

Meeting Minutes

Natural Resources Citizen Advisory Committee
Thursday July 15th, 2021 | 2:30 PM
Outdoor Meeting at Chestnut Hill Pavilion
Prepared by Nick Derico, *Natural Resources Steward*



Committee Members in Attendance

Nick Derico ☒ | Joshua Noble ☒ | Elizabeth Martin ☒ | Sean Baran ☒ | Peter Milliken ☒ | Sara Scudier ☒ | John Zimmerman ☒ | Ronald Kichton ☒ | Robert Campbell ☐ | Joshua Emanuelson ☐ |

Public Attendees

Chris Pansing	



I. Call to Order – 2:34 PM

Old Business

- * **Approval of Previous Meeting’s Minutes**
Nick Derico provided the meeting minutes from the last meeting (6.17.21), members reviewed the minutes and offered no revisions or corrections. Sara Scudier motioned to approve the meeting minutes as presented, the motion was seconded by Sean Baran
- * **Roll Call**
Voting Aye – Derico, Noble, Martin, Baran, Milliken, Scudier, Zimmerman, Kichton
Voting Nay - None

II. **New Business**

Review of On-Going 2021 Natural Resources Projects

Clean Ohio Round 15A

1. Derico provided an update on the Clean Ohio 15A Grant Applications discussed at the previous meeting, stating the applications were received by the local NRAC board and are in the review stage now.

Goose Management

1. Egg Addling/Nest Monitoring Complete – Final Report Received on 7/1.
2. Annual Audubon Count Completed in Late June
3. Both Efforts Show Decreased Goose Numbers Throughout the MetroParks
4. Derico Shared the Final Report from USDA with the Group

Sanctuary Meso-Predator Management

1. USDA Management Efforts Complete – Final Report Received on 7/12
2. Trail Camera Survey to be Repeated in the Late Summer, Beginning on 7/19
3. Derico Shared the Final Report from USDA with the Group

Collier Preserve Tree Planting – YSU Legacy Forest

1. MCMP and YSU Legacy Forest Committee Have Partnered to Plant 1000 Trees at the Collier Preserve.
2. Planting to Take Place in November of 2021
3. Derico Shared the Planting Plan for the Project, Detailing the Overall Species Composition, Density, and Placement.

Healthy Streams Initiative

1. Annual Healthy Streams Initiative to Begin in Early August, Focusing on Portions of Indian Run (South of 224) and Mill Creek (North of 224).
2. Led by Noble and Martin, The Group Revisited the Topic of Using Existing Woody Material for Increased Erosion Control, A Topic First Introduced in 2020.

Sanctuary Improvements

1. Derico Shared Upcoming Improvements Planned for the Mill Creek Wildlife Sanctuary, Which Include: Invasive Species Control, Brush Cutting, and Leak Repair.
- * Noble asked about the status of public access at the MC Wildlife Sanctuary. Derico stated that access to the property remained by permit only and the group briefly discussed possible alternatives to allow for increased public access.
 - * Milliken introduced the idea of revitalizing the Calla Rd. bridge as a pedestrian/bicyclist route to connect the Sanctuary to the Sanctuary Expansion

Bluebird Box Monitoring

1. Derico Shared the Current Status of Bluebird Box Monitoring Throughout the Park, the Natural Resources Interns are Currently Working to Inventory, Monitor, Repair, and Replace our Existing Bluebird Boxes Throughout the MetroParks.
- * Milliken asked about the MetroParks' current policy on bird feeders considering the new disease affecting birds across the country and suggested the MetroParks refrain from any future use of bird feeders until more is known about the disease.

Open Discussion/Brainstorming

- * Noble started the conversation by bringing up the topic of renewable energy, a topic that the group has discussed in the past and was identified in the 2020 and 2021 Committee Goals. Derico encouraged the group to focus on small scale obtainable projects and to give specific examples of where such projects could be implemented.
- * Baran made numerous suggestions including solar powered charging stations/kiosks, electric car charging stations, solar lighted signage, and solar/wind powered aeration at the front Farm Pond.
- * Milliken also made numerous suggestions including solar panel and wind turbine installations at the MetroParks Farm, electric car charging stations at the MetroParks Farm, and incorporating renewable energy sources into new building construction where feasible, specifically referencing Vickers Nature Preserve.
- * Baran suggested an "Explore the Park" program that would encourage park users to visit more regional facilities throughout the park by rewarding park patrons who complete a scavenger hunt and take pictures of various landmarks at each location – this would be a great collaboration with the Education Committee.
- * Scudier brought up the topic of white-tailed deer management, citing the overall poor health of the forest understory throughout the Park as a motivating factor for the MetroParks to take a closer look at current deer and forest management practices.

Public Comments

Chris Pansing, our only public attendee expressed concern over several current MetroParks maintenance activities including:

- III. Roadside Tree Clearing – Mr. Pansing expressed his concern and disapproval of the roadside forestry work that has taken place over the last few years. Derico explained that the work was needed from a safety perspective to open sightlines along roadways and curves, while also

removing hazardous trees from along roadsides and stressed that any tree removal was done so with these safety goals in-mind. Derico also cited the MetroParks' tree planting program at the Collier Preserve, stating that the MetroParks plan to continue tree plantings on an annual basis to help mitigate the loss of trees due to necessary maintenance activity.

Leaf Removal Along Trails – Mr. Pansing expressed his disapproval of the MetroParks' current policies concerning leaf removal along hiking trails, stating that the blowing of leaves along trails in the fall results in a slippery, muddy, and unpassable conditions in the winter/spring. He suggested that we refrain from blowing leaves along trails to improve winter/springtime conditions.

*Noble countered this point, stating that he appreciates the trails being cleared of leaves from a safety perspective to avoid tripping on roots and rocks.

Committee Questions/Comments.

IV. None

Date of Next Meeting

V. August 26th 2:30 @ Slippery Rock Pavilion

VI. **Adjournment** – 4:00 PM
