

July 15, 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 Bruce Ruhl, Chair; Glenn Marzluf, Vice Chair; and John Bader, Secretary present. Staff included Mary Van Haaften, Director; Rich Niccum, Deputy Director; Matt Simpson; Casey Smith; Chris Roshon; Tony Benishek; Claire Saniei-Banrey; Wes Wingert; Bonnie Houk; and Sgt. Watkins.

Public Present: Amy Tovar; Greg Travalio, Preservation Parks Foundation; Doreen Osmun, The Impact Group

Consent Agenda:

1. Approval of June 20, 2025 Board Minutes
2. Human Resources Changes in Personnel Report

Items Removed from the Consent Agenda: None

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

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

Park Updates: None

Department Reports:

Outdoor Connections: C. Smith highlighted the successful Tractor Show, which drew 300 attendees, and shared updates on improvements to the hired man's quarters at Gallant Farm. She also shared photos from Bird Fest at Deer Haven Park, the Bats and Ice Cream program at Sticky Fingers Ice Cream in Kilbourne, and promoted Snake Week activities at the Deer Haven Park Visitor Center.

Administration: T. Swartzlander reported that the McCammon Creek Park East Area parking lot project is out to bid, architectural planning continues for the Perfect Schoolhouse, and fiscal procedures training is being developed for all staff in collaboration with the Fiscal Manager.

Human Resources: T. Benishek reported that nearly 500 people attended the July 12 Adventure Run at Gallant Woods Park and thanked the Preservation Parks Foundation for sponsoring the event. He also provided an update on the Total Compensation Survey being conducted with Experience Management Institute.

Park Police: Sgt. Watkins reported on several incidents: officers safely intervened when a juvenile was contemplating jumping from the Hoover Scenic Trail bridge; assisted the Sheriff's Office with a suspicious persons report at McCammon Creek Park involving potential firearm activity; and helped locate two missing juveniles at Shale Hollow Park, who were safely reunited with their parents. He also provided an update on a prior drug-related case at Sycamore Run Park.

Marketing & Communications: C. Saniei-Banrey reported on Marketing Department's support of the Preservation Parks Foundation's "Area 51" Gala, participation in recent community events, and ongoing website updates.

Natural Resources: C. Roshon shared that wetland construction at Perfect Creek Park is scheduled to begin in late July, weather permitting. A \$5,000 Cabela's Outdoor Fund Grant through the Preservation Parks Foundation will assist in funding the project.

Park Operations: W. Wingert reported on facility improvements, including new automatic restroom doors at Gallant Woods Park, recent improvements at the District office, and the opening of a new grass trail at River Run Park.

Planning & Construction: M. Simpson shared progress photos and updates on the Bicentennial Barn project at McCammon Creek Park and the H2Ohio wetlands constructed in 2023 at Perfect Creek Park. He also reported the start of master planning for the Camp Lazarus 60-acre property and upcoming installation of new park entrance signs by Columbus Signs.

Public Comment: None

Other Business:

1. *Strategic Plan Presentation* – Doreen Osmun with The Impact Group presented an overview of the planning process, community engagement, key themes, and goal. Staff highlighted several objectives and outlined next steps including publicity and implementation. G. Marzluf moved to approve the 2025–2027 Strategic Plan as presented; J. Bader seconded. All members voted aye. The motion passed.
2. *Preservation Parks Foundation Update* – Foundation Board Member Greg Travalio reported on the success of the “Area 51” Fundraiser Gala held at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium. The event was well attended, received positive feedback, and generated an estimated \$60,000 in net proceeds. He also noted that the Foundation received a \$5,000 grant from the Cabela’s Outdoor Fund to support wetland restoration at Perfect Creek Park, and thanked District staff for their assistance with the application. The Park Board congratulated Mr. Travalio on the gala’s success and expressed appreciation for his and the Foundation’s ongoing support of Preservation Parks.

Executive Session: G. Marzluf moved to go into executive session at 1:59 PM for the purpose of discussing land acquisition. J. Bader seconded. Roll call was taken, and all members were present. All members voted aye. The motion passed.

The Board returned to regular session at 2:34 PM and took no action.

Next Board Meeting Date: 2:00 PM on August 21, 2025, at Deer Haven Park

Adjournment: G. Marzluf moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:34 PM, B. Ruhl seconded, all members voted aye. The motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Van Haften, Executive Director



Bruce Ruhl, Chair, Park Commissioner