

**GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT BOARD
OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 17, 2022**

The regular meeting of the Geauga Park District Board was held October 17, 2022 at the Meyer Center, Big Creek Park. The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. Commissioners Howard Bates, Jolene Carnabuci, Mario Innocenzi and Ray Guarino were present.

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

Park District Employees	GUESTS
John Oros, Executive Director	
Dawn Sweeney, Finance Assistant	
Christine Ward, HR Manager	
Dennis Sloan, Chief Ranger	
Matt McCue, Deputy Executive Director	
John Kolar, Chief Naturalist	
Paul Pira, Park Biologist	
Sandy Ward, Marketing Coordinator	
Jessica Alpers, Administrative Assistant	

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

Ms. Carnabuci	Yes
Mr. Innocenzi	Yes
Mr. Bates	Yes
Mr. Guarino	Yes

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Mr. Oros requested a motion to approve the September 19, 2022, regular board meeting minutes. Mr. Bates made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Mr. Innocenzi seconded the motion and after roll-call voice vote, the motion was approved.

Mr. Guarino	Yes
Mr. Innocenzi	Yes
Ms. Carnabuci	Yes
Mr. Bates	Yes

Mr. Preston arrived at 8:35am

PRESENTATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Mr. Oros presented the September 2022 financial statement. Ms. Dawn Sweeney, finance assistant, is currently handling the day-to-day financial operations. The Park has engaged both local services through the state auditor's office and NMS for assistance. Ms. Sweeney has been in touch with the fiscal officer from Perry, OH, Ms. Joanne Clapp, to assist with any questions she may have and to review reports.

PRESENTATION OF FINANCIAL PAYMENT REPORT

Mr. Oros pointed out the payment report has switched back to being presented by fund and service provided per the commissioners request. Ms. Carnabuci questioned an IT cost of \$17,688. Mr. Oros said he would obtain the invoice and forward it to the commissioners since it is most likely the licensing invoice. Ms. Carnabuci also asked about several charges for digital advertising. Ms. Sandy Ward explained these charges are for videos for digital advertising targeting youth groups 12-17 years old in Geauga County starring this age group and encouraging them to get out into the Parks. She added Advance Ohio is Cleveland.com which targets only Geauga County

residents. Ms. Ward explained a report will be presented once these advertising campaigns have completed with metrics, although she noted the numbers are very high. She said the videos are available on the park district's youtube.com channel.

OLD BUSINESS

PERSONNEL POLICY – VACATION LEAVE

Mr. Oros explained this topic had been tabled last month, the suggestion now is a motion requesting private sector years of service for vacation to be used as accrued. Ms. Christine Ward reiterated the vacation leave policy for the commissioner's clarifying time may be used once it is accrued.

Mr. Bates made a motion to approve the vacation policy change, Mr. Preston seconded the motion and after roll-call voice vote, the motion was approved.

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

NEW BUSINESS

NATURALIST PRESENTATION

Mr. John Kolar presented 'Monarchs On The Move' showcasing their lifespan and Geauga Park District's work in helping save the species. Mr. Kolar showed the difference between monarch and viceroy butterflies, the metamorphosis of the butterfly, where they live and migrate and what they eat to survive.

Mr. Kolar explained how monarchs are monitored, tagged, tracked and how the park district's information on these tags help track their survival. Most monarch butterflies in Geauga County migrate to Mexico, while west of the Rockies, they migrate to the west coast. Weather in NE Ohio is too cold, and our butterflies have already flown south.

The Park District has worked to plant meadows, limit mowing and pass out and plant swamp milkweed. In conjunction with Kent State University, the park district has grown and given away seeds and plants to patrons. The Naturalists also provide education to the public at the Geauga Fair and have traveled to schools to educate local children.

Ms. Carnabuci also raised caterpillars for the Fair this year and donated a cage. She mentioned there are a number of apps that are excellent for information. Mr. Kolar also mentioned we have encouraged people to grow pollinator meadows personally and the park district has expanded and maintained the pollinator meadows we currently have at several parks. Mr. Oros mentioned there are other butterflies besides the monarch that we see in our meadows. Mr. Kolar said we also have, for instance, buckeye, tiger, swallowtail, skippers, and many others. Mr. Kolar shared what a 'tag' looks like and Ms. Carnabuci mentioned 'Monarch Watch' has an app. Mr. Kolar added that a butterfly he had tagged was found in Mexico.

2022 PLANNING AND OPERATIONS UPDATE

Mr. Oros said that by next month the Locey Dam Project off 5th Ave. near the Maple Highlands Trail will be added, and was sent out for bid. He added he will update monthly on the project status. Mr. McCue said the roof at The West Woods is moving along and Veterans Legacy Woods heating system is currently in progress.

CONTRACT AWARD FOR PROFESSIONAL DESIGN AND ENGINEERING SERVICES – Holbrook Hollows

On October 7, 2022, 3 requests for proposals were received for the Franklin South Street project, and it is recommended the proposal from Peninsula Architects, not to exceed \$91,500 for professional design and engineering services, be approved and awarded by the board of commissioners.

Mr. Innocenzi made a motion to approve the contract, Mr. Bates seconded the motion and after roll-call voice

vote, the motion was approved.

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

RESOLUTION No. 10-2022 – ODOT Bridge Inspection Program

Mr. Oros presented the ODOT Municipal Bridge Inspection Program which would include (but not limited to) routine inspections, element level inspections, critical findings report, fracture critical member inspections, load rating calculations and reports, weight limits posting sign recommendations, scour assessments, scour plan of actions, development of fracture critical plans and underwater dive inspection reports if needed. Mr. Preston asked if there was a price. Mr. McCue said it is free for 2023 to opt into the program, in 2024 there may be a 3 year program which may continue to be no cost. Currently the county engineer handles all the bridges on the bike trail since they cross county roads, so this program would mainly handle The West Woods bridge.

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

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

APPOINTMENT OF INTERIM FINANCE MANAGER / FISCAL OFFICER AND TREASURER

Mr. Oros requested the commissioners approve Ms. Dawn Sweeney to act as the Interim Finance Manager/Fiscal Officer and Treasurer.

Mr. Guarino made a motion to approve Ms. Sweeney as the Interim Finance Manager/Fiscal Officer and Treasurer. Mr. Innocenzi seconded the motion and after roll-call voice vote, the motion was approved.

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

2023 HEALTHCARE

Mr. Oros presented 2023 contribution rates and said they increased from 2022 by 2.3%. He said the employer payment is estimated to increase by \$14,586.72 2023, and the 2023 employee contribution rates will increase annually by \$24 for families and \$12.00 for single plans. Ms. Ward said other Ohio counties experienced as much as a 13% increase, so our plan is very reasonable. Mr. Oros shared the park district has a great health wellness program and our employees are very aware of their health which is why our rates are lower. Mr. Bates asked for clarification about the 2.3% increase, Ms. Ward confirmed it was across the board for all Geauga County.

Mr. Bates made a motion to approve 2023 Healthcare contribution rates, Mr. Innocenzi seconded the motion and after roll-call voice vote, the motion was approved.

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

COMMISSIONERS TIME

Ms. Sandy Ward shared the following staff and department updates:

- Mr. Preston requested that Mr. Oros and Mr. McCue be included in the training for the next tax commission and have a checklist, so the \$6,000 question does not come up again. Mr. Oros has set up a meeting with NMS Finance to review information.
- Ohio Brook Trout Stream Restoration Project...A Success Story:
Last month (early September), Park Biologist Paul Pira surveyed (along with the Ohio Division of Wildlife) our Spring Brook stream restoration project site. This was the location of our 2021 OEPA 319 grant for \$219,000 to correct troubling erosion problems with the fragile brook trout stream. Before the project, we only collected 16 adult brook trout in the 800-foot problematic stream section. But one year after project completion, we sampled almost 100 adult brook trout in that same section! This was a dramatic increase in numbers and quality of this special Ohio Endangered fish, which is found only in Geauga County and only in Geauga Park District!
- Geauga County Fair attendees to the park building was 16,673
- 83 programs were held in September serving 18,434 patrons (which includes fair attendance)
- The West Woods received 1,761 visitors
- There were 2,711 kayaks, canoe and paddleboat rentals this summer (85% in-county, 15% out-of-county)
- 919 people went up into the treetops on the high ropes course with our seasonal staff at Claridon Woodlands (74% in-county, 26% out-of-county)

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Oros requested a motion to go into executive session to discuss the purchase of property.

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

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

Mr. Oros invited Mr. Alex Czyka from Western Reserve Land Conservancy, Mr. Pira and Mr. McCue to remain for Executive Session. The Board entered Executive Session at 9:10 a.m. and came out of Executive Session at 10:00 a.m.

The following item was brought forward: Mr. Bates made a motion to enter into negotiations to purchase a piece of property in Hambden Township. Mr. Guarino seconded the motion. After a roll call voice vote, the motion was approved.

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

ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT BOARD MEETING

Mr. Oros announced the next board meeting will be Monday, November 21, 2022, at 8:30am.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Mr. Preston	Yes
Mr. Guarino	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,

John Oros, Executive Director

Howard Bates, President