

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, August 12, 2024.

The meeting opened at 5:00 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,	Present
Jeff Harvey;	Present
Paul Olivier;	Present

The Board was presented with the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of July 8, 2024. 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 #92995 - #93362 for a total of \$917,552.01, 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 #92995 - #93362 for a total of \$917,552.01, be approved. The motion was seconded by Tom Frost after discussion, the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

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

Lee Frey moved to exit regular session and go into executive session at 5:02 pm for the purpose of Purchase or Sale of Property and Pending or Imminent Court Action. The motion was seconded by Paul Olivier after discussion, the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

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

Lee Frey moved to exit executive session and return to regular session at 5:58 pm. 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, Frost, Harvey, Olivier
Voting Nay:	None

Aaron Young, Executive Director shared that he along with a variety of other MetroParks staff attended the Friends of Fellows Riverside Gardens Garden Party on Friday, July 26, 2024. Aaron welcomed members of Friends of Fellows Riverside Gardens to present a check from the proceeds of the Garden Party. Phyllis Simione presented a check for \$23,108 and requested the funds be utilized for lighting improvements within the Gardens that would support future Garden Parties as well as Winter Celebration and Pumpkin Walk. The Board thanked Friends for their contributions.

Aaron Young, Executive Director presented and requested approval of Resolution R-24-10 Authorizing the Executive Director to apply for Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Funds. Lee Frey moved, at the request of the Executive Director, that Resolution R-24-10 Authorizing the Executive Director to apply for Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Funds, 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, Frost, Harvey, Olivier
Voting Nay: None

RESOLUTION R-24-10

**AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF MILL CREEK METROPARKS
TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR CLEAN OHIO GREEN SPACE CONSERVATION GRANT
FUNDING FOR THE PURCHASE AND PROTECTION OF THE SHARROTT ROAD WETLANDS**

WHEREAS, the State of Ohio, through the Ohio Public Works Commission, administers financial assistance for conservation purposes through the Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Grant Program ("Clean Ohio"); and

WHEREAS, Mill Creek MetroParks desires financial assistance for the purchase and protection of the approximately 61.67-acre Sharrott Road Wetlands property ("the Property") located in Beaver Township in Mahoning County, Ohio and;

WHEREAS, Mill Creek MetroParks will own and manage the Property, operating it as a public park in line with other park operations; and

WHEREAS, the acquisition of the Property is needed for increased public park access, particularly increased passive recreation opportunities for residents of Mahoning County; and

WHEREAS, the preservation of the Sharrott Road Wetlands property will protect approximately 61.67-acres of mixed landscape including forest, ravines, streams, and wetland habitat.

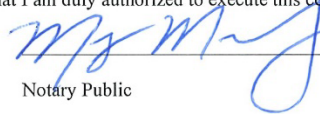
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That Executive Director Aaron Young is hereby authorized and directed to execute and file an application with the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) for Clean Ohio Conservation Program funds seeking grant support for the purchase of this approximately 61.67-acre Property, and;
2. That Executive Director Aaron Young is authorized to enter into any agreements as may be necessary and appropriate for obtaining this financial assistance.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution become part of the correct copy of a resolution adopted at a legally convened Board meeting held on this 12th day of August 2024.

Certificate of Recording Officer

I, the Undersigned, hereby certify, that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of resolution adopted by the Board of Park Commissioners on this 12th day of August 2024 and that I am duly authorized to execute this certificate.


Notary Public


Lee Frey, President


Germaine Bennett, Commissioner


Tom Frost, Commissioner


Jeff Harvey, Commissioner


Paul Oliver, Commissioner



MEGAN MILLICH
NOTARY PUBLIC
STATE OF OHIO
Comm. Expires
04-02-2025

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

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

Megan Hanley, HR & Administrative Services Director presented and requested appointment of Daniel Wright to the Natural Resources Citizens Advisory Committee. Lee Frey moved, at the request of the HR & Administrative Services Director, that Daniel Wright be appointed to the Natural Resources Citizens Advisory Committee, be approved. The motion was seconded by Tom Frost after discussion, the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

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

Aaron Young, Executive Director presented and requested approval of expanding the Bouldering Area within the MetroParks to include an area adjacent to Bears Den Road. Lee Frey moved, at the request of the Executive Director, that expanding the Bouldering Area within the MetroParks to include an area adjacent to Bears Den Road, 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, Frost, Harvey, Olivier
Voting Nay: None

Aaron Young, Executive Director presented and requested approval of naming the education trail at the Ford Nature Center; The Bill Whitehouse Education Trail. Lee Frey moved, at the request of the Executive Director, that naming the education trail at the Ford Nature Center; The Bill Whitehouse Education Trail, 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, Frost, Harvey, Olivier
Voting Nay: None

Aaron Young, Executive Director presented and requested approval of revisions to the Naming Rights Policy. Lee Frey moved, at the request of the Executive Director, that revisions to the Naming Rights Policy, 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, Frost, Harvey, Olivier
Voting Nay: None

Aaron Young, Executive Director presented and requested approval of the following Special Events/Request to Collect Funds:

1. Book Launch Party @ Pioneer Pavilion on 04-13-25

Lee Frey moved, at the request of the Executive Director that the Special Events/Request to Collect Funds, be approved. The motion was seconded by Tom Frost after discussion, the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

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

Chris Litton, Development Director presented the MetroParks Foundation deposit report for the period of July 1-31, 2024, at a total of \$34,695 for approval. Lee Frey moved at the request of the Director of Development to accept the deposit report for the period of July 1-31, 2024, at a total of \$34,695. 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, Frost, Harvey, Olivier
Voting Nay: None

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

- Phyllis Simeone of FFRG declined to speak due to previously addressing the Board.

- Cathy Doslovic stated that she has three questions to ask the Board. She asked if they would consider stopping the slaughter of MCMP Deer. She asked the question a second time. She asked the question a third time. She stated that she is addressing the Board not the Executive Director as she believes he is only concerned with the golf course.
- Jerry Serbel stated that he has spoken at these meetings many times. He had an issue with a tree near his home but he is in attendance because he is against killing the deer. He is concerned about the closure at Collier Preserve for hunting but not the other areas that have hunting. He drives through the Park as he cannot walk well. He admits to previously feeding the deer in the Park.
- Mike Drabison stated that a previous reason for the deer plan was due to unhealthy deer; the white deer. He stated that there were no white deer born in the Park in the last two years. He believes that the Park deer are healthy. He believes the unhealthy claim is untrue. He had people tell him that the Park deer have Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). If he knew CWD was here, he would be the first to support the deer management issue. He claims an employee told him that a large number of employees have been fired or quit since Mr. Young has been here. He would like to know the number of people who have quit or been fired.
- Abby Ivan stated that she comes to the meetings to show support for the deer. She usually does not speak. She spoke about the age of the deer harvested at the Golf Course during the management activities last year. She stated that she spoke with Jeff Westerfield of ODOW about the process. She wonders if the Board thinks that this program will be seen as successful. She provided a photograph of deer at another golf course and a summary of deer that were harvested during the sharpshooting in 2023. She questioned the number of deer that have been counted.
- Sean O'toole stated that he cannot hear anyone at the meeting. He questioned the use and effectiveness of the microphone system.
- Ray Thomas stated that he noticed a forest around Meander Reservoir and questioned how these trees could be in such condition with no deer management plan. He asked what we the MetroParks is doing wrong if our trees are unhealthy.
- Gary Davenport stated that there were very few trees downed as part of the recent storms and thanked the MetroParks staff for their work. He also spoke about the management of the trees at Meander Reservoir and that they are managed for harvesting and that in a report completed by their forester, they are recommending a future deer management plan.
- Celeste Sinistro stated that she is present to talk about the expanded East Golf Hike & Bike parking lot near Pinewood Drive. She claims that the MetroParks and Boardman Township failed to conduct themselves ethically. She claims that critical habitat was decimated. The project represents a clear lack of support for habitat and openness to alternatives. She states that cars are parked at all hours of the night.

Commissioner Comments

- None

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 9, 2024, at 5:00 p.m., in McMahon Hall at the MetroParks Farm.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:33 p.m.

Presiding Officer

Secretary