2016 Plan
Moving Forward

Aaron Young
Executive Director

Last Edited: 03-14-16
The following presentation outlines:

- **Review:**
  - The Beginning
  - The Process
  - Levy Results

- **Our Commitment**
  - Our Mission
  - Administration
  - Capital Improvements

- **Community Concerns**
Jan ’15
• New Executive Director & 2 New Park Board Members
• Levy Determination & Selection Due In Six Months

Mar ’15
• 2015 Budget Approved with $144,661 in cuts (1.48%) as compared to 2014

June ’15
• 2015 Administrative Report Presentation: Levy Options Identified

July ’15
• Board Approval: 1.75 mills Renewal with .25 mills Additional Levy
• Lake Closures due to elevated e-coli levels

Nov ’15
• Numerous Community & Partner Presentations from July to November 2015
• Levy Approved By Voters: 54.27% (yes) vs.45.73% (no)

Jan ’16
• 1 New Park Board Member
• Revised Budgetary Development Procedures

Feb ’16
• 2016 Budget Approved with $187,871 in cuts (1.95%) as compared to 2015
• Internal Reorganization
The following presentation outlines;

- **Review:**
  - The Beginning
  - The Process
  - Levy Results

- **Our Commitment**
  - Our Mission
  - Administration
  - Capital Improvements

- **Community Concerns**
Mill Creek MetroParks strives to fulfill our mission by being Organized, Efficient, Proactive and Sustainable. The following presentation outlines:

- **How are we Organized?**
  - Our Mission Statement
  - Our Strategic Master Plan
  - Our Action Plan Summary
  - Our Staff
  - Our Facilities

- **How are we Efficient?**
  - We are Organized
  - We are Planned
  - We Control Costs

- **How are we Proactive?**
  - We Continue to be Organized
  - We Continue to be Efficient
  - We Continue to Demonstrate Results
  - We Look to Improve
  - We Actively Promote

- **How are we Sustainable?**
  - Then vs. Now
  - Levy Options & Recommendation

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**Review: The Process**

millcreekmetroparks.org
The Mission of Mill Creek MetroParks is to provide park, recreational, and open space facilities of regional significance. In fulfilling this mission our objectives are:

- **To be responsive to community needs**
  
  *Studies and surveys direct the MetroParks to preserve appropriate natural and cultural areas, make improvements to MetroParks facilities, develop additional recreational opportunities, and continue to strengthen activity and public information programs.*

- **To be environmentally sound**
  
  *Stewardship strategies will be dictated by the intrinsic nature of the land.*

- **To be adaptable**
  
  *The only certainty in our world is that change is occurring at an increasing rate. To respond, the MetroParks must maintain strong public information and involvement programs and form new kinds of creative liaisons to meet changing needs.*

- **To be economically feasible**
  
  *The MetroParks has finite resources that are not guaranteed in perpetuity. It must constantly work to broaden its base, especially through new partnerships. Revenue generating programs and facilities must be a key element in the overall funding picture.*
8 Departments:
- Administrative Services/Finance
- Police
- Human Resources
- Operations
- Planning & Natural Resources
- Community Engagement
- Horticulture
- Golf

(+/−) 63 Full Time Staff:
- Non-Union: Management & PT Staff
- AFSCME Union: American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees
- FOP Union: Fraternal Order of Police

(+/−) 97 Part Time Staff

(+/−) 110 Seasonal Staff

Assisted by Hundreds of Volunteers:
- Individuals
- Organizations

Review: The Process
Our Facilities:
- 5,008.25 Total Acres Managed
- 4,481.24 Owned Acres
- 527.01 Easement Acres
- Within 8 Townships and 4 Cities/Villages
- 20.37 Miles of Roads
- 20.92 Acres of Parking
- Miles of Hiking Trails
- Multiple Pavilions and Shelters
- Notable Facilities
  - Mill Creek Park
    - Mill Creek Golf Course
    - Fellows Riverside Gardens
    - Lanterman’s Mill
    - Wick Recreation Area
    - Morley Pavilion
    - Lily Pond
    - Ford Nature Center
    - Lake Glacier, Cohasset & Newport
  - MetroParks Bikeway
  - MetroParks Farm
  - Mill Creek Preserve
  - McGuffey Wildlife Preserve
  - Yellow Creek Park
  - Vickers Nature Preserve/Buckeye Horse Park
  - Sebring Woods

Review: The Process
We are Organized:
- Mission Driven Entity
- Strategic Master Plan: Acts as Our Guide
- Action Plan Summary: Goals & Objectives

We are Planned:
- Managing Today with an eye for Tomorrow
- The Next 15 Years: 2016-2030
- Capital Improvement Needs: $29,000,000
  - Road & Bridge Improvements
  - Parking & Signage Improvements
  - Trail Improvements
  - Dam & Dam-Related Improvements
  - Fellows Riverside Center Renovation
  - Volney Rogers Field Improvements
  - MetroParks Bikeway-Phase III
  - Wick Recreation Area Master Plan
  - Fellows Riverside Gardens Master Plan
  - Mill Creek Golf Course Improvements
  - MetroParks Farm Improvements
  - Volney Rogers Field Improvements
  - Yellow Creek Lodge Renovation Plan
  - Pioneer Pavilion Improvement Plan
  - Wildlife & Habitat Management

Review: The Process
We Actively Look To Improve:

- Evaluate & Modify Our Internal Structure
  - Negotiate FOP Union Contract: 05-31-15
  - Negotiate AFSCME Union Contract: 12-31-15
  - Review Potential Contracted Services

- Revise Budget Development Process
  - Schedule: Reduce Temporary Budget Use
  - Departmental Ownership: APO Link

- Conduct IT Analysis
  - Contracted Virtual Information Officer
  - Current Efficiency Potential is Limited to our Technological Capabilities

- Balance Cost Recovery & Program Offerings
  - 2015: Park Activities (23%) $2,092,400 (est.)
  - Park Changes: Food & Beverage
  - Wick Recreation Area: Future F&B Potential
  - Morley Pavilion: Potential Partnerships

Explore Alternative Recreational Opportunities
- Communities Changing Needs
- Cost Benefit Analysis: Short & Long Term
Mill Creek MetroParks is Debt Free!

We Control Costs:
  - Reduced Administrative Operating Expenses
    - 2015: Cuts totaling $144,661
    - 77% of Staff are Part-Time or Seasonal
    - Utilize Dedicated Volunteers
    - Currently Multiple Full-Time Positions Vacant
    - No Annual Raises since 2009
  - History of Successfully Leveraging Tax Dollars
    - 2015: Over 50% of all Capital Improvement Projects were paid for utilizing other funding sources
    - 2015: Over 84% of major Capital Improvement Projects were paid for utilizing other funding sources
    - Result of our Planning Process
  - Maintain Consistent Foundation Support
    - Mill Creek MetroParks Foundation
    - Friends of Fellows Riverside Gardens
  - Phased Implementation of Plans
    - Balance short needs & long term goals
  - Park Activities Reduce Tax Dollar Dependency
    - 2015: Park Activities to Generate $2,092,400 (est.)

Review: The Process

millcreekmetroparks.org
General Fund 2005:
- General Property Taxes: $6,834,168
- Local Government Fund: $671,272
- Park District Activities: $2,080,501
- Total: $9,585,941

General Fund 2015:
- General Property Taxes: $6,576,258
  - Net decrease (3.8%): $257,910
- Local Government Fund: $305,361
  - Net decrease (54.5%): $365,911
- Park District Activities: $2,092,400
  - Net increase (0.6%): $11,899
- Total: $8,974,019
  - Net decrease (6.4%): $611,922

2016-2030: Planned Improvements
- Estimated: $29,000,000
- 50% Leverage History: $14,500,000
- Shortfall Balance: $14,500,000
- Total Shortfall Balance: $15,111,922

What Are Our Options?

Note: The above comparison does not include all general fund categories or amounts and the 2015 Tax values are estimated.
15 Year Projections: Additional Revenue

- Option #1: 1.75 Renewal: (15 years) x ($0.00 per year) = $0.00
  - $100,000 assessed property value equals (=) approximately $50.24 per year in taxes.

- Option #2: 1.75 Replacement: (15 years) x ($381,920 per year) = $5,728,800
  - $100,000 assessed property value equals (=) approximately $61.26 per year in taxes.

- Option #3: 1.75 Renewal w/.25 Additional: (15 years) x ($1,080,570 per year) = $16,080,570
  - $100,000 assessed property value equals (=) approximately $58.99 per year in taxes.

- Option #4: 2.0 Replacement: (15 years) x ($1,368,910 per year) = $20,533,650
  - $100,000 assessed property value equals (=) approximately $70.00 per year in taxes.

General Fund: 2005 vs. 2015 and 2016-2030 Planned Improvements

- Net decrease (6.4%): $611,922
- Shortfall Balance: $14,500,000
- Total Shortfall Balance: $15,111,922

Recommendation:

- What option provides the best BALANCE of providing MCMP with adequate long term sustainability potential while minimizing the financial impact to residents? (2030)
- Allows us to be Sustainable, but requires us to continue to be Organized, Efficient & Proactive
  - Assumes Maintaining Leveraging History of 50% Acquired Via Grants, Foundations, Etc.
The following presentation outlines;

- **Review:**
  - The Beginning
  - The Process
  - Levy Results

- **Our Commitment**
  - Our Mission
  - Administration
  - Capital Improvements

- **Community Concerns**
Yes: 54.27%
No: 45.73%
The following presentation outlines:

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  - The Beginning
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  - Our Mission
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  - Capital Improvements

- **Community Concerns**
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In fulfilling this mission our objectives are:

- To be responsive to community needs
  Studies and surveys direct the MetroParks to preserve appropriate natural and cultural areas, make improvements to MetroParks facilities, develop additional recreational opportunities, and continue to strengthen activity and public information programing.

- To be environmentally sound
  Stewardship strategies will be dictated by the intrinsic nature of the land.

- To be adaptable
  The only certainty in our world is that change is occurring at an increasing rate. To respond, the MetroParks must maintain strong public information and involvement programs and form new kinds of creative liaisons to meet changing needs.

- To be economically feasible
  The MetroParks has finite resources that are not guaranteed in perpetuity. It must constantly work to broaden its base, especially through new partnerships. Revenue generating programs and facilities must be a key element in the overall funding picture.

Our Commitment: Our Mission
The following presentation outlines;

- **Review:**
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- **Our Commitment**
  - Our Mission
  - Administration
  - Capital Improvements

- **Community Concerns**

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*Presentation Overview*
As we move forward with the discussion related to the administration of Mill Creek MetroParks, it is important to identify that although much of what I will be sharing is both analytical and financial in nature, it is in no means a personal reflection of past or present staff members who have provided dedicated service to the organization. I also want to acknowledge that anytime an organization undergoes a restructuring or internal change, it can be a very difficult time for all of those involved. It is not my intent to minimize or dismiss the difficulty or sensitivity of the situation in discussing the topics of efficiency, costs, budgets or even capital improvements. I share this information in an effort to demonstrate our level of commitment to the community in ensuring that Mill Creek MetroParks is available for all, both current and future generations.

Please feel free to contact me anytime with comments, questions or concerns.

Aaron Young
Executive Director
aaron@millcreekmetroparks.org
Phone: 330-702-3000
Our Challenges:

- Initial Observations
  - 2001-2015: 8 Executive Directors; (1) 15 yr. levy cycle
  - Mistrust of Executive Leadership
  - Only Levy Expires in 11 months; No Plans or Preparation
  - Vacant Director Positions
  - Dissension Amongst Departments; Poor Communication
  - Low Employee Morale (6 year wage freeze)
  - Lack of Transparency Perception by Public
  - Backlog of Necessary Repairs/Improvements
  - Outdated Policies & Procedures
  - Newly Operating MetroParks Foundation
  - Limited Technological Capabilities
  - Various Outdate Equipment
  - Underperforming Venues; Golf, Rentals, etc.

- Reverse the Financial Trend
  - Reduce Our Operating Costs
  - Increase Revenue (Value)

- Operating on 1.75 mills at 2001 values
  - For the Next 15 Years: To 2030
  - Local Government Fund Reductions (-54.5%)
  - Personal Property Tax Elimination (-100%)
  - Shrinking Tax Base (Population Decrease)
  - Increased Material & Supplies Costs

- How Do We Do It?
  - Keep Our Promise: Organized, Efficient & Proactive

Our Commitment: Administration
We Actively Look To Improve:

- Evaluate & Modify Our Internal Structure
  - Negotiate FOP Union Contract: 05-31-15
  - Negotiate AFSCME Union Contract: 12-31-15
  - Review Potential Contracted Services

- Revise Budget Development Process
  - Schedule: Reduce Temporary Budget Use
  - Departmental Ownership: APO

- Conduct IT Analysis
  - Contracted Virtual Information Officer
  - Current Efficiency Potential is Limited to our Technological Capabilities

- Balance Cost Recovery & Program Offerings
  - 2015: Park Activities (23%) $2,092,400 (est.)
  - Golf Course Changes: Food & Beverage
  - Wick Recreation Area: Future F&B Potential
  - Morley Pavilion: Potential Partnerships

- Explore Alternative Recreational Opportunities
  - Communities Changing Needs
  - Cost Benefit Analysis: Short & Long Term

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**Our Commitment:** Administration
- **We Actively Look To Improve:**
  - Evaluate & Modify Our Internal Structure
    - Start to Simplify Department Hierarchies
    - Increase Communication
    - Fill Critical Vacant Positions
    - FOP Union Contract Negotiations Ongoing
    - AFSCME Union Contract Negotiations Ongoing
    - Updating Policies & Procedures
  - Review Potential Contracted Services
    - To Supplement Current Capabilities
    - Reevaluate Existing Agreements
  - Revise Budget Development Process
    - Schedule: Reduce Temporary Budget Use
    - Increase Departmental Ownership: APO Link
  - Continue IT Analysis
    - Contracted Virtual Information Officer
    - Hardware & Software Upgrades
  - Balance Cost Recovery & Program Offerings
    - Evaluate Park Activities (2015: 23% Generated)
    - Reduce Dependence on Tax Dollars
  - Explore Alternative Recreational Opportunities
    - Communities Changing Needs
    - Cost Benefit Analysis: Short & Long Term
  - Leverage Tax Dollars
    - Maintain Foundation Support
    - Actively Pursue Third Party Funding

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**Our Commitment:** Administration

millcreekmetroparks.org
One Year Preliminary Results:

- **Reduced Operating Expenses**
  - 2015: Budget Cuts: $144,661
  - 2016: Budget Cuts: $187,871
  - Reorganization: $883,073
  - Cost Savings:
    - Reduced Internet Service Provider Costs
    - Reduce Phone Service Costs

- **Evaluate & Modify Our Internal Structure**
  - Increased Internal Communication
  - Improved Departmental Responsibility
  - Positive Union Contract Negotiations
    - FOP & AFSCME
  - Addressed Critical Vacant Positions
    - Hired New Golf Director (position was vacant)
    - Hired New Development Director (position was vacant)
  - Hired New Human Resources Director
  - Evaluating Internal Policies & Procedures

- **Review Potential Contracted Services**
  - Contracted Virtual Information Officer
  - Farm Services Agreement
  - Hole 55 Vendor
  - Gardens Café Vendor
  - Golf Club House Retail Vendor
  - Phone System

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**Our Commitment:** Administration

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• One Year Preliminary Results continued:
  o Revise Budget Development Process
    • Schedule: Reduce Temporary Budget Use
      ✓ 2015 Budget Approved in March
      ✓ 2016 Budget Approved in February
      ✓ 2017 Budget Approved in January
    • Increased Departmental Ownership:
      ✓ Annual Plan of Operations Link
      ✓ Direct Department Participation
  o Continue IT Analysis
    • Contracted Virtual Information Officer
    • Improved Technological Capabilities
    • Exchange Server Utilization & Remote Back up
    • Scheduled Hardware & Software Upgrades
      ✓ Costs to be Estimated & Planned
  o Balance Cost Recovery & Program Offerings
    • Updated Discount Rental Facility Policy
    • Future Golf Course Rate Evaluation
    • Food & Beverage at Wick Recreation Area
  o Explore Alternative Recreational Opportunities
    • Pickleball at Yellow Creek Park
    • Ice Skating at Wick Recreation Area
    • Welcomed YYFFA to Wick Recreation Area
    • New AJGA Event
    • New NBC Golf Channel AM Tour Event
    • Potential Kirk Road Trailhead Bike Rentals
One Year Preliminary Results continued:

- Leverage Tax Dollars
  - Maintain Foundation Support
    - Friends of Fellows Riverside Gardens
      - $11,000 income from in 2015
      - Classes & Program Sponsorship
      - Levy Support
    - Mill Creek MetroParks Foundation 2015
  - Actively Pursue Third Party Funding
    - AJGA Sponsorship Potential
    - Maintenance Endowments
  - New Events lead to other MCMP Facilities Use
    - AJGA Tournament
    - NBC Golf Channel AM Tour Event
    - Good For The Valley
The following presentation outlines:

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- **Our Commitment**
  - Our Mission
  - Administration
  - Capital Improvements

- **Community Concerns**
- We are Organized:
  - Mission Driven Entity
  - Strategic Master Plan: Acts as Our Guide
  - Action Plan Summary: Goals & Objectives

- We are Planned:
  - Managing Today with an eye for Tomorrow
  - The Next 15 Years: 2016-2030
  - Capital Improvement Needs: $29,000,000
    - Road & Bridge Improvements
    - Parking & Signage Improvements
    - Trail Improvements
    - Dam & Reservoir Improvements
    - Fellman's Mill Wheel Restoration
    - Lily Pond Improvements
    - MetroParks Bikeway-Phase III
    - Wick Recreation Area Master Plan
    - Fellows Riverside Gardens Master Plan
    - Mill Creek Golf Course Improvements
    - MetroParks Farm Improvements
    - Volney Rogers Field Improvements
    - Yellow Creek Lodge Renovation Plan
    - Pioneer Pavilion Improvement Plan
    - Wildlife & Habitat Management

Our Commitment: Capital Improvements
Our Commitment: Capital Improvements

Our Challenges:
- .25 mills at 2016 Values for 15 Years
  - Income to be received starting in 2017
  - Approximately ½ of what is needed

Our Facilities:
- Our Age: 125 Years
- 5,008.25 Total Acres Managed
- 20.37 Miles of Roads
- 20.92 Acres of Parking
- 44.76 Miles of Hiking Trails
- 225,677 sf of Building Structures

Notable Facilities
- Mill Creek Park
  - Mill Creek Golf Course
  - Fellows Riverside Gardens
  - Lanterman’s Mill
  - Wick Recreation Area
  - Morley Pavilion
  - Lily Pond
  - Ford Nature Center
  - Lakes
- MetroParks Bikeway
- MetroParks Farm
- McGuffey Wildlife Preserve
- Yellow Creek Park
- Vickers Nature Preserve/BHP
- Sebring Woods
Our Commitment: Capital Improvements

- Capital Improvement Needs: $29,000,000
  - Road & Parking Improvements: $5,000,000
  - MCP Hiking & Multi-Use Trail Improvements: $475,000
  - Bikeway Trailhead Improvements: $250,000
  - Ford Nature Center Redevelopment: $2,800,000
  - Lanterman’s Mill Restoration: $500,000
  - MetroParks Farm Improvements: $200,000
  - MetroParks Bikeway-Phase III: $3,500,000
  - Lake & Pond Improvements: $250,000
  - Wick Recreation Area Master Plan: $4,000,000
  - Fellows Riverside Gardens Master Plan: $7,350,000
  - Mill Creek Golf Course MP Improvements: $2,600,000
  - Pavilion Improvements: $350,000
  - Volney Rogers Field Improvements: $150,000
  - Yellow Creek Lodge Renovation Plan: $225,000
  - Police Campus Improvements: $750,000
  - Sebring Woods Improvements: $50,000
  - Scholl Recreation Area Improvements: $50,000
  - Mill Creek Preserve Improvements: $50,000
  - Wildlife Sanctuary Improvements: $250,000
  - Egypt Swamp Improvements: $25,000
  - Cranberry Run Headwaters: $25,000
  - Vickers Nature Preserve: $50,000
  - Sawmill Creek Preserve: $50,000
  - McGuffey Wildlife Preserve: $50,000

Note: All identified costs are preliminary and reflective of the level of design completed at the time the costs were identified. Costs were utilized to assist in determining what levy options were to be considered. Individual project costs will continue to be determined and updated as the design level progresses.
Our Challenges continued:
- Maintaining Successful Leverage History
  - Grants Are Highly Competitive
  - Time Intensive Process
  - Often Item & Project Specific
  - Available Dollars Are Shrinking
  - In the Past: No Grant = No Improvement
- How Do We Do It?
  - Keep Our Promise: Organized, Efficient & Proactive

Master Planning The Future:
- Plan The Improvements
  - Balance Short Term Needs & Long Term Goals
  - Phased Implementation of Plans
  - Schedule Expenditures
- Leverage Our Tax Dollars
  - Actively Apply For Grants
  - Increase Development Opportunities
  - Establish Maintenance Endowments
- Potential For Operating Costs Savings to Assist
  - Potential Did Not Exist Prior To Reorganization

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**Our Commitment:** Capital Improvements

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**Future Capital Improvement Projects**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Project Name</th>
<th>Other Funds</th>
<th>Mill Creek Funds</th>
<th>Total Costs</th>
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Total: $1,242,000 | $1,800,000 | $3,042,000

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millcreekmetroparks.org
One Year Preliminary Results:

- Completed Capital Improvements
  - Various Road & Parking Improvements
  - Lake Newport Dam Repairs
  - Stone Arch Bridge Improvements
  - Lilly Pond Access Improvements
  - Pavilion & Shelter Improvements
  - MCMP Bikeway & Trailhead Improvements
  - Habitat Restoration Projects
    - MC Preserve
    - Daffodil Meadow
  - MCMP Farm Stream Restoration
  - Signage Replacement Program

- Maintaining Our Leverage History
  - 2015: Over 65% of Project Costs From Outside Funds
  - 2016: Over 72% of Project Costs From Outside Funds
  - Friends of Fellows Riverside Gardens Financial Support
  - Mill Creek MetroParks Foundation Financial Support

- Planning For the Future
  - Annual Road, Bridge & Parking Improvements
  - Annual Trail Improvements
  - Annual Sign Replacement Program
  - Annual Pavilion & Shelter Improvements
  - Annual Habitat Restoration Project
  - Location Specific Improvements
    - Lanterman’s Mill Wheel Rehabilitation

Our Commitment: Capital Improvements
One Year Preliminary Results continued:

- Planning For the Future
  - Location Specific Improvements (cont.)
    - Ford Nature Center Rehabilitation
    - Wick Recreation Area: Wet Play Area
    - MetroParks Bikeway-Phase III
    - Mill Creek Golf Course Master Plan
    - Volney Rogers Field Improvements
    - Yellow Creek Lodge Renovation Plan
    - Fellows Riverside Gardens Master Plan
  - Regional Significance
    - $29,000,000 over 15 Years equals $1.93 mil/year
    - Local Construction Job Creation

**Our Commitment:** Capital Improvements

![Mill Creek Metroparks Logo](millcreekmetroparks.org)
The following presentation outlines:

- **Review:**
  - The Beginning
  - The Process
  - Levy Results

- **Our Commitment**
  - Our Mission
  - Administration
  - Capital Improvements

- **Community Concerns**
Community Concerns: Q & A

Comment, Question and/or Concern:

- Why are you making staff cuts after the levy just passed?
- Nobody stated that there were going to be cuts.

Response

- The MetroParks will see no revenue from the levy until 2017.
- Leadership did identify the potential for cuts.
  - “Young, who took over as executive director at the beginning of 2015, told The Vindicator in an interview for an October 4, 2015 story that he would consider staff and salary cuts.” “He said taxpayers should be able to expect a leaner, more efficient administration, meaning less overhead. Whether that’s materials and supplies or salaries and wages, we need to re-evaluate everything we do and how we do it.” excerpt from Vindicator Article 2-13-16
Comment, Question and/or Concern:

- “What we do find disconcerting and yes, puzzling is the way the firings were handled.” excerpt from Vindicator Editorial, 02-21-16.

Response

- I take full responsibility for the internal reorganization and have publicly acknowledged and expressed my regret of the manner in which the restructuring was implemented. I should have been more sensitive to those individuals that were directly affected and sincerely apologize for contributing to an already difficult situation.
  - See previously posted Letter To Our Park Supporters.

- We also acknowledge the need for an improved level of communication by and between the MetroParks and our key partners within the community. We will continue to actively work to ensure both increased and improved communication amongst all our constituents.
  - One of those opportunities will be via a second public input meeting for the proposed Bikeway-Phase III Project that is expected to be scheduled in the next few weeks.
Comment, Question and/or Concern:

- Why are you cutting all of the Naturalists and the nature education programming?

Response

- There has been no discussion about eliminating all of the Naturalists or reducing the quantity or quality of our nature education programming.
- There were no Naturalist positions eliminated as part of the internal reorganization.
  - We currently have (3) part time naturalists/educators. (1) part time naturalist/educator position is vacant.
- The reorganization provides MCMP with the potential to both reduce costs and expand programming opportunities.
  - The costs of one full time outdoor education manager position (40hrs/week or 2080 hrs/year) is the equivalent of over (3) part time naturalist positions (28 hrs/week or 6608 hrs/year); which is 4,528 in potential additional hours of nature education programming at the same cost.
Comment, Question and/or Concern:

- Is it your intent to commercialize the MetroParks?

Response

- No. It is not our intent nor has there been any discussion on “commercializing” the MetroParks.
- The term “capital improvement(s)” relates directly to planned physical improvements and/or maintenance to existing park infrastructure and/or facilities.
Comment, Question and/or Concern:

- Why are you not cutting from the Golf Staff? Everyone knows how expensive it is to maintain a golf course.

Response

- The Mill Creek Golf Course has made significant improvements with regards to efficiency in 2015.
  - New Golf Director Brian Tolnar has lead a resurgence in use and promotion of the golf course.
  - Stacie Butler, Head Golf Pro was promoted in 2015 from a golf administrative assistant and was named the National Girls Golf Coach of the Year in 2015.
  - Andy Santor, Head Golf Pro continues to directly impact the golf community as a noted instructor.
  - Lance Bailey, Golf Course Superintendent continues to maintain two quality courses by balancing use of full time, part time and seasonal employees.
  - Golf Shop & Practice Range had best recorded seasons (in terms of revenue) to date

- Pre-reorganization Horticulture (Gardens) Salaries & Wages: $977,816
- Pre-reorganization Golf Salaries & Wages: $744,400
- 2015 Budget vs. Actuals Analysis – Horticulture: $(−$3,391)
- 2015 Budget vs. Actuals Analysis – Golf: $135,186
Comment, Question and/or Concern:

- Repeal of the levy will lead to reinstatement of the eliminated positions.

Response

- Repeal of the levy that provides Mill Creek MetroParks with over 70% of its general operating fund will not lead to the reinstatement of the eliminated positions.
- Repeal of the levy would result in a drastic loss of recreational opportunity for the community due to the inability of the MetroParks to operate and/or maintain the facilities due to the significant loss of operating revenue. Additional adverse effects would include but not be limited to; staffing & program cuts and closure of various MetroPark facilities.
Comment, Question and/or Concern:

- Why are you not getting grants for the planned capital improvements?

Response

- We have actively pursued and will continue to identify and apply for a variety of outside funding sources as part of our internal planning processes. Our history of successful funding acquisition has not completely addressed or eliminated the improvement needs. Unsuccessful grant applications typically resulted in limited to no physical improvements being made to the facility in which the application was submitted.
- For 2016, $1,022,329 or 72% of the total capital improvements will be paid for through third party funding sources including grants, donations, etc.
- Planning for 2017 and beyond is ongoing.
Comment, Question and/or Concern:

- How are Friends of Fellows Riverside Gardens and the Mill Creek MetroParks Foundation related to Mill Creek MetroParks?

Response

- Mill Creek MetroParks Foundation (MCMPF) and Friends of Fellows Riverside Gardens (FFRG) and are both separate 501(c)(3) non-profits, but who’s missions are to support Mill Creek MetroParks and Fellows Riverside Gardens respectively.
- See also [http://friendsoffellows.org/](http://friendsoffellows.org/)
- See also [http://www.millcreekmetroparks.org/get-involved/support/](http://www.millcreekmetroparks.org/get-involved/support/)
Comment, Question and/or Concern:

- We want the beauty of Fellows Riverside Gardens maintained.
- We want the trails maintained for their beauty and safety.

Response

- We agree. There has been no discussion about reducing the quality of or service to any of our facilities, including Fellows Riverside Gardens.
  - There are still eight (8) full time and eight (8) part time experienced and qualified staff members dedicated to just Fellows Riverside Gardens. Seasonal staff, interns and volunteer members continue to provide much needed assistance and collaboration.
- We are committed to not only maintaining, but improving the quality of our facilities and the experiences they provide.
Comment, Question and/or Concern:

- Why are you buying vehicles if you need to cut costs?

Response

- Fleet Facts:
  - Feb. 2015: 84 Vehicles, Avg. Age: 15 years, Shop/Mechanics wages & benefits: $272,347*
  - Fleet Turnover Schedule @ $272,347* per year/$23,489 per vehicle = 11.59 vehicles/year, 80 total vehicles/11.59 vehicles/year = complete fleet turnover in 6.9 years which would result in an average age being reduced by over half; 6.9 years versus 15 years.
  - Currently oldest Vehicle in Fleet is 1987 Dodge Pick-Up Truck

- Vehicle replacement is an annual component of the Board approved budget.
  - A scheduled replacement allows for the proper planning and allocating of the necessary funds.
  - All 2016 vehicle purchases were made from local vendors who honored State Bid prices. Cost per vehicle was $23,489.
Comment, Question and/or Concern:

- Why are you now allowing the trapping of river otters?

Response

- The MetroParks is not actively or intently trapping river otters.
- The MetroParks has utilized an annual nuisance trapping program as a wildlife and habitat management tool since 2011.
  - See also: March 2009 Biological Inventory and Habitat Management Plan for The Sanctuary as submitted by Field Researchers from the Cleveland Museum of Natural History-Natural Areas Division
- Mill Creek Preserve and Wildlife Sanctuary have been the primary locations for the management activities.
- Muskrats have been a targeted species due to their negative impacts on dams and water impoundments.
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