

**GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT BOARD  
OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
APRIL 15, 2024**

The regular meeting of the Geauga Park District Board was held April 15, 2024, at the Meyer Center, Big Creek Park. The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. Commissioners Howard Bates, Ray Guarino, Les LaGatta, Jolene Carnabuci and Frank Stein were present.

Mr. Oros 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
Matthew McCue, Deputy Director	
Sgt. Mike Rose, Ranger	
Lucas Beamer, IT Manager	
Jessica Alpers, Administrative Assistant	
Christine Ward, Human Resources	
Paul Pira, Park Biologist	
Dawn Sweeney, Fiscal Officer	
Sandy Ward, Marketing Manager	

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA/ADDENDUM ITEMS**

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

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

**APPROVE OR AMEND MEETING MINUTES**

Mr. Oros asked for a motion to approve last month’s meeting minutes. Mr. LaGatta made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from March 18, 2024, Ms. Carnabuci 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

**PRESENTATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENT – MARCH FINANCE**

Ms. Sweeney stated that for the month of MARCH the General Fund had a beginning balance was \$3,947,906 with an ending balance of \$5,532,152. The Land Improvement Fund had a beginning balance of \$1,844,958 with an ending balance of \$1,711,135 Ms. Sweeney shared that all funds combined had an ending balance of \$7,243,287 Mr. Oros asked if there were any questions about the financial statement. No questions were asked.

**PRESENTATION OF PAYMENT REPORT – MARCH FINANCE**

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

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Planning Update**

Mr. McCue shared the 2024 Capital Improvement Project Summary. Mr. McCue stated the Veterans Legacy Woods Coldwater Stream project submitted final 100% design to the EPA who is the funding source. The EPA reviewed it and had a few comments requiring response, with Mr. Paul Pira meeting with the EPA onsite to discuss. Mr. McCue said the park is still waiting on the Army Corp of Engineers but then plans will move forward in July or August. Mr. McCue shared The Rookery asphalt improvement project was awarded last month with the project being scheduled soon. Mr. McCue also shared that for The West Woods bridge project, ODOT is reviewing bids and should award the contract with the project starting over the summer as well.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Resolution No. 2-2024: Approving the Countywide 911 Plan Per ORC 128.08**

Mr. Oros presented the resolution to the board from Geauga County for review regarding the established 911 Program currently in place for emergency calls.

Mr. Oros explained that this type of resolution had been passed in previous years with Park District involvement through the Ranger Department. Mr. Oros shared the Park District and Ranger Department are tied in to the 911 system. Mr. Guarino asked how often this type of resolution is renewed for the county. Mr. Oros asked legal counsel, Ms. Bridey Matheney, if she knew how often this resolution is brought up and she said she would need to review the information but speculated about every 5 years. Mr. Bates inquired as to how much this resolution would cost the Park District. Sgt. Ranger Rose responded that the cost is minimal as the Ranger Department already participates and shares in a law enforcement capacity and responds to 911 calls with other offices if necessary. Mr. Oros stated he would email the board members with the cost the Park District contributes to the 911 system (in the resolution information provided to the board members, the funds collected by the county to implement the program generated as follows: Geauga County Sales Tax Levy; Geauga County General Fund; “9-1-1 Government Assistance Fund”)

Mr. Oros asked for a motion to approve the 911 resolution. Mr. Bates made a motion to approve, Mr. Guarino seconded the motion. After a roll-call voice vote, the motion was approved.

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

**Resolution No. 3-2024: Enterprise Fleet Management Agreement**

Mr. Oros presented to the board a resolution to establish a fleet management program for the Park District covering the 37 vehicles consisting of cars, trucks, sport utility vehicles and transit vans.

Mr. Oros shared that the following tables portray the estimated cost savings associated with the Enterprise Fleet Management program.

GPD Three Year Vehicle Expenditures 2022-2024

2022	\$391,686 (Actual)
2023	\$250,735 (Actual)
2024	\$417,774 (Budget)
Three Year Average	\$353,398

Mr. Oros stated he had utilized UAN fiscal software to generate the actual numbers for the entire fleet from 2022 and 2023 and budget for 2024 to generate the 3-year average.

Enterprise vs. GPD Estimate of Savings over Ten Year Period

GPD 2024-2033	\$1,347,590
Enterprise 2024-2033	\$1,653,726

Mr. Oros explained he had looked at several years to evaluate the efficiency of switching to fleet management. Mr. Oros also shared that he had been in contact with Aaron Hockman, Chief of Operations for Summit Metroparks which has utilized Enterprise managing since 2020 for their 70 vehicles. Mr. Oros also spoke with Nate Ramsey, Chief Operations Officer Toledo Metroparks which also uses Enterprise. Mr. Oros stated he felt the benefit of this type of fleet management is because the Park District annual average per vehicle is 7,600 miles per year but when vehicles go for trade-in or put on govdeals.com, the Park District does not get the best price return/equity. Mr. Oros also said repairs to vehicles currently use many different garages or attempted to be fix in-house; with a fleet management contract the cost savings is better while continuing to patronize contracted local vendors. Mr. Oros stated this program is working well for other park districts and sheriff’s departments in Ohio, which he had spoken with recently.

Mr. Bates asked if the 3-year vehicle expenditures included vehicle purchases and Mr. Oros stated vehicle purchases in 2022 were \$209,000; 2023 was \$89,800; fuel for 2022 was \$100,000 and 2023 was \$82,000. Mr. Oros stated that the Park District contracted services of all vehicle repairs in 2022 was \$44,900 and 2023 was \$65,700 with all supplies (such as oils and add-ons to vehicles) in 2022 was \$35,900 and 2023 was \$12,800. Mr. Guarino asked about moving out older vehicles with Mr. Oros responding that for this year, approximately 5 vehicles will be traded in for equity. Ms. Carnabuci confirmed that Enterprise, should they be the fleet manager, would contract with local vendors and mechanics. Mr. Oros said yes and that post-COVID repair pricing and supplies for vehicles has skyrocketed so contracting fleet management would help with cost controls.

Mr. Oros asked for a motion to table the Enterprise Fleet Management Agreement until the next board meeting in May while legal reviews the contract and should board members have questions before the next meeting. Mr. Bates made a motion to table the resolution, Mr. Guarino seconded the motion. After a roll-call voice vote, the motion to table the resolution was approved.

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

**Insurance & Risk Management Policy Proposal**

Mr. Oros shared that in 2023 Commissioner Carnabuci requested an evaluation of the Park District annual insurance and risk management policy costs. Mr. Oros stated a request for proposal had been sent out with seven inquiries but only generated two responses; one from the current provider Public Entities Pool of Ohio (PEP); the other from Ohio Plan.

Mr. Oros stated that in the past the Park District had contracted with Ohio Plan at one time but switched to PEPO as it was felt they provided the services the Park District needed and were at a lower cost. Mr. Oros and Ms. Sweeney were concerned that Ohio Plan did not evaluate the RFP carefully and undervalued park assets by more than \$5 million dollars. Mr. Guarino pointed out that if Ohio Plan did not meet the RFP requirements then they should be removed as a contender. Ms. Carnabuci asked if Ohio Plan was questioned about why they undervalued the Park District and Mr. Oros responded that once the information from a vendor is submitted and discounted as a vendor, the Park District does not entertain a conversation since they cannot resubmit a proposal. Mr. Oros asked Ms. Sweeney to elaborate on the grants PEP has provided. Ms. Sweeney said the Park District received a PEP+ Grant Program grant which allows agencies to apply up to \$2,000 annually for purchase of PPEs, risk control items, safety equipment. Ms. Sweeney stated that since the Park District has participated it has received \$5,492 from that grant. Mr. Oros shared that contract renewal must be completed by the end of May.

Mr. Oros asked for a motion to approve the insurance and risk management policy proposal from PEPO. Mr. Bates made a motion to approve, Mr. Guarino seconded the motion. After a roll-call voice vote, the motion was approved.

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

**Observatory Park HVAC – Improvement Contract Award**

Mr. Oros stated that on April 4, 2024, one (1) proposal of the seven (7) requested from contractors was received for the Observatory Park HVAC – Improvements Project. The proposal was based on the contract documents dated March 11, 2024 with plans prepared by TEC inc. Engineering & Design. Mr. Oros stated that after reviewing the lowest proposal of \$52,140.00 submitted by Dunbar Mechanical Inc. on the information provided within the contract documents, they had fulfilled the requirements to be eligible to execute the project in accordance with the contract documents. Mr. Oros recommended the Board of Park Commissioners accept this proposal for \$52,140.00 and award the contract to Dunbar Mechanical Inc. for the Observatory Park HVAC – Improvements project.

Mr. McCue shared that Dunbar Mechanical was also the company that installed HVAC at Veterans Legacy Woods. Mr. Guarino asked if Mr. McCue thought they provided good service and Mr. McCue said the biggest struggle has been getting the actual equipment and parts but the service has been good.

Mr. Oros asked for a motion to approve the improvements contract award for Dunbar Mechanical Inc. for Observatory Park HVAC. Mr. Bates made a motion to approve, Mr. Guarino seconded the motion. After a roll-call voice vote, the motion was approved.

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

**West Creek Conservancy Cuyahoga Headwaters Land Donation**

Mr. Oros presented a property donation agreement between West Creek Conservancy and Geauga Park District. The agreement is for 117-acres of land northeast of our Observatory Park. Mr. Oros requested the Commissioners approve the donation at this meeting and pending approval, will execute the donation agreement. The property will then proceed to Escrow for transfer of ownership to Geauga Park District.

Mr. Oros introduced Mr. Paul Pira to discuss the property merits. Mr. Pira shared that this property has a diverse young forest, large marsh habitat and a recently restored Nature Conservancy program. Mr. Pira said that the property has very little invasive plants, has vernal pools, and at one point spotted a Sandhill Cranes (which are currently listed as ‘threatened’ in Ohio). In Mr. Pira’s NQE (Natural Quality Evaluation) report rated a 52 which placed it as an average range but with the possibility of it moving higher on the scale as time moves on. Mr. Pira explained that with the rare species and being adjacency to Observatory Park made this a great property – more property nets more habitat. Mr. Pira said there would be some work needed for this property but is excited to have the park district acquire the parcel.

Mr. Oros asked for a motion to approve the donation by West Creek Conservancy Cuyahoga Headwaters Land to the Geauga Park District. Mr. Bates made a motion to approve, Mr. Guarino seconded the motion. After a roll-call voice vote, the motion was approved.

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

### **Surplus Property**

Mr. Oros presented surplus property item for: (1) 6ft table with wood veneer top for scrap.

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

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

### **COMMISSIONERS TIME**

Mr. Oros shared the following staff and department updates from the month of March and April 2024:

- One week ago today (April 8, 2024), the Great Geauga Total Solar Eclipse attracted 3,200 exuberant visitors ready to experience a once-in-a-lifetime event together at the Geauga County Fairgrounds — and Mother Nature did not disappoint! Thousands came out for a wide variety of eclipse-viewing crafts and activities, 11 food trucks, (10) 4-H chickens, exclusive event merchandise, camaraderie, and plenty of wide-open space to spread out with family, friends and neighbors. By all accounts, the 360-degree view of totality was *incredible*. This event also showcased Geauga County hospitality for visitors from Pennsylvania, Michigan, Maryland, New York, Kentucky, Virginia, Washington D.C., West Virginia, California, Illinois and many other areas of Ohio not in the path of totality. Congratulations to Special Events Coordinator Holly Sauder, Astronomy Naturalist "Astro-Nat" Chris Mentrek and Chief Naturalist John Kolar for doing the heaviest lifting to bring the spectacle down to Earth, and to Grounds & Facilities Manager Joe Slepko and his team for executing a plan to smoothly park all those cars off the grass!
- Also Monday, April 8th our other parks with great open views were chosen by an estimated 1,650 eclipse-watchers, including 500 at Frohring Meadows, 400 at Observatory Park and 250 at Orchard Hills Park. All 33 of our campsites were booked Sunday night (about half from out of state) with 23 staying Monday night, too; 16 facilities were reserved Monday; and 11 boating permits were issued.
- From NRM: Beartown Lakes Reservation's Lower Bear Lake was the lucky recipient of 1,200 Rainbow Trout stocked by the Ohio Division of Wildlife on April 5 for the third year in a row. All trout were raised at state fish hatcheries and measured a nice sized 10-13 inches before release. Mr. Pira said some patrons also fished Beartown Lakes in the winter for ice fishing.
- And from our Naturalist Department: Maple sugaring season ended after 16 public programs, including 3 Sap's-a-Risin' Sundays. Total sugaring program attendance was 1,341.
- In March, the West Woods Nature Center greeted 1,558 guests, and naturalists hosted a total of 119 programs with a total attendance of 3,330.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. Oros asked if there were any items for Executive Session. No items were brought forward.

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT BOARD MEETING:** Mr. Oros announced the next meeting is Monday, May 20, 2024, at 8:30a.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

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

The meeting was adjourned at 9:16 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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Ray Guarino, President