REGULAR MEETING **October 15, 2025**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners of Great Parks of Hamilton County was held on this day, 3:00 p.m., at 10245 Winton Road, Cincinnati, OH 45231.

Board President Melissa Wegman opened the meeting and led the Board, staff, and guests in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Present were Commissioners Wegman, Keating, Laverty, Schuster, Thompson
Staff: Palmeter, Henninger, Collins, Carleton, Doellman, Broughton Murray, Messerschmitt, deJesus, Rahe, Snow, Ammar, Palm, Johnson, Hake, Schilling, Lampert, Bell, Helms, Anklan, Herbert, Roselle, Ference,
Guests: none

GENERAL

1. PUBLIC COMMENTS: No one requested to address the Board.

2. AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS:

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

   - Chief Financial Officer Andrew Collins introduced newly promoted employee Anthony Palm, Technical Services Manager.
   - Chief of Human Resources Molly deJesus introduced newly promoted employee Micah Johnson, Talent Development Specialist.
   - Chief of Planning Janet Broughton Murray introduced new employee Laila Ammar, Director of Site & Facility Development.

   Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmeter noted that Great Parks participated in the America's River Roots Festival. He thanked the staff for working at the booth and expressed gratitude to Great Parks Forever for funding the sponsorship. He also thanked the Cincinnati Museum Center for hosting the premiere of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources' (ODNR) film Ohio Wild at Heart.

   Mr. Schuster noted the sense of pride and excitement from the ODNR film and the Great Parks conservation work. He thanked ODNR, Governor DeWine, and the filmmaker.
   Ms. Wegman noted that the filmmaker was well-suited for IMAX and thought that ODNR was just as passionate as the Great Parks staff.

   Ms. Wegman welcomed Ms. Keating to the Board.

Ms. Wegman thanked the staff for the Avoca Mountain bike trail celebration, the adaptive biking demonstration, and all the project partners.

Ms. Wegman stated that she attended the Hispanic Heritage Festival at Sharon Woods, and it was a fun event.

Ms. Laverty noted the success of the volunteer recognition event and was impressed by our volunteers' passion.

3. NEXT BOARD MEETING DATES:

Thursday	November 20, 2025	1:00 p.m.	Winton Centre
Thursday	December 18, 2025	1:00 p.m.	Winton Centre

ACTION

4. RESOLUTION #3856 – BILLS & PAYROLL RESOLUTION: Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmeter presented the Bills & Payroll Resolution to the Board. He noted that a new quarterly report will be developed in 2026 to track capital project spending. Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmeter reported that Shaker Trace Nursery spending totaled $7.8M on the $12.3M contract, and the Sharon Lake dredge totaled $8.8M on the $16.6M contract. The staff led a thorough discussion, providing clarifying information on the Bills & Payroll report. Upon motion duly made by Laverty, seconded by Schuster, the Board approved the Bills & Payroll Resolution. The Roll Call vote was as follows: Ms. Keating – Aye, Ms. Laverty – Aye, Ms. Wegman – Aye, Mr. Schuster – Aye, Mr. Thompson – Aye.

5. RESOLUTION #3857 – RESOLUTION PROVIDING AUTHORITY TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES FOR PASS-THROUGH FUNDS FOR THE WERK ROAD PROPERTY MASTER PLAN IMPROVEMENT PROJECT: Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmeter presented the resolution to the Board. He noted the original grant request was $1,500,000, and we were very pleased to receive $1,250,000. Mr. Thompson asked if the funds were guaranteed in the budget. Ms. Wegman asked about grant restrictions. The staff led a thorough discussion, providing clarifying information on the grant and grant extensions. Upon motion duly made by Thompson, seconded by Laverty, the Board approved Resolution #3857 authorizing the CEO and his designees to execute the Pass-Through Agreement with ODNR in the amount of $1,225,000 for costs associated with the Werk Road Property Master Plan Improvement Project. The Roll Call vote was as follows: Ms. Laverty – Aye, Ms. Wegman – Aye, Mr. Schuster – Aye, Mr. Thompson – Aye, Ms. Keating – Aye.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Upon motion duly made by Schuster, seconded by Laverty, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Final Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of September 18, 2025. Ms. Keating abstained from voting on this motion.

7. PROFESSIONAL DESIGN SERVICES CONTRACT – SHARON WOODS HARBOR REVITALIZATION: Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmeter and Site Project Delivery Manager Ben Helmes presented the professional design services contract to the Board. Ms. Laverty noted a huge improvement in the approach to the Lake from the parking lot. Ms. Wegman pointed out the stream through the site and stated it was a fantastic upgrade. She also noted that there was significant integration of public participation in the project. Mr. Schuster asked when the concepts would go public and inquired about the current level of engagement on this project. He also asked if there is a plan for when it will be finished and how we should set expectations for public progress updates. Ms. Laverty asked about the date of completion. The staff led a thorough discussion, providing clarifying information on the project's scope, location, and timeline. Upon motion duly made by Laverty, seconded by Thompson, the Board awarded a professional design services contract in the amount of $2,259,300 to emersion DESIGN LLC for the Sharon Woods Harbor Revitalization project.

8. CAPITAL PURCHASE – INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY HARDWARE: Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmeter and Director of IT & Data Management Laurie Bell presented the capital purchase to the Board. The staff led a thorough discussion, providing clarifying information on the project's scope and timeline. Upon motion duly made by Keating, seconded by Laverty, the Board approved the purchase in the amount of $171,454 from CDW Corporation for 20 computers and 60 point-of-sale systems and components.

MONITORING REPORTS

9. FINANCIAL CONDITION & ACTIVITIES: Chief Financial Officer Andrew Collins presented the Financial Condition & Activities report to the Board. He noted a typo on Policy Limitation 11, changing the month from June to September. Ms. Laverty asked about new legislation related to the cash balance. The Board had a brief discussion on changes in the legislature that may impact budgets in the future. Ms. Laverty asked about the increase in visitor center revenue. The staff led a thorough discussion, providing clarifying information on the 3rd Quarter revenue and expenditures, stock investments, and the e-commerce site. After a thorough discussion, the Board determined the report to be reasonable and acceptable. The Board then ordered the report filed for the record.

10. COMPENSATION & BENEFITS: Chief of Human Resources Molly deJesus presented the Compensation & Benefits report to the Board. After a thorough discussion, the Board determined the report to be reasonable and acceptable. The Board then ordered the report filed for the record.

GENERAL REPORTS

11. PHILANTHROPY DIVISION REPORT: Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmeter and Chief of Philanthropy Tom Carleton presented the Philanthropy Division report to the Board. Chief of Philanthropy Tom Carleton noted an error in the second quarter report, which was corrected in this report. Ms. Keating asked about the timeline of the Go Big Campaign. After a thorough discussion, the Board determined the report to be reasonable and acceptable. The Board then ordered the report filed for the record.

12. PURCHASING CARD COMPLIANCE OFFICER: Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmeter presented the Purchasing Card Compliance Officer report to the Board, reporting compliance. Chief Financial Officer Andrew Collins explained the compliance officer's role and its basis in statute. The Board ordered the report filed for the record.

13. SHARON WOODS LAKESIDE LODGE SITE IMPROVEMENTS CHANGE ORDER: Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmeter and Park Engineer Steve Lampert presented the report to the board. Mr. Schuster asked about the scope. Ms. Wegman inquired about the Prus staging area and the unit pricing for the work. She expressed her appreciation to the Chief Executive Officer for bringing this notice to the Board. After a thorough discussion, the Board determined the report to be reasonable and acceptable. The Board then ordered the report filed for the record.

14. BOARD TOUR DISCUSSION:

Mr. Thompson noted that the parks always look good, and he continues to be amazed by the staff's performance and impressed by the outside participation in the tour. He noted interest in cave salamanders.

Mr. Schuster stated that it was nice to see a nature preserve like Oak Glen. He also noted his goals to visit all the parks and mentioned the specific projects underway. He would like to see all these sites to feel more connected to the projects that come before the Board. Mr. Schuster said he was amazed by the complexity and size of our operation. He noted the scale of all the projects before the 5-year tour schedule. Mr. Schuster asked about the invitation list to help influence other partners, including legislators, to attend.

Ms. Wegman stated that during her visits, she discovers new features at the parks, like the Cotswold Overlook. Ms. Wegman noted that exciting projects are coming directly from public input. She appreciated attention to detail in designing new features. Ms. Wegman stated the new signs are appreciated and look great. She gave kudos to the teams for their efforts; their passion takes over, and they shine brightly. Ms. Wegman was also impressed to hear the staff's thank you for the Board's action on projects.

Ms. Laverty noted that she often goes to the parks closest to her house, but she enjoys seeing the natural diversity in parks and places she has never seen before. It speaks to the organization and the passion of the people. The tour makes it so worthwhile, and it is important to see the results of projects. She noted that the staff does an excellent job.

Ms. Keating feels that everything came to light about the parks today, and noted parks and areas within parks she had not seen before this tour. She enjoyed hearing about CORA partnerships. She feels we work well with partners. Ms. Keating stated she was disappointed that more invited partners did not attend the tour and expressed a wish to see more of our Cincinnati partners. She enjoyed her first official day as a Park Commissioner.

Chief Executive Officer Todd Palmeter noted the time required to plan the Fall Tour. He enjoys seeing staff in the field and will send them a thank-you note. He congratulated the staff on their hard work.

After a thorough discussion, the Board determined the report to be reasonable and acceptable. The Board then ordered the report filed for the record.

Ms. Wegman noted a few upcoming park events and a ribbon-cutting for the Board to consider attending.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further matters to come before the Board, a motion was made by Laverty, seconded by Thompson, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 4:35 p.m.

Board of Park Commissioners
Great Parks of Hamilton County

Melissa Wegman, President

Caroline Keating

Caren Laverty

Scott Schuster

Marcus Thompson

ATTEST:

Todd Palmeter, Chief Executive Officer