

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS OF MILL CREEK
METROPARKS HELD MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2023

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners of Mill Creek MetroParks was held on Monday, November 13, 2023.

The meeting opened at 6:00 p.m., with recitation of The Pledge of Allegiance.

Lee Frey, Board President welcomed staff and guests.

Roll Call was as follows:

Germaine Bennett;	Present
Lee Frey;	Present
Tom Frost,	Absent
Jeff Harvey;	Present
Paul Olivier;	Absent

The Board was presented with the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of October 16, 2023. Lee Frey accepted the minutes into the record as written.

Nick Morchak, Finance Director/Treasurer presented the Department Report for Finance and requested that disbursements #91115 - #91379 for a total of \$1,038,984.15, be approved. Lee Frey moved, at the request of the Finance Director, that the funds having been certified as on hand and duly appropriated, that disbursements #91115 - #91379 for a total of \$1,038,984.15, be approved. The motion was seconded by Jeff Harvey after discussion, the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Voting Aye:	Bennett, Frey, Harvey
Voting Nay:	None

Aaron Young, Executive Director shared that the Ford Nature Center Redevelopment Project received an honorable mention award from the Cleveland American Institute of Architects (AIA).

Chris Litton, Development Director presented the MetroParks Foundation deposit report for the period of October 1-31, 2023, at a total of \$50,100. Lee Frey moved at the request of the Director of Development to accept the deposit report for the period of October 1-31, 2023, at a total of \$50,100. The motion was seconded by Germaine Bennett, after discussion, the roll being called upon its adoption, the vote resulted as follows:

Voting Aye:	Bennett, Frey, Harvey
Voting Nay:	None

Public Comments to the Board: (see sign-in sheet)

- Janet Bernard: Wanted to go over the by-laws of the Board of Commissioners. What is covered under actual expenses that they could be paid back? Requested that the Board give some consideration to continuing the Q & A if a person has a question. What were the plans for the Park? What does the Board do to get an Executive Director to leave? She believes that it is inappropriate for Mr. Young to take the minutes of the meeting. What are the goals of the Park? What are the qualifications of being on the Board? Was it discussed with the Board to end the concerts? Is it true that runners have to pay extra to run in the Park? Is it true that the Board delegated operation of the Park to the Executive Director. How many easements does the Park have?
- Lana Van Auker: She read a prepared statement regarding protection of animals. Asked how many animals have the Park killed since 2015? She has seen multiple dead deer and she couldn't sleep in her house due to the smell. She just returned from Clifton, OH and the

University of Cincinnati is doing a research program on sterilization that is successful. She stated that the Golf Course does more harm to the ecosystem than the deer. She called them dead zones. She called the deer program a slaughter program and called it cruel. Stated that the sooner that we acknowledge that animals are emotional beings the sooner that we will embrace them as our brothers and sisters.

- Chris Flak: Requested that the Park name a trail after naturalist emeritus Bill Whitehouse who recently passed away. Bill was instrumental in the creation of the FNC and catalogued many of the natural items within the Park. Bill created the old library within the former nature center. She believes that a trail may be more appropriate, something on the West Newport side of the Park. Bill felt connected to the wildlife within the Park. She requested that the Park consider the request.
- Jerry Serbel: Stated that he is a voter and has lived in Youngstown his whole life. He stated his pride for Youngstown. He believes it is an injustice that the deer were killed. He stated that a deer named Angelo was seen but his mother was not. He questioned the number of hunters, permits and deer are issued. He claims the Park is a filthy pit hole.
- Mike Drabison: Stated that last month he commented that he wanted to know how much money is left in of the \$50,000 that was budgeted for sharp shooting. How many bullets were used? Are they coming back to do more sharp shooting?

Commissioners Comments:

- Lee Frey asked Nick if he knows how many bullets were used? Nick stated that 31 bullets were used for the 30 deer that were killed as part of the targeted removal process. The first invoice for this service was for \$5,000. Pricing is based on time spent and efficiency. Additional invoices are anticipated. Lee stated that the Board has not received any payment for their time or expenses as members. The Board is charged with creating Policy and the Director and staff is in charge of implementing those policies. The Board does not go over the Executive Director and contact the Department Directors. The powers of the Board were read out loud by Lee. The planning process starts with the Department Directors as recommendations, then approved by the Board. The Executive Director serves as the Board Secretary. Road races organizers are charged a fee to utilize the Park. Lee shared how he applied and ultimately became a Board member. Janet Bernard commented further about the positions of the Board and that process. Lee stated that responsibility falls on the probate judge.
- Jeff Harvey invited Boardman Trustee Tom Costello to come to a meeting to speak with the Board if he has any issues with the MetroParks. Jeff stated that he contacted Cuyahoga Valley National Park about their deer and they confirmed that they are still actively managing their deer. Jeff offered to meet with anyone over coffee if they have any questions about the MetroParks.
- Lee stated that sterilization is illegal in Ohio for management of the deer unless approved by ODOW as part of a research project.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 11, 2023, at 6:00 p.m., in the Rossi Auditorium at the Davis Center.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:34 p.m.

Presiding Officer

Secretary