

**GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT BOARD  
OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
November 21, 2022**

The regular meeting of the Geauga Park District Board was held November 21, 2022 at the Meyer Center, Big Creek Park. The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. Commissioners Howard Bates, Pat Preston, Mario Innocenzi and Jolene Carnabuci were present. Ray Garino was not present.

Mr. Bates called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

<b>Park District Employees</b>	<b>GUESTS</b>
John Oros, Executive Director	Bridey Matheney, Legal Counsel
Dan McConnaughy, Planning Manager	Mr. John Bednarski, CPA
Dawn Sweeney, Interim Fiscal Officer	
Christine Ward, HR Manager	
Mike Rose, Sergeant Ranger	
Sheryl Hatridge, Administrative Service Manager	
Matthew McCue, Deputy Director	
Paul Pira, Park Biologist	
Sandy Ward, Marketing Manager	

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Mr. Oros requested a motion to approve the agenda and addendum items. Mr. Innocenzi made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Bates seconded the motion and after a roll-call voice vote, the motion was approved.

Ms. Carnabuci	Yes
Mr. Preston	Yes
Mr. Innocenzi	Yes
Mr. Bates	Yes

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Mr. Oros requested a motion to approve the October 17, 2022, regular board meeting minutes. Mr. Preston made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Mr. Bates seconded the motion and after a roll-call voice vote, the motion was approved.

Mr. Innocenzi	Yes
Ms. Carnabuci	Yes
Mr. Bates	Yes
Mr. Preston	Yes

Mr. Oros introduced Mr. John L. Bednarski, CPA from NMS Accounting in Chardon who will assist with financials on an as needed basis, month-to-month. Mr. Preston asked Mr. Bednarski to be included in the budget meeting next year with the Auditor's office.

**PRESENTATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

Ms. Sweeney presented the financial statement ending October 31, 2022, with a combined ending balance of \$7,001,819.

**PRESENTATION OF OCTOBER 2022 PAYMENT REPORT**

The October 2022 payment report was presented to the board with no questions.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**GRANT STATUS UPDATE**

Mr. Oros shared that Mr. McCue and the planning department received an ODOT/Municipal Bridge Program grant for The West Woods entry bridge replacement. Mr. McCue requested \$824,090 and received \$743,895 nearly 100% of the budgeted amount. Mr. McCue stated that should costs increase, the grant may have money set aside

to cover the difference. Mr. Oros also shared the Park District received a full grant for the Brede property in the amount of \$16,409 from NatureWorks towards materials for work to be done by in-house staff. The grant should off-set some of the \$92,000 cost for the improvements. Mr. Oros said the name of this property may be changed later in 2023 when the park opens. Several park board commissioners said this was a fantastic job done by staff obtaining grants.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **2022 PLANNING & OPERATIONS UPDATE**

Mr. Oros said that the roof on The West Woods is complete, and the Locey Dam construction project will be complete by the end of the month. He also shared that Veterans Legacy Woods Lodge is just waiting for Dunbar to finish the HVAC installation and repairs. He added Bessie Benner Metzenbaum Park refurbishment and trail maintenance is complete, and the Walter C. Best Preserve parking lot asphalt project is complete.

### **BESSIE BENNER METZENBAUM PRESENTATION**

Mr. McConnaughy presented a PowerPoint presentation on the projects at the Bessie Benner Metzenbaum Park which were finished 4 weeks ago. The Park District acquired the property in 1991 and opened it to public in 1993. In the past several years the Park has done a stream restoration project and improved the boardwalks. Mr. McConnaughy said this project was a more comprehensive look at the Park with improvements to the boardwalks, restroom, playground (which had not been updated in about 18 years), shelter and trails. Some trails were rerouted and expanded for better connectivity and accessibility for the public, the playground was overhauled with new equipment and a 'greener Nature based' play area designed by Mr. McConnaughy. Mr. McCue said that the Park also added seating for parents near the playground. Mr. McCue said it was very impressive work from in-house construction/planning staff and recognized Mr. Isaiah Shipman, the construction foreman, and his crew as instrumental to the success of this project. Mr. Bates noted one of the top 5 largest beech trees in Ohio is in this park. Mr. Oros also added that the refurbished park was highlighted online and in the newspapers.

### **2023 FINAL BUDGET DRAFT**

Mr. Oros presented a draft of the budget for 2023. The final budget will be voted on at the December 12, 2022 board meeting. Ms. Sweeney shared land improvement projects increased with Holbrook Phase 2, Brede property, Swine Creek Park asphalt resurfacing and The West Woods bridge impacting the numbers. Ms. Sweeney also stated that the Ranger budget increased with proposed equipment purchases and hiring for a part-time ranger in 2023. Marketing plans to implement a new reservation system next year. Overall, there was decrease in general fund operating from last year with less equipment being purchased. Mr. McCue added the Operations total had gone down for 2023 since some major equipment purchases (brush hog head, excavator, and tractor) were made in 2022. Ms. Sweeney also shared that the personnel budget had gone down. Mr. Oros mentioned a more detailed line-item report would be sent to the board.

### **RESOLUTION NO. 11-2022-CLEAN OHIO 319**

Mr. Oros tabled this resolution to be brought up after the executive session and wished to discuss the Brede property first.

### **SURPLUS PROPERTY**

Mr. Oros stated there were 2 adding machines and 5 chairs for scrap. Mr. Bates made a motion to approve surplus property, Mr. Preston seconded the motion, after roll-call voice vote the motion was approved.

Mr. Bates	Yes
Mr. Preston	Yes
Ms. Carnabuci	Yes
Mr. Innocenzi	Yes

### **COMMISSIONERS TIME**

Mr. Oros shared the following staff and department updates:

- Veterans Legacy Woods received a 2022 OPRA Award of Excellence for Phase 1, 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the award category for capital improvement ranging from \$1m - \$1.2m in the state. Mr. Oros will receive the award at the OPRA conference in Sandusky on January 31, 2023
- The park district received state grant awards for the Brede property and The West Wood bridge project
- Holly Days & Mistletoe Market at The West Woods on November 4 & 5 had 2,133 visitors
- Wagon Rides at Swine Creek served approximately 600 patrons on the rides
- The Space Race attracted 275 runners/walkers and had a total of 388 people
- In October the Naturalists hosted 115 programs serving 3,538 people
- Employee of the Year was Jerry Tvergyak from North Operations
- Mr. Bates thanked the staff for pursuing the many grants to help fund park projects

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. Oros requested a motion to go into executive session to discuss the purchase of property and to consider employee compensation for public employees.

Mr. Preston made a motion to go into executive session, Mr. Bates seconded the motion, after a roll-call voice vote the motion was approved.

Mr. Bates	Yes
Mr. Preston	Yes
Ms. Carnabuci	Yes
Mr. Innocenzi	Yes

The Board entered Executive Session at 8:54 a.m. and came out of Executive Session at 9:56 a.m.

No item was brought forward from Executive Session.

**RESOLUTION NO. 11-2022-CLEAN OHIO 319**

Mr. Oros introduced the resolution authorizing the Executive Director of the Geauga Park District to apply for Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Grant Funding for the purchase and protection of the 181.9-acre Bates Creek Preserve property located in Hambden Township.

Mr. Preston made a motion to approve the resolution, Mr. Innocenzi seconded the motion, after a roll-call voice vote the motion was approved.

Ms. Carnabuci	Yes
Mr. Innocenzi	Yes
Mr. Preston	Yes
Mr. Bates	Yes

Mr. Oros announced the next meeting will be Monday, December 12, 2022, at 8:30am.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Preston made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Innocenzi seconded the motion and after a roll-call voice vote, the motion was approved:

Mr. Preston	Yes
Ms. Carnabuci	Yes
Mr. Bates	Yes
Mr. Innocenzi	Yes

The meeting was adjourned at 10:04 a.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, Executive Director

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Howard Bates, President