

**GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
February 11, 2014**

The regular meeting of the Geauga Park District Board was held on February 11, 2014 at the Donald W. Meyer Center, Chardon, Ohio. The meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. President Mary Ruth Shumway was in the Chair. Commissioner Louis Mucci was present.

President Mary Ruth Shumway called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**GPD Employees**

John Oros, Interim Deputy Director  
Anna McDonald, Executive Secretary  
Michele Pennell, CFO  
Paul Pira, Natural Resource Management Director  
Dan Best, Sr. Naturalist  
Paige Orvis, Marketing & Administrative Services Director  
Aaron Young, Planning Director  
Sandy Ward, Communications Specialist  
Brett Bellas, Maintenance Supervisor  
Don Lombardy, IT Manager  
Scott Wilson, Chief Ranger  
Emilie Gottsegen, Development Director  
Robin Pilarczyk, Human Resources Director  
John Kolar, Chief Naturalist  
Judy Bradt-Barnhart, Nature Education Coordinator  
Steve George, Construction Supervisor  
Isaiah Shipman, Construction Tech  
Tom Salo, Construction Tech  
Sandy Ward, Marketing Department-Communications

**Guests**

Tom & Diane Jones, Wind in the Woods Farm  
Josh Echt, Geauga Maple Leaf  
Iola Skinner, Volunteer  
Nora Stanton, Geauga Ohio Horsemen's Council  
Joy Keco, Geauga Ohio Horsemen's Council  
John Augustine, Parkman Resident  
John Ralph, Probate/Juvenile Court  
David Ondrey, Thrasher Dinsmore & Dolan  
Milan Kapel, Berkshire Hills Country Club  
Rich Frenchie, Geauga Park District Foundation  
Esther Laczko, Geauga County Resident  
Maryann Mclean, Berkshire Hills Country Club

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

Mrs. Shumway moved to adopt the agenda for the meeting.

Mr. Mucci seconded the motion and after voice vote, the motion was approved 2-0:

Mr. Mucci	Yes
Mrs. Shumway	Yes

**ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES**

The Board was presented with minutes from the December 10<sup>th</sup> 2013 Special Meeting, December 16<sup>th</sup> 2013 Regular Meeting and January 31<sup>st</sup> 2014 Special Meeting.

Mrs. Shumway requested that Dave Ondrey, Park District Legal Counsel acknowledge that the December 10<sup>th</sup> 2013 minutes are an accurate reflection of what occurred at the meeting as neither she nor Mr. Mucci were present at the meeting. Mr. Ondrey confirmed that the December 10<sup>th</sup> 2013 Board meeting minutes appear to be an accurate reflection of what occurred during the meeting and recommended that the Board approve as presented.

Mr. Mucci made a motion, that relying on the attestations of Mr. Ondrey, the December 10<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting Minutes be approved.

Mrs. Shumway seconded the motion and after voice vote, the motion was approved 2-0:

Mr. Mucci	Yes
Mrs. Shumway	Yes

Mrs. Shumway requested that John Oros, Park District Interim Deputy Director acknowledge that the December 16<sup>th</sup> 2013 minutes are an accurate reflection of what occurred at the meeting as neither she nor Mr. Mucci were present at the meeting. Mr. Oros confirmed that the December 16<sup>th</sup> 2013 Board meeting minutes appear to be an accurate reflection of what occurred during the meeting and recommended that the Board approve as presented.

Mrs. Shumway made a motion to approve the December 16<sup>th</sup> Board meeting minutes on the recommendation Mr. Oros.

Mr. Mucci seconded the motion, relying on the attestations of Mr. Oros, that the December 16<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting Minutes be approved and after voice vote, the motion was approved 2-0:

Mr. Mucci	Yes
Mrs. Shumway	Yes

Mrs. Shumway made a motion to approve the January 31<sup>st</sup> Board meeting minutes.

Mr. Mucci seconded the motion with the caveat of the amending the language to reflect voice votes rather than motion roll-call going forward. After voice vote, the motion was approved 2-0:

Mr. Mucci	Yes
Mrs. Shumway	Yes

Mr. Ondrey made a suggestion that the language going forward that approval of motions be reflected as a voice vote approval, with indication of the number of yes and no votes.

### **INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

Board President Mary Ruth Shumway reviewed the guidelines regarding public input at Park Board meetings and advised that there will be an additional time for public input, which will be immediately after the introduction of guests. Mrs. Shumway requested that all attending the Board meeting introduce themselves.

Mrs. Shumway asked guests to present their questions to the Board at this time. Questions not answered during this portion of the meeting will be addressed at a later time during the Board meeting

John Augustine of Parkman Township, asked the new Board members to speak about themselves, their history of participation with the Park District and their background relating to natural areas and the protection of them.

Iola Skinner of Newbury Township wanted to know the Board members' favorite Park and inquired as to the Board's background relating to ecology and nature as the Park's Mission is to 'preserve, conserve and protect the natural features of Geauga County'. Ms. Skinner inquired as to what changes the Board members might propose to the Park District.

Mr. Mucci thanked the Park District staff for the compiling the new Board Member informational packet, stating it is very useful and provides great background for new Board members.

Mrs. Shumway thanked staff for tours of the Parks and for the excellent job in providing accurate and detailed information to her requests. Mrs. Shumway took the opportunity to expand on her background, stating she has lived in Geauga County for 17 years, her favorite Park is Beartown, and has frequented The West Woods with her horses. She understands her job is to serve the voters of Geauga County and would like to utilize open township Town Hall meetings to determine what the people of Geauga County want from their Parks.

**Resolution of Appreciation:** Mrs. Shumway called Judy Bradt-Barnhart to the podium for presentation of the following Resolution of Appreciation – Resolution No. 04-14:

***Resolution of Appreciation***

***JUDY BRADT-BARNHART***

***Resolution No. 04-14***

***WHEREAS***, Judy Bradt-Barnhart has faithfully served Geauga Park District since February 8, 1989 when she was hired as a naturalist;

***WHEREAS***, Judy Bradt-Barnhart has been a key influence on the development and implementation of special programs and initiatives, such as naturalist-led hikes, canoe and kayak instruction, cross-country ski programs, backroads bicycle tours, orienteering, Stroller Strolls (an early program for toddlers) and the Park District's participation in internationally popular geocaching programs;

***WHEREAS***, Judy Bradt-Barnhart has been co-coordinator of Nature Arts Festival, Sap's-A-Risin'! Maple sugaring programs, Holiday Greens workshops, Geauga Department on Aging "Gauga Walkers" and other special programs;

***WHEREAS***, Judy Bradt-Barnhart was promoted to Nature Education Coordinator in June of 1998, responsible for planning, developing and scheduling public programs for all ages, as well as in-park and outreach programs for schools, pre-schools, senior centers and other organizations;

***WHEREAS***, Judy Bradt-Barnhart has led the development of curricula for Observatory Park through the formation of a Teacher Advisory Council and collaborations with Case Western Reserve University Astronomy Department and the Chagrin Valley Astronomical Association;

***WHEREAS***, Judy Bradt-Barnhart has acted as an ambassador, built partnerships and collaborations with other organizations to enhance Geauga Park District's outreach to the community, such as with the National Association for Interpretation, the Ohio Maple Producers Association, Northeast Ohio Native Plant Society, Cleveland and Eastern Interurban Historical Society, Cleveland Museum of Natural History's Northeast Ohio Naturalists and Lake Erie Alleghany Partnership for Biodiversity;

***THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED***, the Geauga Park District Board of Commissioners extends their gratitude to Judy Bradt-Barnhart for her contributions to preserve, conserve and protect the natural features of Geauga County and provide opportunities for people to connect with and enjoy those resources.

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***Mary Ruth Shumway***

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***Louis Mucci***

Ms. Bradt-Barnhart was recognized and thanked by the Board, employees and guests with a standing ovation.

## PRESENTATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### PRESENTATION OF VOUCHERS – Resolutions No. 01-14 and 02-14

The Board was provided with copies of the December 2013 and January 2014 Financial Statements and Vouchers. There were discussions regarding the reconciliation of the financial statements to the vouchers, the approval process of the vouchers, and what expenditure items are covered in Board approval of the Park District budget.

<b>Geauga Park District</b>	
<b>FINANCIAL STATEMENT MONTH ENDED</b>	
DECEMBER 31, 2013	
<b><u>GENERAL FUND</u></b>	
<b>BEGINNING FUND BALANCE DECEMBER 1, 2013</b>	<b>5,738,127.45</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES &amp; OTHER USES</b>	
Personnel	222,362.78
Medicare	3,439.52
Dental /Hospitalization	48,114.78
PERS (November payment)	31,440.03
Vouchers	114,746.93
<b>EXPENDITURES &amp; OTHER USES</b>	<b>420,104.04</b>
<b>REVENUES &amp; OTHER SOURCES</b>	
<u>Investment Income</u>	101.07
<u>Gifts &amp; Donations</u>	15,969.32
- TWW Water Feature - \$ 14.60	
- Geauga Walkers - \$75.00	
- Greens Workshop - \$1.25	
- Memorial - B. Cope - \$50.00	
- GPD Foundation - \$ 1501.00- Memorials, \$9,580.44- Land Stewardship	
- GPD Foundation - \$ 4,747.03 TWW Trails Maintenance	
<u>Fees</u>	
- Camping	100.00
- Utility fees	1,455.00
- Workshops - General - Public program	280.00
- Programs - General - Public Program	270.00
<u>Sales</u>	
- Tapper's Treasures - MC	397.92
- Tree Tops - TWW	823.54
- Credit Card - All facilities	797.84
<u>Other Receipts</u>	
- Foundation rental space/equipment - GPD Foundation	501.84
- Swine Creek house - Harry	400.00

- Burton Wetlands house- Kolar	400.00
- Hyde house - Rose	400.00
- Chickagami house - Maksim	400.00
- Citation Disbursement	20.00
- Local Government Funds	7,066.88
- Miscellaneous Receipts	70.71
- Kline, Curtin- public records requests \$4.35	
- WR Farm Co-op yearly dividend \$ 27.36	
- NSF Fee - returned check \$ 39.00	
<b>-REVENUES &amp; OTHER SOURCES</b>	<b>29,454.12</b>
<b>ENDING FUND BALANCE AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2013</b>	<b>5,347,477.53</b>
<b><u>LAND IMPROVEMENT FUND</u></b>	
<b>BEGINNING FUND BALANCE DECEMBER 1, 2013</b>	<b>2,753,010.87</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES &amp; OTHER USES</b>	
Vouchers	26,273.28
<b>EXPENDITURES &amp; OTHER USES</b>	<b>26,273.28</b>
<b>REVENUES &amp; OTHER SOURCES</b>	
<u>Investment Income</u>	46.46
<u>Gifts &amp; Donations</u>	207,271.00
- GPD Foundation - Observatory Park	
<u>Royalties/In-Lieu Fees</u>	631.74
- Sunnybrook - \$188.33, Ford-Windsor - \$83.04, Farley - \$360.37	
<u>Other Revenue</u>	4,700.00
- Middlefield Village shared expense of Rail Road Right of Way	
<b>REVENUES &amp; OTHER SOURCES</b>	<b>212,649.20</b>
<b>ENDING FUND BALANCE AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2013</b>	<b>\$ 2,939,386.79</b>
<b><u>RETIREMENT RESERVE ACCOUNT</u></b>	
<b>BEGINNING FUND BALANCE DECEMBER 1, 2013</b>	<b>\$ 82,412.64</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES &amp; OTHER USES</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Vouchers	-
<b>REVENUES &amp; OTHER SOURCES</b>	<b>1.37</b>
<u>Investment Income</u>	1.37
<b>ENDING FUND BALANCE AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2013</b>	<b>\$ 82,414.01</b>

<b>Geauga Park District</b>	
<b>FINANCIAL STATEMENT MONTH ENDED</b>	
JANUARY 31, 2014	
<b><u>GENERAL FUND</u></b>	
<b>BEGINNING FUND BALANCE JANUARY 1, 2014</b>	<b>5,347,477.53</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES &amp; OTHER USES</b>	
Personnel	229,452.10
Medicare	3,296.23
Dental /Hospitalization	47,860.76
PERS (December payment)	32,297.39
Vouchers	92,962.00
<b>EXPENDITURES &amp; OTHER USES</b>	<b>405,868.48</b>
<b>REVENUES &amp; OTHER SOURCES</b>	
<u>Investment Income</u>	95.66
<u>Gifts &amp; Donations</u>	15.17
- Bird Seed Donation - Patrons	
<u>Fees</u>	
- Camping	40.00
- Utility fees	1,080.00
- Workshops - General - Public program	18.00
- Programs - General - Public Program	4.00
<u>Sales</u>	
- Tapper's Treasures - MC	67.20
- Tree Tops - TWW	2,274.16
<u>Other Receipts</u>	
- Agriculture/Other Lease fees - J. Soltis - \$1,260.00, R.Briggs - \$ 1,432.00	2,692.00
- Foundation rental space/equipment - GPD Foundation	501.84
- Swine Creek house - Harry	400.00
- Burton Wetlands house- Kolar	400.00
- Hyde house - Rose	400.00
- Chickagami house - Maksim	400.00
- Refunds	422.62
- Gander Mtn.- \$50.00, Sherwin Williams -\$ 365.12, Cabelas - \$7.50	
- Local Government Funds	7,676.07
- Auction Proceeds from sale of Ford Explorer	5,228.10
- Miscellaneous Receipts	974.97
- State Farm Insurance MHT Settlement - \$971.72	
- TWW Ladies Restroom vending - \$ 3.25	
<b>REVENUES &amp; OTHER SOURCES</b>	<b>22,689.79</b>
<b>ENDING FUND BALANCE AS OF JANUARY 31, 2014</b>	<b>4,964,298.84</b>

<b><u>LAND IMPROVEMENT FUND</u></b>	
<b>BEGINNING FUND BALANCE JANUARY 1, 2014</b>	<b>2,939,386.79</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES &amp; OTHER USES</b>	
Vouchers	12,179.56
<b>EXPENDITURES &amp; OTHER USES</b>	<b>12,179.56</b>
<b>REVENUES &amp; OTHER SOURCES</b>	
<i>Investment Income</i>	47.39
<i>Royalties/In-Lieu Fees</i>	685.44
- Sunnybrook - \$148.56 Ford-Windsor - \$159.86 Stinchcomb - \$43.08	
- Farley - \$333.94	
<b>REVENUES &amp; OTHER SOURCES</b>	<b>732.83</b>
<b>ENDING FUND BALANCE AS OF JANUARY 31, 2014</b>	<b>\$ 2,927,940.06</b>
<b><u>RETIREMENT RESERVE ACCOUNT</u></b>	
<b>BEGINNING FUND BALANCE JANUARY 1, 2014</b>	<b>\$ 82,414.01</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES &amp; OTHER USES</b>	
Vouchers	-
<b>REVENUES &amp; OTHER SOURCES</b>	<b>1.42</b>
<i>Investment Income</i>	1.42
<b>ENDING FUND BALANCE AS OF JANUARY 31, 2014</b>	<b>\$ 82,415.43</b>

Mr. Mucci made a Resolution to accept the Financial Statements and Vouchers, as presented, which includes December 2013 Vouchers, Resolution No. 01-14 and January 2014 Vouchers, Resolution No. 02-14.

Mrs. Shumway seconded the Resolution and after voice vote, the Resolution was approved 2-0:

Mr. Mucci	Yes
Mrs. Shumway	Yes

Mr. Mucci inquired if a specific motion was necessary to pre-approve the payment of the voucher for Easton Leasing. Ms. Pennell stated this is not necessary as Judge Grendell issued a memorandum granting approval rights to Mr. Oros, Interim Deputy Director, for this Voucher.

#### **COMMUNICATIONS TO THE BOARD**

There were no communications to the Board.

#### **OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

There were no comments from the Public.

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **PARK UPDATES:**

#### **DEPARTMENTAL WORK SESSIONS**

The Board was provided with information and proposed dates for Park District work sessions intended to familiarize the Board with departmental functions and responsibilities. Mr. Mucci proposed a full-day work session to include all Park District departments. The Board members proposed Friday, February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014 starting at 9:00 a.m. at the Meyer Center. Notice of the Special Meeting/Work Session will be posted as a public meeting as required.

#### **2014 PARK PROJECTS**

The Board was provided with information outlining proposed capital improvement projects for 2014, including those under contract now (Maple Highlands Trail North and Chardon projects). Mr. Oros advised that proposed projects for 2015 and 2016 have also been provided and that Park Staff is working towards providing the Board with a three-year project plan, in order to be better able to meet all planning and bidding deadlines.

There were discussions concerning funding for the Nassau Station Restoration. Mr. Mucci asked that Mr. Oros address the expectation of receiving all the funds pledged for the Nassau project. Mr. Oros explained that the entire funding for the Nassau project is included in the 2014 budget and that the Park District Foundation has pledged to raise \$775,000.00 of the funds for the project. Mr. Oros added that in the past the Park District would pay for the projects that are pledged to be funded by the Foundation upfront, and receive the funds from the Foundation at the end of the project year. Mrs. Shumway asked if there was a part of the project that could be started based on the funds received from the Foundation, with Aaron Young, GPD Planning Director, advising that the O.R.C. requires that the entire estimated contract amount be available for the project prior to beginning the bidding process.

Mr. Mucci thanked the Park District Foundation for their fantastic work and added that the concept of private donors stepping up to help a public agency is phenomenal. Mrs. Shumway and Mr. Mucci recommended that the Park District should proceed with the planning and bid process for the proposed 2014 projects.

Mr. Young stated that a motion is required to start the bidding process. The project approval will be included in the 2014 final budget approval during the March 4, 2013 Board meeting.

#### **SNOWMOBILING ACTIVITY IN THE PARKS**

Mr. Oros advised that county snowmobiling organizations have reached out to him regarding possible snowmobile activity in the Parks. Mr. Oros requested the Board consider a proposal to allow a limited number of snowmobilers to access trails on property that is now part of Observatory Park. This access would be on a trial basis and by permit only and intended to help develop a snowmobile program and policies. After discussions of the proposal, the Board requested that Mr. Oros submit a written feasibility analysis, including a map of proposed trails, previous user history, and what user groups would be affected. The proposal could be discussed at a future meeting once the plan/study has been submitted to the Board for review.

#### **ALL-STAFF MEETINGS**

Mr. Oros advised the Board that Park District All-Staff meetings are currently being held every other month with the next one scheduled for March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014 @ 8:30 a.m. at The West Woods Nature Center. The Board was invited to attend for the opportunity to meet the Park District staff.

#### **2014 BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE**

The Board was provided with the previously approved 2014 Board Meeting Schedule. Mr. Mucci asked if there was conference call capability in Park facilities in the event he was not able to attend a meeting in person. Mr.



Ondrey, Park District legal counsel, advised that he believed that it was necessary for a Board member to physically attend the scheduled meetings. Mr. Mucci requested that Mr. Ondrey provide him with confirmation of this opinion.

The Board discussed changing the 3:30 p.m. Board meeting starting times to a later time to allow for increased public attendance/input, and changing the date of the March Board meeting from March 11<sup>th</sup> to March 4<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Mucci made a motion that the next Regular Board Meeting be held on March 4, 2014 at 5:00 p.m. at the Meyer Center.

Mrs. Shumway seconded the motion and after voice vote, the motion was approved 2-0:

Mr. Mucci	Yes
Mrs. Shumway	Yes

Mr. Mucci made an amendment to his motion to include a 5:00 pm. start time for all meetings currently scheduled at the Meyer Center and a 7:00 p.m. start time for meetings scheduled at The West Woods Nature Center.

Mrs. Shumway seconded the motion and after voice vote, the motion was approved 2-0:

Mr. Mucci	Yes
Mrs. Shumway	Yes

#### **GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT FOUNDATION**

Rich Frenchie, of the Park District Foundation, thanked the Board for the kind comments regarding the work the Foundation performed. Mr. Frenchie stated that he wanted to reassure the Board that the Foundation is very comfortable in achieving the goal of raising \$775,000.00 to meet the Foundation's commitment to the Nassau Station restoration project by the end of the year. Mr. Frenchie added that it is a privilege and an honor to be able to serve such a great organization as the Park District.

Mr. Frenchie introduced Joy Keco and Nora Stanton of the Geauga Ohio Horseman's Council for a special presentation. Ms. Keco stated that all their volunteers enjoy and are proud of the Parks and work to raise funds for the Bridle Trail Fund. Mr. Keco and Ms. Stanton presented the Park District foundation with a check in the amount of \$1,000.00 for the Foundation Bridle Trail Fund and thanked the Park District for being so accommodating to people that love horses. Mr. Frenchie and all attendees thanked and applauded Ms. Keco, Ms. Stanton and the Geauga Ohio Horsemen's Council for the check and their efforts.

#### **CONTRACT REVIEW**

The Board was provided with a summary of cost analysis for 2013 Park District projects. There were discussions regarding who acted as the general contractor for Park projects with the Board requesting that in the future the name of the general contractor be included in the contract review documentation.

There were additional discussions with the Board and Mr. Young regarding contract budget overage, the process for developing the project budget, bid package/award, and the process for contract add-ons.

#### **OPRA COVERED BRIDGE AWARD**

Mr. Oros asked the Park District Construction Crew comprised of Steve George, Tom Salo and Isaiah Shipman to come forward regarding the 2013 OPRA (Ohio Parks & Recreation Association) Annual Awards of Excellence. Of the 48 projects submitted to the OPRA, the Geauga Park District Bridge Project was awarded 1st place in its category for Park Projects up to \$2,500,000 and was included in one of three projects to be considered for the Governor's Award. Mr. Oros announced that the Park District's Covered Bridge Project won 'best in show' and was awarded the OPRA Governor's Award. In addition, OPRA awards a \$500.00 check to the winning Park District's Foundation. All in attendance applauded the group.

**RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION NO. 04-14**

Mr. Ondrey brought to the Board’s attention that a motion was not made to approve the Resolution of Appreciation.

Mr. Mucci made a motion to approve the Resolution of Appreciation No. 04-14 to Judy Bradt-Barnhart for her 25 years of wonderful service.

Mrs. Shumway seconded the motion and after voice vote, the motion was approved 2-0:

Mr. Mucci	Yes
Mrs. Shumway	Yes

**NEW BUSINESS**

**2014 AMENDED BUDGET – RESOLUTION NO. 03-14**

The Board was provided with a copy of the 2014 Temporary Budget and revisions, for review and approval.

Mrs. Shumway and Mr. Mucci posed numerous questions pertaining to the Budget. Mr. Mucci stated that under current operating procedures this is the Board’s only opportunity to approve in advance, he would like additional time for budget review by the Board and have the opportunity ask questions at the February 21<sup>st</sup> work session.

Mrs. Shumway made a motion to table the approval of the 2014 Amended Budget, Resolution No. 03-14 to the March 4<sup>th</sup> Regular Board meeting.

Mr. Mucci seconded the motion and after voice vote, the motion was approved 2-0:

Mr. Mucci	Yes
Mrs. Shumway	Yes

**APPROVAL AUTHORIZATION LEVELS**

The Board was presented with a request to approve temporary approval authorization to John Oros, Interim Deputy Director, to the level of the Executive Director which would include purchases and encumbrances over \$10,000.00.

Mrs. Shumway made a motion to table the request to approve Authorization Levels to the March 4<sup>th</sup> Regular Board meeting.

Mr. Mucci seconded the motion and after voice vote, the motion was approved 2-0:

Mr. Mucci	Yes
Mrs. Shumway	Yes

**2014 SMALL RESEARCH GRANTS**

The Board was presented with a request to approve the following 2014 Small Research Grants:

Investigation of an invasive Asian earthworm (*Amyntas*) in northeastern Ohio and its impacts on the body condition and behavior of an important forest floor amphibian (*Plethodon cinereus*)  
 Julie Ziemba, Department of Biology, John Carroll University  
 Two (2) year Grant: \$6,000.00

Population viability analysis of the Tamarack in Kelso Lake area: defining the critical stages in the life cycle of this species for the establishing of adequate management strategies  
 Oscar J. Rocha, Kent State University  
 Two (2) year Grant: \$6,000.00

Mrs. Shumway requested background on the Small Research Grant process from Paul Pira, Natural Resource Management Director. Mr. Pira stated that the Park District has been awarding Small Research Grants since 1994, and that it is a wonderful way to encourage science, research, park history and enables the Park District to reach out and build relationships with the schools and universities in Northeast Ohio. The Park District solicits applications/proposals based on Park District research priorities consistent with the Mission of the Park District, submitted proposals are reviewed and evaluated, and presented to the Board for approval. Dan Best, Sr. Naturalist added that some of the Park District's educational efforts/ programming are based on the findings of research conducted through the small research grants and the relationships fostered with the educational institutions.

The Board thanked Mr. Pira and Mr. Best for their excellent feedback.

Mrs. Shumway paraphrased a request made by Mr. and Mrs. Jones that any research grants completed for the Park District be posted on the Park District website, and be readily accessible by the Public. Mrs. Jones confirmed that this would be very helpful to education and to those individuals who are intellectually curious.

Mrs. Shumway made a motion to approve the Small Research grants as presented for the Asian earthworm and Tamarack tree.

Mr. Mucci seconded the motion and after voice vote, the motion was approved 2-0:

Mr. Mucci	Yes
Mrs. Shumway	Yes

Mr. Mucci stated that the feedback on accessing research information on the Park District website was very valuable, with Mrs. Jones adding that access to the research via a search engine, such as Google, would also be beneficial.

#### **AMENDMENT TO LEASE AGREEMENT**

The Board was presented with an Amendment to the Lease Agreement between the Geauga Park District and Park District Foundation which proposed the relocation of the Park District Development Department and Foundation offices from the Meyer Center to The West Woods Nature Center.

Mr. Oros recommended this motion be tabled to the March 4<sup>th</sup> Regular meeting. Mr. Mucci asked Mr. Frenchie if this delay would present any problems for the Foundation. Mr. Frenchie stated the delay will present no problems to the Foundation.

Mrs. Shumway made a motion to approve Mr. Oros' recommendation to table action on the Amendment to Lease Agreement between the Park District and Park District Foundation to the March 4<sup>th</sup> 2014 Regular Meeting

Mr. Mucci seconded the motion and after voice vote, the motion was approved 2-0:

Mr. Mucci	Yes
Mrs. Shumway	Yes

#### **AERIAL DEER SURVEY**

The Board was presented with a proposal to approve an aerial infrared deer survey for the purpose of estimating deer populations in the Park District to assist in future deer management decisions and recommendations.

Mr. Pira gave a brief history on deer management regarding the use of aerial surveys. Based on the cost for a

one-time aerial fly over and to allow him the opportunity to research and propose alternative methods for monitoring deer populations in Park District property, Mr. Pira recommended that this item be tabled to a future Board meeting. Mrs. Shumway requested an explanation on why a deer count is necessary and what has been done in the past to manage the deer population. Mr. Pira stated that deer population numbers are a tool used for managing deer in the Park District, which is necessary to mitigate the damage deer does to the ecology of the forests. Mr. Pira added that the Park District implemented a hunting program to help control the deer population

Mrs. Shumway made a motion to table the proposal for an aerial infrared deer survey pending receipt of Mr. Pira's recommendations for alternative methods for monitoring deer populations in Park District property.

Mr. Mucci seconded the motion and after voice vote, the motion was approved 2-0:

Mr. Mucci	Yes
Mrs. Shumway	Yes

#### **4<sup>th</sup> AMENDMENT TO AGREEMENT WITH OHIO WETLANDS FOUNDATION**

The Board was asked to approve the 4<sup>th</sup> Amendment to Agreement with Ohio Wetlands Foundation and the Geauga Park District which amends the payment process for the 2.2 acres of mitigation credits necessary to complete the Maple Highland Trail projects. This Amendment is necessary due to a suggestion by the office of the Auditor of the State of Ohio that the Park District pay the Ohio Wetlands Foundation directly for the full transaction amount regarding these mitigation credits.

Mrs. Shumway made a motion to rescind the November 19<sup>th</sup> 2013 Board approval of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Amendment to the Agreement between the Ohio Wetland Foundation and Geauga Park District and to approve the 4<sup>th</sup> Amendment between the Ohio Wetlands Foundation and Geauga Park District.

Mr. Mucci seconded the motion and after voice vote, the motion was approved 2-0:

Mr. Mucci	Yes
Mrs. Shumway	Yes

#### **CONTRACT APPROVAL – OHIO WETLANDS AGREEMENT**

The Board was presented with a request to open a contract with the Ohio Wetlands Foundation in the amount of \$61,600.00 for the purpose of payment of the 2.2 mitigation credits necessary to complete the Maple Highland Trail projects.

Mr. Mucci made a motion to open a contract with payment to Ohio Wetlands Foundation.

Mr. Shumway seconded the motion and after voice vote, the motion was approved 2-0:

Mr. Mucci	Yes
Mrs. Shumway	Yes



**ITEM #2:**

Pursuant to Article XX of the Board of Park Commissioners Bylaws, Mr. Mucci put forth a proposal for consideration to amend Article XVII, which amendment would allow for greater flexibility regarding Board Meeting Agendas:

Current Article XVII:

**ARTICLE XVII                      SESSION AGENDA**

The Business of the Park Board shall be considered in the following order:

1. Roll Call
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Approval or amendment of minutes of the previous meeting
5. Introduction of Guests
6. Presentation of Financial Statement
7. Presentation of Vouchers
8. Communications to the Park Board
9. Open to the Public
10. Unfinished Business
11. New Business

Proposed Article XVII

**ARTICLE XVII                      SESSION AGENDA**

*The meeting Agenda of the Park Board shall be prepared, following a discussion prior to the regular meetings, between the ranking official of the Geauga Park District staff and the President of the Board. The meeting agenda should provide for ample time for public input into the business of the Park Board consistent with the timely and efficient consummation of official Park Board business. Adjustments to the published agenda are allowed at the discretion of the President of the Board or a majority of the Commissioners of the Board present. The following topics should be considered for inclusion onto the agenda:*

1. Roll Call
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Approval or amendment of minutes of the previous meeting
5. Introduction of Guests
6. Presentation of Financial Statement
7. Presentation of Vouchers
8. Communications to the Park Board
9. Open to the Public
10. Unfinished Business
11. New Business

Mr. Mucci requested that this proposed Amendment be included as an Agenda item for the March 4<sup>th</sup> 2014 Regular Board meeting.

**QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**

John Augustine, of Parkman Township, commented that 5:00 p.m. Board meeting start times may still exclude the public from attending due to work. Mr. Augustine stated that he is against snowmobiling in the Parks as

they cause noise pollution, air pollution, are disruptive to wildlife and other Park user groups and, if allowed, may open the door to other groups that want to bring their motorized equipment into the Parks. He requested that the Board expand on their interest in parks in general, their participation in conservation groups, and any personal agendas and changes they might bring to the Park District.

Mr. Mucci thanked Mr. Augustine for his comments. He asked that Mr. Oros address Mr. Augustine's issues in the snowmobiling feasibility study.

Mr. Mucci supplied background information stating as a Burton Twp. Trustee he worked with the other Trustees, the Trust for Public Land and Natural History Museum to secure the first Clean Ohio Grant to set up Burton Headwaters Park. With assistance from groups such as Geauga Park District, Geauga Soil and Water and spear-headed by Trust for Public Lands, the Township secured a grant and purchased property that was proposed for 100 acre high-density housing development adjacent to the Twp. Park and memorial cemetery, resulting in a beneficial outcome for the selling land owner and the Burton Township Park. Mr. Mucci added that he appreciated the Trust for Public Land's tag line "Land for People" in that we need to preserve our natural resources, and part of that preservation is helping to engage the public in appreciating and utilizing it. He stated that he has no agenda, and his goal is to help continue the great work done by others before him.

Mr. Augustine asked the Board's opinion on land acquisition and conservation easements, citing his personal experience regarding property offered to the Park District. Mr. Mucci stated that land acquisition is one of the items he will be looking into, and that conservation easements are a tool for acquiring land. Mrs. Shumway added that Geauga County has 260,000 acres of Property with GPD holding just under 9,000 acres, Punderson holding 750 acres and many municipal parks. She believes that some of the people who want different recreational experiences could be re-directed to a municipal park with the facilities they are looking for. Mrs. Shumway stated that the Board wants to maintain the phenomenal job the Park staff has done running the Parks, and requested time for the Board to acclimate themselves with the Park District operations. The Board thanked Mr. Augustine for his helpful comments.

Iola Skinner of Newbury Township stated she likes the idea of 7:00 p.m. meetings for public input, but requested that the Board stay consistent with whatever dates and times are decided upon for Board meetings.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. Mucci made a motion to go into executive session to discuss pending litigation, land acquisition and personnel compensation.

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

Mr. Mucci	Yes
Mrs. Shumway	Yes

The Board entered executive session at 6:57 p.m.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 7:56 p.m. and brought the following items forward:

Mrs. Shumway made a motion to hire O'Brien Leadership Systems for Leadership Team evaluations in an amount up to sixteen thousand dollars (\$16,000.00), effective retroactive to Monday, February 3, 2014.

Mr. Mucci seconded the motion and after voice vote, the motion was approved 2-0.

Mr. Mucci	Yes
Mrs. Shumway	Yes

Mr. Mucci made a motion to direct John Oros, Interim Deputy Director to develop a process for selecting a new Executive Director.

Mrs. Shumway seconded the motion and after voice vote, the motion was approved 2-0.

Mr. Mucci	Yes
Mrs. Shumway	Yes

**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 months of December 2013 and January 2014 were submitted to the Interim Deputy Director and a summary sheet was forwarded to the Board prior to the Board meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Mucci made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Mrs. Shumway seconded the motion and after voice vote, the motion was approved 2-0.

Mr. Mucci	Yes
Mrs. Shumway	Yes

The meeting was adjourned at 7:59 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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John Oros, Interim Deputy Director

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Mary Ruth Shumway, President