

Stark County Park District Park Board – Regular Meeting Minutes
Exploration Gateway at Sippo Lake Park, 5712 12th St. NW, Canton, OH 44708
October 5, 2021
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(AGENDA ITEM: 4)

- 1. CALL TO ORDER** – The regular meeting of the Stark County Park Commission was called to order by Denise Freeland at 5:30 p.m.

A. Roll Call of Members

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Denise Freeland, Bill Bryan, Ralph Dublikar, Pat Quick, David Regula

STAFF PRESENT:

Robert A. Fonte, Park Director/Secretary to the Board

Barb Wells, Financial Manager

Corianne Kocarek, Clerk to the Board

Justin Laps, Chief of Public Safety

Dani McGuinness, Human Resources Manager

Rick Summers, Operations Manager

GUESTS PRESENT:

None

B. Adoption of Agenda

D. Regula MOVED to adopt the agenda, which was SECONDED by R. Dublikar

DISCUSSION:

None

MOTION CARRIED on a vote as follows:

Voting Aye: Denise Freeland, Bill Bryan, Ralph Dublikar, Pat Quick, David Regula

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

3. STAFF PRESENTATION – JUSTIN LAPS, CHIEF OF PUBLIC SAFETY

J. Laps shared the following information with the Park Board:

- The Public Safety Department is comprised of 13 full-time officers, 1 part-time, 5 active ranger cadets and 1 fully certified canine
- Patrol methods: patrol vehicles, watercraft, climate controlled utility vehicle, ATV, bicycle, and a trailer used for hauling cadet bicycles
- Crime statistics (so far in 2021): 49 misdemeanors (44 at Molly Stark Park), 2 ATVs on trail, 1 failure to control a motor vehicle, 1 failure to appear for theft, 1 criminal damages, 1 felony indictment for fentanyl
- Ohio Law Enforcement Collaborative – awarded group 1 certification for use of force and hiring and recruitment. Working on groups 2 and 3 that include community engagement, body worn cameras, telecommunication training, bias free policing, investigation of employee misconduct, vehicle pursuit, response to mass protests-demonstrations and agency wellness
- Future state funding will be tied to Collaborative Certification, we expect full certification in 2022
- Also obtained certification for Executive Order 13929 from President Trump – that includes use-of-force policies and prohibits the use of chokeholds
- 2021 Public Outreach: Ranger safety stops coordinated with marketing, second annual ranger bass tournament, 5 additional open bass tournaments – raised over \$1,000 for ranger cadet program, National Night Out in Massillon and Jackson, Catfish with Cops, Gunnar K-9 demonstrations, Ranger for a Day (over 400 people), in 2020 the department was awarded second place for law enforcement programs. They are also participating in the Pink Patch program through Friends of Stark Parks for a fundraiser for breast cancer research

- **Reference 72**

- Training – new Chief training (40 hours) – contained law enforcement ethics, records, budgeting, officer wellness, liability, situational leadership, best hiring practices, and communications/media relations
 - 2020 Ohio Attorney General’s Law Enforcement Conference – use of force, crisis intervention
 - Echelon Front First Responder Training – leadership training seminars
 - Ohio Parks and Recreation Association (OPRA) Leadership Summit
 - Department Training: use of force/de-escalation training, judgement/reaction simulator training
 - Policy One Academy (online training): Anti-bias training for law enforcement, de-escalation and use of force, officer liability, arrest, search and seizure
 - Taser training
- 2022 Looking Ahead:
 - 24 hours of mandatory state training (50% reimbursement from the State)
 - Crime reduction – continue to implement strategies to reduce crime at Molly Stark
 - Diversify patrol methods to have maximum visibility – the more time that is spent patrolling the less problems we have
 - Outreach programming – emphasize values as a department
- B. Bryan asked how the controlled hunt was going
- J. Laps answered that we had 375 applicants for 45 spots. It started last week and 4 deer have been shot. Natural Resources will do studies post hunt
- P. Quick stated that was well over your estimation of 200 people
- D. Regula stated that he would like to extend an invite to Chief Laps to attend an upcoming seminar on human trafficking. Ohio is the 4th largest for human trafficking

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

WHEREAS, minutes from the September 7, 2021 Regular Park Board meeting have been submitted for review.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Stark County Park District Board of Park Commissioners to approve the minutes from the September 7, 2021 Regular Park Board meeting as submitted.

B. Bryan MOVED to adopt this resolution, which was SECONDED by P. Quick

DISCUSSION: None

MOTION CARRIED to approve the minutes on a vote as follows:

Voting Aye: Denise Freeland, Bill Bryan, Ralph Dublikar, Pat Quick, David Regula

5. FINANCIAL REPORTS

WHEREAS, the monthly Financial Report and Summary Financial Report for the period ending August 31, 2021 have been submitted to the Board for review.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Stark County Park District Board of Park Commissioners to approve and accept for audit the Financial Report and Summary Financial Report for the period ending August 31, 2021 as submitted.

D. Regula MOVED to adopt this resolution, which was SECONDED by R. Dublikar

DISCUSSION:

None

MOTION CARRIED on a vote as follows:

Voting Aye: Denise Freeland, Bill Bryan, Ralph Dublikar, Pat Quick, David Regula

6. APPROVAL OF PAYROLLS AND BILLS

WHEREAS, copies of payroll and bills for the month of August 2021 were submitted for the Board’s review in accordance with Resolution #98-133.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Stark County Park District Board of Park Commissioners to approve and accept for audit the payroll and bills for August 31, 2021 as submitted.

P. Quick MOVED to adopt this resolution, which was SECONDED by D. Regula

DISCUSSION: None

MOTION CARRIED on a vote as follows:
Voting Aye: Denise Freeland, Bill Bryan, Ralph Dublikar, Pat Quick, David Regula

7. OLD BUSINESS

A. Informational: Upcoming Events

DISCUSSION:

General discussion regarding the upcoming Friends of Stark Parks Board meetings and whether they are being held in person, via zoom or both

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. RESOLUTION: #21-10-064: 2022 Tax Levy Rate and Amount

WHEREAS, the Stark County Park District Board of Commissioners in accordance with the provisions of law has previously adopted a Tax budget for the next succeeding fiscal year commencing January 1, 2022; and

WHEREAS, The Budget Commission of Stark County, Ohio has certified its action thereon to this council together with an estimate by the County Auditor of the rate of each tax necessary to be levied by the Board of Park Commissioners, and what part thereof is without, and what part within the ten mill limitation, there be it.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Stark County Park District Board of Park Commissioners, Stark County, Ohio that the amounts and rates, as determined by the Budget Commission in its certification, be the same are here by accepted; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that there be and is hereby levied on the tax duplicate of said Park District the rate of each tax necessary to be levied within and without the ten mill limitation as follows; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FUTHER RESOLVED, by the Stark County Park District Board of Park Commissioners to accept the tax rate of 1.00 mil and the amount of Seven Million Four Hundred Twenty Eight Thousand Five Dollars (\$7,428,005.00) as determined by the Budget Commission.

P. Quick MOVED to adopt this resolution, which was SECONDED by D. Regula

DISCUSSION:

None

MOTION CARRIED on a vote as follows:

Voting Aye: Denise Freeland, Bill Bryan, Ralph Dublikar, Pat Quick, David Regula

B. RESOLUTION: #21-10-065: Grant Acceptance: Body Armor Vests

WHEREAS, the Stark County Park District (SCPD) applied for a grant through the Ohio Attorney General's Ohio Law Enforcement Body Armor Program for five (5) new vests; and

WHEREAS, SCPD was awarded project reimbursement in the amount of Seventy Five Percent (75%) of the total project costs and the project total is Five Thousand Eight Hundred and Fifty Dollars (\$5,850.00).

WHEREAS, the SCPD Board of Park Commissioners accepts the grant award in the amount of Four Thousand Three Hundred Eighty Seven Dollars and Fifty Cents (\$4,387.50); and

WHEREAS, the SCPD share is One Thousand Sixty Two Dollars and Fifty Cents (\$1,462.50); and

WHEREAS, the grant award acceptance and requests for reimbursement are due by September 30, 2022.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Stark County Park District Board of Park Commissioners accepts the grant award and will obligate the funds required to satisfactorily complete the project including a Twenty Five Percent (25%) match.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Stark County Park District Board of Park Commissioners to authorize the Park Director to accept the grant through the Ohio Attorney General's Law Enforcement Body Armor Program for five (5) new vests.

B. Bryan MOVED to adopt this resolution, which was SECONDED by P. Quick

DISCUSSION:

D. Regula asked how frequently the vests are replaced

J. Laps stated they are retired after five years. This grant only has a 25% match.

MOTION CARRIED on a vote as follows:

Voting Aye: Denise Freeland, Bill Bryan, Ralph Dublikar, Pat Quick, David Regula

C. RESOLUTION: #21-10-066: Clean Ohio Greenspace Conservation Fund: Natural Resource Advisory Council (NRAC) Grant Applications for Petros Lake Park and the Tavares Property

WHEREAS, grant funding is available from the Clean Ohio Conservation Fund program for the acquisition of open space and site improvements in Stark County with a goal of protecting habitat, preserving water quality, linking open spaces and enhancing economic development for recreation and ecotourism, and enhancing educational opportunities for the community; and

WHEREAS, the Stark County Park District (SCPD) desires financial assistance through the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) with applications being due no later than October 8th, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the grant funds available in this round of Natural Resource Advisory Council (NRAC) funding are approximately One Million Five Hundred Sixty Two Thousand Four Hundred Sixty Five Dollars (\$1,562,465.00); and

WHEREAS, SCPD is recommending two projects for the grant program funding; and

WHEREAS, the request for Petros Lake Park totals Two Hundred Twenty One Thousand Eight Hundred Twenty Five Dollars (\$221,825.00) for prairie restoration, a parking lot, signage and trails; and

WHEREAS, the request for property acquisition known as the Tavares Property, Stark County Auditor Permanent Parcel numbers 10002561 and 1302634 totals Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000.00) for the acquisition of floodplain property totaling 17.49 acres; and

WHEREAS, the total project cost for both projects is Three Hundred Thirty Five Thousand Seven Hundred Sixty Six Dollars and Sixty Seven Cents (\$335,766.67); and

WHEREAS, the total funding request for both projects is Two Hundred Fifty One Thousand Eight Hundred Twenty Five Dollars (\$251,825.00); and

WHEREAS, NRAC requires a Twenty-Five Percent (25%) match for each project which equates to Eighty Three Thousand Nine Hundred Forty One Dollars and Sixty Seven Cents (\$83,941.67) which SCPD intends to cover with the value of labor and in the form of cash; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Stark County Park District Board of Park Commissioners to authorize the Park Director to submit an application for a grant to OPWC for site improvements at Petros Lake Park and the Tavares Property acquisition totaling a grant request of Two Hundred Fifty One Thousand Eight Hundred Twenty Five Dollars (\$251,825.00) with a match of Eighty Three Thousand Nine Hundred Forty One Dollars and Sixty Seven Cents (\$83,941.67).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, by the Stark County Park District Board of Park Commissioners to authorize the Park Director and to sign any documents necessary to submit the grant application.

P. Quick MOVED to adopt this resolution, which was SECONDED by D. Regula

DISCUSSION:

R. Fonte stated the grant request at Petros is completing a trail and parking lot along Navarre Road to help service the neighborhood to the north. The Tavares property is in Canton South. Canton Township trustees approached the Park District about extending the West Branch trail in the township. This property along with several publicly owned properties (school, township and AEP) along the Nimishillen Creek will aid in extending the trail.

MOTION CARRIED on a vote as follows:

Voting Aye: Denise Freeland, Bill Bryan, Ralph Dublikar, Pat Quick, David Regula

D. RESOLUTION: #21-10-067: Wildlife Conservation Center Note Sale Transfer

WHEREAS, the Stark County Park District Board of Park Commissioners previously approved the Wildlife Conservation Note with Resolution #20-11-071; and

WHEREAS, the Financial Manager recommends paying down an amount not to exceed Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000.00) and issuing a new note in the amount of Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000.00); and

WHEREAS, the interest rate on the note will be determined after the quotes are received; and

WHEREAS, a transfer is needed from the General Fund for an amount not to exceed Five Hundred Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$520,000.00) for principal, interest and legal fees; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Stark County Park District Board of Park Commissioners to authorize a new note in the amount between Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000.00) and Seven Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$750,000.00).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, by the Stark County Park District Board of Park Commissioners to transfer an amount not to exceed Five Hundred Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$520,000.00) from 072.28.0000.82100 (Transfers Out) to 529.28.0000.72100 (Transfers In) for principal, interest and legal fees.

B. Bryan MOVED to adopt this resolution, which was SECONDED by R. Dublikar

DISCUSSION:

R. Fonte stated that we are still working on what the debt payment will be. Our goal is to retire the note as soon as we can. This resolution gives B. Wells permission to shop the note

MOTION CARRIED on a vote as follows:

Voting Aye: Denise Freeland, Bill Bryan, Ralph Dublikar, Pat Quick, David Regula

E. RESOLUTION: #21-10-068: License Agreement: Muskellunge Brewing Company/Stark Parks

WHEREAS, the Stark County Park District and Muskellunge Brewing Company desire to enter into a License Agreement (attached as Exhibit A); and

WHEREAS, the License Agreement will be mutually beneficial for both agencies; and

WHEREAS, the licensing relationship established by this Agreement will support Stark Parks' development of sustainable trails, encourage and stimulate the use of Stark Parks' trails and other offerings by the public, and generally promote Stark Parks' facilities, programs and services.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Stark County Park District Board of Park Commissioners to approve the License Agreement and authorize the Park Director, Robert A. Fonte, to sign/execute the License Agreement with Muskellunge Brewing Company (attached as Exhibit A) as approved for legal form and sufficiency by Attorney William Morris.

P. Quick MOVED to adopt this resolution, which was SECONDED by D. Regula

DISCUSSION:

B. Bryan asked where the brewery is located

B. Wells stated his location is in downtown Canton and all of his initial concerns have been addressed in the updated License Agreement

P. Quick asked the percentage

B. Wells stated the percentage is between 5-10%

R. Fonte stated this agreement is only for 6 months at a time so we can re-evaluate to make sure the agreement is beneficial for both partners

MOTION CARRIED on a vote as follows:

Voting Aye: Denise Freeland, Bill Bryan, Ralph Dublikar, Pat Quick, David Regula

F. RESOLUTION: #21-10-069: 2021 Department Project Revision-Restoration Project

WHEREAS, the 2021 Project List & Budget was approved by the Stark County Park District Board of Commissioners by resolution #21-02-015 on February 2, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the 2021 Natural Resources Department Project Budget included Restoration as a project for the Donzelli property and forest restoration to address Ash die off; and

WHEREAS, Natural Resources Manager, Talula Wiater, has recommended including prairie restoration in this project instead of only forest restoration in this project due to the need to stabilize the soil and protect it from run off prior to reforestation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, by the Stark County Park District Board of Park Commissioners to update the project description for the Reforestation from the original project submitted to add prairie restoration.

B. Bryan MOVED to adopt this resolution, which was SECONDED by R. Dublikar

DISCUSSION:

R. Fonte stated this change would give T. Waiter the flexibility to stabilize the ground after to planting the trees

P. Quick clarified that no additional money is being requested

R. Fonte stated that was correct, only a change in the project

MOTION CARRIED on a vote as follows:

Voting Aye: Denise Freeland, Bill Bryan, Ralph Dublikar, Pat Quick, David Regula

9. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. 2021 Project List and Budget

DISCUSSION: None

B. Director's Report:

DISCUSSION:

D. Regula stated that he and D. Freeland attended the Friends of Stark Parks event and would like to pass along to the planning committee that it was very well done

R. Fonte updated the Park Board of Commissioners on the following:

- You may have read about the Solar Farm that has been proposed in Washington Township. The Park District was not notified prior to reading the article in the Repository. We have since been in communication with the vendor to let them know the proposed farm goes through our property in that area as well
- Met with G. Schaefer of the Quail Hollow Herb Society along with their secretary and treasurer due to his individual conduct and incidents at the garden. Overall it was a good meeting and we made some headway.
- G. Schreiber recently resigned as the President of the Quail Hollow Volunteer Association and the Chair of the Rock Garden Restoration Committee
- Reminder to B. Bryan that his second term as a Park Board Commissioner is up and we encourage him to contact Judge Park if he has an interest in staying on the Board
- We sent Senator Kirk Schuring the next request for State Capitol dollars for the next phase at the Magnolia Flouring Mills. This request is for an elevator and to begin the interpretive story. We will probably find out next spring if we're awarded funds
- We're collectively working to extend leases:
 - Stark County Commissioners – current lease ends in 2022 for the 1,200 acres of park lands owned by the Stark County Commissioners, April 30, 2042 for the Aqueduct Bridge, and August 9, 2054 for the Exploration Gateway Building
 - City of Alliance for Walborn and Deer Creek Reservoirs ends 2022-2023
 - Whitacre Greer in three to five years, interested in a 25 year option with first right of refusal

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

BE IT RESOLVED, to reconvene into a second Executive Session at 6:17 p.m. to consider the employment of a public employee and consider the purchase of property for public purposes.

D. Regula moved to adopt this motion, which was SECONDED by P. Quick

MOTION CARRIED on a roll call vote as follows:

Voting Aye: Denise Freeland, Bill Bryan, Ralph Dublikar, Pat Quick, David Regula

11. RECONVENE FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

BE IT RESOLVED to reconvene to Regular Session at 6:48 p.m.

R. Dublikar MOVED to adopt this resolution, which was SECONDED by B. Bryan

MOTION CARRIED on a vote as follows:

Voting Aye: Denise Freeland, Bill Bryan, Ralph Dublikar, Pat Quick, David Regula

12. ADJOURNMENT

BE IT RESOLVED to adjourn at 6:48 p.m. Next scheduled meeting: November 3, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. at the Exploration Gateway at Sippo Lake Park.

P. Quick MOVED to adjourn the meeting, which was SECONDED by D. Regula

MOTION CARRIED on a vote as follows:

Voting Aye: Denise Freeland, Bill Bryan, Ralph Dublikar, Pat Quick, David Regula

APPROVAL DATE: November 3, 2021

ATTEST:

Denise Freeland, Chairperson
Stark County Park Commission

Robert A. Fonte, Director/Secretary to the Board
Stark County Park District

Corianne Kocarek/Clerk to the Board
Stark County Park District

• **Reference 78**