orchard Hills restoration</i>	4,492.50
<i>Royalties/In-Lieu Fees</i>	195.48
- Farley, Troyer, Kuhns, Kovacs, Hehmeyer, Hart, Sunnybrook, Swine Creek, Stinchcomb	
<b>REVENUES &amp; OTHER SOURCES</b>	<b>113,622.86</b>
<b>ENDING FUND BALANCE AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2012</b>	<b>\$ 2,265,589.99</b>

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**RETIREMENT RESERVE ACCOUNT**

<b>BEGINNING FUND BALANCE DECEMBER 1, 2012</b>	<b>\$ 82,368.92</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES &amp; OTHER USES</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Vouchers	0.00
<b>REVENUES &amp; OTHER SOURCES</b>	<b>6.86</b>
<i>Investment Income</i>	6.86
<b>ENDING FUND BALANCE AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2012</b>	<b>\$ 82,375.78</b>

**VOUCHER RESOLUTION NO. 01-13**

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

Mr. Petruziello moved to adopt Voucher Resolution No. 01-13, a copy of which is on file in the Park District office.

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

Mr. Fischbach	Yes
Mr. Petruziello	Yes
Mr. Patterson	Yes

**COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD**

There were no communications to the Board

## **OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

Mrs. Jones requested information on the type and cost of the Wind Turbine being installed at Observatory Park. Mr. Curtin advised that it is a residential size wind turbine and is part of Observatory Park's green features. The Park currently has solar array installed that is tied into the electric grid, as will the wind turbine, resulting in our electric meter running backward. Mrs. Jones also requested information on the kilowatts produced by the wind turbine, including the annual kilowatt production. Mr. Patterson noted that in a prior meeting the Board requested that the Park District keep detailed information documenting electricity produced so that the Park District has records of when the turbine pays for itself and so that data can be shared with members of the community who might be interested in a residential wind turbine for personal use. Mr. Curtin informed that the cost of the wind turbine was approximately \$18,000.00 and that the kilowatt information would be relayed to Mrs. Jones.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **PARK UPDATES**

#### **Ranger Commendations**

Mr. Curtin shared the following commendations from Chief Scott Wilson:

Chief Wilson commended Ranger Allan Frantz, Sergeant Larry McKinnon and Ranger Denise Weisbarth for their assistance in the case of a seventeen year old male who was reported missing by his family to the Geauga County Sheriff's Office (GCSO). The GCSO asked the Park District Ranger Department to assist them in the search for this young man with the possibility that he might have travelled on park property from his residence. The search lasted three days, and Chief Wilson thanked Ranger Frantz, Ranger Weisbarth and Sergeant McKinnon for their help to the Sheriff's Department and dedicated service to the Park District and the citizens of Geauga County in this case.

Chief Wilson commended Ranger Allan Frantz and Sergeant Larry McKinnon for their excellent work in investigating and solving an act of vandalism committed on Geauga Park District property. Their investigation ultimately led to identifying and charging the individual responsible for the crime. Chief Wilson thanked Ranger Frantz and Sergeant McKinnon for their dedicated service to the Geauga Park District and for a job well done.

#### **Staff Update**

Linda Gilbert, a Naturalist with our Naturalist Services Department, slipped and fell at The West Woods during Winter Solstice and will be out with a broken wrist until cleared by her doctor to return to work

#### **Meyer Center HVAC**

Our Planning Department will be meeting with representatives of a geo-thermal company to see if the Meyer Center is a good candidate for geo-thermal heating/cooling. If it is a feasible option, the quote will be compared with the one previously received for an upgrade of the current heating/cooling system.

#### **Ellerin Barn Demolition**

The Park District has received one contractor estimate of \$27,000.00 for demolition and removal of the barns located on the Ellerin property, and is waiting for a second estimate. The Board requested pictures of the barns for review.

### Operations Department

A part-time employee to fill a department vacancy and a winter seasonal employee were hired, both starting on January 7<sup>th</sup> 2013. The Board asked for a general job description for the winter seasonal and was advised the primary responsibility would be to groom the Maple Highlands cross-country trails, then to assist the Operations Department as time permitted. Mr. Fischbach asked if the Park District had considered working with Geauga Growth Partnership who promoted to the hiring of local individuals, and Mr. Curtin advised that the District has been in contact with them.

### Volunteer Hours

Our volunteers contributed 8,917 hours in 2012 which equates to approximately \$168,264 in paid labor.

### Raccoon Management

The Board was provided with detailed information regarding raccoon management and how it related to the Park District's Spotted Turtle Program. Mr. Petruziello commented that removing two female Spotted Turtles to the Cleveland Zoo for controlled egg laying and incubation of the eggs, three eggs hatched, one died resulting in a 33% fatality rate. He asked what the likelihood of survival was for the turtle hatchlings was if left in an uncontrolled environment. Mr. Pira stated that with the raccoon population in The Rookery, the survival rate was not very good, and that it would be difficult for them to survive. Mr. Petruziello asked if the program would continue this year. Mr. Curtin advised that it would as it is a three year program and would be re-evaluated at the end of the program.

### Deer Management

The Board was provided with an updated deer management report. There were discussions regarding the low number harvested. Mr. Curtin advised that the Park District was looking into the possibility of a deer culling sharp shooting program using Park District employees in Parks that have a high deer population. Mr. Oros added that all hunters had not yet reported in, and that more exact numbers would be available later in the year after the completion of archery season. Mr. Patterson and Mr. Fischbach both suggested the Park District explore programs that might involve youth and women, and that such programs are currently being run in other parts of the State.

### Frohning Meadows Communication Tower

Negotiations are still underway between the Geauga County Sheriff's Department and the City of Cleveland regarding generator usage.

### Orchard Hills

Mr. Patterson reported that the sledding hill at Orchard Hills Park was being heavily used. He counted 75 people at one time, using everything imaginable to sled down the hill.

### Observatory Park Shelter

The Board was provided with renderings and construction estimate costs for a shelter at Observatory Park. The cost of a typical open-sided octagonal shelter is \$60,000.00 which is a pre-fab shelter that includes electric service, concrete pad and is stamped by an engineer. This would be funded by resources received from the O'Neill Foundation. The budgeted cost of the shelter would increase to approximately \$108,900.00 if it is decided to enclose, add a fireplace and radiant heat to the shelter. Mr. Curtin stated that enclosed, heated shelters are well-received by the public and that none are available for use in this portion of the county. An enclosed shelter would provide additional space for year-round school and public programming at Observatory Park. The Board asked if would be possible to upgrade the basic shelter in the future and was advised that the basic shelter is designed to allow the flexibility of upgrades and amenities.

Mr. Fischbach moved to put the basic open-sided shelter for use in Observatory Park out for bid.  
Mr. Petruziello seconded the motion and the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Mr. Fischbach	Yes
Mr. Petruziello	Yes
Mr. Patterson	Yes

Geauga Park District Foundation

The Board was provided with fund raising numbers for the 2012 Annual Campaign and was advised that the Foundation exceeded the target goal of \$100,000. Mr. Curtin said that 2012 was a very good year for the Foundation also citing additional fundraising for the Chip Henry Institute, and the successful Observatory Park campaign. Mr. Curtin added that Emilie Gottsegen and Amanda Stith are to be commended for their efforts.

Contract Review

There were no items presented for contract review.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Meyer Center – Weekend Hours

The Board was presented with a proposal to close the Meyer Center on weekends year-round and shifting the weekend staff to The West Woods. This recommendation is due to limited weekend attendance at the Meyer Center and higher attendance at The West Woods and would allow for two staff members on duty at all times for safety reasons. The Board discussed the recommendation and prior to acting on the proposal has requested information on the cost for additional seasonal employees to enable The West Woods Nature Center and the Meyer Center to be staffed with two employees during weekend hours.

Personnel Status Change – Resolution No. 02-13

John G. Hayhurst, Ranger has received approval for disability from OPERS. The Board was asked to rescind the appointment of John G. Hayhurst as Ranger (*Resolution No. 26-05, Geauga Park District Minutes, August 26, 2005, Book 6, Page 312*).

Mr. Petruziello made a motion to rescind the appointment of John G. Hayhurst as a Geauga Park District Ranger.

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

Mr. Fischbach	Yes
Mr. Petruziello	Yes
Mr. Patterson	Yes

2013 Newsletter Print & Mail Contracts

The Board was provided with information on Requests for Proposals (RFP) for the printing and mailing of the Park District newsletter. Eight proposals were received for print services and six proposals were received for mailing services. Based on the proposals that were received that fulfilled all requirements of the RFP, it was recommended that the Park District enter into contracts with Premier Printing Corporation for printing services and Direct Marketing Solutions for mailing services. The Board asked various questions, and all were answered satisfactorily.

Mr. Petruziello made a motion to enter into contracts for printing and mailing services for the Park District Newsletter as follows:

- Premier Printing Corporation for printing services
- Direct Marketing Solutions for mailing services



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

Mr. Fischbach	Yes
Mr. Petruziello	Yes
Mr. Patterson	Yes

Resolution of Commendation – Resolution No. 03-13

Mr. Patterson read the Resolution of Commendation, Resolution No. 03-13 honoring former Commissioner John D. Leech.

**RESOLUTION OF COMMENDATION**

**Resolution No. 03-13**

Honoring

**John D. Leech**

**WHEREAS**, John D. Leech faithfully served on the Board of Park Commissioners from January 1, 2007 through December 31, 2012;

**WHEREAS**, John D. Leech has been dedicated to the mission and values of Geauga Park District demonstrated through his thoughtful and insightful leadership;

**WHEREAS**, John D. Leech acted beyond what is required of his position of commissioner by serving on the South Newbury Union Chapel preservation committee and volunteering to help the Geauga People for Parks levy committee;

**WHEREAS**, John D. Leech helped drive significant advances for Geauga District by assisting Geauga Park District Foundation with capital campaigns to raise funds for the development of The West Woods Nature Center and Observatory Park;

**WHEREAS**, John D. Leech has been a strong advocate for the conservation of land and protector of open spaces for the current and future citizens of Geauga County;

**WHEREAS**, John D. Leech showed exemplary leadership by looking always to the best interests of the citizens of Geauga County;

**WHEREAS**, John D. Leech consistently participated in Park District programs and activities, and has demonstrated enthusiasm and support for the hard work of volunteers and staff;

**WHEREAS**, John D. Leech is to be commended for his dedication, loyalty and valuable contributions to Geauga Park District;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, the Geauga Park District Board of Commissioners, its staff and volunteers extend their gratitude to John D. Leech for his superior leadership and upholding the mission of this vital resource.

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James F. Patterson, President  
Board of Park Commissioners

Mr. Petruziello made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 03-13.

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

Mr. Fischbach	Yes
Mr. Petruziello	Yes
Mr. Patterson	Yes

### **COMMISSIONERS' TIME**

Mr. Petruziello welcomed Mr. Fischbach to the Board of Commissioners and said that he is looking forward to working with him. Mr. Petruziello added that he has learned a lot about the Park District by working with the Department heads.

Mr. Patterson stated that the meetings held with each department head and staff in 2012 were beneficial giving the Board insight on what projects are currently going on, future projects and departmental needs for the coming year. Mr. Patterson proposed that this practice be continued in 2013. Possible dates for 2013 meetings will be discussed and relayed to the Board. Mr. Petruziello added that he would like to sit down with members of the community such as the Horsemen's Council and Mr. Augustine to determine what they would like to see from the Park District.

### **QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Diane Jones asked for the date of the next Board meeting and was advised that it is Tuesday, February 12, 2013.

Mr. Laczko told the Board and audience that he and his wife have lived across from the Meyer Center since 1966, when the Park District was just getting started. To them, the Park was Don Meyer, Chief Fischbach and Sherry. They have known the Chief for a long time and want to attest to his integrity and that they are so proud to see him here on the Board of Commissioners at Big Creek Park. Mr. Fischbach replied that he appreciates the opportunity to serve on the Park Board and that with his 35 years of experience in law enforcement and park management hopes that he can bring a lot to Board and the Park District. Mr. Fischbach added that he and his wife use the Parks all the time and he is happy to be here.

Mr. Augustine asked if the Ellerin barns that are slated for demolition had any good building material, and if so, it might be possible to get someone to tear them down and remove the material for free. Mr. Curtin stated that this has been considered and once the second cost estimate for the demolition is received a decision will be made as to whether to go ahead with the demolition, or to declare the barns surplus property and put up for a minimum bid of \$1.00 and see who bids. Mr. Augustine also felt that using 100% recyclable paper for our Newsletters would set a good example. Mr. Curtin said that the Park District would explore this possibility. Mr. Augustine commented on Spotted Turtles stating that he thought that they lived 20 years or more and that the females layed 8 to 9 eggs a year or about 150 eggs in a lifetime. In a stable population, only two – or 1% - of these eggs lives to adulthood. He felt that a 33% success rate is doing really good.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION - ROLL CALL**

Mr. Petruziello moved to go into Executive Session at 4:37 p.m. for the purpose of discussing personnel compensation and land acquisition.

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

Mr. Fischbach	Yes
Mr. Petruziello	Yes
Mr. Patterson	Yes

The Board returned from Executive Session at 5:27 p.m. and brought forward the following item for motion:

Mr. Fischbach moved to approve the salary adjustments discussed in Executive Session.

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

Mr. Fischbach	Yes
Mr. Petruziello	Yes
Mr. Patterson	Yes

Mr. Fischbach requested that the Pledge of Allegiance be recited at the beginning of all future Board meetings.

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

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:29 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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James F. Patterson, President