

Minutes

February 14, 2024

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Miears called the meeting to order at 1:01 PM in the Commission Room of the Maple Grove Center, Osborn MetroPark, Huron, Ohio.

ROLL CALL

Park Commissioners Present: James “Don” Miears, Chairperson
 Troy Wisehart, Vice Chairperson
 Margaret Murray, Vice Chairperson

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

(1) Commissioner Wisehart moved to waive the reading of and approve the draft minutes of the January 17, 2024, meeting.

Second: Commissioner Murray

Action: Motion carried unanimously with three affirmative votes.

Comm. Miears stated that he would be absent from the March 13, 2024, Board meeting, unless they could move it back to March 20th. Comm. Wisehart stated that he is set to start a trial that week. It was decided to keep the meeting on March 13th, unless Comm. Wisehart’s trial was cancelled.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

January Fund Activity Summary, Citizens Bank Checking Account Reconciliation, Citizens Bank MMIA Reconciliation:

Members of the Park Commission have received copies of these reports.

(2) Resolution 2024-05: February Schedule of Payables

Ms. Ferback distributed copies of the Schedule of Payables and a new sheet for the Capital Projects Fund Budget & Expense Year to Date Report via email. Ms. Ferback pointed out Erie MetroParks received donations from Ms. Hahler-Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. Cull, and Mr. Bettcher toward the new nature center. She noted both the General Fund and Capital Projects Fund Income Statements reflect zero amounts in the budgeted total revenues due to currently operating on the 2024 Interim Appropriations. Once the final 2024 budget is approved, she will update the statements. Ms. Ferback asked the Board to review and let her know if they had any questions. Comm. Miears had a question on the Schedule of Payables on page two, for \$980.79 for real estate taxes on Cleveland Road if it was for the rental house. Ms. Ferback explained that yes it was, it was for the first half of the year. Comm. Miears then asked will be doing any work to the house, are we going to rent it out again, and will it be at a competitive rate.

Ms. Price explained that staff will do an assessment on whether or not it should remain a rental, be used this summer for programming, etc. and produce a plan for its use going forward. Discussion ensued.

Comm. Murray inquired about the payment to Chuck Oeder. She asked what it was for. Ms. Ferback explained that it was for the electrical installation at the Castalia Quarry MetroPark and completed an approved 2023 capital improvement project. Ms. Ferback added, the Ohio Edison payment for the monthly service was also listed on page three of the report.

Commissioner Wisheart moved to approve Resolution 2024-05 Schedule of Payables as presented.

Second: Commissioner Murray

Action: Motion carried unanimously with three affirmative votes.

(3) Approval of 2024 Final Budget

Ms. Ferback distributed copies of the 2024 Final Tax Proposed Budget via email on Tuesday. She explained the overall projected income is still more than the expenditures and specified that the Erie MetroParks 2024 Final Budget General Fund is projected to have \$3.2 million dollar carryover. She noted the memo in and out of ODOT funds that will be used to pave around the new nature center. Year-round staff salaries decreased by two job positions, and seasonal staff salaries increased for operations and program staff to cover any deficits. Comm. Murray and Wisheart had no further questions. Comm. Miers asked if some of the General Fund was allocated to the nature center in this budget. Ms. Ferback responded that the necessary funds were transferred into the budget in 2023.

Commissioner Murray moved to approve the 2024 Final Budget as presented.

Second: Commissioner Wisheart

Action: Motion carried unanimously with three affirmative votes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Price referred to her report sent via email. Ms. Price added the following to her Director's Report:

-Ms. Price stated that January and February have been tough for staff due to two staff vacancies, illness, injury, or loss. But the staff has banded together, took care of each other, covering positions, programs, etc. An Ops guy, Mike Wheeler, who previously shadowed Mike Hensley, has taken over the maple sugaring production and Maple Sugaring Day is a go!

-She received an email Friday from ODOT, regarding the permanent right of way acquisitions on Cleveland Rd. Ms. Price had some questions regarding the wording and reached out to Mr. Peters, legal counsel, to discuss and interpret. Ms. Price read Mr. Peters response and discussion ensued on how to proceed with correspondence with ODOT on the matter.

(4) Commissioner Wisheart moved to allow Ms. Price and Mr. Peters to handle the correspondence and related matters on this project.

Second: Commissioner Murray
Action: Motion carried unanimously with three affirmative votes.

-The Firelands Area Pickleball Association (FAPA) asked Ms. Price if they could hold clinics and pay an instructor for their services. Ms. Price made sure that they still have a non-profit status and would not be making any money. Ms. Price added that they would still need to obtain a Special Permit from the park. The Board agreed that it was ok.

(5) Commissioner Murray moved to approve the Director's Report as presented.
Second: Commissioner Wisehart
Action: Motion carried unanimously with three affirmative votes.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Building Site Review- Amy Bowman-Moore

-Ms. Bowman-Moore reported that the building is moving along. The left- and right-wing roofs are completed, and they will need to wait for a few dry days to complete the flat roofs.
-She had a good talk with Brett from Turner over concerns on some major adjustments, including a change order for @\$1,800 for the front faux finish to return it to the original horizontal design.
-They are moving forward and working Saturdays to catch up. They hope to be finished in the beginning of June.

NEW BUSINESS

A. 2024 Local Park Grant Information

Ms. Price explained that we made some modifications to streamline the application process and would like to give out \$40,000 again this year. There was discussion about increasing the amount of funds to be distributed this year. It was decided that we would look at increasing the distribution amount in 2025.

(6) Commissioner Murray moved to approve \$40,000 to be distributed for 2024 Local Park Capital Improvement Grant program for 2024.
Second: Commissioner Wisehart
Action: Motion passed unanimously with three affirmative votes.

B. Annual Donation Report

This has been deferred to the March Board meeting.

C. Hart Billboard (by Hemminger Ditch-Cleveland Rd.)

Ms. Price explained that Aaron Klein notified her last October of a Hart billboard on our property near the Hemminger Ditch where the City of Sandusky would like to put their Landing sign. The city had previously obtained a construction easement from Erie MetroParks. She explained that Ms. Kauffman, our Natural Resource Manager, has attempted to contact Hart several separate times by different methods and has not received any response. Neither the City or Erie MetroParks has been receiving income from or gave permission for the sign installation. Mr. Peters suggested that we do a lien and property search on that spot. See if anyone has approved it. Discussion ensued and Comm. Miars asked Mr. Peters to write a formal letter to Hart and ask them to prove that they had the proper authority to have the sign there and request a response.

(7) Commissioner Murray moved to approve Mr. Peters, legal counsel, to create and send a letter to Hart Advertising regarding the issues with the billboard on Erie MetroParks property on Cleveland Road.

Second: Commissioner Wisheart

Action: Motion passed unanimously with three affirmative votes.

D. Conservation Easement (in Lorain County)

Ms. Price explained that she was approached by the director of Lorain County Metroparks to have Erie MetroParks hold a conservation easement for a parcel of property that is in Avon (Lorain County). Discussion ensued about utilizing our resources to uphold an easement outside of our county.

(8) Commissioner Wisheart moved to not approve the conservation easement that was presented.

Second: Commissioner Murray

Action: Motion passed unanimously with three affirmative votes.

INFORMATION ITEMS:

Travel & Training Summary

Mark Malone would like to obtain the Certified Park & Recreation Professional certification, and the training, study materials and test together cost over \$500. And therefore, requires Board Approval. Ms. Price explained that he is a long-term employee and is one of her key point managers. Discussion ensued regarding training parameters, repayment if you sever employment with Erie MetroParks, etc.

(9) Commissioner Wisheart moved to approve the Travel & Training Form for M. Malone as provided.

Second: Commissioner Murray

Action: Motion passed unanimously with three affirmative votes.

Special Permit Summary (acknowledge and file)

There is one new special permit to acknowledge and file this month.

(10) Commissioner Wisheart moved to acknowledge and file the Special Permit Summary provided.

Second: Commissioner Murray

Action: Motion passed unanimously with three affirmative votes.

Credit Card Summary (acknowledge and file)

Ms. Price asked the board to acknowledge and file the Credit Card Summary as presented.

(11) Commissioner Murray moved to acknowledge and file the Credit Card Summary provided.

Second: Commissioner Wisheart

Action: Motion passed unanimously with three affirmative votes.

Disposal of Surplus Personal Property & removal from inventory (None)

Other (Misc. items from Board or Administration) (None)

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

ADJOURNMENT

With there being no further business brought before the Park Commission,

(12) Commissioner Wisehart moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:05 PM.

Second: Commissioner Murray

Roll Call: Commissioner Mears: aye

Commissioner Murray: aye

Commissioner Wisehart aye

Action: Motion passed unanimously with three affirmative votes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The foregoing is a true and accurate account of the February 14, 2024, meeting of the Park Commission and has been formally adopted by the Commissioners as such and shall be placed in and become part of the official Proceedings of the Board of Park Commissioners.

APPROVED:

James L. "Don" Mears, Chairperson

Date

ATTEST:

Melissa Price, Executive Director

Date