MINUTES OF THE

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

OF

MEDINA COUNTY PARK DISTRICT

February 19, 2025

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Chairman Venner called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m. at Oenslager Nature Center, 6100 Ridge Road, Sharon Township, Ohio.

B. Roll Call

1. Roll call showed Chairman Venner, Commissioner Davis, and Commissioner Neate present. Also in attendance were Director Eppink, Deputy Director Stray, Planning Manager Smith, Business Manager Chaney, and Legal Counsel Holland.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. January 22, 2025

1. Commissioner Neate offered a motion approving the minutes of the January 22, 2025 meeting as presented. Commissioner Davis seconded; the motion unanimously carried.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A. No members of the public were present, and Director Eppink reported that he didn't receive comments for the board from the public prior to the meeting.

IV. FINANCIAL REPORTS

A. Cash Balance Statement

1. The January 2025 cash balance statement was presented for the board's perusal.

B. Cash Flow Statement

1. Business Manager Chaney reported that the county auditor's office cannot provide the necessary year-to-date financial data used to compile the monthly cash flow statement until the county commissioners enter a full 2025 budget in the Munis ERP system. It is estimated that the county commissioners will replace its 20 percent temporary budget with a full budget after February 25.

C. Approval of Vouchers

1. Resolution #25-003, January 2025 Vouchers
   a. Commissioner Davis offered a motion approving Resolution #25-003, payment of the January 2025 vouchers, as presented. Commissioner Neate seconded; the motion unanimously carried.

D. Ratification of Appropriation Transfer

1. Fund 3412
   a. Chairman Venner offered a motion ratifying the February 13, 2025 appropriation transfer of $600 from the materials line to the advertising/printing line in fund 3412 as presented. Commissioner Neate seconded; the motion unanimously carried.

V. DIRECTOR/STAFF REPORTS

A. Director's Updates

1. In addition to what was previously submitted in advance of the meeting, Director Eppink thanked the board for attending the Killbuck Lakes Master Plan meeting last Wednesday evening at the Lodi Library. He was pleased with the public turnout, comments received, and follow-up story published in *The Gazette.*
2. Director Eppink reported that the expense of running the farm at the Brown-Trump Homestead has been a challenge for Hope Recovery. He contacted the holder of the property's conservation easement, Western Reserve Land Conservancy, which will permit Hope Recovery to sell produce offsite and retain a percentage of the sales to help sustain the operation. Director Eppink will sign an acknowledgment and advise Hope Recovery to donate 50 percent of its product to the community.
3. Deputy Director Stray provided an overview of a recent meeting he and Interpretive Services Manager Tender had with representatives of the Medina County Beekeepers Association to view a portion of park property off of Ballash Road that the group could use to create a community bee garden. In exchange, the group would provide a few public programs per year for the park district. The board authorized Director Eppink to offer the group a ten-year lease agreement to be drawn by Legal Counsel Holland and reviewed by the probate judge.
    a. Deputy Director Stray and Interpretive Services Manager Tender also viewed the site to identify an area that may be suitable for the potential creation of a native plant nursery.
4. Commissioner Neate offered a motion approving a donor's pledge to pay for installation of new metal siding on the Chandler barn on Smith Road and authorizing the director to sign a simple donor pledge, with legal counsel review, for the donation to be made to Friends of Medina County Parks (FOTP), for FOTP to pay the contractor directly, and for the park district to facilitate the project. Chairman Venner seconded; the motion unanimously carried.
    a. Natural Resources Manager Morton arrived at this time.
5. Commissioner Davis offered a motion authorizing the director to approve up to $15,000 for Standard Welding's fabrication, delivery, and installation of new outlet plates for the Chippewa Lake outlet with the understanding that the Save the Lake Committee will contribute $3,500 toward the project and that the park district will maintain sole control and operation of the plates. Chairman Venner seconded; Commissioner Neate abstained from the vote.
6. The board approved the park district's 2024 Annual Report as presented.

B. Monthly Report

1. January 2025
    a. Director Eppink provided the January monthly report for the board's perusal.

C. Departmental Activities

1. January 2025
    a. Director Eppink provided the January departmental activity report for the board's review.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Docking at Chippewa Lake
   1. Director Eppink provided the board with an update on the latest draft of the proposed docking rules for Chippewa Lake. An updated, final draft of the docking rules will be brought to the board at the March meeting along with a request for authorization to make the new rules effective before the start of the 2025 boating season.

B. Levy Information
   1. Director Eppink provided the board with a breakdown of several levy possibilities for consideration later this year, including revenue amounts that would be generated by a renewal levy, a renewal with additional millage, and a replacement levy at the current millage. A budget forecast will be shared with commissioners at the March meeting.
      a. Development Coordinator Peacock arrived at this time.
   2. Commissioner Davis suggested that the park district have a conversation with Friends of Medina County Parks to arrange for a third party to conduct a survey, similar to what the group did for the last levy, to ascertain what the public wants and what people are thinking. Chairman Venner offered to assist in drafting questions for the survey.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Public Records Policy, Police Body Cameras, and Security Cameras
   1. Though, currently, park police officers do not wear body cameras, Director Eppink provided the board with information regarding H.B. 315, signed into law last month, that clarifies a public entity's duty to respond to public records requests for body camera video for peace officers. He asked the board whether it would like to consider, during a future meeting, an updated public records policy to include police body cameras and footage captured by in-park security cameras.
   2. The board asked the director to conduct additional research on the subject. Do all police agencies in Medina County use body cameras? Do officers of other park districts (besides Cleveland and Summit) use body cameras? Do other park districts have policies regarding the handling of public records requests for law-enforcement videos of a sensitive nature?

B. Stewardship Fees and Restricted Fees
   1. Director Eppink asked the board where it would like to place stewardship fees collected from agencies for long-term maintenance of park sites such as funds from Stream + Wetlands foundation for Granger Wetlands Wildlife Sanctuary and from EnviroScience for the Mud Lake property in Westfield Township. These funds, restricted to their specific uses, could be accepted by the park district; however, Stream + Wetlands Foundation and EnviroScience have, separately, recommended that a third party hold stewardship fees on the park district's behalf, which is also acceptable to the Corps.
   2. Alternatives to the park district holding the funds include asking Friends of Medina County Parks, Inc. (FOTP) to create restricted funds or working with the Medina County Community Foundation to establish stewardship or conservation funds with the payouts for each site being restricted to the individual properties.

3. The board suggests utilizing FOTP to accept and manage stewardship fees and restricted funds if the Friends Trustees are receptive to the idea.

C. Partnering with the Medina County Community Foundation
   1. Director Eppink shared three possible fund ideas that the park district could utilize to partner with the Medina County Community Foundation (MCCF).
      a. The board feels that the park district should utilize FOTP for managing funds rather than using a third-party organization. It is felt that the Friends Trustees should hold the conversation with a third-party organization should they be interested in investing elsewhere.
      b. In seeking a more collaborative approach to working together, Commissioner Davis, as the board liaison to FOTP, recommended that the director have conversations with her prior to Friends Trustees meetings so she can facilitate the conversations with the trustees.
      c. Discussion was held regarding the execution of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Friends to help manage expectations and define ways the park district and Friends Trustees can more effectively work together.

D. Bath Pony Club Lease
   1. Chairman Venner offered a motion authorizing the director to execute a ten-year lease with Bath Pony Club, as presented, to be contingent upon probate court approval. The lease will not be recorded with the Medina County Recorder's Office. Commissioner Davis seconded; the motion unanimously carried.

E. Virtual Participation in Public Meetings Per H.B. 257
   1. Director Eppink provided information on H.B. 257 regarding virtual participation in public meetings, which will take effect in April. The bill allows public bodies and its members to meet virtually. For the board to choose to adopt a policy permitting virtual meetings, it will need to review and update current park district bylaws to comply with such items as advance notification of meetings, etc.
      a. The board is interested in moving forward to establish policy to permit virtual participation in meetings.

F. ODOT Metroparks Funds – OPRA Park Road Improvement Program
   1. Commissioner Davis offered a motion approving Resolution #25-004 as presented, requesting funds from the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) and designation of projects for Ohio Parks Districts Roadwork Fund FY 2026-2027 through the Ohio Parks & Recreation Association (OPRA). Commissioner Neate seconded; the motion unanimously carried.

G. 2025 Purchase of CXT Restrooms for Multiple Locations
   1. Chairman Venner offered a motion authorizing the park district to enter into a contract with CXT in a combined amount not to exceed $300,000 ($60,000 per restroom) to cover potential contingencies, utilizing Sourcewell cooperative pricing, for the purchase and installation of five single-stall restroom units for placement at Chippewa Lake, Granger Wetlands Wildlife Sanctuary, Holmesbrook Park, Lester Rail Trail NEOLS area, and Oenslager Nature Center, and subject to review and approval by legal counsel as to form. Commissioner Davis seconded; the motion unanimously carried.

H. Request for Qualifications for Oenslager Nature Center Design Services
   1. Commissioner Davis offered a motion authorizing the park district to publicly advertise a Request for Qualifications for the ONC Design Services project and follow the procedures outlined in the Ohio Revised Code for selection of professional design services. Following review of the proposals received, a request for authorization to accept the selected professional services proposal will be brought to the board. Chairman Venner seconded; the motion unanimously carried.

I. Authorization to Bid: Holmesbrook Park Paved Trail Extension and Chippewa Rail Trail North Parking Lot Construction
   1. Commissioner Davis offered a motion authorizing the park district to publicly advertise for bid the Holmesbrook Park Paved Trail Extension project and Chippewa Rail Trail North Parking Lot Construction project, as presented. Following bid openings, a request for authorization for acceptance of the lowest and best bid for each project will be brought to the board. Commissioner Neate seconded; the motion unanimously carried.

J. Buckeye Woods Barn Renovation and New Shelter – Change Order Request #3
   1. Commissioner Davis offered a motion ratifying the approval of Change Order Request #3 for the Buckeye Woods Barn Renovation and New Shelter project in the amount of $30,840 and amending the total contract sum with Master Renovations to $561,680. Commissioner Neate seconded; the motion unanimously carried.

K. RFP #NR 2024-001 Chippewa Lake Water-quality Monitoring
   1. Chairman Venner offered a motion authorizing the park district to enter into a contract with Aqua Doc at a cost not to exceed $35,000 for the annual monitoring of the water quality of Chippewa Lake, which includes regular water-quality testing, algal sampling, and treatment of harmful algal blooms (if necessary). Commissioner Davis seconded; the motion unanimously carried.

L. Credit Card Fees
   1. Business Manager Chaney presented a three-year analysis of credit card convenience fees received for shelter reservations compared to what the park district pays in vendor fees for offering a credit-card payment option to the public. Based on the analysis, it was recommended that the current five-percent convenience fee charged per credit-card transaction not be adjusted at this time.

VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. Chairman Venner offered a motion that the board move into executive session to consider the purchase of property for public purposes, where premature disclosure of information would give an unfair competitive or bargaining advantage to a person whose personal, private interest is adverse to the general public interest; for the purpose of considering the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official; and for the discussion of pending litigation. Commissioner Neate seconded; the motion unanimously carried.
   1. Development Coordinator Peacock and Natural Resources Manager Morton left the meeting at this time.

2. Planning Manager Smith participated in the land acquisition discussion but left the meeting for the pending litigation and personnel discussions.

B. Chairman Venner offered a motion that the board move into regular session. Commissioner Davis seconded; the motion unanimously carried.

C. As a result of executive session discussions, the following actions were taken.
   1. Commissioner Davis offered a motion authorizing the director and legal counsel to update language in the land-swap agreement with Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District to include Muskingum's use of an access road on one of the properties. Commissioner Neate seconded; the motion unanimously carried.
   2. Commissioner Neate offered a motion authorizing the director to accept a donation of approximately 11.3 acres in Medina and Montville townships, contingent upon probate court approval. Closing costs will be paid by the park district from fund 3403-7800-50790. Commissioner Davis seconded; the motion unanimously carried.
   3. Commissioner Davis offered a motion authorizing the director to enter into an agreement to offer a +/- half-acre sewer easement in Montville Township in exchange for a +/- 1.5 mile trail easement and related trail work by the involved contractor(s). Costs for the easements are to be paid by the recipient of the sewer easement. Commissioner Neate seconded; the motion unanimously carried.

IX. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

A. No comments were offered.

X. ADJOURNMENT

A. There being no further business for discussion, Chairman Venner declared the meeting adjourned at 11:27 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 54.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MEDINA COUNTY PARK DISTRICT

NATHAN D. EPPINK, DIRECTOR

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