

**WOOD COUNTY PARK DISTRICT  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS MINUTES REGULAR MEETING  
JUNE 8, 2021**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Sandy Wiechman at 4:00 p.m. at the Arrowwood Archery Range, 11126 Linwood Road, Bowling Green, Ohio 43402

**2. ROLL CALL**

Sandy Wiechman, present  
Kim Rose, present  
Dennis Parish, absent  
Tom Myers, present  
Bill Cameron, present

Staff present: Neil Munger, Jim Witter, Jeff Baney, Adrien Lowien-Kirian, Corinne Gordon, Chris Dauer,

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ms. Wiechman stated the minutes of the May 11, 2021 regular meeting and May 17, 2021 special meeting were distributed to the board in advance of the meeting and asked if there were any additions or corrections. Mr. Myers moved approval of the minutes for the May 11, 2021 regular meeting minutes and the May 17, 2021 special meeting as presented. Ms. Rose seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

**4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Ms. Wiechman reported that the board has created committees that will enable the board to communicate with staff on various topics and give the staff a direct line of communication with the board. Each committee will have board representation by members with specific interest in that specific area. Ms. Wiechman stated that the committees formed are Law Enforcement with Mr. Myers and Ms. Wiechman, facility maintenance and rentals with Mr. Parish, Programming and Stewardship with Ms. Wiechman and Capital Improvements and Planning with Mr. Cameron and Mr. Myers. Ms. Wiechman noted that the remaining standing committee is the Compensation Committee that consists of the Chair and Vice Chair. Ms. Wiechman stated that these committees are intended to give staff a line of communication with the board with ideas and thoughts. Ms. Wiechman noted that these committees are not intended to undermine department heads or micromanage but rather serve as an outlet to facilitate communication and idea sharing. Ms. Wiechman added that this is in no way an outlet for staff complaints, noting that there is already a process in place for employee grievances and these committees are not being set up to circumvent or interfere with current policy.

Ms. Wiechman reported that as was reported previously, the board met in special session on May 17 to reopen facilities and allow for full rental status. Ms. Wiechman noted that since that time there have been a number of questions from staff regarding mask wearing and who should wear them and when. Ms. Wiechman noted that per the Ohio Department of Health guidelines, fully

vaccinated people are no longer required to wear masks. Ms. Wiechman noted that if staff are more comfortable wearing masks they should feel free to wear masks and can continue to encourage program participants to wear masks, the only change is that it is no longer a requirement. Mr. Myers stated that staff can continue to limit the number of participants in programs as well as limiting the capacity of our interpretive centers and similar facilities to promote social distancing and eliminate crowding.

## 5. **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Munger reported the Park District membership in the Public Entities Pool (PEP) is due for renewal. Mr. Munger noted that he met recently with local agent, Joe Schroeder of the Miller Insurance Agency and they discussed changes in programming and facilities as well as reviewing vehicles in the Park District fleet. Mr. Munger noted that the membership contribution increased this year to \$86,686 from \$77,608 for the same coverage in 2020. Mr. Munger noted that Mr. Schroeder has come up with some ideas to control those costs and introduced Mr. Schroeder. Mr. Schroeder noted that for the first time since 1991, PEP did have a rate increase. Mr. Schroeder noted that the increase only affects automobile physical damage (comprehensive & collision) and real property. It does not affect any liability coverages. Mr. Schroeder noted that with the auto physical damage, the cost of vehicles has increased over the years, parts are more expensive and labor is more intensive, all of which contribute to the increase. Mr. Schroeder added that it is a similar situation on real property, especially commercial property. There are so many different laws, codes, and ordinances affecting commercial structures that even small claims now are in the thousands of dollars. Mr. Schroeder stated that with this rate increase, he anticipates it to remain stable for a good number of years, noting that PEP has always been very conservative with their rates and he has no doubt that they will continue to do so. Mr. Schroeder added that other factors that led to the increased cost this year include the addition of the Rudolph Bike Park as well as a couple new vehicles added to the fleet. Mr. Schroeder stated that he does have a recommendation to revise the coverage that will bring the contribution amount back in line with last year's contribution. Mr. Schroeder noted that currently the Park District has a \$500 deductible for all property and auto losses. Mr. Schroeder recommended raising those deductibles to \$1,000 on vehicles and \$ 2,500 on property. Mr. Schroeder stated that given the holdings of the District and the claims history, he feel that increasing the deductibles will not put an undue strain on the budget and will significantly decrease the premium. Mr. Schroeder noted that it's enough of a savings and based upon the history of claims for the Park District it will offset the cost of claims. Mr. Schroeder noted that by increasing the deductible, it's a total annual savings of \$9,466 for a revised total of \$77,220. Mr. Schroeder noted that he and Mr. Munger had a discussion on the liability limits and if there should be a consideration of raising the limits. Mr. Schroeder stated that he noted that the highest liability claim that PEP has paid in recent history is \$3M and with the current limit set at \$4M he is comfortable with the liability limit remaining at that point. Mr. Munger presented resolution 21-011 authorizing renewal of the Park District's membership in the Public Entities Pool of Ohio for liability, vehicle and property insurance coverage for the amount of \$77,220. Mr. Cameron moved approval of resolution 21-011, Ms. Rose seconded. A roll call vote was conducted with all in favor,

motion carried.

Mr. Munger reported that a draft copy of the Statutory Budget for 2022 was distributed to the board in advance of the meeting for their review. Mr. Munger noted that the statutory budget is a preliminary look at projected budget needs for the upcoming year based upon current budget figures in the current budget cycle. Mr. Munger stated that each year as we prepare the statutory budget, he asks the various department heads to meet with their staff members to review their respective budget lines. They take into account current budget balances as well as projected changes in needs and supply him with their budget requests. Mr. Munger noted that per previous discussions, the salaries budget reflect normal step increases plus a 1.5% COLA. Mr. Munger noted that as in past years, we do not include specific capital improvement projects in the statutory budget but rather just a proposed lump sum. Mr. Munger explained that specific capital projects are identified in the fall and are included in the final operating budget that is approved in December. Mr. Cameron questioned if the starting rate of \$10 per hour for seasonal employees was adequate. Mr. Munger responded that in raising seasonal pay rates it will be necessary to reevaluate the pay for full time employees as an increase would put seasonal employees pay rates above those of some full time employees. Mr. Cameron agreed that should we decide to increase the starting seasonal wages a reevaluation of full time employee wages would be in order as well. Mr. Munger noted that at this time there is one seasonal hired for the season and that is the limit of the applications received to date. Mr. Munger noted advertising has been done in the newspaper as well as online and has had no success. Mr. Munger noted that the next attempt at advertising will be to put signs in all the parks advertising for seasonal employees. Ms. Rose questioned how many total seasonals are in the budget for hiring. Mr. Munger responded that there are 11 total spread out over three departments. Mr. Baney noted that with the loss of seasonals this year the operations department is 200 hours short in manpower per week. Mr. Munger noted that the parks look good and the employees are doing an outstanding job of trying to keep up as best they can but the small things are having to be overlooked in order to keep up with the main maintenance functions. Mr. Munger noted that in 2020 we were able to make do without seasonals however with the addition of rentals this year that adds another priority function that must be done which stretches the staff even more thin.

Mr. Munger reported that in April, the board approved the drilling of a new well at the Carter Historic Farm for the amount of \$4,850. Mr. Munger noted that at that time he stated that the quote on the drilling included to a depth of 100-feet and should the well need to be drilled deeper, we would incur an additional cost. Mr. Munger stated that the well drilling was recently completed and the depth was approximately 20-feet deeper which resulted in an additional cost of \$450. Mr. Munger stated that per our policy he approved the change order on the project and now needs the board to ratify the change order. Mr. Munger presented resolution 21-012 ratifying change order 001 in the amount of \$450 for the drilling of the well at the Carter Historic Farm. Mr. Cameron moved approval of resolution 21-012, Ms. Rose seconded. A roll call vote was conducted with all in favor, motion carried.

Mr. Munger reported that included in the 2021 capital improvement budget is creation and installation of interpretive displays in the Otsego Park River Overlook as well as the LOONA and Classroom at the W.W. Knight Nature Center. Mr. Munger stated that program department staff have been working with various display companies requesting proposals for the creation and installation of these displays. Mr. Munger noted that as interpretive display construction is a very specialized field it is difficult to find companies to quote projects and many of the larger companies won't quote small project like we have. Mr. Munger stated that three companies were contacted but only two submitted quotes with the third declining to bid the projects. The two companies that bid the projects were 2020 Exhibits, who completed the Sawyer Interpretive Center and 2Scale Exhibits, who completed the Bradner Interpretive Center. Mr. Munger noted that both have done good work for the Park District previously and staff are confident in the abilities of both. Mr. Munger reported that for the Otsego proposal, 2020 exhibits submitted the low bid at \$7,800 and 2Scale Exhibits submitted a quote of \$7,999.61. Mr. Munger stated that as both companies have done good work for us before he saw no reason to not go with the lowest bid and presented resolution 21-013 authorizing him to enter into agreement with 2020 Exhibits for the installation of interpretive displays in the Otsego River Overlook Room for the amount of \$7,800. Mr. Cameron moved approval of resolution 21-013, Ms. Rose seconded. A roll call vote was conducted with all in favor, motion carried.

Mr. Munger reported that in regards to the W.W. Knight interpretive display proposal, 2020 Exhibits again submitted the low quote of \$22,979.25 with 2Scale Exhibits coming in at \$23,154.51. Mr. Munger presented resolution 21-014 authoring him to enter into agreement with 2020 Exhibits for the installation of interpretive displays in the W.W. Knight Nature Center for the amount of \$22,979.25. Mr. Myers moved approval of resolution 21-014, Mr. Cameron seconded. A roll call vote was conducted with all in favor, motion carried.

Mr. Munger reported that with the lifting of COVID restrictions we are finally able to start thinking about opening some of the projects that we have been working on over the past two years. Mr. Munger stated that the first such opening is the Sawyer Interpretive Center. Mr. Munger noted that staff have been in contact with the Sawyer Family and found that they are able to gather on Saturday, July 31 so as a result we have set that date as the official grand opening of the facility. Mr. Munger noted that one remaining detail still to be determined is the naming of the facility. Mr. Munger stated that after a great deal of thought he recommends that this facility be named after the matriarch of the family and the person who was responsible for the donation of the property and name the facility the Ann B. Sawyer Interpretive Center. Mr. Munger noted that before her passing, Mrs. Sawyer was excited at the thought of a facility that would document and interpret the history of the quarry and the family, adding that Mrs. Sawyer was the source of much of the information that we gathered for the displays and the creation of the Sawyer Quarry Nature Preserve was made possible only through her great generosity. Mr. Munger also noted that after her passing, memorials were received in her honor which were directed toward the creation of the interpretive center.

Mr. Munger stated that per Park District policy, if the Board is agreeable to this naming proposal we would put this out for public comment and act at the July board meeting to officially establish the facility name. Mr. Munger noted that would give us adequate time to get a permanent sign noting the facility name in time for the grand opening on July 31. The consensus of the board was to move forward with the naming process.

Mr. Munger reported that in 2011, the Park District entered into agreement with the Wood County Commissioners, with a management agreement for the pond located at the county owned Gypsy Lane Road complex to open the area to public use. Mr. Munger stated recently we received a number of calls from the public regarding a substantial fish kill in the pond that prompted us to close the pond to the public until we determined what caused the incident. Mr. Munger stated that staff had a local pond expert examine the pond and that expert believed that what caused the issue was what is known as "pond turnover." Mr. Munger noted that he wanted to have water testing conducted to rule out any sort of contamination however, the local expert does not do water sampling. Mr. Munger stated that as a result staff called in an aquatic management company that inspected that pond and took water samples for testing. Mr. Munger noted that again, the aquatic manager also suspects the natural occurring "pond turnover" as the cause of the fish kill in the pond. Mr. Munger stated that assistant director, Jeff Baney, has a great deal of knowledge on the subject and asked him to report. Mr. Baney explained that water is most dense at 39.4 degrees which is the typical temperature of the lower layer of a pond causing a thermal stratification with varying temperatures above the 39.4 degree layer. Mr. Baney explained that the top layer of water contains the most oxygen and is where the fish live while the lower layer contains decomposing leaves and other organic materials that are decomposing and creating toxic substances such as hydrogen sulfide and methane gas that is not conducive to fish life. Mr. Baney explained that with the wildly fluctuating temperatures lately it has caused the temperature of the top layers of water to change drastically and thus the water literally turns over, bringing the toxic substances in the bottom layer to the top and creating a toxic environment for the fish. Mr. Baney stated that as Mr. Munger stated, while this is the most likely cause of the fish kill, in order to rule out any other contamination of the pond water testing must be done. Mr. Baney added that at the present time we are waiting for the results of the water testing and once we know conclusively that turnover is the cause we will reopen the pond.

**6. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

Ms. Wiechman stated departmental reports were distributed to the board in advance of the meeting for review and asked if there were any questions. Mr. Myers stated that he participated in a recent program conducted by the program department and was very impressed. No questions were raised.

**7. APPROVAL OF PAYABLES**

Ms. Wiechman stated payables for the month of May were distributed to the board in advance of the meeting for review. Ms. Rose moved approval of the payables for the month of May, Mr. Myers seconded. A roll call vote was conducted, all in

favor, motion carried.

8. **OLD BUSINESS**

Nothing at this time.

9. **NEW BUSINESS**

Nothing at this time.

10. **FRIENDS OF THE WOOD COUNTY PARKS**

No members were in attendance.

11. **HEARING OF VISITORS**

Historic Farm and History Specialist, Corinne Gordon, introduced Historic Agriculture Specialist, Chris Dauer. Ms. Gordon noted that Mr. Dauer has been with us for a little over a year now however with Covid protocols this is the first opportunity she has had to introduce Mr. Dauer.

Ms. Molly Strader, a resident who lives in the vicinity of the Buttonwood-Betty C. Black Recreation Area was in attendance and expressed her sincere thanks for the work done at Buttonwood in cleaning up the area in the front of the park and mowing the grass. Ms. Strayer said that she had many other area residents that have expressed their thanks and appreciation for the work done.

12. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Nothing at this time.

13. **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Cameron moved adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 5:39 p.m.



Sandra Wiechman, Chair



Neil Munger, Director

Wood County Park District, 18729 Mercer Road, Bowling Green, OH 43402