

**GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT BOARD
OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
November 20, 2023**

The regular meeting of the Geauga Park District Board was held November 20, 2023, at the Meyer Center, Big Creek Park. The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. Commissioners Howard Bates, Ray Guarino, Jolene Carnabuci, Les LaGatta and Frank Stein were present.

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

Park District Employees	GUESTS
John Oros, Executive Director	Todd Hicks
Matthew McCue, Deputy Director	
Chief Dennis Sloan, Ranger	
Sandy Ward, Marketing Manager	
Lucas Beamer, Interim IT Manager	
Jessica Alpers, Administrative Assistant	

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDENDUM ITEMS

Mr. Oros asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Bates made a motion to approve the agenda; Mr. Guarino seconded the motion. After a roll-call voice vote, the motion was approved.

Mr. Guarino	Yes
Mr. Bates	Yes
Ms. Carnabuci	Yes
Mr. Stein	Yes
Mr. LaGatta	Yes

APPROVE OR AMEND MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Oros asked for a motion to approve last month’s meeting minutes. Mr. Guarino made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from October 16, 2023, Ms. Carnabuci seconded the motion. After a roll-call voice vote, the motion was approved.

Ms. Carnabuci	Yes
Mr. LaGatta	Yes
Mr. Stein	Yes
Mr. Bates	Yes
Mr. Guarino	Yes

PRESENTATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENT – OCTOBER FINANCE

Ms. Sweeney stated that for the month of October the General Fund had a beginning balance was \$4,906,106 with an ending balance of \$4,672,930 The Land Improvement Fund had a beginning balance of \$2,177,974 with an ending balance of \$1,849,120 Ms. Sweeney shared that all funds combined had a beginning balance of \$7,084,080 with an ending balance of \$6,522,050 Mr. Oros asked if there were any questions about the financial statement. No questions were asked.

PRESENTATION OF PAYMENT REPORT – OCTOBER FINANCE

Mr. Oros asked if there were any questions about the payments made in September. No questions were asked.

OLD BUSINESS

Planning Update

Mr. McCue shared updates regarding a few projects currently being completed or worked on within the parks: Holbrook Hollows South Franklin Street Connection is moving along with contracted work being finished at the end of this month with park crews working on other areas. Mr. McCue said the crews are trying to finish projects before the weather turns cold. At Veterans Legacy Woods, weather permitting, crews will do trail work now and in the spring. Mr. McCue also shared the HVAC system in Veterans Legacy Woods Lodge is being worked on but most everything else has been completed.

Mr. Oros asked if the board had any questions. No questions were asked.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution 15-2023 / The West Woods Road Replacement Bridge / ODOT

Mr. Oros read the resolution document to the board.

The following is a resolution enacted by the Geauga Park District of Geauga County, Ohio, hereinafter referred to as the Local Public Agency (LPA).

SECTION I – Project Description

WHEREAS, the LPA has determined the need for the described project: Municipal Bridge Project to replace the West Woods Road bridge over a tributary to Silver Creek located south of Kinsman Road (SR-87) in Russell Township.

NOW THEREFORE, be it ordained by the Geauga Park District of Geauga County, Ohio.(LPA)

SECTION II – Consent Statement

Being in the public interest, the LPA gives consent to the Director of Transportation to complete the above described project as detailed in the LPA-ODOT-Let Agreement entered into between the parties, if applicable.

SECTION III – Cooperation Statement

The LPA shall cooperate with the Director of Transportation in the development and construction of the above described project and shall enter into a LPA Federal ODOT Let Project Agreement, if applicable, as well as any other agreements necessary to develop and construct the Project. The LPA agrees to participate in the cost of the project. The LPA agrees to assume and contribute the entire cost and expense of the improvement less the amount of Federal-aid funds set aside by the Director of Transportation for the financing of this improvement from funds allocated by the Federal Highway Administration, United States Department of Transportation. The LPA agrees to assume and bear one hundred percent (100%) of the cost of the preliminary engineering, right-of-way and environmental documentation. The LPA further agrees to pay 100% of the cost of those features requested by the LPA which are determined by the State and Federal Highway Administration to be unnecessary for the Project. The LPA further agrees that change orders and extra work contracts required to fulfill the construction contracts shall be processed as needed. The State shall not approve a change order or extra work contract until it first gives notice, in writing, to the LPA. The LPA shall contribute its share of the cost of these items in accordance with other sections herein. The LPA agrees that if Federal Funds are used to pay the cost of any consultant contract, the LPA shall comply with 23 CFR 172 in the selection of its consultant and administration of the consultant contract. Further the LPA agrees to incorporate ODOT's "Specifications for Consulting Services" as a contract document in all of its consultant contracts. The LPA agrees to require, as a scope of services clause, that all plans prepared by the consultant must conform to ODOT's current design standards and that the consultant shall be responsible for ongoing consultant involvement during the construction phase of the Project. The LPA agrees to include a completion schedule acceptable to ODOT and to assist ODOT in rating the consultant's performance through ODOT's Consultant Evaluation System.

Mr. Oros asked if there were any questions regarding this resolution. Mr. McCue shared that stage three engineering documents are being submitted to ODOT by the end of this year. Mr. McCue stated ODOT will most likely send the project out for bid in the spring with construction anticipated next summer. No questions were asked by the board.

Mr. Oros asked for a motion to approve this resolution. Mr. LaGatta made a motion to approve, Mr. Guarino seconded the motion. After a roll-call voice vote, the motion was approved.

Mr. LaGatta	Yes
Mr. Stein	Yes
Mr. Bates	Yes
Mr. Guarino	Yes
Ms. Carnabuci	Yes

Resolution 16-2023 / 1,000 Trees Support

Mr. Oros presented the resolution to the board as follows:

WHEREAS, the following sponsors answered the call this fall to support Geauga Park District’s 1,000 Trees Earth Day Initiative to reforest Veterans Legacy Woods at the following levels: at the Red Oak (\$3,000) level, Covia-Best Sand; and at the Dogwood (\$250) level, Avonlea Gardens & Inn; and returning in-kind sponsors of this initiative included Sage’s Apples providing apples and Sunrise Springs Water providing water;

WHEREAS, the following organizations, companies and groups answered the call this fall to plant trees and put up protective fencing on October 12 and 13: NDCL (environmental science students and Conservation Club), Philips, Solid Rock on Which We Stand LLC, Nestlé, the Murzynski family, and Geauga Park District’s own trusty volunteer Corp;

WHEREAS, generous community support of 1,000 Trees culminated in 64 volunteers who helped plant more than 200 3-to-6-foot Ohio native trees and shrubs in this former golf course; and within just a few years, these new trees and shrubs will begin providing excellent food and habitat to countless songbirds, insects and wildlife;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Geauga Park District Board of Commissioners extends its gratitude to all 1,000 Trees supporters for their contributions to preserve, conserve and protect the natural features of Geauga County and to provide outdoor recreational experiences to our residents of every age, every ability and at all times of the year.

Mr. Oros thanked Marketing Manager, Sandy Ward for writing the resolution. Mr. Oros asked if there were any questions regarding the resolution. No questions were asked.

Mr. Oros asked for a motion to approve the resolution. Mr. Guarino made a motion to approve, Ms. Carnabuci seconded the motion. After a roll-call voice vote, the motion was approved.

Ms. Carnabuci	Yes
Mr. LaGatta	Yes
Mr. Stein	Yes
Mr. Bates	Yes
Mr. Guarino	Yes

2024 Final Budget Draft

Ms. Sweeney shared that the 2024 final tax budget draft has an estimate for the General Fund Revenue of \$7,079,090 with the General Fund Expenditures at \$7,517,709. Estimated Land Improvement Fund Revenue to be \$913,255 and Land Improvement Fund Expenditures to be \$839,360 with the overall for the 2024 budget revenue for both funds to decrease by about 72% from this years budget. Ms. Sweeney said we can also estimate expenditures will decrease by about 70% from this years budget.

Mr. Oros mentioned there had been concerns earlier in the year about appropriations, we’re starting to see some of those revenue sources come in. Mr. Oros asked Ms. Sweeney approximately how much the revenue was for capital which hit the books. Ms. Sweeney said about \$360,000; Mr. Oros stated this was for the Holbrook Hollows project while other revenue sources are now coming in. Mr. Oros stated there will be revenue sources that will carry over to sustain the first quarter of 2024.

Mr. Oros asked if there were any questions about the 2024 budget draft No questions were asked. Mr. Oros stated that the final budget will be presented at the December and a vote will be called for at that time.

Surplus Property

Mr. Oros presented a 2015 Ford Explorer for trade-in and the following for scrap: Honda HS 80 snowblower, Royal 7910Z 18: vacuum cleaner, Husqvarna 7021P push mower with bag and a regular Husqvarna push mower with bag. Mr. Oros asked for a motion to approve surplus property. Ms. Carnabuci made a motion to approve the surplus; Mr. Stein seconded the motion. After a roll-call voice vote, the motion was approved.

Mr. LaGatta	Yes
Mr. Stein	Yes
Mr. Bates	Yes
Ms. Carnabuci	Yes
Mr. Guarino	Yes

COMMISSIONERS TIME

Mr. Oros shared the following staff and department updates from the month of October 2023:

- As shared on Resolution 16-2023, the 1,000 Trees initiative at Veterans Legacy Woods continued in October with two days of fall plantings. (photos were shown of planting at Veterans Legacy Woods)
- Two weeks ago, in preparation for earthwork and pond draining at Veterans Legacy Woods, Natural Resource Management and EnviroScience Inc. (part of the contractor team) removed fish from two ponds and transferred them safely to another pond within the park. Mr. Paul Pira and his team moved a few hundred bluegill and bass to their new home – just the beginning of the long, 100% grant-funded project there to create a new coldwater stream, restoring two other streams and more.
- On October 7, the park hosted our 2nd annual Space Race at Observatory Park, where 264 runners and walkers filled the event to capacity. Participants did endure some on-again-off-again rain, but most everyone smiled through it, and they were also treated to an incredible double rainbow.
- Approximately 1,660 shoppers patronized Holly Days Artisan Boutique at The West Woods on the first Friday evening and Saturday of November, as well as the Mistletoe Market featuring youth artisans. Vendors reported good sales as many visitors kicked off their holiday shopping season with us.
- Park Planner Dan McConnaughy recently joined the naturalist team to complete visits of eight local nature centers to gather ideas for our new nature center exhibit.
- In the month of October, 112 Naturalist programs were attended by 2,552 people.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Oros motioned for an executive session to discuss compensation of public employees and collective bargaining matters with negotiations with the Ranger Department

Mr. Oros asked for a motion to go into Executive Session. Mr. Guarino made a motion to approve the session; Ms. Carnabuci seconded the motion. After a roll-call voice vote, the motion was approved.

Mr. Stein	Yes
Mr. Bates	Yes
Ms. Carnabuci	Yes
Mr. Guarino	Yes
Mr. LaGatta	Yes

Executive Session began at 8:48am.

Executive Session concluded at 9:13am at which point attendees returned to the meeting.

Mr. Oros asked if there were any items of business coming out of the Executive Session. No items of business were brought out of Executive Session.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT BOARD MEETING: Mr. Oros announced the next meeting is Monday, December 18, 2023, at 8:30am.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Oros asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Guarino made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Ms. Carnabuci seconded the motion and after a roll-call voice vote, the motion was approved.

Mr. Guarino	Yes
Ms. Carnabuci	Yes
Mr. LaGatta	Yes
Mr. Stein	Yes
Mr. Bates	Yes

The meeting was adjourned at 9:16am 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