

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners of Mill Creek MetroParks was held on Monday, May 16, 2016, at the MetroParks Farm. President John Ragan welcomed guests and staff.

The meeting opened at 6 p.m. with recitation of The Pledge of Allegiance. Roll Call was as follows: Germaine Bennett, present; Bob Durick, present; John Ragan, present; and Scott Schulick, absent.

John Ragan presented Addendum A, below, for the March 9, 2015, Board Meeting Minutes for approval.



**2015 Budget - Income & Expense Summary Sheet**

Finance Department  
Last updated: March 9, 2015  
Prepared by: Kevin W. Smith

	100 General Fund	701 Replacement Reserve	702 Law Enforce. Asst. Fund	705 Bikeway Phase III	Total All Funds
<b>Carryover</b>					
Unencumbered Cash Balance	\$ 1,560,919.87	\$ 643,313.00	\$ 1,206.39	\$ -	\$ 2,205,439.26
Prior Year Encumbrances	355,566.96	1,020,941.67	1,200.00	0.19	1,377,708.82
<b>Estimated Revenues</b>					
General Property Tax	\$ 6,576,258.00				\$ 6,576,258.00
Local Government Fund	305,361.00				305,361.00
Park Activities	2,092,400.00	143,177.98	2,405.00		2,237,982.98
ODOT - Fed Trans Grant		741,359.44			741,359.44
FHWA Grant					133,240.00
Partnerships	133,240.00				133,240.00
Insurance Settlement		190,670.00			190,670.00
Clean Ohio Fund		198,980.25			198,980.25
Ohio EPA		123,600.00			123,600.00
Fellows Trust	19,779.96				19,779.96
Mill Creek Park Foundation	50,000.00	225,790.93			275,790.93
Advances Repaid					0.00
Transfers From Other Funds					0.00
<b>Total Estimated Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 9,177,038.96</b>	<b>\$ 1,713,578.60</b>	<b>\$ 2,405.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 10,893,022.56</b>
	84%	16%	0%	0%	100%
<b>Total Carryover &amp; Estimated Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 11,093,525.79</b>	<b>\$ 3,377,833.27</b>	<b>\$ 4,811.39</b>	<b>\$ 0.19</b>	<b>\$ 14,476,170.64</b>
<b>Appropriations</b>					
Park Operations-Mat. & Supplies	\$ 2,232,051.46				\$ 2,232,051.46
Park Operations-Salaries & Wages	4,897,412.97				4,897,412.97
Capital Equipment	181,111.38				181,111.38
General Improvements	133,240.00	1,439,044.93		0.00	1,572,284.93
General Expenses & Transfers	2,162,205.85				2,165,805.85
Advances Repaid					0.00
<b>Total 2015 Appropriations</b>	<b>\$ 9,606,021.66</b>	<b>\$ 1,439,044.93</b>	<b>\$ 3,600.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 11,048,666.59</b>
Outstanding Purchase Orders (2014)	355,566.96	1,020,941.67	1,200.00	0.19	1,377,708.82
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 9,961,588.62</b>	<b>\$ 2,459,986.60</b>	<b>\$ 4,800.00</b>	<b>\$ 0.19</b>	<b>\$ 12,426,375.41</b>
	80%	20%	0%	0%	100%
<b>Projected Ending Fund Balance</b>	<b>\$ 1,131,937.17</b>	<b>\$ 917,846.67</b>	<b>\$ 11.39</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	

2015 Budget	\$ 9,606,021.66
2014 Budget	\$ 9,750,682.99
2015 vs. 2014 Budget \$	\$ (144,661.33)
2015 vs. 2014 Budget %	-1.48%

Germaine Bennett motioned that it be approved. The motion was seconded by Bob Durick and passed, and the vote taken resulted as follows:

Voting Aye: Bennett, Durick, Ragan  
 Voting Nay: None

John Ragan presented Addendum A, below, for the February 8, 2016, Board Meeting Minutes for approval.

## 2016 Budget - Income & Expense Summary Sheet

Finance Department  
 Last updated: February 1, 2016  
 Prepared by: Kevin W. Smith



	100 General Fund	701 Replacement Reserve	702 Law Enforce. Asst. Fund	Total All Funds
<b>Carryover</b>				
Unencumbered Cash Balance	\$ 1,668,373.29	\$ 339,802.26	\$ 4,647.39	\$ 2,012,822.94
Prior Year Encumbrances	513,089.17	825,360.87	0.00	1,338,450.04
<b>Estimated Revenues</b>				
General Property Tax	\$ 6,598,038.00 73%			\$ 6,598,038.00 64%
Local Government Fund	315,000.00 3%			315,000.00 3%
Park Activities	2,155,771.85 24%	51,500.00	4,000.00	2,211,271.85 21%
ODOT - Fed Trans Grant		11,910.77		11,910.77 0%
ODOT - Road Tax Allocation		108,800.00		108,800.00 1%
FHWA Grant		562,148.28		562,148.28 5%
Insurance Settlement		115,722.94		115,722.94 1%
Clean Ohio Fund		141,858.65		141,858.65 1%
Ohio EPA		123,600.00		123,600.00 1%
Friends of Fellows Riverside Gardens		75,000.00		75,000.00 1%
Mill Creek Park Foundation	25,000.00 0%	88,846.02		113,846.02 1%
<b>Total Estimated Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 9,093,809.85 88%</b>	<b>\$ 1,279,386.66 12%</b>	<b>\$ 4,000.00 0%</b>	<b>\$ 10,377,196.51 100%</b>
<b>Total Carryover &amp; Estimated Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 11,275,272.31</b>	<b>\$ 2,444,549.79</b>	<b>\$ 8,647.39</b>	<b>\$ 13,728,469.49</b>
<b>Appropriations</b>				
Park Operations-Mat. & Supplies	\$ 3,094,632.47 31%		5,000.00	\$ 3,099,632.47 25%
Park Operations-Salaries & Wages	6,344,117.13 64%			6,344,117.13 52%
Capital Improvements	0.00 0%	1,421,911.85		1,421,911.85 12%
<b>Total 2016 Appropriations</b>	<b>\$ 9,438,749.60</b>	<b>\$ 1,421,911.85</b>	<b>\$ 5,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 10,865,661.45</b>
Outstanding Purchase Orders (2015)	513,089.17 5%	825,360.87	0.00	1,338,450.04 11%
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 9,951,838.77 82%</b>	<b>\$ 2,247,272.72 18%</b>	<b>\$ 5,000.00 0%</b>	<b>\$ 12,204,111.49 100%</b>
<b>Projected Ending Fund Balance</b>	<b>\$ 1,323,433.54</b>	<b>\$ 197,277.07</b>	<b>\$ 3,647.39</b>	

2016 Budget	\$ 9,438,749.60
2015 Budget	\$ 9,626,621.00
2016 vs. 2015 Budget \$	\$ (187,871.40)
2016 vs. 2015 Budget %	-1.95%

Germaine Bennett motioned that it be approved. The motion was seconded by Bob Durick and passed, and the vote taken resulted as follows:

Voting Aye: Bennett, Durick, Ragan  
 Voting Nay: None

John Ragan presented the Minutes of the Meeting of April 11, 2016, and asked that they be approved. Bob Durick motioned they be approved. The motion was seconded by Germaine Bennett and passed, and the vote taken resulted as follows:

Voting Aye: Bennett, Durick, Ragan  
 Voting Nay: None

Mark Mrofchak, Interim Treasurer, presented the Treasurer's Report. After discussion, Germaine Bennett moved, the funds having been certified as on hand and duly appropriated, that disbursements #70298 - #70473, for a total of \$245,359.01 be approved. The motion was seconded by Germaine Bennett and the vote taken resulted as follows:

Voting Aye: Bennett, Durick, Ragan  
 Voting Nay: None

Mark also presented the cash balances as shown below:

**CASH BALANCES**  
 April 29, 2016

Cashier Change	\$5,900.00
Cash-Active Account	\$2,079,696.48
Cash-Payroll Account	\$5,000.00
*Star Plus Investment Acct.	\$1,889,020.78
<b>TOTAL CASH</b>	<b>\$3,979,617.26</b>

*\*Star Plus is currently paying 0.3699% on all accounts.*

Aaron Young, Executive Director presented updated MetroParks Bikeway Rules and Regulations, which will now include East Golf Drive. After discussion, Germaine Bennett motioned that the nomination be approved. The motion was seconded by Bob Durick and the vote taken resulted as follows:

Voting Aye: Bennett, Durick, Ragan  
 Voting Nay: None

Aaron spoke regarding the 3-year labor agreement contract with AFSCME, and asked for approval of the contract. Germaine Bennett motioned that the nomination be approved. The motion was seconded by Bob Durick and the vote taken resulted as follows:

Voting Aye: Bennett, Durick, Ragan  
 Voting Nay: None

Aaron presented Resolution R-16-03 as follows:

**R-16-03**  
**RESOLUTION GRANTING HONORY TITLE**  
**OF**  
**MILL CREEK METROPARKS NATURALIST EMERITUS**  
**TO**  
**RAYMOND JOSEPH NOVOTNY**

**WHEREAS**, for more than thirty years (1985-2016) Raymond Joseph Novotny has faithfully and diligently served Mill Creek MetroParks at Ford Nature Center, interpreting nature and history to park district visitors and the Mahoning Valley community.

**WHEREAS**, Raymond Joseph Novotny has been twice honored for his special event, Reptile Exhibit (1991 & 1993), by the Ohio Park and Recreation Association;

**WHEREAS** Raymond Joseph Novotny wrote a thesis for his Master of Science degree at Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania (1994) titled: "A History of the Old Mill Museum – Mill Creek Park, Youngstown, OH 1933-1982";

**WHEREAS**, Raymond Joseph Novotny devoted fourteen years nominating Mill Creek Park founder and father Volney Rogers for the Ohio Natural Resources Hall of Fame, and finally achieved success on December 5, 2000;

**WHEREAS**, Raymond Joseph Novotny was chosen by the Roger Tory Peterson Institute of Natural History in Jamestown, New York as its first-ever Nature Education Hero in 2009;

**WHEREAS**, Raymond Joseph Novotny received a Commendation for Outstanding Attainment from the 131st Assembly of Ohio Senate in 2015;

**WHEREAS**, Raymond Joseph Novotny has been recognized by the National Association for Interpretation seven times, including NAI's President's Award in 2010, Thomas Say Naturalist Award of Excellence in 2014, and Distinguished Professional Interpreter in 2016.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Board of Park Commissioners of Mill Creek MetroParks, that Raymond Joseph Novotny is hereby granted the honorary title of Mill Creek MetroParks Naturalist Emeritus. A suitable copy of this Resolution shall be prepared and presented to Mr. Novotny, and an additional copy shall be placed in the permanent archives of Mill Creek MetroParks.

Bob Durick read the Resolution to the audience. Germaine Bennett motioned that the Resolution be approved. The motion was seconded by Bob Durick and the vote taken resulted as follows:

Voting Aye: Bennett, Durick, Ragan  
Voting Nay: None

Carol Vigorito, Recreation and Education Director, presented the following special event requests for approval:

1. Mill Creek MetroParks Family Campout, July 23 & 24, 2016, in the Wick Recreation Area.
2. Mill Creek MetroParks Green Cathedral Half-marathon, September 11, 2016, in the Wick Recreation Area
3. MS Superwalk Fundraiser on September 25, 2016 in the Wick Recreation Area

After discussion, Germaine Bennett motioned that the requests be approved. The motion was seconded by Bob Durick and the vote taken resulted as follows:

Voting Aye: Bennett, Durick, Ragan  
Voting Nay: None

Lori Shandor, Director of Development, presented the following special event request for approval:

1. Request of West Side Cats to hold a "Photography Dogs in the Park" fundraiser on Saturday, June 18, 2016, near the Suspension Bridge, selling t-shirts, dog toys, and raffle tickets.

After discussion, Germaine Bennett motioned that the requests be approved. The motion was seconded by Bob Durick and the vote taken resulted as follows:

Voting Aye: Bennett, Durick, Ragan  
Voting Nay: None

Brian Tolnar, Golf Director gave a PowerPoint presentation with information about the upcoming AJGA event at the Mill Creek Golf Course.

Jim Willock, Chief of Police, requested permission to sell a police cruiser that is marked for salvage this year, to Choffin Career Center. After discussion, Germaine Bennett motioned that the sale be approved. The motion was seconded by Bob Durick and the vote taken resulted as follows:

Voting Aye: Bennett, Durick, Ragan  
Voting Nay: None

Mr. Joe Meranto, Director of the Choffin Career Center, thanked the MetroParks for this important piece of training equipment.

Aaron, Executive Director Report:

1. New "Public Information" tab under "About Us" on the MetroParks website
2. 04-14-16 Letter of Support: Youngstown's SMART Tiger Grant
3. 04-20-16 Letter of Support: Eastgate Regional Water Quality Programming
4. 05-05-16 Public Records Training
5. 05-12-16 Hosted Ohio Ethics Training

Commissioners Comments:

- Germaine Bennett thanked the public for reaching out to her, and suggested the list that Scott Schulick presented at the last meeting continued to be worked on.
- Bob Durick said the meetings with the public were constructive.
- John Ragan said that he is listening to the public, and is currently working on these 4 items:
  1. Ohio Checkbook online
  2. Board retreat, after the new members arrive, tour of all MCP properties
  3. Board policies & procedures
  4. Public Info tab on the website

Public Comments:

Mr. Ragan explained that there would be no sharing of the 3 minutes, beginning at this meeting.

- Judy Peyko – First spoke about her son moving due to not having a job at the MetroParks anymore. She called for removal of Aaron Young, due to the harsh terminations in February. She spoke about the age of the employees let go, and would like to see them all brought back. She spoke about being denied records to view. Turned in more signatures to have Aaron removed.

- Lynn Anderson – She is protesting secret business the MetroParks has had with the fracking industry and that the park approved fracking under the bikeway and in the Hitchcock Woods area by Sunoco. She would like to see the park speak up about frack pads being put on the Idora property. She spoke about the fish kill at the lakes due to the City's combined sewer overflows into the park.
- Suzie Beiersdorfer – A citizen concerned with the sewers in the park, wildlife, employees & volunteers, and Volney's vision. She stated that there is a lack of trust, and felt betrayed by the governing leadership of the MetroParks. She handed the Board members form letters for them to sign for their resignation.
- Bill Adams – Questioned John Ragan about if the Board had done performance evaluations on Aaron, according to his contract of December 2014. He received a response to a public records request that that document does not exist. Aaron stated that yes, they do exist, and will make sure he gets a reply to his public records request with the documents tomorrow. He questioned the park's finances, monies from Friends of FRG, taxpayers, terminations, bikeway line item, and grants.
- Deby Clark – Requested that Aaron Young be removed because he is not working in the best interest of the MetroParks, the employees, the wildlife, and because the \$ being spent on the bike path. Said that the public wants education, programs, cleanup of Lily Pond and polluted waters, Keith and Ray, gardeners and rangers brought back.
- Eric Clark – Questioned why the budget is different from last year's, about golf course raises, and why there were no cuts at the golf course. Aaron explained that the budget was revised to be more legible, and show the full budget for each location, including staff costs, that there were no raises or cuts at the golf course. Aaron was asked to resign.
- Kathleen Berry – Talked about this being a throw-away society, that the park was not a business, but a public entity. She felt it was disrespectful and shameful the way Aaron let go of the staff that were the essence of the MetroParks. She said the public wants a natural environment.
- Chance Metz – Stated that he and his dad don't go to the park anymore because the way people have been treated, and they won't come back until Aaron is gone. Felt that Volney's vision was not being honored.
- Jeff Harvey – Talked about meeting with Scott Schulick and Germaine Bennett, then Bob Durick and John Ragan, discussed issues, and discovered there are lots of issues that we can work on together. In the long run advances can be seen. Stated that some of the public perceptions have not been exactly right.
- Lucia Yurco – Stated to the board and executive director to be careful what you wish for. She spoke about Earthday, quotes from Scott Shalaway and EO Wilson. She mentioned that the financial cost we were saving with the terminations, were at a larger human resource cost – resignations of staff and volunteers.
- Karen Wright – Noted the sea of negativity due to Aaron's actions, and that the public wants a director of the gardens, and of forestry, instead of a bike path, and high advertising costs. Felt Aaron has been lying to the public about the finances. She feels that the donations are going elsewhere. Appreciates the positive efforts made.
- Wayne Lewis – Upset with the firing of employees, and wished Aaron good luck at his next job.
- Liz Ramsey – Stated that she appreciated the changes that have been made. Questioned the Golf Capital Improvement program, large undesignated funds, and small funds for trail maintenance. She noted that the February 8, 2016, minutes were changed before they were approved.
- Kate McAllen – Stated she supported everything that Aaron and the Board are doing. She felt the people who are opposing everything are bullies, demanding, irrational, have no common courtesy, think they are a majority, and need to experience real life terminations - out of the Youngstown area (at this point, an audience member got up, took her shirt off, and left the meeting with several others). She suggested that there were other volunteer needs in the community if they weren't happy with the MetroParks.
- Eric Pickard – Felt that this meeting is a waste of time, the Board isn't answering questions about the park the public owns. Talked about lack of transparency, failure of democracy, Judge Rusu is

the only one elected, qualifications of Ray Novotny, and police escorts of the terminated employees.

- Robert Stanger – Suggested that the park made a mistake the way the staff were fired, and that it should have been done through attrition. He stated the park was poorly run until Aaron got here, he is doing his job. Talked about dredging the lily pond, and improving trails. He feels that Aaron is the guy to do what needs done, and we should just let him do his job.

John Ragan announced that the next Regular Board Meeting will be held on Monday, June 13, 2016, at 6 p.m. at the MetroParks Farm.

Bob Durick moved the Board meet in Executive Session to consider the appointment, employment, discipline, or compensation of public employees. Germaine Bennett seconded the motion, and the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Germaine Bennett - Aye  
Bob Durick - Aye  
John Ragan - Aye

The motion was passed, and the Board met in Executive Session at 7:45 p.m.

Bob Durick motioned to return to Regular Session. Germaine Bennett seconded the motion and the Board returned from Executive Session at 8:20 p.m. The vote taken resulted as follows:

Voting Aye: Bennett, Durick, Ragan  
Voting Nay: None

Bob Durick motioned that Mark Mrofchak be appointed Interim Treasurer at the rate of \$27.12/hr. Germaine Bennett seconded the motion. The vote taken resulted as follows:

Voting Aye: Bennett, Durick, Ragan  
Voting Nay: None

There being no further business, Bob Durick moved to adjourn the meeting. Germaine Bennett seconded the motion, and the vote taken resulted as follows:

Voting Aye: Bennett, Durick, Ragan  
Voting Nay: None

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.