

December 19, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes
Preservation Parks of Delaware County
10:00 AM Deer Haven Park

Roll Call: The meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM, with Board members John Bader, Chair; Bruce Ruhl, Vice Chair; and Glenn Marzluf, Secretary. Staff included Mary Van Haaften, Director; Rich Niccum, Deputy Director; Matt Simpson; Casey Smith; Chris Roshon; Beth McCollam; Kyle Pace; Tony Benishek; Tyler Swartzlander; Bonnie Houk; Liz Neroni, Saundra McBrearty, and Chief Welch. Public Present: Amy Tovar.

Approval of Revised Consent Agenda: B. Ruhl moved to approve the revised agenda as presented, G. Marzluf seconded, all members voted aye. The motion passed.

Consent Agenda:

1. Approval of November 13, 2024 Previous Board Minutes
2. Human Resources Changes in Personnel Report
3. Resolution 2024-606 to Approve Outstanding Advances to be Carried Forward and repaid in 2025.
4. Resolution 2024-607 to Approve a Then and Now Certificate
5. Resolution 2024-608 to Approve a Transfer from the General Fund to Capital Projects in the amount of \$965,280.00
6. Resolution 2024-609 to Approve a Repay of Prior Year Advance from the OPWC Perfect Creek Ph 3 Fund to the General Fund in the amount of \$51,414.67
7. Accepting a donation from the Delaware County Foundation (Nature Dads Conservation Fund) in the amount of \$6,000.00 for Honeysuckle Hackfest at Deer Haven Park
8. Accepting a donation from the Preservation Parks Foundation in the amount of \$20,000.00 for the Bicentennial Barn renovation project
9. Accepting a donation from the Preservation Parks Foundation in the amount of \$16,550.00

Items Removed from the Consent Agenda: None

Approval of Consent Agenda: G. Marzluf moved to approve the consent agenda, B. Ruhl seconded, all members present voted aye. The motion passed.

Financial Report and Ratification of Vouchers: G. Marzluf moved to approve the Financial Report and Ratification of Vouchers, B. Ruhl seconded, all members present voted aye. The motion passed.

Park Updates:

1. M. Van Haaften reported that the Park District closed on 60 acres of land adjacent to Camp Lazarus and Seymour Woods State Nature Preserve. Preservation Parks shared the news in a Facebook post that linked to an article in the Delaware Gazette and a video that was shared with the Board.

Department Reports:

Outdoor Connections Manager C. Smith highlighted recent successful programs, including Natural Wreathmaking and Knit for Victory. The Honeysuckle Hackfest at Deer Haven Park in collaboration with Nature Dads attracted over 300 participants and resulted in the removal of 3.5 acres of invasive honeysuckle. At Gallant Farm, Greg Myers was recognized as Farm Volunteer of the Year. Infrastructure improvements at the farm included the installation of electrical service to the machine shed and the addition of new gutters and downspouts.

Administrative Manager T. Swartzlander reported that automatic gate closers and signage were installed at four parks: Char-Mar Ridge, McCammon Creek North, Sycamore Run, and Gallant Woods, enhancing accessibility and safety.

Human Resources Manager T. Benishek provided updates on staff evaluations and administrative processes. Managers are completing evaluation meetings with staff, and open enrollment for health benefits concluded on December 2. Additionally, year-end reports related to insurance, payroll, and other administrative tasks are being submitted to the County.

Chief Welch shared the following updates: A suspect involved in a November incident at Sycamore Run Park has been arrested; Officer Drown provided critical assistance to a suicidal individual near Hogback Ridge Park; and six deer tracking permits were issued.

Marketing Manager B. McCollam reported on the District's photo contest, sharing several standout submissions. The judging process is underway and is expected to conclude soon.

Natural Resources Manager C. Roshon announced the successful planting of over 400 trees at Hickory Woods Park, thanks to generous donations from the Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed (FLOW) and Del-Co Water. Additionally, the District welcomed its second AmeriCorps member.

Operations Manager K. Pace provided updates on maintenance and improvements. Graveling of the Blue Stem Trail at Blues Creek Park is underway, and repairs were completed on the wildlife blind at Deer Haven Park following damage caused by a fallen tree.

Senior Park Planner M. Simpson reported progress on infrastructure projects. Construction of an outdoor restroom at Hogback Ridge Park is underway, and installation of parking lot lighting at Deer Haven Park is set to begin this winter, further improving park accessibility and visitor experience.

Public Comments: None

Other Business:

1. *The Year Ahead Presentation.* Staff shared a PowerPoint presentation highlighting 2025 projects and programs.
2. *Perfect Creek Master Plan:* M. Simpson shared the updated Master Plan and timeline for improvements.
3. *Authority to negotiate for land in Delaware County.* G. Marluf moved to authorize the Executive Director to negotiate for land in Delaware County for the year 2025, B. Ruhl seconded, all members present voted aye. The motion passed.
4. *Reappointment of a Park Commissioner.* M. Van reported on the reappointment of John Bader as Park Commissioner from January 1, 2025, to December 31, 2027.

Executive Session: B. Ruhl moved to go into executive session at 10:46 AM for the purpose of discussing land acquisition and compensation of employees, G. Marzluf seconded. Roll call was taken, and all members were present. All members voted aye. The motion passed.

The Board returned to regular session at 11:38 AM and took the following action:

1. B. Ruhl moved to approve a 5% increase and a one-time \$2,500 bonus for the Executive Director effective December 21, 2024. G. Marzluf seconded, all members voted aye. The motion passed.
2. B. Ruhl moved to authorize the Executive Director to execute and record perpetual access easement agreements with Frazier Farms, Ltd., Frazier Farms II, Ltd., and Ronald D. Frazier and Alice A. Frazier for the purpose of a public trail between Camp Lazarus and Preservation Parks owned property north of Camp Lazarus. G. Marzluf seconded, all members voted aye. The motion passed.

3. B. Ruhl moved to authorize the Executive Director to execute a lease management agreement for Seymour Woods State Nature Preserve with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. G. Marzluf seconded, all members voted aye. The motion passed.
4. B. Ruhl moved to authorize the Executive Director to enter into a purchase agreement in an amount up to \$389,000 for 1.3 acres in Delaware Township. G. Marzluf seconded, all members voted aye. The motion passed.

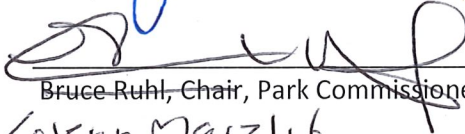
Next Board Meeting Date: 1:00 PM on January 23, 2025 at Deer Haven Park

Adjournment: B. Ruhl moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:43 PM, J. Bader seconded, all members voted aye. The motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Van Haaften, Executive Director



Bruce Ruhl, Chair, Park Commissioner

Glenn Marzluf

Vice Chair