Meeting Minutes (Draft)
Natural Resources Citizen Advisory Committee
Wednesday, May 6, 2026 | 3:00 PM
Education Building, Ford Nature Center
Prepared by Rachel Sobnosky, *Natural Resources Manager*

Committee Members in Attendance

Rachel Sobnosky ■| Joshua Noble ■| Ryan Jackson □| Serene Awad ■| Peter Milliken■| Sara Scudier ■| John Zimmerman ■| Ronald Kichton ■ |Gary Davenport■ | Joshua Emanuelson ■ |

Public Attendees:

Mia Swain, MCMP	
Justin Rogers, MCMP	

I. Call to Order – 3:00 PM

Old Business

* **Review of Previous Meeting's Minutes**
  Rachel Sobnosky provided the meeting minutes from the previous meeting (10.16.25), members reviewed the minutes and Kichton suggested a correction in the spelling of his name in the previous minutes. Davenport moved to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by Scudier.

* **Roll Call**
  Voting Aye – Noble, Awad, Miliken, Scudier, Zimmerman, Kichton, Davenport
  Voting Nay – None

II.

New Business

White-tailed Deer Management Update

Sobnosky shared with the group updates on WTD management, as well as updates to the website regarding the drone survey performed by the park.

The group briefly discussed Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) and Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD), followed by discussion of the results of the drone survey and their effect on future management.

Meso-Predator Management

Sobnosky shared updates regarding the meso-predator management at George L. Fordyce Park.

HWA Treatment Grant

Sobnosky shared information about grant the MetroParks has received from the ODNR Division of Forestry to treat Hemlock Woolly Adelgid.

The group discussed the cost of labor and treatment materials.

Bears Den Tree Planting

Sobnosky shared information about the First Energy tree planting at Bears Den.

The group discussed the completion of the plantings at Bears Den.

Volunteer Opportunities

Sobnosky shared with the group volunteer opportunities including monitoring blue bird nesting boxes and maintaining tree tubes.

Fish Stocking

Sobnosky shared that ponds have been stocked for fishing.

Trail Improvements

Sobnosky discussed improvements to the trails throughout the park

Noble suggested improvements should be made to trail markings at Vickers Nature Preserve.

Fordyce Improvements

Sobnosky shared various improvements being made at George L. Fordyce Park, including public access, trail improvements, and fish stocking in pond 7.

Noble inquired about the Sandhill Crane nesting location as well as restrictions to public access.

Sobnosky explained where the public access would be limited to, and signage and gates would be put in place where needed.

Invasive Species Treatments

Sobnosky discussed invasive treatment plans at Collier Preserve and Bears Den Road meadow.

Noble suggested treatment of poison ivy on and near trails on the west side of Lake Newport, particularly in between the boathouse and dam, as well as on the East Golf Hike and Bike Trail.

Milliken suggested posting signage to make visitors aware of poison ivy.

Water Quality Testing

Sobnosky discussed water quality testing in collaboration with OEPA to show improvements within the water quality before vs. after the City of Youngstown's sewer interceptor project.

Open Discussion

Milliken presented information regarding single use plastics. The group discussed making a recommendation to the board. The group discussed the wording in which the recommendation would be presented.

Milliken made a motion: "I move that our committee recommends that the Mill Creek MetroParks and vendors and caterers operating at its facilities minimize the use and issuance of single-use items, wherever practical, and use environmentally friendly alternatives." Noble seconded.

Voting Aye – Unanimous

Voting Nay – None

Noble suggested a update in signage around Newport Wetlands, provided a picture of a faded "don't feed the geese" sign.

	Davenport suggested the removal of vines around trees and plant stubs as a group project at Ford Nature Center. Sobnosky agreed to do further investigation on the topic. Gary motioned for the meeting to adjourn. Seconded by Sobnosky.
III.	**Public Comment** None
IV.	**Committee Questions/Comments**.
V.	**Date of Next Meeting** TBD – Sobnosky will send Doodle Poll
VI.	**Adjournment** – 4:35 PM