

**Minutes**  
**Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority**  
**Board of Commissioners**  
**Thursday, March 11, 2021**

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At a regular meeting of the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority's Board of Commissioners was held on Thursday, March 11, 2021. Due to state of Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Emergency Order under MCL 333.2253 and to minimize the spread of COVID-19, this meeting will be held electronically, as permitted under Public Act 228 of 2020.

Commissioners Present:	Robert W. Marans ( <i>Remote – Lee County, FL</i> ) Jaye Quadrozzi ( <i>Remote – Farmington Hills, Oakland County, MI</i> ) Kurt Heise ( <i>Remote – Plymouth Twp, Wayne County, MI</i> ) John Paul Rea ( <i>Remote – Mt. Clemens, Macomb County, MI</i> ) Bernard Parker ( <i>Remote – Detroit, Wayne County, MI</i> ) Steve Williams ( <i>Remote – Marine City, St. Clair County, MI</i> )
Staff Officers Present:	
Director	Amy McMillan
Interim Deputy Director	Michael Lyons
Chief of Finance	Rebecca Franchock
Others:	
Miller, Canfield, Paddock & Stone	Steve Mann
Muchmore, Harrington, Smalley & Assoc.	Patrick Harrington
Muchmore, Harrington, Smalley & Assoc.	Evelyn Sweeney
Detroit Riverfront Conservancy	Stephan Bobalik

**1. Call to Order**

Commissioner Marans called the meeting to order at 9:17 a.m.

**2. Chairman's Statement**

None.

**3. Approval – March 11, 2021 Public Hearing, Regular and Special Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Commissioner Rea, support from Commissioner Quadrozzi that the Board of Commissioners approve the March 11, 2021 public hearing, regular and special meeting minutes as submitted.

Motion carried unanimously.

**4. Approval – March 11, 2021 Full Agenda**

Motion by Commissioner Williams, support from Commissioner Quadrozzi that the Board of Commissioners approve the March 11, 2021 agenda as presented.

Discussion: Commissioner Parker asked why public comments were moved to the end of the agenda and required to be in writing. Director McMillan said public comments were moved to the end of the meeting last month and is permissible under the Open Meetings Act regarding remote meetings. She said it's advantageous as people can submit comments, even if they join the meeting late. Also, the comments would be recorded verbatim in the official minutes. Ms. McMillan said this will allow commissioners to respond to public comments during commissioner comments.

Commissioner Parker said he still thinks the comments should be at the beginning of the meeting so that commissioners can comment before the Board votes. He disagrees with having public comments at the end.

Commissioner Marans said the Board would go back to the previous arrangements when the Board is able to hold in-person meetings.

Commissioner Williams said he agrees with Commissioner Parker regarding public comments.

## ROLL CALL VOTE

Voting yes: Quadrozzi, Parker, Rea, Heise, Marans, Williams  
Voting no: None  
Absent: McCarthy

Motion carried unanimously.

### 5. Approval – March 11, 2021 Consent Agenda

Motion by Commissioner McCarthy, support from Commissioner Rea that the Board of Commissioners approve the February 11, 2021 consent agenda as presented:

- a. Approval – January / February 2021 Financial Statements
- b. Approval – February 2021 Appropriation Adjustments
- c. Report – February 2021 Capital Project Fund Update
- d. Bids – Hike-Bike Trail Reconstruction, Kensington
- e. Approval/Resolutions – Grant Applications
  1. Delhi Metropark – Launch Accessibility along Huron River
  2. Lake Erie Metropark – Cherry Island Nature Trail Improvements
  3. Stony Creek Metropark – Reflection Nature Trail Improvements
- f. Report – Purchases over \$10,000
- g. Purchases
  1. Portable Toilets, Eastern District
  2. Heavy Duty Pickup, Natural Resources Crew
  3. Six Carryall Vehicles
  4. Grounds and Golf Course Mowers and Equipment
  5. Four Police Vehicles
  6. Outdoor Carpet for Mini Golf Course, Lake St. Clair
  7. Total Spent and Vendor Locations for March 2021

Motion carried unanimously.

### 6. Reports

#### A. Administrative Department

##### 1. Report – 2020 Lobbying Review and 2021 Preview, MHSA

Discussion: Ms. McMillan introduced Patrick Harrington and Evelyn Sweeney with Muchmore, Harrington, Smalley and Associates who then updated the Board on lobbying efforts in 2020 highlighting the Metroparks caucus, its members, possible members and the creation of a daily COVID-19 bulletin sent to all their clients.

Ms. Sweeney updated the Board on issues that may come up during 2021 highlighting Proposal A, the Headlee Act, the federal stimulus package and what it means for local municipalities and legislation taken up by both the Michigan House and Senate regarding extending remote meetings. She also said the Metroparks may have a panel discussion on the economic benefits of parks and recreation during the Mackinac Policy Conference.

Ms. McMillan said the Mackinac Policy Conference draws a lot of attention and it's an important discussion since parks have been extremely important this past year. Ms. McMillan said she began daily calls with all employees that was inspired by Mr. Harrington and the calls are important for team building efforts. She said pre-pandemic, staff was focused on grant funding and how important grant funding was to the Metroparks since the funding helps to begin/start projects.

Commissioner Parker asked with the stimulus funding received in December 2020 and the current round of funding, if there was a chance for the Metroparks to receive any of the funds. Mr. Harrington said legislators and the governor are clashing over how the funding could be used and that the federal funding approved in December 2020 has been fully committed. He said with the new federal stimulus package, there is a lot of opportunity to use funds and now is a good time to explore those opportunities.

Ms. McMillan asked how the Metroparks can use partnerships to receive stimulus funding. Mr. Harrington suggested reaching out to local municipalities to let them know the Metroparks can be used as a vaccine location, etc.

Commissioner Marans asked if MHSA would assist the Metroparks to find partnerships. Mr. Harrington said yes.

Commissioner Heise said that if local units of government wanted to partner with the Metroparks on infrastructure projects that we should work together for mutual benefits.

Commissioner Quadrozzi said she would like to see who is and who is not on the Metroparks caucus. She also said she would like to hear about activities more than once a year, which will help her stay connected with county issues.

Commissioner Marans asked if the caucus members were from the five-county area. Ms. Sweeney said a new caucus would be created since it's the beginning of a new legislative session. Currently there are 35 members on the current caucus and that some were very engaged; five members declined to join. Once the new caucus is created, Ms. Sweeney said she would share the members information with the Board.

Commissioner Marans said he would like to have an event where commissioners could interact with legislators.

Commissioner Heise said he would like a PFAS update so that the Metroparks can be ready in case anything is needed.

No action taken.

## **6. Reports**

### **A. Administrative Department**

#### **2. Approval – Renew Michigan Fund, Detroit Riverfront Conservancy**

Motion by Commissioner Rea, support from Commissioner Parker that the Board of Commissioners That the Board of Commissioners approve a \$1 million application through the Renew Michigan Fund within EGLE's Brownfield Redevelopment Grant Program as recommended by Director Amy McMillan and staff.

Discussion: Ms. McMillan updated the Board on the project and said this program provides grants to local units of government for response activities at brownfield sites with redevelopment potential. Under this program, grants are awarded to local units of government for response activities at brownfield sites with redevelopment potential. She said the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy will be responsible for writing and assembling the application and the Metroparks will serve as the applicant, since the program requires a governmental agency to administer the funds.

Mr. Boalik said this grant opportunity would support the construction of Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park by providing non-federal matching funds for a partnership with the EPA that will provide sediment remediation in the Detroit River at the park site and habitat restoration and creation within the park.

Motion carried unanimously.

#### **3. Report – Monthly Marketing Update**

Motion by Commissioner Heise, support from Commissioner Rea that the Board of Commissioners receive and file monthly marketing update as recommended by Chief of Marketing and Communications Danielle Mauter and staff.

Discussion: Chief of Marketing and Communications Danielle Mauter updated the Board on Marketing activities highlighting the winter filming done with Factory Detroit and said the final product would be done soon. She also said staff was making progress on projects included in the Marketing Plan.

Motion carried unanimously.

## **6. Reports**

### **A. Administrative Department**

#### **4. Report – Monthly DEI Update**

Motion by Commissioner Quadrozzi, support from Commissioner Parker that the Board of Commissioners receive and file the monthly DEI update as presented by Chief of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Artina Sadler and staff.

*Discussion:* Chief of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Artina Sadler updated the Board on DEI efforts and highlighted the first event in the DEI Speaker Series scheduled to take place on March 24 at 10:00 a.m. (special board meeting) and at 6:00pm (open to everyone).

Ms. Mauter reviewed the official communications plan developed specifically for the March 24 event. She said registration was being done through the new point-of-sale (POS) system and that event promotion would begin March 15.

Commissioner Marans said he was concerned that he wanted to have University of Michigan colleagues attend and doesn't want to overlap with outreach efforts conducted by staff.

Commissioner Quadrozzi said she would like to see the draft communications plan. Ms. Mauter said Ms. McMillan's assistant sent the information to commissioners via email.

Motion carried unanimously.

#### **5. Report – Interpretive Services Update**

Motion by Commissioner Heise, support from Commissioner Quadrozzi that the Board of Commissioners receive and file Interpretive Services monthly update as recommended by Chief of Interpretive Services Jennifer Jaworski and staff.

*Discussion:* Chief of Interpretive Services Jennifer Jaworski updated the Board on various programs and initiatives taking place within the Interpretive Department.

Motion carried unanimously.

#### **6. Report – Natural Resources Update**

Motion by Commissioner Williams, support from Commissioner Rea that the Board of Commissioners receive and file the monthly Natural Resources Report as recommended by Chief of Natural Resources and Regulatory Compliance and staff.

*Discussion:* Chief of Natural Resources and Regulatory Compliance Tyler Mitchell updated the Board on Natural Resources efforts including goose and swan management, invasive species control and hazardous tree removal.

Motion carried unanimously.

### **B. Financial Department**

#### **1. Report – Monthly Financial Review**

Motion by Commissioner Williams support from Commissioner Quadrozzi that the Board of Commissioners receive and file the Monthly Financial Review as submitted by Chief of Finance Rebecca Franchock and staff.

*Discussion:* Chief of Finance Rebecca Franchock reviewed financials to date highlighting park revenue and cross country ski revenue (up 172 percent from 2020). She said expenses were down compared to last year and that tax collections are behind where they were last year. ``

Motion carried unanimously.

## 6. Reports

### B. Financial Department

#### 2. Report – Draft Investment Policy

Motion by Commissioner Rea, support from Commissioner Heise that the Board of Commissioners (1) review the draft Investment Policy; and (2) receive and file the draft Investment Policy as presented by Chief of Finance Rebecca Franchock and staff.

*Discussion:* Ms. Franchock updated the Board and said current investment policy was last updated in May 2013 and a periodic review of the existing document took place over the past year. This review included examining current best practices as outlined by the Michigan Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). She said both the original and the updated policy limit investment instruments to a more restrictive scope than allowed by law.

Commissioner Parker said the First Independence Bank had excellent ratings in 2013 and asked if the Metroparks have ever invested with them. Ms. Franchock said the Metroparks have invested with First Independence Bank; however, there are no current investments with them.

Commissioner Parker asked if the Board approves investments at any time. Ms. Franchock said the Board approves the institutions in which the Metroparks can invest with, and the permissible terms in which to invest. She also said as part of the financial statements each month, there is a section that shows the institution and amount invested.

Motion carried unanimously.

### C. Planning Department

#### 1. Report – Planning Department Monthly Update

Motion by Commissioner Williams, support from Commissioner Heise that the Board of Commissioners receive and file receive and file the Planning and Development Department Monthly Update as recommended by Chief of Planning and Development Nina Kelly and staff.

*Discussion:* Chief of Planning and Development Nina Kelly updated the Board on Planning and Development activities highlighting grant projects and the acquisition of the Schmidt property.

Motion carried unanimously.

#### 2. Approval – Beach Restoration Project, Lake St. Clair

Motion by Commissioner Rea support from Commissioner Parker that the Board of Commissioners award ITB 2021-013 to Warren Contractors and Development LLC of Shelby Township, MI for an amount of \$250,961.20 for the installation of plantings and bird deterrents at Lake St. Clair Metropark as recommended by Chief of Planning and Development Nina Kelly and staff.

*Discussion:* Chief of Planning and Development Nina Kelly updated the Board and said the Metroparks was awarded a grant from the Michigan Department of Energy, Great Lakes, and the Environment (EGLE) to install water quality best management practices (BMPs) and perform monitoring through 2023 at the beach at Lake St. Clair Metropark. She said this contract is part of the larger EGLE project and will include the installation of plantings and solar-powered bird deterrents at the beach at Lake St. Clair Metropark. Upon installation, the Metroparks will enter into a separate contract with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to perform water quality monitoring for this project in coordination with the Macomb County Health Department.

Commissioner Rea thanked staff for bringing this project to fruition and said the plantings will help revitalize the water line.

Motion carried unanimously.

## 6. Reports

### D. Engineering Department

#### 1. Approval – Boat Launch Shade Structure and Site Design, Stony Creek

Motion by Commissioner Rea, support from Commissioner Williams that the Board of Commissioners (1) approve the proposed shelter design for the Stony Creek Boat Launch facility; and (2) approve staff issuing a purchase order to Miracle Midwest contract Sourcewell ID# 16841 in the amount of \$29,038 as recommended by Chief of Engineering Services Mike Henkel and staff.

*Discussion:* Chief of Engineering Services Mike Henkel updated the Board on the project and said the shade structure for the boat launch site redevelopment project is the last piece to be incorporated into the project. Staff has reviewed many different structures and elements have been incorporated into the design that include separate changing rooms, touchless fixtures and a gathering area.

Commissioner Rea said he appreciates all the hard work staff has done and is thrilled with how the adaption of this project will fit the needs of park patrons.

Motion carried unanimously.

#### 7. Public Participation – *public comments required to be submitted in writing and will be accepted through the end of the regular meeting.*

- a. Toni Spears, Dexter, Michigan: Some public meetings allow for public comments both before and after voting by the commissioners. Both may be relevant, responding to published info in the packets (before) and to CM comments during the meeting (after). Please consider an opportunity for public comments both before and after CM discussion.

#### 8. Other Business

- a. Ms. McMillan said the screening process continues for the deputy director position and that more than 70 candidates have applied for the position so far and that staff may not meet the April deadline to bring candidates to the Board for approval. She said meetings with Kapstone would begin next week for the Chief of Finance position.
- b. Ms. McMillan said Board action is required to adjust the meeting format as permissible under the current Open Meetings Act, which allows for remote access meetings until March 31. At the December 2020 meeting, the Board approved meeting remotely through the end of March and that meetings would begin at 9:00 a.m. The extension of the Open Meetings Act that permits for remote meetings may be extended or amended. However; while we are still under social distancing restrictions, we will not be able to meet at the Administrative Office. When we are able to meet in person, a determination needs to be made for a location that allows for social distancing.

For April, staff proposes to meet remotely (if permitted) as many staff members have not received their COVID vaccine yet. If the meeting is required to be held in person, the Environmental Discovery Center (EDC) at Indian Springs Metropark is the best option as we have already held a successful social distanced meeting at the EDC in September. Ms. McMillan said there are a couple of options regarding the start time.

Commissioner Marans said he prefers the EDC for the April meeting and that he is flexible on a start time.

Commissioner Heise said he prefers an in-person meeting to uphold the Board's constitutional responsibilities for constituents.

Commissioner Quadrozzi said the Board's first responsibility is to the health and safety of employees and the public; she is in favor of a remote meeting for April if permitted.

Commissioner Rea said he prefers a remote meeting for April as it's a transitional month, which then gives the Board more latitude for May moving forward.

Commissioner Parker said he prefers a remote meeting in April with in-person meetings beginning in May. He also suggested finding a location “outside” to conduct in person meetings to show everyone meetings can be conducted outside. He said he is flexible with the start time.

Commissioner Williams said either the beginning or end of the day works best for in-person meetings and that he prefers to meet in-person.

Ms. McMillan summarized the options for the Board: (1) an in-person meeting at the EDC for April is preferable; (2) remote meeting for April if permitted with a 9:00 am. Start time; (3) begin in-person meetings in May with a 1:00 p.m. start time; (4) look for a venue in the Southern District for the May meeting; and (5) use the approved schedule for meetings after May.

**9. Staff Leadership Update**

Ms. McMillan thanked staff for all the extraordinary work done during this time.

**10. Commissioner Comments**

Commissioner Williams thanked staff for the presentations, the director for her flexibility and said he was looking forward to in person meetings.

Commissioner Rea thanked staff for all their work.

Commissioner Parker said staff should be able to come up with good programing to use if the Metroparks is able to receive stimulus funding.

Commissioner Heise thanked staff and said the Metroparks needs to be creative to tap into the stimulus funding.

**11. Motion to Adjourn**

Motion by Commissioner Quadrozzi, support from Commissioner Rea that the Board of Commissioners adjourn the regular meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 11:31 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Shawn M. Athayde  
Recording Secretary