



# Board of Park Commissioners

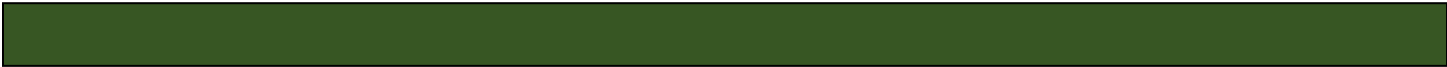
## **POLICY MANUAL**



Stark County Park District  
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*[www.StarkParks.com](http://www.StarkParks.com)*

Approved by Stark County Park District Board of Park Commissioners – October 5, 2005  
Revised January 2021 and Approved – February 2, 2021  
V:\Board Policies, Constitution and By-Laws\BOARD POLICIES.Adopted.2-2-2021.CK



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## SECTION 1: BOARD POLICIES

### INTRODUCTION

The Stark County Park District, hereinafter the “Park District” is an independent political subdivision created and governed by Section 1545 of the Ohio Revised Code. A volunteer five-member Park Commission, hereafter the “Board”, is appointed by the Probate Court and governs the Park District.

The Stark County Park District Board of Commissioners recognizes the need for a manual that contains Board approved policies that facilitate the operation of the Park District on a day-to-day basis. The Board has reviewed and approved this manual and will in the future periodically review and revise the policies contained in this manual as it deems appropriate.

#### A. Constitution and By-Laws

The Park District is governed by Section 1545 of the Ohio Revised Code, which is a codification of the general law relating to Park Districts in the state of Ohio. References and excerpts from the Park District Code and other related laws may be made in this manual.

#### B. Defining Policies and Procedures

*Policy* – a policy is any plan or course of action reflecting the mission to be achieved and officially approved by the Stark County Park District Board of Commissioners. Policies provide guidance for the operation of the Park District and give direction to the Park Board and staff in the execution of their duties

A policy must be approved by the Park Board and recorded in writing.

*Procedure* – a procedure is any plan or course of action formulated, developed and implemented by the Park District to facilitate day-to-day operations within the respective policy guidelines. Procedures guide the staff in providing safe, efficient and enjoyable experiences of the public by detailing the specific course of action to be taken within the general framework of the policy.

The Director shall have the responsibility of specifying the action required and designing the detailed arrangements under which the Park District operates. These detailed arrangements and specific actions shall constitute the procedures that govern the day-to-day operations of the Park District and will, in every respect, be consistent with the policies adopted by the Board.

Procedures will be documented and placed in the appropriate Departmental Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) Manual.

### **POLICY: THE MISSION OF THE STARK COUNTY PARK DISTRICT** **POLICY TYPE: VISION MISSION POLICY**

**Our Mission:** The mission of the Stark County Park District is to preserve, manage and connect natural areas to serve the community through recreation, conservation and education.

**Our Vision:** Stark Parks will be recognized as an essential community asset.

**Our Values:**

1. Integrity/Trust
2. Teamwork
3. Customer Service
4. Environmental Stewardship
5. Work Ethic
6. Respect for Each Other
7. Community Partnerships
8. We have fun!

**POLICY NUMBER – 1.0**

**DATE APPROVED – 2016**

**POLICY: GOVERNING STYLE**  
**POLICY TYPE: GOVERNANCE PROCESS**

The Board will approach its task with a style which emphasizes strategic leadership more than administrative detail; clear distinction of Board and staff roles; an eye toward the future rather than the past or present; and proactivity rather than reactivity. In this spirit, the Board will:

1. Involve itself primarily with the intended long-term goals of the organization, rather than with the administrative or programmatic means of attaining those goals.
2. Direct, control, and inspire the organization through careful deliberation and establishment of policies. Policies will be statements of values or approaches which address (A) the “products” (what benefits for which needs at what cost), (B) the boundaries of prudence and ethics to be observed by the staff, (C) Board roles and responsibilities, and (D) the Board-staff relationship.
3. Enforce upon itself whatever discipline is needed to govern with excellence. Discipline will apply to attendance, policy making principles, respect for clarified roles, speaking with one voice, and self-policing of Board tendencies to stray from rigorous governance.
4. Ensure that no Commissioner shall participate in the consideration of, or the voting on, any contract with the Board, or on any project for which the Board may approve funding, in which a Commissioner, a member of his or her family, or any of his or her business associates has a financial interest. No Commissioner shall be permitted to realize any personal financial benefit, directly or indirectly, from any project funds approved by the Board or from any contract with the Board except that this prohibition shall apply to contracts providing for goods or services unobtainable elsewhere for the same or lower cost, and where the transaction is conducted at arm’s length, with full disclosure of the interest or benefit to the Board, and where the Commissioner having such interest does not participate in the deliberations or decisions of the Board.

A Commissioner shall disclose to the Board any membership or affiliation he or she may have with any agency, organization, or other entity which submits to the Board any project for funding or which proposes to contract with the Board for provision of goods or services.

The provision of this Section shall apply to projects, grants, and contracts when the Board is a party regardless of whether the funds in question are public funds or funds received by the Board from private sources.

5. Be accountable to the general public for competent, conscientious, and effective accomplishment of its obligations as a body. It will allow no officer, individual, or committee of the Board to usurp this role or deter this discipline.
6. Monitor and regularly discuss the board’s own processes and performance. Ensure the continuity of Board actions through some systematic treatment of its own institutional memory.
7. Be an initiator of policy, not merely a reactor to staff initiatives. The Board, not the staff, will be responsible for Board performance.
8. Periodically review the Board’s policy on which Board member communicates directly with the public and/or media.

**POLICY NUMBER – 2.0**

**DATE APPROVED – 10/5/05**

**RECEIPT**

The undersigned hereby acknowledges receipt of the Regulations that deal with conflict of interest.

*DUPLICATE*

*Please keep this copy for your records.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dated

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

## RECEIPT

The undersigned hereby acknowledges receipt of the Regulations that deal with conflict of interest.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dated

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

**POLICY: BOARD JOB CONTRIBUTION**  
**POLICY TYPE: GOVERNANCE PROCESS**

The “job contribution” of the organization as a whole is to achieve its mission in ethical and prudent ways. The job of the Board is to make certain contributions, which lead the organization toward achieving its goals. The Board’s own contributions are unique to its trusteeship role and necessary for proper governance and management. Consequently, the “products” or job contributions of the Board shall be:

1. Functioning as the link between the organization and the public.
2. Written governing policies which, at the highest levels, address:
  - a. “Results and Priorities” or organizational products, impacts, benefits, and outcomes (What goods for which needs at what cost).
  - b. Limitations or constraints on executive authority (prudence and ethics boundaries which define the acceptable area of executive activity, decisions, and organizational circumstances).
  - c. Governance process (how the board conceives, carries out and monitors its own tasks, including this specific policy).
  - d. Board-staff relationship (passing of power, relationships and monitoring the use of power thus delegated).
3. The assurance of staff performance (against policies in 2A and 2B, through control and evaluation of the director).
4. Endowment funding.
5. The naming of parks, areas, and facilities.
6. Financial support of the Park District in its various fundraising activities.

**POLICY NUMBER – 3.0**  
**DATE APPROVED – 10/5/05**

**POLICY: DELEGATION TO THE PARK DIRECTOR**  
**POLICY TYPE: BOARD – STAFF LINKAGE**

The Board job is generally confined to establishing topmost policies, leaving implementation, and subsidiary policy development to the Park Director. “Results and Priorities” policies direct the Park Director to achieve certain results and “Executive Limitations” policies constrain the Park Director to act within acceptable boundaries of prudence and ethics. All Board authority delegated to staff is delegated through the Park Director, so that all authority and accountability of staff can be phrased – insofar as the Board is concerned – as authority and accountability of the Park Director.

1. The Director is authorized to establish all administrative policies, make all decisions, take all actions, and develop all activities consistent with Board policy. The Board may, by extending its policies, “undelegate” areas of the Park Director’s authority, but will respect the director’s choices so long as the delegation continues. This does not prevent the Board from obtaining information about activities in the delegated areas.
2. No individual Board member, officer, or committee has authority over the Park Director. Information may be requested by such parties, but if the Director determines that such a request requires a material amount of staff time, it may be refused.
3. Acting within the blanket authority granted in #1 above, the Park Director may not perform, allow, or cause to be performed any act which is unlawful, insufficient to meet commonly accepted business and professional ethics or the “prudent person” test, in violation of funding source requirements or regulatory bodies, or contrary to explicit Board restraints (see Executive Limitation policies) on executive authority.
4. Should the Director violate a Board policy or have knowledge of such a violation, he or she shall inform the Board as soon as practicable. Informing is simply to guarantee that no violation may intentionally be kept from the Board and does not exempt the Director from subsequent Board judgment of the action.
5. The Director is the only employee hired, disciplined, or fired by the Board. He or she is the only employee to whom the Board issues direct instructions and upon whom the Board makes a performance evaluation.

**POLICY NUMBER – 4.0**  
**DATE APPROVED – 10/5/05**

**POLICY: DIRECTOR JOB CONTRIBUTION**  
**POLICY TYPE: BOARD – STAFF LINKAGE**

The Director is the Board’s single official link to the operating organization. She or he is accountable for all organizational performance and exercises all authority transmitted into the organization by the Board. Inasmuch as the Board governs through explicit and succinct policies which address organizational values, the Director’s job contributions can be stated as performance in only two areas:

1. Organizational accomplishment of the provisions of Board policies on “Results and Priorities.”
2. Organizational operation within the boundaries of prudence and ethics established in Board policies on “Executive Limitations.”

Consequently, Director performance will be considered to be synonymous with organizational performance as a whole.

**POLICY NUMBER – 5.0**  
**DATE APPROVED – 10/5/05**



**POLICY: MONITORING DIRECTOR PERFORMANCE**  
**POLICY TYPE: BOARD – STAFF LINKAGE**

Monitoring executive performance is synonymous with monitoring organizational performance against Board policies on “Results and Priorities” and on “Executive Limitations”. Monitoring will be as automatic as possible, using a minimum of board time so that meetings can be used to create the future rather than to review the past.

1. The purpose of monitoring is simply to determine the degree to which Board policies are being fulfilled. Information which does not do this will not be considered monitoring.
2. A given policy may be monitored in one or more of three ways:
  - a. Executive Report: Disclosure to the Board of compliance information from the Director.
  - b. External Report: Discovery of compliance information by a disinterested, external auditor, inspector, or judge who is selected by and reports directly to the Board. Such reports must assess executive performance only against policies of the Board, not of the external party, unless the Board has previously indicated that party's opinion to be the standard.
  - c. Discovery of compliance information by the Board as a whole. This is a direct inspection of organizational documents, activities, or circumstances, which allows a “prudent person” test of policy compliance.
3. The Board may monitor compliance of any policy at any time by any of the above methods. Routine monitoring, however, will occur as follows:
  - a. Staff Treatment (Annual) by (Executive Report)
  - b. Budgeting (Annual) by (Executive Report)
  - c. Financial Condition
  - d. Communication and Counsel (Annual) by (Executive Report)
  - e. Emergency Executive Succession (Annual) by (Executive Report)
  - f. Asset Protection (Annual) by (Executive Report)
  - g. Compensation and Benefits (Annual) by (Executive Report)
  - h. Public Communications (Annual) by (Executive Report)
  - i. Board Relationship with Volunteer Group (Annual) by (Executive Report)
  - j. Rangers (Annual) by (Executive Report)

**POLICY NUMBER – 6.0**

**DATE APPROVED – 10/5/05**

**POLICY: STAFF LIMITATIONS**  
**POLICY TYPE: EXECUTIVE LIMITATION**

With respect to treatment of paid and volunteer staff, the Director may not cause or allow conditions which are inhumane, unfair, or undignified. Accordingly, he or she may not:

1. Discriminate among employees on any basis other than clearly job-related, individual performance/qualifications, except when the collective bargaining agreement provides otherwise.
2. Fail to establish an affirmative action program.
3. Subject staff to unsafe or unhealthy conditions.
4. Withhold from staff a grievance procedure, able to be used without bias.

Employees are discouraged from communicating directly with the Board both verbally and in writing:

1. On matters pertaining to the collective bargaining process or the subject of a grievance under the collective bargaining agreement.
2. Unless specifically called for under established procedures of communication, within the chain of command, for grievance and disciplinary appeal procedures.
3. By telephone, email, or letter unless so instructed by the Director.

**POLICY NUMBER – 7.0**

**DATE APPROVED – 10/5/05**

<b>POLICY:</b>	<b>COMMUNICATION AND COUNSEL TO THE BOARD</b>
<b>POLICY TYPE:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE LIMITATION</b>

With respect to providing information and counsel to the Board, the Director may not cause or allow the Board to be uninformed or misinformed. Accordingly, he or she may not:

1. Let the Board be unaware of relevant trends, public events of the organization, or material external or internal changes. Such changes in particular include changes in the assumptions upon which any Board policy has been previously established or events/accidents that could lead to significant public concern and/or media attention.
2. Fail to submit the required monitoring data (see policy on Monitoring Executive Performance) in a timely, accurate, and understandable fashion, directly addressing provisions of the Board policies being monitored.
3. Fail to marshal as many staff and external points of view, issues, and options as needed for responsibly informed Board choices.
4. Present information in unnecessary complex or lengthy form.

**POLICY NUMBER – 8.0**

**DATE APPROVED – 10/5/05**

<b>POLICY:</b>	<b>EMERGENCY EXECUTIVE SUCCESSION</b>
<b>POLICY TYPE:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE LIMITATION, Updated Resolution #: 09-07-064</b>

A change in executive leadership is inevitable for all organizations and can be a very challenging time. Therefore, it is the policy of the Stark County Park District to be prepared for an eventual permanent change in leadership--either planned or unplanned--to insure the stability and accountability of the organization until such time as new permanent leadership is identified. The Board of Park Commissioners shall be responsible for implementing this policy and its related procedures.

It is also the policy of the Board to assess the permanent leadership needs of the organization to help insure the selection of a qualified and capable leader who is representative of the community, a good fit for the organization's mission, vision, values, goals and objectives, and who has the necessary skills for the organization. To insure the organization's operations are not interrupted while the Board of Park Commissioners assesses the leadership needs and recruits a permanent executive officer, the Board may in its sole discretion appoint interim executive leadership as described below. The interim Director shall ensure that the organization continues to operate without disruption and that all organizational commitments previously made are adequately executed, including but not limited to, loans approved, reports due, contracts, licenses, certifications, memberships, obligations to lenders of the Stark County Park District, and others.

It is also the policy of the Stark County Park District, to develop a diverse pool of candidates and consider at least three finalist candidates for its permanent Director position. The Stark County Park District, shall implement an external recruitment and selection process, while at the same time encouraging the professional development and advancement of current employees. The interim Director and any other interested internal candidates are encouraged to submit their qualifications for review and consideration by the transition committee according to the guidelines established for the search and recruitment process.

**Procedures for Succession:**

For a temporary change in executive leadership in the event the director is temporarily in incapacitated and unable to perform his duties (i.e., illness or leave of absence) the department heads shall report to the chairman of the board until such time as the chairman of the board appoints an interim Director. In the event the Director of the Stark County Park District, is no longer able to

**POLICY: EMERGENCY EXECUTIVE SUCCESSION (continued)**  
**POLICY TYPE: EXECUTIVE LIMITATION, Updated Resolution #: 09-07-064**

serve in this position (i.e., leaves the position permanently), the chairman of the Park Board of Commissioners shall do the following:

1. As soon as is reasonably practicable appoint an interim Director from one of the following:
  - a. Chief Financial Officer of the Stark County Park District
  - b. Manager of one of the departments of the Stark County Park District
  - c. External Consultant (inferably with experience as an Interim Executive Director)
2. As soon as is reasonably practicable appoint an executive transition committee, in the event that a permanent change in leadership is required. This committee shall be comprised of at least one officer of the Board and two additional members which maybe a member(s) of the Board of Commissioners or a community leader(s) with experience in selection of high level personnel. It shall be the responsibility of this committee to implement the following preliminary transition plan:
  - a. Communicate with the public regarding actions taken by the board in naming an interim successor, appointing a transition committee, and implementing the succession policy.
  - b. Consider the need for consulting assistance (i.e., transition management or executive search consultant) based on the circumstances of the transition.
  - c. Review the organization's business plan and conduct a brief assessment of organizational strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to identify priority issues that may need to be addressed during the transition process and to identify attributes and characteristics that are important to consider in the selection of the next permanent leader.
  - d. Establish a time frame and plan for the recruitment and selection process.
  - e. Refer to the Employee Handbook for additional procedures.

The board should use similar procedures in case of an executive transition that simultaneously involves the director and other key management. In such instance, the board may also consider temporarily subcontracting some of the organizational function from trained consultant or other organizations.

**POLICY NUMBER – 9.0**  
**DATE APPROVED – 7/1/09**

**POLICY: PUBLIC COMMUNICATION**  
**POLICY TYPE: EXECUTION LIMITATION**

With respect to providing information to the public, the Director may not fail to utilize information resources to inform the Park District's constituency of regulations, program opportunities, or significant changes that would affect public use of Stark Parks.

Accordingly, he or she may not:

1. Fail to provide information explaining the scope and reason for major changes in facilities, trails, land management, or park operation.
2. Fail to advertise changes in park rules and regulations.
3. Fail to publicize leisure opportunities in Stark Parks.
4. Fail to publicize entry-level job openings in Stark Parks.

Additionally, the Director (or his/her designee) shall be the public spokesperson for the Park District.

**POLICY NUMBER – 10.0**  
**DATE APPROVED – 10/5/05**

The Stark County Park District provides board members with access to the park's computers, electronic communication systems and network.

Park District Technology Resources may include usage of but are not limited to the following items that are provided or paid for in whole or in part by the Park District:

- a. Infrastructure: Networks including fiber, cables, and other hardware; internet services and access, wired or wireless; content filters
- b. Communication systems and devices: Telephones, cellular phones, voicemail facilities; electronic mail (email); facsimile (fax) machines
- c. Information systems and services: Applications and databases that are internally or externally hosted and accessed via an internal or external connection, including websites, information systems, and communication and collaboration systems
- d. Hardware, software, and devices: Desktop and laptop computers; mobile and tablet devices; servers; portable hard drives and storage devices; printers and scanners; mice, keyboards, cameras, and other peripheral devices; software including operating systems, applications, and mobile application (apps) software
- e. Data: Information including text, data files, email, images, video, and audio files that are stored, accessed, or transmitted using parks technology
- f. Other: New technologies as they become available

**Limitation on Stark County Park District's Liability:**

The electronic information available to authorized users does not imply endorsement by the Park of the content, nor does the Park guarantee the accuracy of information received. The Park is not responsible for any information that may be lost, damaged or unavailable when using the network or for any information that is retrieved via the internet. The use of provided technology resources is at the individual's own risk. The system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis.

The Stark County Park District shall not be responsible for any unauthorized charges or fees resulting from access to the internet or other network resources or for unauthorized financial obligations or consequential damages arising from the use of parks technology resources.

The Stark County Park District's computer and network resources are the property of the Park. Users shall have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send, receive or display on or over the parks' internet, computer, email, or network resources, communication systems and devices, including personal files or any use of the parks' internet, computer, or network resources.

Data and other materials in files maintained on park technology resources may be subject to review, disclosure, or discovery under various laws. The Park District shall cooperate to the extent legally required with the ISP, local, state and federal officials in any investigation concerning or related to the misuse of the parks' internet, computer, and network resources.

The Park District reserves the right to monitor, track, and log network access and use for any reason and without permission — in its discretion as owner of its technology resources afore mentioned; monitor file server space utilization by district users; or deny access to prevent unauthorized, inappropriate or illegal activity and may revoke access privileges.

A back-up, or the process of making a copy of files and data, is used to restore the original in the event of a disaster or data loss. The Park District is responsible for creating a backup of data from district-wide applications such as email and other data stored on the server. It is the user's responsibility to frequently back up, or make a copy of, his/her own files (word processing documents, presentations, etc.).

The Stark County Park District is responsible for maintaining the equipment and networks (wired or wireless) as they pertain to the park system and those installed on Stark Parks grounds. The Stark County Park District cannot be held liable for ensuring the provided equipment works on personal networks for various users.

Any technical issues with provided technology resources will be addressed through the Stark County Park District's Information Technology Department and any testing, repairs and modifications will be done on Park grounds and within the park network (wired or wireless).

### **Appropriate Use:**

The Stark County Park District urges all board members to fully comply with this policy and to immediately report any violations or suspicious activities to their Chairperson.

Inappropriate use may include, but is not limited to illegal activity, accessing, posting, or transmitting profane, obscene, lewd, or pornographic materials, any form of vandalism, hacking network resources, unauthorized access to network accounts, installation of unapproved applications, or bypassing park safety and filtering resources.

Users are expected to act in a responsible, ethical and legal manner in accordance with the Park Board policy, accepted rules of network etiquette, and federal and state law. Specifically, the following uses are prohibited:

1. Illegal activity
2. Commercial or for-profit purpose
3. Product advertisement or political lobbying
4. Sharing of proprietary, financial or confidential information not made public
5. Pirating software, music and/or movies
6. Using or accessing a network, file or an account owned by another user without their permission
7. Violating copyright laws and licensing agreements
8. Accessing, reviewing, downloading, storing, or printing files or messages that may be considered obscene, vulgar or sexually explicit in nature, or uses degrading language
9. Installing personal software, applications (apps), and other materials not approved by the Stark County Park District's technology department

Board members are expected to use the park technology resources to conduct business, and support Park operations and Board business. Personal use of park technology resources should be minimal and incidental.

### **Email Communications:**

Board members utilizing the specified park board email provided by the Stark County Park District recognize that those email communications are the property of the Park District and should be used appropriately as previously outlined under the Appropriate Use section. Authorized users have no expectation of privacy whilst using, creating, receiving, or sending any email correspondence via the park authorized email system and recognize that depending on the correspondence, the emails in question may be governed by specific public record and other applicable laws.

Electronic communications have the potential for being intercepted and viewed by other individuals that are governed by public record laws and regulations. Email users should take into account the level of sensitivity / confidentiality of information being shared via email; the likelihood of inadvertent disclosure to someone other than the intended recipient; before sending sensitive information via email.

**BOARD POLICY: TECHNOLOGY USE GUIDELINES (continued)**  
**POLICY TYPE: TECHNOLOGY Resolution #: 15-10-062**

Please keep in mind that email and other technology records should be treated as confidential in nature and accessed only by the intended recipient. Confidential information should not be shared in the subject line of an email.

Email records and other technology resource files may be subject to discovery in litigation or by public record; as such users should use great care and judgment and avoid making statements that would not reflect favorably on the Stark County Parks District if disclosed in litigation or otherwise.

**Park-Owned Portable Electronic Devices:**

Park-owned portable electronic devices may contain sensitive data, which could pose a security risk to both individuals and the park district. All park technology resources should be handled and stored carefully so that they are not damaged, stolen or lost. Password protection is required on all park owned portable electronic devices. If a device is stolen, the board member should immediately notify their Chairperson and the Information Technology Administrator so that appropriate steps may be taken.

**Cloud Storage:**

Stark County Park authorized technology users should only use park-approved cloud storage services and applications.

**Passwords:**

Passwords are for personal use and must remain confidential. Never share a user name or password with staff or other users, and do not log in to a system and allow another user to access the system. An authorized user is responsible for all activity performed using the board member's credentials and many systems record all actions performed under a user's log in and access credentials. If a password is compromised, it must be changed immediately. To preserve the integrity of park district systems and resources, Stark Parks reserves the right to employ technologies to lock an account or log a user out of a system after a period of inactivity.

**POLICY NUMBER – 15-10-062**

**DATE APPROVED – 10/07/15**

**RECEIPT**

The undersigned hereby acknowledges receipt of the Regulations that deal with technology use.

*DUPLICATE*

*Please keep this copy for your records.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dated

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

## RECEIPT

The undersigned hereby acknowledges receipt of the Regulations that deal with technology use.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dated

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name



<b>BOARD POLICY:</b>	<b>BOARD RELATIONSHIP WITH VOLUNTEER GROUPS</b>
<b>POLICY TYPE:</b>	<b>BOARD-VOLUNTEER LINKAGE</b>

The Board desires to encourage the commitment and enthusiasm of volunteer participation in the Park District and maintain a relationship with the formally recognized Friends of Stark Parks and any other Stark Parks volunteer groups. Therefore, it is the policy of the Board of Park Commissioners that volunteer charters be established to define this relationship. These charters shall formally establish the role of each volunteer group, as well as its purpose, fundraising capabilities, membership, use of Stark Park facilities, and staff liaison.

The charters for the following are attached and made a part of this policy.

- **Friends of Stark Parks**
- **Quail Hollow Volunteer Association**
- **Quail Hollow Herb Society**

**POLICY NUMBER – 12.0**  
**DATE APPROVED – 10/5/05**

<b>POLICY:</b>	<b>RANGERS</b>
<b>POLICY TYPE:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE LIMITATION</b>

With respect to the provision of ranger services, the Director shall not:

1. Fail to designate certain employees as Park Rangers as authorized by the Park Board.
2. Authorize or empower Stark Park rangers to respond to situations outside their jurisdiction that would require the use of police powers except as provided for by ORC 1545.132 and the Regional Mutual Aid Pacts approved by the Board.
3. Fail to provide all necessary equipment as specifically authorized by the Park Board for Park Ranger use in the performance of their duties for the Stark County Park District.
4. Fail to provide sufficient training to meet minimum Ohio Peace Officer Training Council annual requirements or those established by the District in addition to State minimums or fail to establish regulations for the use of any defensive equipment or tactic.

**POLICY NUMBER – 13.0**  
**DATE APPROVED – 10/5/05**



**INTRODUCTION**

The Stark Metropolitan Park District was established on February 17, 1967 by Probate Judge Reuben Z. Wise Jr.

The Stark County Park District, hereinafter the “Park District” is an independent political subdivision created and governed by Section 1545 of the Ohio Revised Code. A volunteer five-member Park Commission, hereafter the “Board”, is appointed by the Probate Court and governs the Park District. The mission of the Park District is to preserve, manage and connect natural areas to serve the community through recreation, conservation and education. The District’s administration assists the Board in formulating policy and implementing those policies once they are approved by the Board.

**PURPOSE**

This administrative policy manual is intended to describe the existing policies of the Park District as they apply to the administrative management of the Park District. The Board has reviewed and approved this manual and will periodically review and revise the policies contained in this manual as it deems appropriate.

**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE**

The administrative and principle business office of the Park District is located at Sippo Lake Park, 5300 Tyner St. NW, Canton, OH 44708.

**OFFICIAL RECORDS**

Park District public records as defined by the Ohio Revised Code (section 149.43), the Local Records Act, the Freedom of Information Act, and the Open Meetings Act shall be made available for inspection and copying in accordance with the rules and regulations with the above stated laws

**STRUCTURE OF AUTHORITY**

The structure and authority reflects the Park District’s mission statement and methods of operation. Please refer to the Organizational Chart.

<b>ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY:</b>	<b>ACQUISITION OF PARKLANDS</b>
<b>POLICY TYPE:</b>	<b>RESULTS AND PRIORITIES</b>

The main priority for land acquisition shall be to acquire land adjacent to existing facilities; land that includes representative examples of significant natural areas of sufficient size to allow the natural systems within them to function with some independence; corridors, linear parklands, and wayside tracts between natural areas to preserve or reestablish natural habitat connections and to implement the “Stark County Trail and Greenway Master Plan.” Historic and cultural areas shall have a priority established based on the property’s relationship to the “Stark County Trail and Greenway Master Plan,” the availability of other viable operators, the risk of the resource being lost if not protected, and the total cost of preserving the resource including future operating costs. Each annual budget will contain some funds for land acquisition. Priority shall be given to acquisition within Stark County.

**POLICY NUMBER – 14.0**

**DATE APPROVED – 10/5/05**

<b>ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY:</b>	<b>USE OF PARKLANDS</b>
<b>POLICY TYPE:</b>	<b>RESULTS AND PRIORITIES</b>

The Stark County Park District will encourage and promote the appropriate use of Stark Parks. Uses that are inspired by passive recreation and/or derive their reward from the natural, historical, and cultural character and features of the park are most desirable. Appropriate uses are non-destructive and non-consumptive. Public recreational use of some areas may be inappropriate, and such areas will be designated as preserve areas within Stark Parks.

Development will be limited to the facilities necessary to support the appropriate uses of Stark Parks. Facilities shall be carefully controlled so that heavy visitation does not unduly impair the natural, historic, and cultural values of the parks. Such facilities will be designed in a manner that is consistent to the highest practicable degree with the preservation of these natural, historic, and cultural values.

Development of Stark Parks will be limited to 20% of the total acreage within a park including trails, parking lots, and buildings.

**POLICY NUMBER – 15.0**  
**DATE APPROVED – 10/5/05**

<b>ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY:</b>	<b>STEWARDSHIP OF PARKLANDS</b>
<b>POLICY TYPE:</b>	<b>RESULTS AND PRIORITIES</b>

Every activity of the Stark County Park District is subordinate to its duty to faithfully preserve for posterity the parks in essentially their natural state.

Ongoing research has identified significant rare and endangered plants, animals, and natural features which may occur within Stark Parks which will be protected, as determined by the Board, against willful destruction and/or displacement without adequate mitigation.

These natural areas are land and water areas where natural processes are allowed to function largely unhindered by humans. Such areas are actively managed to maintain a representative example of natural succession, and include areas which have suffered considerable impact from humans, and are artificially seeded with native materials to restore the process of succession.

Where significant cultural resources are present in natural areas and are worthy of preservation for their historic value, they shall be protected and presented for public appreciation and enjoyment to an extent compatible with the mission of the Park District.

**POLICY NUMBER – 16.0**  
**DATE APPROVED – 10/5/05**

<b>ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY:</b>	<b>COOPERATION</b>
<b>POLICY TYPE:</b>	<b>RESULTS AND PRIORITIES</b>

The Stark County Park District will provide a leadership role in cooperation with other public and private agencies and private landowners to preserve significant natural, historic, and cultural areas to enhance the quality of life within the Northeast Ohio region.

**POLICY NUMBER – 17.0**  
**DATE APPROVED – 10/5/05**

**ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY:**  
**POLICY TYPE:**

**OPERATIONS**  
**RESULTS AND PRIORITIES**

The Stark County Park District will operate Stark Parks in a manner that enhances the public enjoyment, awareness, and understanding of natural, historic, and cultural areas, while faithfully preserving and protecting for posterity the parks in essentially their natural state.

These goals are achieved through a strategic planning process, which is incorporated into the operations of Stark Parks. Strategic planning includes the development of Master Plans for each of parks within the Stark County Park District outlining specific steps for a unified effort to achieve this desired goal.

**POLICY NUMBER – 18.0**  
**DATE APPROVED – 10/5/05**

**ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY:**  
**POLICY TYPE:**

**DONATION**  
**DONATION, SPONSORSHIP AND ENDOWMENT**

**Purpose**

The Stark County Park District receives numerous inquiries from individuals and organizations about donations and memorials to the County's park system. The intent of the Donation and Sponsorship Program is to create a package that is responsive to the needs of community donors, as well as uphold the Park's mission to preserve, manage, and connect natural areas to serve the community through recreation, conservation and education.

**Policy**

The Stark County Park District shall set the guidelines for accepting donations and sponsorships whether the funds originate from Friends of Stark Parks, Stark Parks, or the general public. The Stark County Park District's Board of Commissioners, and Park Director reserve the right to refuse any donation based upon our standard guidelines. The Stark County Park District's Board of Commissioners has the final decision whether to accept a donation and/or naming rights for trails, parks, and facilities.

All costs associated with donation requests should be covered by the donor. Stark Parks may, on a case by case basis, establish an appropriate administrative fee paid by the donor. The coordination of naming and dedications must be organized between Friends of Stark Parks and Stark Parks in order to maintain the integrity of the Stark Parks brand and to effectively coordinate site locations for specific donations between the donors and Stark Parks.

**A. Proposed Donations** may be incorporated into the landscape and facilities of parks and trails, upon review by the Stark County Park District's Director and approval by the Stark County Park District Board of Commissioners in accordance with the following criteria:

**1. Cash Donations**

Unrestricted cash donations may be used to build, repair, or upgrade existing or new facilities at Stark Parks' discretion. Money will be deposited into the General Fund and cannot be earmarked for specific projects. Money wishing to be designated towards a specific project may be made *IF* the Stark County Park District's Director reviews the project and Stark Park's Board approves the project.

2. *Trees, Shrubs, Flowers*

Stark Parks accepts cash donations for trees, shrubs, flowers, and additional plants to be placed throughout the parks at the discretion of Stark Parks. A pre-approved list of trees and plants is available through Stark Parks and pricing varies upon types. Location of the donation will be determined by Park staff. Placing a plaque on live donations is prohibited. Letters of donation will be sent if appropriate information is supplied.

*2a. Celebration, Memorial, and Traffic Gardens at Molly Stark Park*

Memorial donations of bricks, benches, gazebos and native plants may be made to the Celebration Garden funds held by Friends of Stark Parks for this purpose.

3. *Amenities* Stark Parks has established a park giving program to accept funds towards the purchase of amenities or furnishings that include the purchase and installation of a plaque. Stark Parks has a standard for all amenities and will purchase and install after the donation has been accepted and details have been finalized.

3a. Benches – two options available; standard and towpath - \$1,500

3b. Picnic Tables – \$500

3c. Kiosk – Half \$5,000 OR Full \$10,000

3d. Doggie Waste Station – \$125

*Lifetime and Damages of Park Amenities:* A “lifetime” agreement consists of the natural life of an item without perpetual maintenance, not to last more than 10 years. Stark Parks will make every effort to repair damaged donations and memorials. However, Stark Parks is not responsible for replacing items, including plaques, due to excessive damage or loss. Stark Parks will make every effort to contact the donor to inform them of the loss. The donor may replace the item and/or plaque at their own expense.

4. *Donated Items*

Donations of art, exhibit pieces, furniture, or cash donations to purchase or commission art exhibit pieces must be preapproved by the Stark Parks Director. A donation form must be completed on any donated item and approved in advance by Stark County Park District’s Director. Cash donations go to Friends of Stark Parks.

5. *Historic Memorabilia*

Individuals may have the option to donate memorabilia to be placed within the confines of certain parks within the district and must be preapproved. Memorabilia will be placed within the park by park employees. No person shall dictate the location of his/her memorabilia.

6. *Wildlife Conservation Center*

Monetary and itemized donations are accepted through the Wildlife Conservation Center. A listing of needed items can be requested by contacting the Center at 330.477.0448 or online at <https://starkparks.com/wishlist>

7. *Land Donations*

Donations made in the value of land will be accepted on a case by case basis with consideration from the Park Director and approval by the Park Board of Commissioners. The land donation will undergo the process for naming rights as described elsewhere in this policy.

8. *Capital Projects*

Cash donations will be accepted towards capital projects, such as new buildings, facilities, and new trail funds. Larger donors (above \$10,000) should contact the Park Director to discuss options for these donations.

## B. Naming Rights

**Commemorative Naming:** The Board retains its sole and exclusive discretion to name, rename and dedicate park assets or provide memorials to individuals without regard to any charitable contribution. Friends of Stark Parks may offer suggestions, but do not have the discretion for commemorative naming. The factors that the Board may consider for this purpose include whether the individual:

1. Has performed extraordinary public service in support of parks, trails, and /or open spaces;
2. Is or was an outstanding community leader who made significant civic contributions to the County and/or Stark Parks; and/or
3. Is or was an outstanding regional or statewide leader who significantly furthered the mission of parks and/or land conservation.

Examples of the above include:

- a. The Ralph Regula Canalway Center
- b. The Richard Fry Memorial Garden
- c. Fry Family Park
- d. Joseph J. and Helen M. Sommer Wildlife Conservation Center
- e. The Teke & Faye Heston Education Classroom
- f. The Alan and Lee Dolan Wildlife Viewing Room

Naming of park amenities will be reviewed on a case by case basis. Naming rights in honor of those who have made significant contributions to the field will be made at the Park Board's discretion.

Should a request be made to name a park or park amenity, contingent upon a monetary donation, the following guidelines are recommended:

- Stark Parks reserves the right to determine the standard of amenity naming as it pertains to plaques, buildings, rooms, shelters, facilities and structures.
- New parks may be named by the property owner if the donation is a significant part of the property purchase price, which should be reviewed by the Park Director and approved by the Park Board.
- When the donation meets or exceeds the costs of the amenity and all associated fees for installation, construction, and plaque placement purposes.
- Other considerations for naming rights include a minimum cost as determined:
  - Buildings, named rooms, shelters, facilities, and structures require a minimum contribution of at least 50% of the cost of the area in proportion to the total cost of the facility or projected total cost. Costs are determined at the time of project and approved by the Park Board. For example, square footage can be used to determine costs, such as a 1,400 sq. ft. room. Total cost to build: \$560,000 therefore the naming right minimum is: \$280,000.
  - Removal of Name Recognition and Subsequent Circumstances  
As determined by the sole discretions of the Stark County Park District Board of Commissioners, the name or name recognition of any building, rooms, shelters, facilities and structures shall end under the following circumstances:
    - The building, room, shelter, facility or structure is set to be demolished
    - The building, room, shelter, facility or structure changes function to the extent that the purpose for the naming or name recognition is no longer relevant
    - If the individual or corporation is engaged in activities that are in conflict with the Stark County Park District's mission and values, or is involved in disreputable or criminal activities that would bring dishonor and embarrassment to the Stark County Park District

### **C. Endowments**

Friends of Stark Parks has set up two endowment funds with the Stark Community Foundation. One for the perpetual maintenance of Stark Parks in general and another for the perpetual maintenance of the Wildlife Conservation Center. Arrangements to donate towards this endowment are available by contacting the Stark Community Foundation or the Park Director. The Park Board reserves the right to decide what projects these funds are spent towards and at what time to do so.

### **D. Eagle Scout Projects**

Eagle Scout troops must work with the Volunteer Coordinator to complete proposed projects. Scout troops must send in their Scout Project Proposal to be reviewed by the Volunteer Coordinator and appropriate Departmental Manager(s) based upon the nature of the project. With department recommendation and the Park Director's approval, the scout project may proceed and must adhere to appropriate departmental signage. Scouts should be aware that the Stark County Park District has full discretion of the scout project regardless of project or timeline and may make changes to or remove the structure as park planning and development occurs. Stark Parks is not responsible for repairing or replacing any damaged or removed materials related to the scout project.

**POLICY NUMBER – Resolution #19-01-008**  
**DATE APPROVED – 01/02/2019**



“FeLeap” is a registered trademark of the Stark County Park District. Use of the logo in its entirety or any of its registered forms without the permission of the Marketing Department is prohibited. The logo should never be redrawn or changed. There is no acceptable alterations to the letterforms or spacing of the logotype.

**A. Size:**

The size of the logo should not be so small as to be unreadable, less than one (1) inch in height is not recommended.

**B. Area of Non-Interference:**

Whenever the Stark Parks logo is used, a “clear zone” must surround it to ensure visibility and impact. No graphic elements of any kind should invade the area of non-interference. The minimum area of non-interference is one-quarter inch around the entire logo, or a line to separate the logo from the area must be defined clearly.

**C. Approved Colors for the Stark Parks Logo:**

- FeLeap green (Pantone® 364)
- Text blue (Pantone® 303)
- Black, white, and approved Pantone® 464 line drawing are also allowed

**D. Intended Used of the Logo Include:**

- On all official documents such as letterhead, registration forms, manuals, business cards, and brochures
- On all signage representing areas or equipment owned or maintained by the Stark County Park District
- On all promotional materials such as brochures, print advertisements, or fundraising publications
- On employee and volunteer uniforms
- On merchandise for profit or fundraising
- Advertising or promotion of projects or events with organizations that have entered a formal partnership with the Stark County Park District

**E. Merchandising ordering requirements for internal orders**

- Any Stark Parks merchandise or apparel must be ordered through vendors with prior written approval by Stark Parks

While we recognize the value of wide circulation of our logo, the Stark County Park District reserves the right to approve or reject the logo's application by outside organizations. Criteria to be considered is likely for organizations with which Stark Parks has an active, on-going partnership, such as the Ohio & Erie Canalway Association (OECA); for events in which the Park District is a co-sponsor; or at events held by other organizations at facilities managed by the Park District.

Requesting organizations should submit a letter requesting use of the logo, including the name of the organization, how the logo will be used, type of promotional materials on which it will appear, and date of first expected use. In the case of printed materials, the Park District prefers to have drafts of the written materials to review prior to approval. Send requests to Stark County Park District, 5300 Tyner St. NW, Canton, OH 44708.



**POLICY NUMBER – Resolution #08-09-081 (NEW: 19-08-056)**

**DATE APPROVED – 08/07/2019**

Freedom of speech, press, religion and assembly are constitutional rights. However, the courts have recognized that activities associated with the exercise of these rights may be reasonably regulated to protect park resources.

Special events that fall under First Amendment rules include:

- Distribution and/or sale of printed matter
- Religious services
- Public demonstrations or assemblies, etc.
- Collecting signatures for petitions

First Amendment activities with over 25 participants require the approval of a "Special Event Request". The park may regulate the time, place and manner in which these activities are conducted.

A small group, defined as 25 people or less is not required to obtain permission through a special event request if they are located within a park's designated "Free Speech Site" and have no more than leaflets, booklets and/or hand held signs. A permit is required for any small group that:

- Wants to hold a demonstration or distribution and/or sell printed matter somewhere outside a designated free speech site.
- Wants to use equipment (i.e. tables, banners, platforms, etc.) even if it is within a designated area.
- Is an extension of another group already availing itself of the 25 person maximum.
- Wants to guarantee they will have priority for the use of a location, including the designated free speech site.

All special event requests are "revocable" without notice if the terms of the permit are violated.

At no time may other visitors' experiences be directly impeded by any special use. They may not be approached, solicited, or harassed in any way.

All printed material that will be distributed must be attached to the initial application for review.

Free speech sites have been designated at the following Stark County Park District locations:



**Lake Avenue Trailhead, Congressman Ralph Regula Towpath Trail**



**John Glenn Grove, Congressman Ralph Regula Towpath Trail**



## Fry Family Park



## Fichtner Park





## Sippo Lake Park, North



## Esmont Park





## Devonshire Park



## Deer Creek Park





### Crystal Springs Trailhead, Congressman Ralph Regula Towpath Trail



### Cook's Lagoon Park





**Bridgeport Quarry, Congressman Ralph Regula Towpath Trail**



**Whitacre Greer Park**





## Walborn Reservoir Park



## Sippo Lake Park, West





## Sippo Lake Park, East



## Quail Hollow Park





## Petros Lake Park



## Molly Stark Park



## Magnolia Flouring Mills



## Lock 4 Trailhead, Congressman Ralph Regula Towpath Trail



**POLICY NUMBER – Resolution #19-06-050**  
**DATE APPROVED – 06/05/2019**



**Photography and Recording Requiring a Permit**

Persons may take still photographs, video, or audio recordings within the park district without first obtaining a written permit from the Director unless any of the following apply:

- The photographs or recordings are being taken for use in a publication or for the purpose of advertising a product or service. Commercial photography or recording that does not interfere with the normal operations in a park will be charged at a rate of \$25 per hour.
- The project involves professional casts, props, models, or crews, other than in the case of valid news media personnel covering a breaking news event that cannot be covered at any other time or at any other location.
- The project requires access to an area that is closed or restricted to general public use.
- The project carries substantial risk of damaging park resources, disrupting park visitors, disrupting park operations, or compromising public health and safety regulations. Commercial photography or recording will be charged at a rate of \$100 per hour.
- The project involved the usage of a facility or loan of a special collection or exhibit owned by the Stark County Park District and does not interfere with the original integrity of the structure or collection/exhibit.
- Breaking news exception: Coverage or filming of breaking news by valid news media personnel does not require a permit, but such personnel may not damage park resources, disrupt park visitors, or compromise public health and safety regulations. The on-duty park ranger holds ultimate jurisdiction in any breaking news situation. "Breaking news" is defined as an event that cannot be covered at any other time or any other location.

Additionally, anyone using a park to photograph, video, or audio recording must acknowledge the location of the photo and the Stark County Park District. Please contact the Stark County Park District at 5300 Tyner St. NW, Canton, Ohio 44708 or 330-477-3552.

**POLICY NUMBER – Resolution #08-04-032**

**DATE APPROVED – 04/07/2008**

**ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY:  
POLICY TYPE:**

**DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN  
ADMINISTRATIVE**

The Stark County Park District acknowledges its responsibility to protect electronically stored information that is necessary to doing business. The Park District has developed the following Disaster Recovery Plan to minimize risks during emergency disaster situations or other failures that cause physical damage to electronic storage media and loss of data.

**MAJOR GOALS OF THIS PLAN**

- To minimize interruptions of the normal operations
- To limit the extent of disruption and damage
- To minimize the service impact of the interruption
- To provide for smooth and rapid restoration of service

<b>PERSONNEL</b>			
<b>Disaster Recovery Team</b>			
Name	Department	Address	Telephone
Mike Duplay	Administration Department	W: 5712 12 <sup>th</sup> St. NW, Canton, OH 44708 H: 1141 Westbury Circle NW, Massillon, OH 44646	W: 330-409-8097 C: 330-284-5478
Sarah Buell	Administration Department	W: 5300 Tyner St., Canton, OH 44708 H: 7361 Shady Hollow Rd., Canton OH 44708	W: 330-479-2334 C: 330-209-2721
Bob Fonte	Park Director	W: 5300 Tyner St. Canton, OH 44708 H: 5005 Plain Center NE, Canton, OH 44714	W: 330-479-2333 C: 330-353-2381

- A. Inventory Profile
  - a. Up-to-date inventory list is located on the Shared Drive/Technology/IT Equipment Inventory Sheet.xlsm. This document is backed up multiple times a day.
- B. Information Services Backup Procedures
  - a. These are handled on a location by location basis for hardware/software. Saved My Documents folders and Shared Drive items are handled campus-wide.
- C. Disaster Recovery Procedures – Disaster Action Checklist
  - a. Determine degree of disaster
  - b. Notify Disaster Recovery Team
  - c. Refer to appropriate SOP for specific type of disaster
  - d. Contact all other necessary personnel
  - e. Notify users of the disruption of service
- D. Recovery Start-up Procedures for use After a Disaster
  - a. Notify Disaster Recovery Team of the need to utilize service and of recovery plan selection
  - b. Identify equipment delivery site address (when applicable), a contact, and an alternate contact for coordinating service and telephone numbers at which contacts can be reached
  - c. Contact power and telephone service suppliers and schedule any necessary service connections
  - d. Notify appropriate parties immediately if any related plans should change
- E. Backup Plan
  - a. Individual files and folders are backed up multiple times a day for on average up to 30 days going back in time
  - b. The main server (SCP-DATA) located at the Exploration Gateway is backed up aka (virtualized) to a virtual server located at the Exploration Gateway daily as a whole
  - c. This backup is then transferred/copied to a NAS (Network Attached Storage) device located at the Operations Department
- F. Recovery Procedures
  - a. Loss of individual documents or files located on the server can be restored at the server by individual file or folder level
  - b. Loss of physical server device can be restored using the virtual server
  - c. Loss of virtual server can be restored using the NAS located at Operations

**POLICY NUMBER – Resolution #19-08-057**  
**DATE APPROVED – 08/07/2019**

<b>ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY:</b>	<b>SEVERE WEATHER OR OTHER EMERGENCY POLICY</b>
<b>POLICY TYPE:</b>	<b>ADMINISTRATIVE</b>

In a case where a weather and/or other emergency is declared by the President of the United States, the Governor of the State of Ohio, the Ohio Department of Health Director or other similar agency, or a resolution of the Stark Parks Board of Park Commissioners or in the absence of a Board Meeting, after the concurrence of the Board President and the Park Director, requiring the official closure of operations, all hourly and exempt employees will receive straight time pay for the hours they were otherwise regularly scheduled to work up to 40 hours per defined work week (prorated to the average hours worked for the preceding 12 weeks for part time staff).

Employees absent from work and on “active pay status” (i.e. FMLA, personal leave, paid sick leave, etc.) during a declared emergency will be charged the time off during the declared emergency.

Exceptions to this would be any pre-scheduled vacations as cancelled by the employee.

During a defined emergency the Stark Parks Director will identify essential staff as those necessary to perform the basic functions of the business. These essential staff will be defined based on the severity of each situation. Any hourly identified essential staff will be paid for all hours worked (per federal, state and local guidelines) or their base straight time, whichever is greater. Exempt essential staff will be paid their regular base pay.

Employees assigned to work from home will be expected to continue to work from home as assigned as the workload is available. No additional pay outside of the straight time pay outlined above will be paid.

Declaration of a weather related emergency by any authority other than those listed above is not sufficient to trigger payment under this provision, including declaration of “Level 3” road conditions by the Sheriff or other authorized agency.

**POLICY NUMBER – Resolution #20-04-026**

**DATE APPROVED – 04/01/2020**

<b>ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY:</b>	<b>INVASIVE/NOXIOUS SPECIES POLICY</b>
<b>POLICY TYPE:</b>	<b>ADMINISTRATIVE</b>

Invasive species are becoming more common in our local ecosystems. These non-native or exotic plants invade natural areas, degrading critical habitat that provide food sources and nesting areas for wildlife such as birds, mammals, and insects. There are over 700 non-native plant species found in the wild in Ohio but less than 100 of these plants invade causing the severe effects on our native ecosystems. Another type of plant species encountered are noxious weeds. These noxious species can be native or non-native and have crippling effects on our agricultural communities due to their aggressive nature and resistance to certain herbicides.

In 2016, Stark County Park District (SCPD) created a Natural Resources Department which is dedicated to the conservation and management of native wildlife and their habitat through research, education and quality animal care. The natural resources staff are trained employees qualified to identify target plant species (i.e. invasive or noxious species), use herbicides and application equipment safely, keep accurate records for daily treatments, and map the location of invasive species. With the use of The Weed Information Management System data base (WIMS) and the Habitat/Invasive Management Prioritization Workbook, programs developed to assist with creating priority areas and maintaining a database for reporting, Stark Park's creates Invasive Plant Management Plans (IPMP) for the areas that are infested with invasive or noxious species. The Invasive Plant Management Plan outlines the site description, conservation targets, and management goals. This includes an inventory of the invasive and/or noxious species on site, as well as the management philosophy, priority species, and an implementation schedule. Stark Parks uses a variety of strategies when managing invasive or noxious species. The techniques include manual (i.e. hand removal) or mechanical removal (i.e. mowing), and application of herbicide. Due to herbicides potentially having a negative effect on our ecosystems, all other means of removal are assessed before this approach is considered. Many factors go into choosing herbicide usage over other methods of removal such as staffing, funding, and location. SCPD employees involved with the application of herbicide are licensed commercial herbicide applicators with the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) and are equipped with the knowledge and skill to use Best Management Practices (BMP) required by the state (<https://agri.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/oda/divisions/plant-health/pesticides/commercial-study-guides>).

Best Management practices include but are not limited to training staff on identification, scheduling for the best result and appropriate timing, scouting for invasive/noxious species, and cleaning equipment before transport. Cleaning is especially important because dirty vehicles, equipment, and clothing can transport invasive/noxious species parts and seeds, creating new infestations. Stark Parks will follow Ohio Noxious Weed Laws set by The Ohio State University Farm Office, when managing noxious weeds on public lands which border agricultural lands. The Ohio Noxious Weed Law states the following language. "When notified that noxious weeds are growing on land owned or managed by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources or on park land owned or managed by the state or a political subdivision, Ohio law requires the township trustees to notify the county Extension Educator. The Extension Educator must form a committee with a person designated by the state or political subdivision, the landowner, and a designated supervisor of the soil and water conservation district. Within five days of the date the township provided the notice of noxious weeds, the committee must meet and 'consider ways to deal with the problem.' The committee must report its findings and recommendations to the township trustees. We presume that the township trustees are to share the noxious weed report and recommendations with the ODNR or political subdivision but strangely, Ohio law does not require the board of trustees to do so. O.R.C. § 5579.05(B)." Stark Parks will also reference The Ohio Department of Agriculture list of plants formally designated as noxious weeds in the Ohio Administrative Code at <http://codes.ohio.gov/oac/901:5-37-01>. And OSU identification guide of Ohio noxious weed at <https://ohiostate.pressbooks.pub/ohionoxiousweeds/>.

**POLICY NUMBER – Resolution #20-08-048**

**DATE APPROVED – 08/04/2020**

**ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY:****MOTOR VEHICLE USE FOR ESSENTIAL ON-CALL  
EXEMPT STAFF****POLICY TYPE:****ADMINISTRATIVE**

The use of Stark County Park District vehicles will be strictly controlled by the Stark County Park District Board of Park Commissioners. Use of Park District vehicles shall be restricted for official business only, except as otherwise provided by the Board of Park Commissioners. No employee is permitted to operate any County vehicle unless they have a proper, appropriate, and valid operator's license pertinent to the operation of that vehicle.

Except for in designated instances (as per the Board of Park Commissioners), employees are required to use their personal vehicles for commuting to and from work. Park District vehicles may be used for commuting if there are bona fide business reasons for permitting the employee to commute in the vehicle and the Park District specifically, Park Director or designee authorizes such use. The Park District when authorizing such use, in excess of 30 days, shall so inform the Park Board of Commissioners. The Board maintains the authority to refuse such permission, at its discretion.

Employees who are on call on a regular basis may be allowed to take a company vehicle home so they can respond as soon as possible. Such employees will be asked to provide a written acknowledgment that they fully understand that the vehicle is used only as part of emergency response and not for personal use.

Any authorized vehicle assignments will follow all IRS tax rules as outlined by the Finance department.

When operating a department vehicle, employees must exercise caution to drive safely and adhere to all rules, safety practices, regulations, and laws and avoid distractions while driving. Employees are expected to be courteous to other drivers and pedestrians. Careless, reckless, or destructive vehicle operation will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Traffic fines and arrests for illegal or improper use of vehicles is the sole responsibility of the employee. All employees are required to wear seatbelts or restraints as provided in the vehicle. The use of cell phones while driving is restricted to hands-free devices, when necessary and text messaging is not allowed (see Devices, Cellular Policy).

Vehicle interiors and exteriors are to be kept in neat and clean condition. Each employee is accountable for removing trash and other items from the interior after use. Use of tobacco products in Stark Parks' vehicles is strictly prohibited.

Nonemployees and nonbusiness passengers (e.g., family and friends, volunteers) are prohibited from riding in or operating any Stark Parks' vehicles and equipment without prior approval from the Park Director.

When possible, company vehicles will be permanently assigned to departments that have demonstrated a continued need for them. Additional vehicles are maintained in a motor pool for use by individual employees, as needed.

Employees must report any accident, theft or malicious damage involving a company vehicle to their supervisor and Human Resources, regardless of the extent of damage or lack of injuries. Such reports must be made as soon as possible but no later than 8 hours after the incident. Employees are expected to cooperate fully with authorities in the event of an accident. However, employees should make no voluntary statement other than in reply to questions of investigating officers.

Employees are not permitted, under any circumstances, to operate a company vehicle or a personal vehicle for company business when any physical or mental impairment causes the employee to be unable to drive safely.

Additionally, employees shall not operate any company vehicle at any time or operate any personal vehicle while on company business while having used or consumed alcohol, illegal drugs or prescription medications that may affect their ability to drive.

Employees should make every effort to use Park District vehicles whenever possible in the course of performing work duties. Use of personal vehicles is discouraged. Employees using their private vehicle while traveling on routine Park business are covered by the Park District's liability insurance – however, the employee's insurance carrier is the primary insurer.

Violation of this policy may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

**POLICY NUMBER – Resolution #20-10-066**

**DATE APPROVED – 10/06/2020**

## **SPECIAL COLLECTING AND PERMIT POLICY**

### **PURPOSE**

The Stark Parks welcomes scientific research that is beneficial to the management of our areas natural resources, is not harmful to the park in any way and is consistent with park procedures and integrity. Stark Parks receives numerous inquiries from individuals and organizations about the collection of resources within our park boundaries. The intent of the Special Collections Permit is to safeguard our natural and cultural resources, as well as uphold the Park's mission to preserve, manage, and connect natural areas to serve the community through recreation, conservation and education.

### **POLICY**

The Special Collections Permit is used to insure the preservation of our natural habitat and resources throughout Stark Parks' properties. Stark Parks shall set the guidelines for the collection of any and all resources throughout our district including but not limited to soil, water, vegetation, insects, wildlife, etc. The Stark Parks Director and Natural Resources Manager reserve the right to refuse any collection request based upon our standard and guidelines. In some cases, additional park permissions may be required.

All costs associated with the collection of resources should be covered by the permit holder. Stark Parks may, on a case by case basis, ask for a copy of the records or findings if it proves beneficial to the work being done within the park district or the integrity of the Stark Parks brand.

### **Permit Submissions**

Special Collection Permits can be obtained by contacting the Natural Resources Department located at the Wildlife Conservation Center, 800 Genoa Ave NW, Massillon, Ohio, calling by phone at (330) 477-0448, or by visiting our website at [https://starkparks.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Special-Permit-Form\\_Natural-Resources.pdf](https://starkparks.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Special-Permit-Form_Natural-Resources.pdf):

#### *1. Permit Approval*

Once the permit is completed and submitted the collection request terms will be reviewed by the Natural Resources Manager. After the permit request is reviewed for compliance with agency requirements and other laws, regulations and policies it is then submitted to the Park Director for approval. The park reserves the right to pursue external scientific review, depending on the complexity and sensitivity of the work being proposed and other factors, should it so choose.

Staff reviewing the applications make a decision to approve based on peer review of favorable and unfavorable factors; on an assessment of perceived risk to the natural resources and interruption to park activities; and on the benefits to the knowledge of park resources. While staff will work with applicants to arrive at a mutually acceptable research design, there may be instances where no acceptable mitigating measures are possible and the application may be denied.

The time required for permit to be reviewed will be proportional to the type and magnitude of the proposed research.

#### *2. Approved Requests*

Upon approval the permit must remain in the possession of the user and is non-transferable. The permit must be accessible at all times by the user during the completion of the research. Proof may be requested by Stark Parks at any time during the duration of the permit and the work being conducted. All permits expire within one year of approval date and must be resubmitted as needed. Failure to comply may result in the loss of the permit and privileges provided by Stark Parks.



### *3. Denied Requests*

Stark Parks reserves the right to deny the application if it is deemed to be in direct contrast to the mission or integrity of the Park including but not limited to:

- a. shows potential for an adverse impact on the parks natural resources
- b. shows potential for an adversely affecting park visitors or staff
- c. involves extensive collecting of resources
- d. does not allow collected specimens to be stored at a public institution

### *4. Additional Permits*

Additional state or federal permits may be required as part of a research project and it is the sole responsibility of the applicant to identify and secure all additional regulatory permits required. Applicants may be asked to provide copies of additional permits prior to commencing research in the park.

## **STANDARD CONDITIONS FOR ALL SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH/COLLECTING**

The permit holder and all persons associated with the holder are asked to conduct themselves in a professional manner and adhere to any standards, protocols and conditions set forth by the permit and must abide by all rules, regulations and ordinances of the Stark County Park District. A full listing of Stark Parks' ordinances can be found on our website at <https://starkparks.com/regulations-ordinances/>, additionally, all permit holders are held to the following:

- a. All projects should be non-invasive, with no long-term impacts on natural communities or populations.
- b. Park Director or Natural Resources Manager may halt an ongoing research project for any reason pending evaluation, discussion, and resolution of any issues in conjunction with the park district.
- c. The permit may be modified, terminated, or suspended by Park Director or Natural Resources Manager for any reason.
- d. The Permittee must keep all permits with them when conducting research or collecting any specimens. The Permittee should be prepared to educate others as to what, how, and why the collecting is taking place, with emphasis on conservation issues.
- e. The Permittee is expected to collect discriminately, taking only the amount necessary to complete the project including minimizing by-catch.
- f. The permittee is expected to collect in a discreet manner away from roads, trails, and developed areas unless otherwise specified in the permit. The permit may designate the kind, number, sizes, and places of scarce or important specimens that are not to be collected as necessary for the preservation of the area.

## **OTHER COLLECTION REQUESTS**

From time to time Stark Parks receives various requests for collection of foods such as mushrooms and berries, and other natural resources that grow within our various parks. Our ordinances do not allow the gathering/harvesting of these resources on an individual/group basis. Some exceptions may be made in cases of Stark Parks' endorsed programming involving invasive species removal and other public educational events.

**POLICY NUMBER – TBD**

**DATE APPROVED – TBD**

With respect to planning fiscal events (budgeting for all or any remaining part of a fiscal period), the Director may not jeopardize either programmatic or fiscal integrity of the organization. Accordingly, he or she may not cause or allow budgeting which:

1. Plans the expenditure from the general fund in any fiscal year of more funds than are conservatively projected to be available in that year from:
  - a. Tax Levies
  - b. Local Government Allocation
  - c. Grants
  - d. Interest
  - e. Operation Receipts
  - f. Prior Year Balances
2. Deviates materially from Board-stated priorities (see Results and Priorities Policy) in the allocation of funds for competing budgetary needs.
3. Postpones needed capital improvements and major maintenance when a balance is projected for the current year-end.
4. Budgets more operations than projected for current year revenues
5. Exceeds Board approved budgeted expenditures for capital and/or operating expenses without prior Board approval.

**POLICY NUMBER – 14.0**

**DATE APPROVED – 10/5/05**

**FINANCIAL POLICY:  
POLICY TYPE:**

**FINANCIAL CONDITION  
EXECUTIVE LIMITATION**

With respect to the actual ongoing condition of the organization's financial health, the Director may not cause or allow the development of fiscal jeopardy or loss of allocation integrity. Accordingly, he or she may not:

1. Expend more funds than the sum of the funds received from taxes and other revenue sources in the fiscal year to date, plus prior year balances, plus Board approved bond anticipation notes.
2. Indebt the organization in an amount beyond the accounts payable.
3. Allow cash to drop below the amount needed to settle payroll and debts in a timely manner.
4. Allow actual allocations to deviate materially from Board-stated priorities (see Results and Priorities policies).

**POLICY NUMBER – 15.0**

**DATE APPROVED – 10/5/05**

**FINANCIAL POLICY:  
POLICY TYPE:**

**ASSET PROTECTION  
EXECUTIVE LIMITATION**

With respect to proper stewardship of the district's assets, the Director may not risk losses beyond those necessary in the normal course of business. Accordingly, he or she may not:

1. Fail to insure against casualty and liability losses in material equivalents to standards in comparable organizations.
2. Allow unbonded personnel access to material amounts of funds.
3. Subject plant and equipment to improper wear and tear or insufficient maintenance.
4. Unnecessarily expose the organization, its Board, or its staff to claims of liability.
5. Make on his or her own authority any purchase of greater than \$25,000.00 unless specifically approved as part of the annual adopted budget nor prepare any purchase of over \$50,000.00 without sealed bids.
6. Use any other fiscal agent or fiscal system other than the county auditor.
7. Invest operating capital in insecure instruments, including uninsured checking accounts and bonds of less than AAA rating.

**POLICY NUMBER – 18.0**

**DATE APPROVED – 10/5/05**

**POLICIES:**

**COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS**

**POLICY TYPE:**

**EXECUTIVE LIMITATION**

With respect to employment, compensation and benefits to employees, consultants, contract workers, and volunteers, the Director may not cause or allow jeopardy to fiscal integrity or public image. Accordingly, he or she may not:

1. Change his or her own compensation and benefits as established by the Board.
2. Promise or imply permanent or guaranteed employment.
3. Establish current compensation and benefits which:
  - a. Deviate materially from the geographic or professional market for the skills employed and the adopted pay scale created as part of the "Korn Ferry Hay System" of valuing jobs and their ranges of compensation.
  - b. Create obligations over a longer term than revenues can be safely projected (in no event longer than one year and in all events subject to losses of revenue).
4. Establish deferred or long-term compensation or benefits.

**POLICY NUMBER – 19.0**

**DATE APPROVED – 10/5/05**