

**GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING – WORK SESSION  
May 15, 2013**

A Special Board Meeting – Work Session of the Geauga Park District Board of Commissioners was held on May 15, 2013 at Big Creek Park, The Meyer Center. The meeting was called to order at 1:15 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  
Paige Orvis, Marketing and Administrative Services Director  
Emilie Gottsegen, Development Director  
Amanda Stith, Development Associate  
Michele Pennell, Chief Financial Officer  
Gloria Freno, Accountant

**Guests:**

None

President James Patterson called the meeting to order.

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

Mr. Patterson requested a vote on the adoption of the agenda.  
The roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

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

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

No guests were present at the meeting.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Patterson provided background on the purpose for the work sessions: To provide the Board with the opportunity to become more familiar with current, short range and long ranges plans, goals and challenges of each Geauga Park District department.

Finance

Michele Pennell, Chief Financial Officer, introduced herself and Gloria Freno, Geauga Park District Accountant. The Finance department also utilizes a Park District administrative assistant on a part-time basis. Ms. Pennell reviewed the department responsibilities as follows:

**Asset Administration Duties:** Management and reconciliation of merchant credit cards for Park District purchases; Insurance Services which encompasses the processing of claims, property appraisals, and working with the insurance provider for the Park District. RFP's were sent out this year for a new

insurance provider with the Ohio Pool being selected; Inventory Control includes maintenance of inventory records for the Park District and managing the sale/auction of surplus property; Fleet management includes maintaining records (maintenance and mileage logs, e-check) of all Park Owned vehicles.

**Budget:** Finance works with the County Auditor, the Park District's fiscal agent, to insure compliance with state and federal guidelines. The County will be migrating to the New World accounting system and account number changes have been made to facilitate the transfer. The Park District budget timeline has been revised to provide an earlier project submittal to the Board resulting in final budget completion by year-end.

**Tax Levies/Revenue:** Finance administers and reconciles monthly online and nature store credit card transactions, tracks sales and manages invoicing/payments to Vendors who participate in Park District arts events.

**Personnel/Benefits:** Finance processes payroll including prevailing wages when necessary, maintains a personnel analysis that shows the long-range effect of individual personnel changes and tracks floating holidays.

**Financial Reporting:** Finance prepares budgetary projections to review with Mr. Curtin, the Board and for submittal to the Auditor.

**Grants Management:** Ms. Pennell expressed that there could be improvement in the tracking of grant requests. The form currently used will be reviewed, edited if necessary, and discussions will be held to determine how to increase the tracking requests.

**Efficiency:** Finance was involved in the E-squared committees created to increase efficiencies in the areas of Energy, vehicles, uniform allowance and IT/File storage.

There were questions and discussions regarding the transition to the New World system and the process for transferring money from the Foundation to the Park District. Mr. Patterson requested a work session be scheduled for discussions on the upcoming 2014 budget prior the temporary budget being presented to the Board.

#### Development Department

Emilie Gottsegen, Development Director introduced herself and Amanda Stith, Development Associate. She advised that the department was also comprised of part-time employees to assist with donor data base management, administrative and accounting functions. Ms. Gottsegen advised that the department utilizes best practices and standard procedures for fundraising in an effort to be as effective as possible, with most monies being raised for specific projects. Ms. Gottsegen would like a system put into place showing of ROI of donated monies that could be shared with donors so that they can see the impact of their donations. The Foundation has been successful securing grants, and the Trustees are very important in providing contacts for future grant proposals. The fundraising process is a group effort and the process includes: identification, research, education and cultivation. Donations come from within and outside the county, but almost all out-of-county donations have a Geauga County connection.

Ms Gottsegen advised that the Case for Support is the why, the who, the what and the where of the Geauga Park District Foundation. All other communications to donors should be written taking points and information from it.

Ms. Stith advised that fundraising is a team effort comprised of Foundation Trustees, Park District Staff and volunteers. Ms. Stith manages the annual campaign, fundraising for Nature Scopes, The Chip Henry Institute, the Bridle Trail and Special Event appeals. Ms. Stith advised that Nature Scopes has been very

successful in regards to fundraising – the community can see the benefits of their donations. All donations to the Park District are acknowledged with a thank you letter including tax information and a hand written note by a Foundation Trustee. Mr. Patterson inquired if there were any events planned between now and the end of the year. Ms. Gottsegen distributed information on what the Foundation hopes will become an annual fundraising event. Small intimate dinners will be hosted by a Foundation member with 10 – 20 guests each, concluding with all groups meeting at TWW for desert, music and night-hike. Each host will set a ‘goal’ for the dinner with total contributions being announced at TWW at the conclusion of the evening.

Ms. Gottsegen reported that the Foundation has raised over \$6 million dollars since its inception, and that part of the ROI of the Foundation is the good will and connections its members provide to the Park District. Mr. Curtin added that the Foundation members provide professional and social capital, and that these volunteers work in partnership with the Park District. Ms. Gottsegen advised that to be successful in the future the Development department will need adequate staffing, must work in collaboration with other Park District departments and provide a definitive way to show donors the difference their gifts can make.

Mr. Fischbach inquired as to whether requests were made for federal funding. Mr. Curtin advised that the Park District has utilized federal funding for specific needs within a project by partnering with organizations that have expertise in going after federal funding, such as Western Reserve Land Conservancy.

**QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

There were no questions from the public

**EXECUTIVE SESSION - ROLL CALL**

Mr. Fischbach moved to go into Executive Session at 3:05 p.m. for the purpose of discussing land acquisition.

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

The Board returned from Executive Session at 3:28 p.m. and the following item was brought forward for motion:

Mr. Fischbach moved to approve authority to Mr. Curtin for the negotiation of land in Burton and Newbury Townships.

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

**REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES OF THE BOARD**

There were no reports from Committees of the Board.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 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