

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
FIVE RIVERS METROPARKS**

January 12, 2024

A meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners (BOPC) was held at Five Rivers MetroParks Main Office, 409 E. Monument Avenue, Dayton, Ohio on January 12, 2024, and convened at 1:01 p.m. on a roll call vote by the Board of Park Commissioners.

**Present:**

Five Rivers MetroParks Commission President Karen L. Davis, Commissioner Jessica Salem, Commissioner Bear Monita, CEO Karen Hesser, Chief of Public Safety Mark Hess, Chief of Philanthropy Alexis Larsen, Acting Chief of Operations Amy Dingle, Chief of Administration Bill Tschirhart, Director of Marketing and Public Engagement Shelli DiFranco, Facilities & Equipment Manager Richard Alder, Facilities & Equipment Manager Andy Tarter, Executive Assistant Christianna Romer, and Legal Counsel Bob Curry.

**Visitors Present:** Paul Lamberger, Jennifer Grusenmeyer, and Cora Saunders.

**Minutes:**

- The BOPC was presented with the minutes of the regular meeting on December 31, 2023. On a motion by Commissioner Salem, the minutes were approved.

**Financial Reports:**

- The BOPC was presented with the December 2023 financial information and list of bills for December 1 – December 31, 2023. On a motion by Commissioner Salem, the financials were accepted as presented.
- Chief of Administration Bill Tschirhart requested approval of a then and now certification in the amount of \$7,650 to Starlink for internet connectivity equipment. On a motion by Commissioner Salem, the BOPC approved the request, as presented.
- Chief of Administration Bill Tschirhart requested approval of a then and now certification in the amount of \$6,000 to Emerge, Inc. for software maintenance services. On a motion by Commissioner Salem, the BOPC approved the request, as presented.

**Law Enforcement Activity:** Chief of Public Safety Mark Hess presented the Law Enforcement Activity Report for December 2023.

**Strategic Plan Update: Financial Health Review:** CEO Karen Hesser presented the BOPC with 2023 Budget Work Sessions status updates. The BOPC asked CEO Hesser to follow up and report back on the following items:

1. Review the time frame for the levy. Look granularly and explore every opportunity.
2. For messaging now and in the future: look closely at public amenities such as restrooms and trails. Where do they fall within the repair and replacement plan?
3. What are some potential hard decisions that could be made to support the repair and replacement plan?

**GovDeals Resolution:**

- Chief of Administration Bill Tschirhart requested approval and adoption of Resolution No. 24-001, declaring MetroParks' intent to auction surplus property via internet auction of [www.govdeals.com](http://www.govdeals.com). On a motion by Commissioner Salem, the BOPC adopted Resolution No. 24-001.

**Budget Adjustment Resolution(s):**

- Chief of Administration Bill Tschirhart requested approval and adoption of Resolution No. 24-002, adjusting the 2024 Budget for the 2023 Purchase Order carryover amounts. On a motion by Commissioner Salem, the BOPC adopted Resolution No. 24-002.
- Chief of Administration Bill Tschirhart requested approval and adoption of Resolution No. 24-003, making appropriation transfers and adjustments in the 2024 budget. On a motion by Commissioner Salem, the BOPC adopted Resolution No. 24-003.
- Chief of Administration Bill Tschirhart requested approval and adoption of Resolution No. 24-004, amending Resolution No. 23-035, adopting the capital fund budget. On a motion by Commissioner Salem, the BOPC adopted Resolution No. 24-004.

**Grant Resolution(s):**

- Chief of Public Safety Mark Hess requested approval and adoption of Resolution No. 24-005, authorizing the CEO to enter into an agreement with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), Division of Parks and Watercraft, for funding the 2024 Marine Patrol Assistance Grant program at Eastwood MetroPark Lake. The amount of the agreement shall not exceed \$14,040.58 and MetroParks matching share shall not exceed \$4,680.19. On a motion by Commissioner Salem, the BOPC adopted Resolution No. 24-005.

**Contract(s):**

- Facilities and Equipment Manager Richard Alder requested authorization to enter into a contract with Spectra Contract Flooring, in the amount of \$66,772.44 to purchase and install carpeting in high-wear/common areas of the Main Office and in entirety at Ranger Headquarters. On a motion by Commissioner Salem, the BOPC approved the request as presented.

**Other Business:**

- CEO Karen Hesser shared two awards recently received by MetroParks:
  - GovDeals Certificate of Achievement for reaching \$1,000,000 in assets sold.
  - Montgomery County Sustainability Awards 2023 Recognition of MetroParks outstanding environmental commitment toward becoming a carbon-negative agency.

- CEO Karen Hesser announced that Chief of Administration Bill Tschirhart will be named Professional of the Year at the Ohio Parks and Recreation Association annual meeting February 6 in Sandusky.
- CEO Karen Hesser shared MetroParks' 2023 Strategic Plan Accomplishments with the BOPC.
  - Climate Change Mitigation:
    - Reestablished the Conservation Department.
    - Completed phase one of the Great Miami Mitigation Bank.
    - Received \$120,000 donation to install solar panels at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Market.
    - Continued lighting upgrades and energy efficiency measures.
    - Launched Eco Talks.
  - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
    - Increased accessibility at water play area at Children's Discovery Garden at Wegerzyn Gardens.
    - Installed the region's first ADA-accessible hunting blind at Taylorsville MetroPark.
    - Directors of HR and Marketing presented with the Dayton Metro Library at University of Dayton's Imagining Communities Symposium.
    - Exhibited at LGBTQ Center's Dayton Pride event at Courthouse Square, as well as at NCCJ's Pride Rocks event at Levitt Pavilion.
    - Trained more than 30 staff on Diversity 101.
  - Financial Health
    - Our three foundations raised \$1.42 million dollars in cash, directing \$784,000 to MetroParks and \$162,000 into MetroParks through in-kind funds.
    - Awarded \$1.45 million grant to improve urban forestry in underserved areas.
    - Reached \$1 million in sales on GovDeals.
    - Received \$112,000 in state grant funds for our Rangers who were on staff during the COVID-19 pandemic.
    - Centennial Overlook at Sunrise MetroPark ribbon cutting. Made possible by a \$100,000 gift from the Garden Club of Dayton, which was celebrating its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
  - Connecting people to nature
    - Opened a new nature play area at Cox Arboretum MetroPark.
    - Welcomed 14,000+ people to the Wagner Subaru Outdoor Experience, a 10% YOY increase.
    - Won first place in OPRA's law enforcement category for our Explorer to Ranger program.
    - Received 624 trail logs for the MetroParks Trails Challenge.
    - Received the Olmsted Award for Hills and Dales MetroParks' Historic American Landscape survey.

**Visitor Comments:** None

**Next Board Meeting:**

- The BOPC agreed to hold the next regularly scheduled meeting on Friday, February 9, 2024, at 8:00 a.m. at Five Rivers MetroParks Main Office, 409 E. Monument Avenue, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor. The regular meeting will be followed by a Special Meeting – Financial Health Discussion. The BOPC directed the

Secretary of the Board to give notice of this meeting and all subsequent meetings pursuant to the rule adopted by the BOPC.

**Adjournment:** On a motion by Commissioner Salem, the BOPC adjourned the meeting at 1:37 p.m.

**Approved:**

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President Karen L. Davis

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_