

***Minutes***

**February 19, 2025**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Commissioner Miears called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM in the Margaret M. Murray Conference Room, Roger Johnson Nature 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 Murray moved to waive the reading of and approve the draft minutes of the January 15, 2025, meeting.

Second:           Commissioner Wisehart

Action:           Motion carried unanimously with three affirmative votes.

**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.

(A.) Resolution 2025-05: February Schedule of Payables

Ms. Ferback distributed copies of the Schedule of Payables and the Capital Projects Fund Budget & Year-to-Date Expenses Report via email. She asked the board if they had any questions. She wanted to bring to their attention a few items. On page two, there was a payment to SCBBPW for an ad in their program guide. She wanted to explain that SCBBPW is known as the Sandusky Club of Black Business Professional Women. On page four, there was a \$1,636 payment for risers. Ms. Ferback explained the risers are portable and used for animal education programs. The purchase will be reimbursed by The Friends of Erie MetroParks.

Comm. Miears inquired about the electric bill. He wondered how much the electric bill increased with the new nature center. Ms. Ferback explained that the nature center electric bill had gone down as the new nature center is heated by natural gas. The Frost Center was heated by electric at less-than-optimal efficiency. He then asked about the Columbia Gas utility bill. Ms. Ferback explained that the maintenance barn at Osborn MetroPark and the nature center are using natural gas for heating. The barn is no longer using propane for heating. Comm. Miears noted the payment of the first half property taxes for the rental house at 3918 Cleveland Road. He asked what the monthly rent was. Ms. Ferback answered that it was \$750 per month. Commissioner

Wisehart inquired about the first half property taxes for the rental and if they were increased. Ms. Ferback responded she would check into that detail.

(2) Commissioner Wisehart moved to approve Resolution 2025-05 Schedule of Payables as presented.

Second: Commissioner Murray

Action: Motion carried unanimously with three affirmative votes.

**(B.) Approval of 2025 Final Budget**

Ms. Ferback sent an email on Friday with the 2025 Final Tax Budget and details for each fund, which provided prior years alongside 2025. She asked the Board if they had any questions. Comm. Miears inquired about the other expenses listed on page two for \$147,000. Ms. Ferback explained that there was \$45,000 of ODOT funds added into that line item as well as the \$40,000 increase for the Local Park Capital Improvement Grants starting in 2025. Comm. Wisehart acknowledged the healthy approximately \$3.9 million dollar carry over from 2024 going into 2025. Discussion ensued about the carryover and different ways to spend down some of the carryover based on responses from our community survey and strategic planning.

Comm. Miears asked when we will close out the Roger Johnson Nature Center (RJNC) purchasing out of Capital Projects Fund and what will be the final costs. Ms. Price explained that the Window on Wildlife needs to be finished. When it is completed and the last of the receipts are paid, then the final total will be presented, the Capital Projects Fund will return any remaining carryover to the general fund and then be closed. She estimated the total expenses to be approximately \$4.4 million dollars. Discussion ensued.

(3) Commissioner Murray moved to approve the 2025 Final Budget as presented.

Second: Commissioner Wisehart

Action: Motion carried unanimously with three affirmative votes

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Ms. Price sent her report via email in the board packet. Ms. Price added the following:

-She would like to present to the Board in April, when they are all present, on the community survey and strategic planning for the next five years.

-We held the Fall in Love with Erie MetroParks Winter Open House on Saturday, it was well attended with approximately 150 participants during the afternoon event.

-We are conducting interviews for seasonal positions and the full-time Park Maintenance Technician position.

-The ODNR- Division of Parks & Watercraft will be conducting Boater Safety Education classes at the new nature center. She added that it is exciting that other organizations are interested in partnering with us in our beautiful new facility.

(4) Commissioner Murray moved to approve the Director's Report as presented.

Second: Commissioner Wisehart  
Action: Motion carried unanimously with three affirmative votes

**OLD BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

A. Resolution 2025-06 Request of Funds From ODOT for FY 26-27

Ms. Price explained that this is a standard requirement from the Ohio Department of Transportation for Erie MetroParks to accept the monies provided through the Ohio Parks & Recreation Association.

(5) Commissioner Wisehart moved to approve Resolution 2025-06 Request of Funds From ODOT for FY 26-27.

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

B. Special Permit for Greater Sandusky Partnership to serve alcohol at their March Membership Mixer at the Roger Johnson Nature Center

Ms. Price explained that the GSP is hosting their March Membership Mixer at the new RJNC, and the theme of the night is Women In STEM, and she will be moderating a panel of women in the field. The permit is for GSP to offer alcoholic beverages along with other light refreshments during the two-hour event. Discussion ensued and Comm. Murray and Wisehart, who are both attorneys, added some legal wording to the special permit, regarding liability and listing EMP as a third party ensured.

(6) Commissioner Wisehart moved to approve the Special Permit for the Greater Sandusky Partnership to serve alcohol at their March Membership Mixer at the RJNC.

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

**INFORMATION ITEMS:**

Travel & Training Summary NONE

Special Permit Summary (acknowledge and file)

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

(7) Commissioner Murray moved to acknowledge and file the Special Permit Summary provided.

Second: Commissioner Wisehart  
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.

(8) Commissioner Wisehart moved to acknowledge and file the Credit Card Summary provided.

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

Disposal of Surplus Personal Property & removal from inventory

(9) Commissioner Wisehart moved to approve the Disposal of Surplus Property & and removal from inventory, as provided.

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

Other (Misc. items from Board or Administration) NONE

There was a discussion on the date of the March Board meeting. Comm. Miears had already previously been excused. Comm. Wisehart has a potential conflict with a trial date and asked the Board to change the date. After some discussion, the date of the March Board meeting was changed to Thursday, March 20, 2025.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

(10) Commissioner Wisehart moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:42 PM.

Second: Commissioner Murray  
Roll Call: Commissioner Miears: 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 19, 2025, 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" Miears, Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Melissa Price, Executive Director

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Date