

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MetroParks Board Approves 2011 Budget

Erie MetroParks Board of Park Commissioners approve 2011 budget.

Huron, OH, March 21- At a special meeting Thursday March 17, 2011, Erie MetroParks Board of Park Commissioners passed the agency's 2011 budget. The budget reflects both increased revenues from last year's successful levy campaign and anticipated cuts in the proposed state budget.

Some of the highlights in the budget include the following new outdoor education programs:

- "Froggy Fridays", a program series on amphibians;
- A summer book club for kindergarten through 12th grade;
- "Dirt Don't Hurt", a children's gardening club; and
- A summer program series for senior citizens about prairies.

In addition, canoe rentals will be available on site at The Coupling MetroPark this summer on Friday afternoons, Saturdays, and Sundays.

Steve Dice, Executive Director, said that the levy passage also enabled the district to restore five positions that had been vacant for more than a year. In addition, several maintenance projects that had been postponed will now be funded.

The park district is also continuing its aggressive grant application efforts. For example, a Nature Works grant from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Osborn MetroPark will receive new basketball hoops and refurbished tennis courts. These projects will be completed by December 2011.

"This is a very careful budget," board president Tom Dusza concluded. "While we are extremely thankful for the community's support of last fall's levy, our long term goal remains to reduce the park district's reliance on local property taxes."

About Erie MetroParks- Erie MetroParks was established in 1968 starting with only Osborn MetroPark. Currently, Erie MetroParks has grown to include 11 parks or preserves. Many of the properties that are managed by the park district are maintained in their natural state in keeping with the role assigned by the Ohio Revised Code. Areas used for active recreation are designed to have minimal impact on the natural environment of the parks. Educational programs are offered year round for all ages. Each park is unique and allows for a variety of activities for people of all ages. To learn more about Erie MetroParks, log onto eriemetroparks.com or call (419)625-7783.

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