

February 20, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes  
Preservation Parks of Delaware County  
1:00 PM Deer Haven Park

**Roll Call:** The meeting was called to order at 1:00 PM, with Board members Glenn Marzluf, Vice Chair, and John Bader, Secretary, present. Bruce Ruhl was absent. Staff included Mary Van Haften, Director; Rich Niccum, Deputy Director; Matt Simpson; Casey Smith; Chris Roshon; Beth McCollam; Kyle Pace; Tyler Swartzlander; Bonnie Houk; Sgt. Elkins; Sgt. Watkins; Ofc. John Bailey, and Chief Welch.

Public Present: Amy Tovar, Robin Bailey, Anna Aylor, Judi Beckwith.

**Consent Agenda:**

1. Approval of January 23, 2025, Previous Board Minutes
2. Human Resources Changes in Personnel Report
3. Resolution 2025-612 Repay Prior Year Advance Back for WRRSP
4. Resolution 2025-613 Repay Prior Year Advance for OPWC Olentangy River Protection
5. Resolution 2025-614 Repay Prior Year Advance from ARPA
6. Resolution 2025- 615 Request Funds from ODOT Park District Road Improvement Program
7. Accepting an unrestricted donation from the Columbus Foundation / R. E. Johnson Family Fund in the amount of \$3,000.00

**Items Removed from the Consent Agenda:** None

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

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

**Park Updates:** M. Van Haften reported that the Bicentennial Barn project went out to bid on February 15, 2025. Bids are due March 13, 2025.

**Department Reports:**

*Outdoor Connections:* C. Smith reported that the New Year's Day Hike at Char-Mar Ridge Park attracted 80 participants. Staff have partnered with the Central Ohio Flyfishers to offer fly-tying programs this winter, and the cross-country skiing pop-up programs have drawn 230 participants so far. At Gallant Farm, the Gallant Farm Literary and Cowpie Society (book club) celebrated its 10th anniversary with a small gathering, and staff installed new fence gates around the farm.

*Administration:* T. Swartzlander shared that he and Fiscal Manager B. Houk developed a vendor payment change policy, which is on the agenda for board approval. He is also working with consultants on the McCammon Creek East pedestrian bridge and the Perfect Creek schoolhouse projects. Additionally, he provided an update on District office improvements, which are expected to be completed this spring.

*Human Resources:* T. Benishek was absent. In his place, M. Van Haften reported that nine staff members attended the annual Ohio Parks and Recreation Association conference at Kalahari Resort from February 2–5. T. Benishek attended the Ohio Public Employer Labor Relations Association conference at the Polaris Hilton during the same period and is also participating in the Leadership Delaware 2.0 class.

*Park Police:* Chief Welch reported 13 security incidents in the parks during January, including an off-roading incident at Deer Haven Park. Additionally, the hiring process for a new park officer has been completed.

*Marketing & Communications:* B. McCollam announced that the Spring Program Guide has been printed and distributed. The website now has a new digital flipbook where the public can view the program guide, register for programs, and access additional resources.

*Natural Resources:* C. Roshon provided updates on upcoming prairie burns in six parks scheduled for March. He also noted that the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium browse agreement is expected to be ready for board approval in March.

*Park Operations:* K. Pace reported on various improvements, including upgrades to offices at the Gallant Woods Park maintenance shop and installation of snow guards on the restroom roof at Blues Creek Park. Operations staff also assisted with fire break mowing in preparation for upcoming prairie burns and cleared woody vegetation from the dam at Blues Creek Park.

*Planning & Construction:* M. Simpson shared updates on the Bicentennial Barn project, the pedestrian bridge and parking area at McCammon Creek East Area, and the submission of qualifications from five consultants for the Hickory Woods Park project that will include a future shelter, restroom, playground, and wetland area.

**Public Comment:** None

**Other Business:**

1. *Swearing in Park Officer.* G. Marzluf conducted the swearing in of new Park Officer John Bailey.
2. *Approval of Vendor Payment Change Policy.* T. Swartzlander presented a new Vendor Payment Changes Policy, which protects the District from unauthorized or fraudulent requests to change vendor payment methods and establishes secure procedures to prevent cyber threats, such as payment redirection and business email compromise schemes. J. Bader moved to approve the policy as presented, G. Marzluf seconded, all members present voted aye. The motion passed.
3. *Approval of vehicle purchases.* Staff recommended purchasing a Ford F350 diesel pickup with service body for Park Operations in an amount not to exceed \$86,003.00 and a Chrysler Voyager 7 passenger van for Outdoor Connections in an amount not to exceed \$54,475.00. Both vehicles are included in the 2025 capital budget. J. Bader moved to authorize the purchase of the vehicles as recommended, G. Marzluf seconded, all members present voted aye. The motion passed.

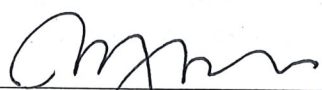
**Executive Session:** J. Bader moved to go into executive session at 1:20 PM for the purpose of discussing land acquisition, G. Marzluf seconded. Roll call was taken; J. Bader and G. Marzluf were present. B. Ruhl was absent. All members present voted aye. The motion passed.

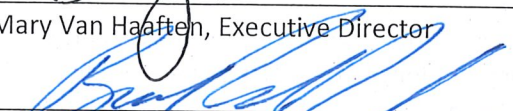
The Board returned to regular session at 1:53 PM; no action was taken.

**Next Board Meeting Date:** 2:00 PM on March 25, 2025, at Deer Haven Park

**Adjournment:** G. Marzluf moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:53 PM, J. Bader seconded, all members present voted aye. The motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Mary Van Haften, Executive Director

  
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Bruce Ruhl, Chair, Park Commissioner