MINUTES OF THE

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

OF

MEDINA COUNTY PARK DISTRICT

August 16, 2023

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Vice-chairwoman Davis called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. at Medina County Park District Headquarters, 6364 Deerview Lane, Medina, Ohio.

B. Roll Call

1. Roll call showed Vice-chairwoman Davis and Commissioner Neate present. Also in attendance were Director Eppink; Planning and Operations Manager Smith; Development Coordinator Peacock, Park Planner Kleshinski, Business Manager Chaney; Legal Counsel Holland; future board commissioner Jason Venner, and Guilford Township residents Jansen Wehrley, James and Judy Carpenter, and Paul Wyrzykowski.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. July 19, 2023

1. Commissioner Davis offered a motion approving the minutes of the July 19, 2023 meeting as presented. Commissioner Neate seconded; the motion unanimously carried.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A. Jansen Wehrley

1. Mr. Wehrley resides at 4669 Blake Road in Guilford Township. He attended the meeting representing 11 neighbors residing near Hubbard Valley Park to oppose the proposed land swap between the park district and Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District (MWCD). MWCD plans to construct an office and equipment storage building across from Mr. Wehrley's residence on Blake Road. Mr. Wehrley presented the board with a signed resolution from the Guilford Township Trustees in opposition of the land swap. Mr. Wehrley stated that he and some neighbors will continue to attend park board meetings in opposition of the land swap until the park district drops the issue.

B. James Carpenter

1. Mr. Carpenter resides at 4655 Blake Road. He opposes the proposed land swap with MWCD as he doesn't want to hear MWCD's equipment running.
2. Mr. Venner left the meeting at this time.
3. Vice-chairwoman Davis stated that no park district financial resources have been expended on the proposed land trade. Mr. Wehrley countered that the time the director spends in discussing the issue costs the park district money.

C. Director Eppink

1. Director Eppink said that he has not seen alternate site plans from MWCD. He stated that the house at Buffalo Creek Retreat is currently leased to a renter and that neither the Buffalo Creek house or the vacant Hubbard Valley house are suitable for use as public buildings.

2. The director reported that he has written to the Guilford Township Trustees explaining the park district's position on the proposed land swap. If the park district divests itself of land or swaps/sells land, it must give notice to surrounding public entities that may be interested. Director Eppink confirmed that, outside of the time he has spent discussing the proposed swap, the park district has not expended financial resources toward this issue.
3. Director Eppink stated the land swap was not a topic on today's agenda and that it is not prudent for the park board to vote on or authorize the swap before MWCD has received all necessary approvals for the project.

D. Jansen Wehrley
1. Mr. Wehrley stated that he wants the park district to deny the swap and discontinue conversations with MWCD now rather than waiting for the township to deny Muskingum's zoning request.

E. James Carpenter
1. Mr. Carpenter said he is upset that MWCD is moving forward in conducting surveys without consulting the residents and township.
2. Director Eppink said that he cannot speak to where MWCD is in the process as he is not affiliated with or on the board of MWCD. He said that if a potential benefit to the park district arises in which the park district can exchange 4 acres for 13 acres adjacent to another site that will provide better access, we will consider the opportunity.

F. Paul Wyrzykowski
1. Mr. Wyrzykowski stated that he does not want to be subjected to the lights, noise, or activity that would take place across from his property should MWCD develop its facility there. He is also concerned that such development will reduce the animal activity he currently observes on the property.

G. Vice-chairwoman Davis thanked the guests for attending the meeting and sharing their concerns with the board.
1. Mr. and Mrs. Carpenter and Mr. Wyrzykowski left the meeting at this time.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORTS

A. Cash Balance Statement
1. The July 2023 cash balance statement was presented for the board's perusal.

B. Cash Flow Statement
1. The July 2023 cash flow statement was presented for the board's review.

C. Approval of Vouchers
1. Resolution #23-013, July 2023 Vouchers
   a. Vice-chairwoman Davis offered a motion approving Resolution #23-013, payment of the July 2023 vouchers with noted spelling and abbreviation corrections. Commissioner Neate seconded; the motion unanimously carried.

D. Appropriation Transfer
1. Fund 3408 – July 18, 2023
   a. Vice-chairwoman Davis offered a motion ratifying the July 18 appropriation transfer within Fund 3408, as presented. Commissioner Neate seconded; the motion unanimously carried.

V. DIRECTOR/STAFF REPORTS

A. Director's Updates

1. Director Eppink and the board officially welcomed new Park Planner John Kleshinski to the park district.
2. The director reported that, as a follow up to last month's discussion about the county's accounting software, he and Business Manager Chaney are meeting with County Administrator Chris Jakab this afternoon to discuss the issues staff is experiencing.
3. Director Eppink reported that, as follow up to last month's board meeting, he has:
   a. responded to questions about the possible land swap with the Chippewa Subdistrict posed by residents of Blake Road and answered a handful of calls from other neighbors. A letter was also sent to Guilford Township Trustees.
   b. notified Medina Fiber that authorization was not granted. He encouraged Medina Fiber to, instead, consider the Chippewa Yacht Club property where it wouldn't impact a state-funded wetland project.
4. Director Eppink reported that, since the June board meeting, he received deeded lake rights from one of the Chippewa Lake residents who was in attendance. Per legal counsel review, the deed appears to address access to the water for bathing, fishing, and boating but nothing about subsequent owners having the ability to place docks in perpetuity. He will revisit the issue with the group of stakeholders put in place last year and bring a recommendation to the commissioners this fall.
5. Director Eppink reported that the first round of Main Drive paving at Chippewa Lake from the new roundabout to the new bridge has been completed. A second round of paving should be completed yet this year covering the entire span of Main Drive from Lake Road to the new bridge before Euclid Avenue. The projects were made possible by a federal critical infrastructure grant to the county and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars committed to the project by the county commissioners.
6. Director Eppink reported that he has been elected president of the Ohio Parks and Recreation Association board for the current year, July 1 through June 30, 2024. His current and final term on the board expires in 2025.
7. Director Eppink invited the board and Legal Counsel Holland to join park staff for a summer picnic at Buffalo Creek retreat on Wednesday, August 30 at 11:30 a.m.

B. Monthly Report

1. Director Eppink presented the July Monthly Report for the board's review.
   a. Vice-chairwoman commented on the increased number of patrol warnings and citations. The director stated that there were nine citations for alcohol on Chippewa Lake this past weekend. As the park district now has a full slate of officers, the police department is making patrol of Chippewa Lake a priority.

C. Departmental Activities

1. Director Eppink provided the July departmental activity report for the board's review.

a. Planning and Operations Manger Smith reported that he has accepted a position with Trust for Public Land. His last day with the park district is August 25. Planning and Operations Manager Smith expressed his gratitude to the board, Legal Counsel Holland, Director Eppink, and park staff for the opportunity at Medina County Park District.
b. Planning and Operations Manager Smith reported that the metal roof was installed in-house on the Granger Wetlands bridge. The parking lot improvements will begin soon.
c. Planning and Operations Manager Smith reported that construction of the H2Ohio Vaughn project is commencing. The Chippewa Rail Trail will remain open when possible but will, periodically, need to be closed for the public's safety.
d. Vice-chairwoman Davis applauded Planning and Operations Manager Smith's hard work over the last few years, expressed sorrow to see him leave, and wished him well in his future endeavors.
e. Development Coordinator Peacock reported that she will be attending meetings with the investment subcommittee of the Friends group to review procedures and consider depositing monies into a donor-advised fund with the Cleveland Foundation for support and management.
f. Development Coordinator Peacock reported that the Medina Sunrise Rotary did not choose to fund the park district's grant application requesting financial support of the roof for the Granger Wetlands bridge. The organization appears to be focusing on children-oriented grant requests at this time.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. No old business was presented for discussion.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Updated Job Description
   1. Commissioner Neate offered a motion approving a new job description as presented, Community Education Coordinator, to update one of the naturalist roles to reflect an increased need to accommodate requests for programs by community groups. The salary ranges shall remain the same. Vice-chairwoman Davis seconded; the motion unanimously carried.

B. Rivendell Nature Preserve – Professional Design Services
   1. Vice-chairwoman Davis offered a motion authorizing the director to enter into a professional design services contract with Davey Resource Group, pending legal counsel review, for work related to Rivendell Nature Preserve at a cost of $29,850. Commissioner Neate seconded; the motion unanimously carried.

C. Granger Wetlands Parking Lot Paving
   1. Vice-chairwoman Davis offered a motion authorizing the director to enter into a contract with Mc.B Paving for paving and striping of the parking lot at Granger Wetlands Wildlife Sanctuary at a cost not to exceed $28,416. Commissioner Neate seconded; the motion unanimously carried.

D. H2Ohio Kennard Site – GMP, Change Order
   1. Commissioner Neate offered a motion authorizing the director to move forward and amend the previous agreement(s) with Davey Resource Group with the revised guaranteed maximum price (GMP) increase, as presented, for a total contract cost of $266,340.08 for restoration/enhancement of wetlands on the 7.5-acre the Kennard Road H2Ohio site. Vice-chairwoman Davis seconded; the motion unanimously carried.

E. Resolution for H2Ohio Applications
   1. Vice-chairwoman Davis offered a motion approving Resolution #23-014, permitting the director to apply for H2Ohio funding through the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, and to obligate the funds required to satisfactorily complete the projects.

RESOLUTION #23-014

WHEREAS, the State of Ohio, through the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, administers financial assistance for water quality improvement projects through the H2Ohio Wetland Grant Program; and

WHEREAS, Medina County Park District desires H2Ohio funding for several projects it is proposing during the current application period, which closes August 25, 2023.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Board of Commissioners approves filing the applications for H2Ohio funding; that Director Nathan D. Eppink is hereby authorized and directed to execute and file the applications with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and to provide all information and documentation required to become eligible for possible funding assistance; and that the park district agrees to obligate the funds required to satisfactorily complete the proposed projects and become eligible for funding under the terms of the H2Ohio Wetland Grant Program.

   2. Commissioner Neate seconded; the motion unanimously carried.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. Vice-chairwoman Davis offered a motion that the board move into executive session for the discussion of personnel hiring and land acquisition. Commissioner Neate seconded; the motion unanimously carried.
   1. Guest Jansen Wehrley and Planning and Operations Manager Smith, Park Planner Kleshinski, Development Coordinator Peacock, and Business Manager Chaney left the meeting for the personnel hiring discussion. Planning and Operations Manager Smith, Park Planner Kleshinski, Development Coordinator Peacock, and Business Manager Chaney returned to the meeting for the land acquisition discussion.

B. Vice-chairwoman Davis offered a motion that the board move into regular session. Commissioner Neate seconded; the motion unanimously carried.

IX. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

A. Commissioner Neate recognized Planning and Operations Manger Smith for his service to the park district and wished him well.

X. ADJOURNMENT

A. There being no further business for discussion, Vice-chairwoman Davis declared the meeting adjourned at 10:16 a.m.

We, the undersigned, as Board of Commissioners of Medina County Park District, Medina, Ohio, do certify the above minutes are true and correct as recorded in the board of commissioners' journal, Volume 52.

Kathleen S Davis

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BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MEDINA COUNTY PARK DISTRICT

NATHAN D. EPPINK
DIRECTOR

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