

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS OF MILL CREEK
METROPARKS

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners of Mill Creek MetroParks was held on Monday, January 8, 2024.

The meeting opened at 6:00 p.m., with recitation of The Pledge of Allegiance.

Lee Frey, Board President welcomed staff and guests.

Roll Call was as follows:

Germaine Bennett;	Present
Lee Frey;	Present
Tom Frost,	Absent
Jeff Harvey;	Present
Paul Olivier;	Present

Lee Frey moved to exit regular session and go into executive session at 6:00 pm for the purpose of to consider the appointment, employment, discipline, or compensation of public employees and to discuss with legal counsel pending or imminent court action. The motion was seconded by Germaine Bennett after discussion, the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Voting Aye:	Bennet, Frey, Harvey, Olivier
Voting Nay:	None

Lee Frey moved to exit executive session and enter regular session at 6:46 pm. The motion was seconded by Jeff Harvey after discussion, the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Voting Aye:	Bennet, Frey, Harvey, Olivier
Voting Nay:	None

The Board was presented with the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 11, 2023. Lee Frey accepted the minutes into the record as written.

Nick Morchak, Finance Director/Treasurer presented the Department Report for Finance and requested that disbursements #91655 - #91773 for a total of \$983,403.81, be approved. Lee Frey moved, at the request of the Finance Director, that the funds having been certified as on hand and duly appropriated, that disbursements #91655 - #91773 for a total of \$983,403.81, be approved. The motion was seconded by Paul Olivier after discussion, the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Voting Aye:	Bennett, Frey, Harvey, Olivier
Voting Nay:	None

Nick Morchak, Finance Director/Treasurer presented the Quarterly Credit Card Report for the fourth quarter of 2023. No Board action was needed.

Aaron Young, Executive Director along with Nick Derico, Natural Resources Manager acknowledged Emily Heino for the work she performed as a Scout in the construction of a new kiosk at Lanterman's Mill Parking Lot.

Randy Campana, Chief of Police presented the annual Law Enforcement Assistance Fund Report for the year 2023. No Board action was needed.

Megan Hanley, HR & Administrative Services Director presented and requested approval of Resolution R-24-01 Salary Reduction Pick Up Plan. Lee Frey moved at the request of the HR & Administrative Services Director that Resolution R-24-01 Salary Reduction Pick Up Plan be approved. The motion was seconded by Germaine Bennett, after discussion, the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Voting Aye: Bennett, Frey, Harvey, Olivier
Voting Nay: None



Resolution R-24-01

Resolution for Salary Reduction Pick-up Plan

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Park Commissioners that Mill Creek Metropolitan Park District will pick-up the statutorily required contribution to the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System for all employees of Mill Creek Metropolitan Park District including but not limited to full-time, part-time, and seasonal employees pursuant to Internal Revenue Code Section 414(h)(2).

WHEREAS, pursuant to federal and Ohio laws, the federal and state income taxes on a portion of the wages or salaries of the employees of Mill Creek Metropolitan Park District will be deferred if Mill Creek MetroParks "picks up" the contributions statutorily required to be made by such covered employees to Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS); and

WHEREAS, Mill Creek Metropolitan Park District will not incur any additional costs in picking up such contributions.

NOW THEREFORE, be it ordained by the Board of Park Commissioners of Mill Creek Metropolitan Park District, that:

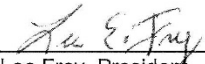
SECTION 1: Effective for the reporting period of January 2024, the full amount of the statutorily required employee contributions to OPERS shall be withheld from the gross pay of each person within any of the classes established in Section 2 herein and shall be "picked up" (assumed and paid to OPERS) by Mill Creek Metropolitan Park District. This "pick up" by the Mill Creek Metropolitan Park District shall be designated as public employee contributions and shall be in lieu of contributions to OPERS by each person within any of the classes established in Section 2 herein. No person subject to this "pick up" shall have the option of choosing to receive the statutorily required contribution to OPERS directly instead of having it "picked up" by Mill Creek Metropolitan Park District or of being excluded from the "pick up." Mill Creek Metropolitan Park District shall, in reporting and making remittance to OPERS, report that the public employees' contribution for each person subject to this "pick up" has been made as provided by the statute. Therefore, contributions, although designated as employee contributions, are employer-paid, and employees do not have the option to receive the contributions directly. All contributions are paid by the employer directly to the plan.

SECTION 2: The "pick up" by the Mill Creek Metropolitan Park District provided by this ordinance shall apply to all persons that are employees of the Mill Creek Metropolitan Park District who are or become contributing members of OPERS.


SECTION 3: The Mill Creek Metropolitan Park District method of payment of salary to employees who are participants in OPERS is hereby modified as provided in Section 4, in order to provide for a salary reduction pick up of employee contributions to OPERS.

SECTION 4: The total salary for each employee shall be the salary otherwise payable under the Mill Creek Metropolitan Park District policies. Such total salary of each employee shall be payable by Mill Creek Metropolitan Park District in two parts: (a) deferred salary and (b) cash salary. An employee's deferred salary shall be equal to that percentage of that employee's total salary which is required from time to time by OPERS to be paid as an employee contribution by that employee, and shall be paid by the Mill Creek Metropolitan Park District to OPERS on behalf of that employee as a pick up and in lieu of the OPERS employee contribution otherwise payable by that employee. An employee's cash salary shall be equal to that employee's total salary less the amount of the pick up for that employee, and shall be payable, subject to applicable payroll deductions, to that employee. The Mill Creek Metropolitan Park District shall compute and remit its employer contributions to OPERS based upon an employee's total salary. The total combined expenditures of Mill Creek Metropolitan Park District for such employees' total salaries payable under applicable Mill Creek Metropolitan Park District policies and the pick-up provisions of this resolution shall not be greater than the amounts it would have paid for those items had this provision not been in effect.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, We, the Board of Park Commissioners hereunto set our hand this 8th day of JANUARY, 2024.



Lee Frey, President



Germaine Bennett, Vice President

Tom Frost, Commissioner



Jeff Harvey, Commissioner



Paul Olivier, Commissioner

Megan Hanley, HR & Administrative Services Director presented and requested approval of the 2024 Employee Pass. Lee Frey moved at the request of the HR & Administrative Services Director that 2024 Employee Pass be approved. The motion was seconded by Paul Olivier, after discussion, the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Voting Aye: Bennett, Frey, Harvey, Olivier
Voting Nay: None

Aaron Young, Executive Director presented and requested approval of Resolution R-24-02 Acknowledgement of Grants, Donations, or Trusts for the period of October 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023. Lee Frey moved at the request of the Executive Director that Resolution R-24-02 Acknowledgement of Grants, Donations, or Trusts for the period of October 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023 be approved. The motion was seconded by Jeff Harvey, after discussion, the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

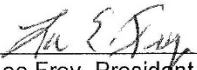
Voting Aye: Bennett, Frey, Harvey, Olivier
Voting Nay: None

Resolution R-24-02

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF GRANTS, DONATIONS, OR TRUSTS

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Park Commissioners of Mill Creek Metropolitan Park District that we deem it necessary and in the best public interest to acknowledge the grants, donations or trusts submitted to the Park District for the period of October 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023 as detailed on the summary marked Exhibit A, and authorize legal counsel to make application to the Probate Court pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 1545.11 for approval and to secure Journal Entry of the Probate Court.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, We, the Board of Park Commissioners hereunto set our hand this 8th day of JANUARY, 2024.



Lee Frey, President



Germaine Bennett, Vice President

Tom Frost, Commissioner



Jeff Harvey, Commissioner



Paul Olivier, Commissioner

Donor	Amount	Intent	Date
Capital Group	\$ 4,000.00	Children's Garden Fund	9/29/2023
Micro Doctor IT	\$ 500.00	Volney Rogers Short-Term	10/4/2023
P. Michael & Sharyn McConnell	\$ 50.00	General Endowment	10/5/2023
Janice Lattanzio	\$ 50.00	Tree Fund	10/10/2023
Daniel P. Schiavone Sr. Family TU	\$ 100.00	Children's Garden Fund	10/10/2023
Farmer Trust Company(Centofanti)	\$ 20,000.00	Ford Nature Center Fund	10/17/2023
Fidelity Brokerage Services	\$ 25,000.00	General Short-Term	10/18/2023
Huntington National Bank	\$ 500.00	Volney Rogers Short-Term	10/24/2023
Chris Litton	\$ 2.00	Children's Garden Fund	11/9/2023
Susan Rossi-Wilcox	\$ 100.00	Tree Fund	11/13/2023
Kristene Grayem	\$ 50.00	Children's Garden Fund	11/14/2023
Carrie Cannon	\$ 50.00	Children's Garden Fund	11/14/2023
Patricia Julian	\$ 25.00	Children's Garden Fund	11/14/2023
Karen Potoka	\$ 100.00	Children's Garden Fund	11/14/2023
Sharri Horvat	\$ 25.00	Children's Garden Fund	11/15/2023
Stifel Trust Company	\$ 2,000.00	General -Short Term	11/15/2023
Akron Children's Hospital	\$ 5,000.00	Volney Rogers Short-Term	11/16/2023
Grace Lee	\$ 100.00	Children's Garden Fund	11/20/2023
Jennifer Manning	\$ 50.00	Children's Garden Fund	11/24/2023
Mary Missos	\$ 25.00	Children's Garden Fund	11/27/2023
LPL Financial	\$ 10,000.00	General-Short Term	11/27/2023
Christine Young	\$ 100.00	Children's Garden Fund	11/28/2023
Chris Liebig	\$ 100.00	Children's Garden Fund	11/29/2023
Premier Wealth (Bresnahan Trust)	\$ 1,000.00	General-Short Term	11/29/2023
Lisa Foley	\$ 20.00	Children's Garden Fund	11/30/2023
Robert McGregor	\$ 250.00	Children's Garden Fund	11/30/2023
Mahoning Valley Historical Society	\$ 300.00	Lily Pond Endowment	11/30/2023
David McDonald	\$ 100.00	Children's Garden Fund	11/30/2023
Anna Klejka	\$ 50.00	Children's Garden Fund	12/1/2023
Paul Olivier	\$ 350.00	Children's Garden Fund	12/1/2023
The Columbus Foundation	\$ 1,000.00	Tree Fund	12/12/2023
Jeffery Doinoff	\$ 300.00	General-Short Term	12/15/2023
Mary E. Michael	\$ 25.00	Children's Garden Fund	12/15/2023
Lisa Aurilio	\$ 100.00	Children's Garden Fund	12/22/2023
Scott & Kelley Moff	\$ 2,500.00	General-Short Term	12/28/2023
Total	\$ 73,922.00		

Justin Rogers, Planning and Operations Director presented the planned 2024 Capital Improvements Presentation. All presented projects are included in the proposed 2024 Permanent Budget.

Nick Morchak, Finance Director presented and requested approval of the 2024 Permanent Budget. Nick summarized the details and accounts associated with the Budget. Lee Frey moved at the request of the Finance Director that the 2024 Permanent Budget be approved. The motion was seconded by Paul Olivier, after discussion, the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Voting Aye: Bennett, Frey, Harvey, Olivier
Voting Nay: None

2024 Budget - Income & Expense Summary Sheet

Finance Department
 Last updated: January 3, 2024
 Prepared by: Nick Morchak, Finance Director/Treasurer



	100 General Fund	200 Unclaimed Funds	701 Replacement Reserve	702 Law Enforce. Asst. Fund	809 Ford Center Redevelopment	Total All Funds
Carryover						
Unencumbered Cash Balance	\$ 3,521,805.81	\$ 3,904.18	\$ 571,905.11	\$ 19,906.50	\$ -	\$ 4,117,521.60
Prior Year Encumbrances	1,768,342.59	0.00	66,860.94	0.00	0.00	1,835,203.53
Estimated Revenues						
General Property Tax	\$ 7,521,190.00 62%					\$ 7,521,190.00 44%
Intergovernmental Revenues	830,400.00 7%					830,400.00 5%
Local Government Fund	430,000.00 4%					430,000.00 2%
Park Activities	3,093,132.00 26%	100.00		1,000.00		3,094,232.00 18%
Gas Well Income			70,000.00			70,000.00 0%
Bikeway Phase III Grant - Construction			3,423,900.00			3,423,900.00 20%
Grant Revenues			278,824.00			278,824.00 2%
						0.00 0%
Transfer from General Fund			700,000.00			700,000.00 4%
Third Party Funding	178,000.00 1%		257,367.00		\$ 470,214.52	905,581.52 5%
Total Estimated Revenue	\$ 12,052,722.00 100%	\$ 100.00	\$ 4,730,091.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 470,214.52	\$ 17,254,127.52 100%
Total Carryover & Estimated Revenues	\$ 17,342,870.40	\$ 4,004.18	\$ 5,368,857.05	\$ 20,906.50	\$ 470,214.52	\$ 23,206,852.65
Appropriations						
Transfer to Fund 701 - Replace. Resrv.	\$ 700,000.00 4%					700,000.00 3%
Park Operations-Mat. & Supplies	4,617,390.00 28%			0.00	470,214.52	5,087,604.52 23%
Park Operations-Salaries & Wages	6,744,331.48 41%					6,744,331.48 31%
Capital Equipment	678,967.00 4%					678,967.00 3%
Capital Improvements	1,833,000.00 11%		4,829,875.00		0.00	6,662,875.00 31%
Total 2024 Appropriations	\$ 14,573,688.48	\$ -	\$ 4,829,875.00	\$ -	\$ 470,214.52	\$ 19,873,778.00
Outstanding Purchase Orders (2023)	1,768,342.59 11%	0.00	66,860.94	0.00	0.00	1,835,203.53 8%
Total Expenditures	\$ 16,342,031.07 100%	\$ -	\$ 4,896,735.94	\$ -	\$ 470,214.52	\$ 21,708,981.53 100%
Projected Ending Fund Balance	\$ 1,000,839.33	\$ 4,004.18	\$ 472,121.11	\$ 20,906.50	\$ -	

Brian Tolnar, Director of Golf & Recreation presented and requested approval of the following Special Events:

1. Golf Outings:
 - a. The Greatest Golfer of the Valley on 08-09-24
 - b. Chaney High School Alumni Outing on 08-17-24
 - c. Pat Ginnetti Golf Outing on 08-19-24
2. Races:
 - a. The Get Up Stand Up Foundation Annual 5k Race on 04-13-24 @ Wick & MCP
3. Request to Collect Funds
 - a. Night at the Races by Glacier Sports, Inc on 03-09-24 @ FRG

Lee Frey moved at the request of the Director of Golf & Recreation that the special events be approved. The motion was seconded by Germaine Bennett, after discussion, the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Voting Aye: Bennett, Frey, Harvey, Olivier
 Voting Nay: None

Chris Litton, Development Director presented the MetroParks Foundation deposit report for the period of December 1-31, 2023, at a total of \$15,725.00. Lee Frey moved at the request of the Director of Development to accept the deposit report for the period of December 1-31, 2023, at a total of \$15,725.00. The motion was seconded by Jeff Harvey, after discussion, the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Voting Aye: Bennett, Frey, Harvey, Olivier
 Voting Nay: None

Public Comments to the Board: (see sign-in sheet)

- Kathy Maine asked for Mr. Young's attention and asked why is he killing all of the deer. She continued that Aaron Young is doing a good job of landscaping and if he grew up in Youngstown he would have a different heart. The Park is not a golf course, it is a Park.

- Lana Van Auker read a prepared statement about animal abuse and the deer management activities being undertaken by the Park. Poison is being used on the course. Contraception works for a deer management option as it does in other location. Culling is brutal killing.
- Mike Drabison made a statement on the number of deer that were killed and asked how much was paid for the service. Mike asked why ODOW only gave 38 permits to the Park for harvesting deer. Mike asked how many deer were harvested as part of the program. Mike mentioned a comment he claims Aaron made on the MLO Bros. regarding all deer must go as part of the program.
- Jerry Serbel stated that he lives on Bears Den next to the Park. He stated that the trees are dead and the deer are gone. He states that the deer are beautiful and that they helped him through a health issue. He stated that he drove through the Park and didn't see any deer. He claims to have to repeat himself because they don't have any facts. The taxpayers pay for the Park. The signs that warn of archery hunting are inappropriate.
- Lisa Bond stated that she saw the photographs that Lana brought, and they are horrific. She questioned the \$350,000 that was budgeted for Annual Drive Improvements. She questioned why the work on East Glacier was not prioritized. Justin Rogers offered a summary of the work that was done in 2023.
- Rick Maine stated that the number of deer that were harvested came from the Vindicator. The total harvested number of deer of 205 are much less than the 387 deer per square mile. He questions the number of deer per square mile as reported. He believes that the Park needed the support of the public to start the management plan. He questions the individual from ODOW who stated there are only 47 deer per square mile. He believes the use of eminent domain on a bike trail is a waste of his taxpayers' dollars. He believes that we should work with the McGuffey Historical Society.

Commissioner Comments:

- Lee provided the following written summary on the benefits of wetlands for the record:

Benefits of Wetlands

Improved water quality – Wetlands can intercept runoff from surfaces prior to reaching open water and remove pollutants through physical, chemical, and biological processes. They can provide an alternative to traditional wastewater and storm water treatment options.

Erosion control – Riparian wetlands, salt marshes, and marshes protect stream banks from erosion. The roots of the wetlands' plants hold soil in place and can reduce velocity of streams.

Flood Abatement – Wetlands can play an important role in flood abatement, soaking up and storing flood waters. A wetland can typically store 3-acre feet of water.

Habitat Enhancement – Wetlands can enhance habitat for game and non-game species. It can provide habitat for threatened and endangered species. More than 1/3 of endangered species live only in wetlands. An additional 20 percent of the country's threatened and endangered species use or inhabit wetlands at some time in their life.

Water Supply – Wetlands can positively impact water supply, serving as reservoirs for the watershed and releasing retained water into surface water and ground water.

Recreation – Wetlands can become a destination for outdoor activities such as hiking, bird watching and photography.

Partnerships – Wetlands protection can allow communities, individuals, businesses, organizations, and others to build business partnerships through protection activities and provide various entities access to data and resources that otherwise would not be available.

Education – Wetlands protection activities provide meaningful opportunities to educate the public regarding wetlands science, wetlands protection, and the value of water resources.

Aesthetic Appeal – Wetlands provide a certain visual value and are often incorporated as features within landscape design.

Wetlands are among the most productive ecosystems in the world, comparable to rain forests³ and coral reefs. They are biological supermarkets by providing volumes of food that attract many animal species. Dead plant leaves and stems break down in water to form small particles of organic material called detritus. This material is used for nutritional food.

Scientists now know that atmospheric maintenance may be an additional function of wetlands.

- Paul thanked the Staff for the national recognition of Fellows Riverside Garden.
- Lee adjourned the meeting after several verbal interruptions from the public.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 12, 2024, at 6:00 p.m., in McMahon Hall at the MetroParks Farm.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:40 p.m.

Presiding Officer

Secretary