

**REGULAR MEETING**

**March 18, 2026**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners of Great Parks of Hamilton County was held on this day, 1:00 p.m., at 10245 Winton Road, Cincinnati, OH 45231.

Board President Scott Schuster opened the meeting and led the Board, staff, and guests in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Present were Commissioners Schuster, Keating, Laverty, Wegman, Thompson  
Staff: Palmeter, Henninger, Carleton, deJesus, Broughton Murray, Messerschmitt, Rahe, Snow, Hodge, Featherstone, Callahan, Bell, Helmes, Anklan, Spencer, Herbert, Volk, Mentzer, Ference  
Guests: Sue Hoepf, Tony Rosiello, Tana Weingartner

**GENERAL**

1. PUBLIC COMMENTS: No one requested to address the Board.
2. AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

Board President Scott Schuster presented a Resolution of Appreciation to Sue Hoepf. Sue retired as a Campground Manager on February 13, 2026, after fifteen years of service.

Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmeter notified the Board of the following:

- Great Parks won two local American Advertising Awards for the Come Grow with Us video. The video won the Gold Award for Film, Video & Sound and the Judges' Choice Award.
- The Great Parks website was named "Site of the Month" in September 2025 by Kentico. Great Parks website received an Honorable Mention for "Site of the Year 2025." Our website was in the top 3 in the Government & Municipal sites category. Cleveland Metroparks won the award.

Ms. Wegman noted the website is excellent and commented on how inspiring the video is. She praised the staff and congratulated Sue Hoepf on her retirement.

3. NEXT BOARD MEETING DATES:

Thursday	April 16, 2026	1:00 p.m.	Winton Center
Wednesday	May 20, 2026	1:00 p.m.	Winton Center

**ACTION**

4. RESOLUTION #3871 – BILLS & PAYROLL RESOLUTION: Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmetter presented the Bills & Payroll Resolution to the Board. The Board submitted two payment items for review. The first was to Hamilton County Public Health for food service licenses, and the second was to seven companies for easement acquisitions for the Columbia Connector trail. Ms. Laverty commented on the difference between land acquisition and construction for the Columbia Connector trail. The staff led a thorough discussion, providing clarifying information on the scope of the payment items. Upon motion duly made by Wegman, seconded by Laverty, the Board approved the Bills & Payroll Resolution. The Roll Call vote was as follows: Ms. Keating – Aye, Ms. Laverty – Aye, Mr. Schuster – Aye, Mr. Thompson – Aye, Ms. Wegman – Aye.
5. RESOLUTION #3872 – THEN & NOW RESOLUTION: Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmetter presented the Then & Now Resolution to the Board. Upon motion duly made by Keating, seconded by Thompson, the Board approved the Then & Now Resolution. The Roll Call vote was as follows: Ms. Laverty – Aye, Mr. Schuster – Aye, Mr. Thompson – Aye, Ms. Wegman – Aye, Ms. Keating – Aye.
6. RESOLUTION # 3873 – OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FINAL LEGISLATION FOR THE COLUMBIA CONNECTOR SHARED USE TRAIL: Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmetter presented the resolution to the Board. Ms. Laverty asked about costs for acquisition, design, and construction for this project. Ms. Wegman asked if construction cost increases were possible and inquired about the construction timeline. Mr. Thompson noted that bids can often come in high in the region's construction market. The staff led a thorough discussion, providing clarifying information on the scope of the project, the ODOT bidding process, funding sources, and Great Parks' share of the project cost. Upon motion duly made by Laverty, seconded by Wegman, the Board approved the Final Resolution for the construction of the Columbia Connector Shared Use Trail and agreed that Great Parks will assume and bear the entire cost and expense of the improvement, less the amount of federal allocation as set aside by the Director of Transportation, totaling an estimated \$444,906.00 in park district funds. The Roll Call vote was as follows: Mr. Schuster – Aye, Mr. Thompson – Aye, Ms. Wegman – Aye, Ms. Keating – Aye, Ms. Laverty – Aye.
7. RESOLUTION #3874 – RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION – JULIE STUBBS: Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmetter presented the Resolution of Appreciation to the Board. Upon motion duly made by Wegman, seconded by Thompson, the Board approved the Resolution of Appreciation for Julie Stubbs, Interpreter, who has retired with 25 years of service with Great Parks of Hamilton County. The Roll Call vote was as follows: Mr. Schuster – Aye, Mr. Thompson – Aye, Ms. Wegman – Aye, Ms. Keating – Aye, Ms. Laverty – Aye.

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Ms. Lavery and Ms. Wegman noted that a previously misspelled name in the tentative minutes was corrected in the final minutes. Upon motion duly made by Wegman, seconded by Thompson, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Final Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of February 19, 2026.
9. BID TAB – PURCHASE AND DELIVERY OF UNIFORMS AND OTHER GARMENTS: Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmeter presented the bid to the Board. Ms. Lavery inquired about potential bidders. Ms. Keating asked how many years we have been using the current provider. The staff led a thorough discussion, providing clarifying information on the bid scope, the supplier's history, and the possibility of additional logoed apparel and items. Upon motion duly made by Keating, seconded by Lavery, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the bid in the amount of \$89,247.10 to Empire Printing LLC for the purchase and delivery of non-law enforcement uniforms and other garments.
10. BID TAB – PORTABLE RESTROOM SERVICES: Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmeter presented the bid to the Board. Mr. Thompson asked about restrooms at Otto Armleder Memorial Park. The staff led a thorough discussion, providing clarifying information on the Otto Armleder Memorial Park lease, the renewal period, and possible lease modifications. Upon motion duly made by Lavery, seconded by Keating, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the bid in the amount of \$48,722.10 to Porta Kleen for portable restroom services.
11. CAPITAL PURCHASE – FORD MAVERICK HYBRID PICKUP TRUCKS: Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmeter presented the capital purchase to the Board. Mr. Schuster asked about the standard vehicle branding. Ms. Lavery inquired about online auctions for replaced vehicles and requested a report on the auction results of surplus items. Ms. Keating asked about methods for purchase using a state contract. Mr. Schuster noted past dialogue about the purchase of vehicles from in-state vendors. Upon motion duly made by Wegman, seconded by Keating, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the purchase in the amount of \$108,252 to Montrose Ford for three Ford Maverick hybrid pickup trucks.
12. CAPITAL PURCHASE – FORD F-350 DUMP TRUCK: Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmeter presented the capital purchase to the Board. Upon motion duly made by Thompson, seconded by Wegman, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the purchase in the amount of \$80,100 to Montrose Ford for one Ford F-350 dump truck.

13. CAPITAL PURCHASE – JOHN DEERE PROGATOR 2030A UTILITY VEHICLE: Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmeter presented the capital purchase to the Board. Upon motion duly made by Laverty, seconded by Wegman, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the purchase of two John Deere ProGator 2030A utility vehicles from Beard Equipment Company. The final purchase amount will be specified in Sourcewell's contract pricing and in line with current appropriations.
14. CAPITAL PURCHASE – JOHN DEERE 5075E UTILITY TRACTORS: Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmeter and Chief of Conservation and Parks Jason Rahe presented the capital purchase to the Board. Ms. Wegman inquired about the two different vendors for the purchase of John Deere equipment. The staff led a thorough discussion, providing clarifying information on the two types of equipment purchases and the two vendors – golf turf and agricultural equipment. Upon motion duly made by Keating, seconded by Thompson, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the purchase of three John Deere 5075E Utility Tractors from Bud Herbert Motors Inc. The final purchase amount will be specified in Sourcewell's contract pricing and in line with current appropriations.
15. CAPITAL PURCHASE – TORO 3555D FAIRWAY MOWER: Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmeter presented the capital purchase to the Board. Upon motion duly made by Thompson, seconded by Wegman, the Board approved the purchase of one Toro 3555D fairway mower from Century Equipment, A Jerry Pate Company. The final purchase amount will be specified in Sourcewell's contract pricing and in line with current appropriations.
16. CAPITAL PURCHASE – TORO REEL MOWERS: Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmeter and Chief of Guest Experiences Rachel Messerschmitt presented the capital purchase to the Board. Ms. Wegman asked how golf course equipment pieces differ in their use on the courses. The staff led a thorough discussion, providing clarifying information on greens, fairways, and rough area mowers. Upon motion duly made by Laverty, seconded by Wegman, the Board approved the purchase of one Toro 4000 reel mower and one Toro 4500 reel mower from Century Equipment, A Jerry Pate Company. The final purchase amount will be specified in Sourcewell's contract pricing and in line with current appropriations.
17. CAPITAL PURCHASE – ASPHALT AND RELATED SERVICES: Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmeter presented the capital purchase to the Board. Ms. Wegman inquired about this vendor's previous history with the park district. The staff led a thorough discussion, providing clarifying information on the State of Ohio Procurement program price of asphalt and Great Parks history with the vendor. Upon motion duly made by Keating, seconded by Wegman, the Board approved the purchase in the amount of \$450,000 from Valley Asphalt Corporation for asphalt and related services.

**MONITORING REPORTS**

18. ENDS PRIORITY 1: Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmeter and Director of Natural Resources Jessica Spencer presented the Ends Priority 1 report to the Board. Ms. Wegman asked about distinguishing the different types of plant cover and about management techniques. Ms. Laverty commented on previous Board tours and learning about habitat types from the staff. Mr. Schuster noted that these reports are eye-opening and should be considered for a future Board tour. Ms. Wegman noted that prairies sequester carbon effectively. Mr. Thompson stated that the message about invasive tree species is a story we should highlight more often as subject-matter experts. Ms. Keating remarked on seeing the park district's social media posts about engaging the community in natural resources management. After a thorough discussion, the Board determined the report to be reasonable and acceptable. The Board thanked the staff for the presentation and then ordered the report filed for the record.
  
19. TREATMENT OF GUESTS: Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmeter, Ranger Chief Scott Snow, and Guest Relations Manager Lauren Hake presented the Treatment of Guests report to the Board. Ms. Laverty inquired about the "other" categories in the report. Mr. Schuster noted kudos for Ranger-directed patrols, which positively influenced the data. Ms. Keating stated that seeing Rangers and staff out in the parks makes users feel safer. Ms. Wegman noted how pleased she was to see that the Ranger's strategic plan implementation was so effective. Ms. Laverty commented on the changes in traffic incidents over the past three years. Mr. Schuster noted the low complaint rate as a percentage of annual visits. After a thorough discussion, the Board determined the report to be reasonable and acceptable. The Board thanked the staff and then ordered the report filed for the record.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

A motion was made by Thompson and seconded by Keating to go into Executive Session to consider the employment and compensation of public employees at 2:30 p.m. The Roll Call vote was as follows: Mr. Thompson – Aye, Ms. Wegman – Aye, Ms. Keating – Aye, Ms. Lavery – Aye, Mr. Schuster – Aye,


Following the Executive Session, a motion was made by Wegman and seconded by Keating to reconvene the Regular Meeting at 3:05 p.m. The Roll Call vote was as follows: Ms. Wegman – Aye, Ms. Keating – Aye, Ms. Lavery – Aye, Mr. Schuster – Aye, Mr. Thompson – Aye.

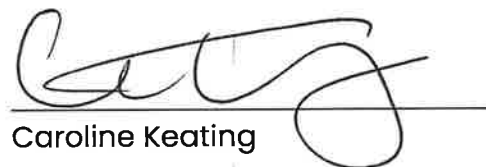
20. COMPENSATION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES: Upon motion duly made by Wegman, seconded by Keating, and unanimously carried, the Board authorized the Board President, the CEO, and his designees to execute the necessary documents for compensation of public employees.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further matters to come before the Board, a motion was made by Lavery, seconded by Wegman, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 3:07 p.m.

Board of Park Commissioners  
Great Parks of Hamilton County

  
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Scott Schuster, President

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Caroline Keating

**Absent**

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Caren Lavery

**Absent**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Marcus Thompson

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Melissa Wegman

ATTEST:

  
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Todd Palmeter, Chief Executive Officer