

December 9, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes
Preservation Parks of Delaware County
1:00 PM Deer Haven Park

Roll Call: The meeting was called to order at 1:04 PM with Board members; Glenn Marzluf, Vice Chair; and John Bader, Secretary, present. B. Ruhl was absent.

Staff present included Mary Van Haaften, Executive Director; Tyler Swartzlander, Deputy Director; Rich Niccum; Matt Simpson; Casey Smith; Chris Roshon; Beth McCollam; Kyle Pace; Bonnie Houk; Tony Benishek; Carol Zimmerman; Chief Watkins; Deputy Chief Elkins; Sgt. Curfman; Liz Neroni; Bodhi Nithyananda; Aaron Azzola; Robin Mayes; Saundra McBrearty; Jon Drown; Kevin Kuhn; Molly Creamer; Sam Fairbanks; Erica Gicej; Jonah VanGundy; Wes Wingert; Gabe Ross; Craig Flockerzie; Kevin Parrott; Kerry Gerich; Lisa Choy.

Public Present: Amy Tovar; Dennis Welch; Lisa Welch; Olivia Elkins; Emma Elkins; Brian Watkins; Amanda Watkins; Tyler Olexa; Kim Caldwell; Shelby Watkins; Avery Watkins; Brett Curfman; Evelyn Curfman; Wesley Curfman; Emily Douglas, EXMI; Vasilike Stemonli; Brenton Meininger, Milestone Benefits.

Consent Agenda:

1. Approval of November 17, 2025 Board Minutes
2. Human Resources Changes in Personnel Report
3. Accepting a \$3,000.00 unrestricted donation from the Lakemachers
4. Accepting a \$10,000.00 unrestricted donation into the General Fund from the Preservation Parks Foundation
5. Accepting a \$5,000.00 restricted donation into the General Fund from the Preservation Parks Foundation for Perfect Creek Wetland Restoration
6. Accepting a \$1,600.00 restricted donation into the Capital Fund from the Preservation Parks Foundation; \$1,000.00 for land acquisition and \$600.00 for Hogback Ridge Park improvements
7. Resolution 2025-627 – Authorization to rescind a fund, approve a supplemental appropriation, and transfer funds related to the OPWC Olentangy River Protection Fund

Items Removed from the Consent Agenda: None

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

Park Updates:

1. M. Van Haaften reported that the Braille Trail was among three projects nominated for the Ohio Park and Recreation's Governor's Award. Winners will be announced in early February.
2. M. Van Haaften thanked the Operation Department for their efficient response to the year's first snow event.

Department Reports:

Development: C. Zimmerman reported she is researching donor management software and scheduling demonstrations with staff and foundation members The Foundation's Annual Appeal is currently underway. She also highlighted the Cabela's grant award to the Foundation and provided an update on the ongoing work related to the naming policy.

Human Resources: T. Benishek shared that two conditional offers have been extended for the Park Officer positions.

Law Enforcement: Chief Watkins reported that an incident report was taken regarding damage to two signs at Blue Creek Park. A suspect was interviewed, admitted to the damage, and was cited.

Marketing & Communications: B. McCollam reported that voting for the District's photo contest is underway.

Natural Resources: C. Roshon indicated he was available to answer any questions related to his written report.

Outdoor Connections: C. Smith highlighted the success of the Honeysuckle Hackfest event at Deer Haven Park as well as always popular wreath making program at Shale Hollow.

Park Operations: K. Pace provided updates on construction of Gallant Farm's three-sided barn project.

Planning & Construction: M. Simpson reported that construction has begun on the Perfect Creek Park entrance drive and that the Schoolhouse Project is out to bid. The McCammon Creek Park East parking lot has been paved, and construction has begun on the pedestrian bridge foundation. Demolition of structures at the Camp Lazarus property is underway.

Public Comment: None

Other Business:

1. *Swearing in Chief Chad Watkins:* G. Marzluf conducted the swearing in of Chad Watkins as the new Chief Park Officer.
2. *Swearing in Deputy Chief Travis Elkins:* G. Marzluf conducted the swearing in of Travis Elkins as the new Deputy Chief Park Officer.
3. *Swearing in Sergeant Logan Curfman:* G. Marzluf conducted the swearing in of Logan Curfman as the new Sergeant.
4. *Total Compensation Survey Presentation (EXMI)* – Emily Douglas-McNab of Experience Management Institute (EXMI) presented the methodology, market comparison data, and key findings of the Total Compensation Survey. She noted that recommendations for updated minimum and maximum compensation ranges, salary schedules, and pay bands will be presented in executive session and will require Board approval.
5. *Election of Officers*:* G. Marzluf made a motion to nominate himself for Chair, J. Bader as Vice Chair, and B. Ruhl as Secretary. J. Bader seconded, all members present voted aye. The motion passed.
6. *Resolution 2025-628 – Approval of the 2026 Budget*:* J. Bader moved to approve the 2026 Budget as presented, G. Marzluf seconded, all members present voted aye. The motion passed.
7. *Authorize the Executive Director to negotiate for land in Delaware County*:* G. Marzluf moved to authorize the Executive Director to negotiate for land in Delaware County in calendar year 2026, J. Bader seconded, all members present voted aye. The motion passed.
8. *Resolution 2025-629 – Authorization to execute a lease agreement with ODNR*:* G. Marzluf as moved to approve Resolution 2025-629 – Authorization to execute a lease agreement with ODNR, J. Bader seconded, all members present voted aye. The motion passed.
9. *Resolution 2025-630 - Authorization to purchase land to expand Deer Haven Park*:* G. Marzluf moved to approve Resolution 2025-630 as presented. J. Bader seconded, all members present voted aye. The motion passed.

Executive Session: G. Marzluf moved to go into executive session at 2:09 PM for the purpose of discussing land acquisition and compensation of employees. J. Bader seconded. Roll call was taken, and Glenn Marzluf and John Bader were present. All members present voted aye. The motion passed.

The Board returned to regular session at 2:56 PM and took the following action:

1. G. Marzluf moved to accept EXMI's recommended pay bands including the minimum and maximum compensation ranges and placement of employees into bands based on staff recommendations. J. Bader seconded, all members present voted aye. The motion passed.
2. G. Marzluf moved to approve the creation of a step pay program for park officers and sergeants as recommended. J. Bader seconded. All members present voted aye. The motion passed.
3. G. Marzluf moved to approve a 4% increase for the Executive Director. J. Bader seconded, all members present voted aye. The motion passed.

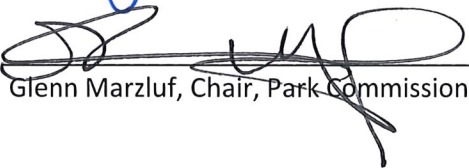
Next Board Meeting Date: The next regular board meeting will be held at 1:00 PM on January 15, 2026 at Deer Haven Park.

Adjournment: G. Marzluf moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:58 PM, J. Bader seconded, all members present voted aye. The motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Van Haaften, Executive Director



Glenn Marzluf, Chair, Park Commissioner

