

MACOMB PARK DISTRICT  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING 03/17/2020

MINUTES:

Commissioners present: Philip Weiss, John Hemingway, Russ Hamm, Stirling Edwards, & Emily Gamage  
Attorney: Joe O'Donnell  
Staff Present: Rachel Lenz  
Media and others: 1

6:01 p.m. –President Weiss declared the meeting open.

**2. Approval of Agenda** –Commissioner Edwards moved for approval of the agenda. Commissioner Gamage seconded the motion. The motion passed (5 ayes – 0 nays).

**3. Consideration of and action on the minutes, bills and transfers, and monthly financial statements** – Commissioner Hemingway moved for approval of the regularly scheduled February meeting minutes. Commissioner Edwards second the motion. The motion passed (5 ayes – 0 nays). Treasurer Hamm gave a description of the general fund and the consolidated fund and what each account is used for. Hamm then gave a summary of each account balance. Commissioner Edwards moved to approve the bills and transfers and monthly financial statements. Commissioner Gamage second the motion. The February financial statements and March bills were approved on roll call vote (5 ayes – 0 nays).

**4. Public Comment** – None

**5. President's report** – President Weiss thanked commissioners for coming to the meeting and practicing social distancing. Weiss informed commissioners that he has created a steering committee (consisting of the President and most senior member) for Strategic Plan development for the Park District. Weiss, Hemingway, and Director Lenz met with the CEO of Campfire Concepts and were all very impressed with his presentation and ideas. He will provide a proposal for the board to review at next month's meetings. Weiss also informed the board they have reached out to IAPD to look into further board development training for the board. Lastly, President Weiss "tipped his hat" to Director Lenz and her staff for their response to COVID-19 and the work they are doing to support and educate the community through this time.

**6. Director's report** – Director Lenz also recognized District staff for their patience, candidness, and positivity. Lenz informed the board that due to COVID-19 all programs, events, and facility rentals have been cancelled until further notice; refunds will be issued. All District facilities are closed as well as public restrooms throughout District parks. With the main office being closed to the public there is a limited staff scheduled to be on site to maintain daily operations, remaining staff will continue their work remotely from their homes. Lenz said marketing efforts are shifting to keep the public informed and help support local businesses. Lenz also informed the board of changes to public meeting requirements due to the Governor's executive order. The next month would be hosted via zoom.

Director Lenz announced that prior to COVID-19 the district had entered several expansion projects that she wanted to continue to boast about as progress on those projects was still ongoing. The ceramics studio has been expanded to approximately double the size. More progress is happening at Lakeview, invasive species removal project once COVID restrictions are lifted as well as a pending partnership on bringing bees back to Lakeview

Nature Center. Finally, Lenz announced an partnership with Rocketbook, an international agency that produces reusable notebook with integrated technology.

Commissioner Hamm asked if there was any update on the lighting project and the effect of COVID-19. Lenz said at this point the only factor that could delay progress remains weather. There has been no effect on the progress with COVID-19.

**7. Public Hearing regarding the Budget and Appropriation Ordinance #335** – President Weiss reminded the public that the Ordinance has been on file for public view for the required 30-day period. President Weiss declared the public hearing open at 6:25. Commissioner Hemingway motioned to close the public hearing. Commissioner Hamm second the motion. The motion passed on a roll call vote (5 ayes, 0 nays)

**8. Consideration and possible action regarding the Budget and Appropriations Ordinance #335** – President Weiss asked Commissioners if they had any questions and reminded commissioners the draft is in their emails under ordinances. Commissioner Weiss moved to approve the Budget and Appropriation Ordinance #335. Commissioner Hemingway second the motion. The motion passed on a roll call vote (5 ayes, 0 nays)

**9. Discussion and possible action on purchase of 15 passenger accessible van** – Director Lenz reminded commissioners she sent an email with a description of the van, the need for the accessible vehicle, and a video of the van. Lenz said she had recently been informed the District’s current 15 passenger van needed to be replaced and it should not be driven outside of city limits. She shared her concern with the board as that vehicle’s primary use was for the Special Olympics teams who regularly travel out of the area for competitions. The cost of the vehicle is just under \$43,000.

Commissioner Edwards reclused himself from the vote as he has a family member who are members of the Special Olympics team in Macomb. Commissioner Hamm moved to approve the purchase of the accessible 15 passenger van. Commissioner Hemingway seconded the motion. The motion passed on a roll call vote (4 ayes, 0 nays, 1 abstain).

**10. Update on Adult Softball Program** – Director Lenz has been searching for new leadership for the Adult Softball program since before January and has not any luck with finding an interested party. Lenz said the District cannot afford to run this program without raising the entry fee a significant amount. She informed the board that, at this time, and with the development of the COVID-19 crisis there is no adult Softball program. Lenz said if anyone is interested they should reach out to her and the District would assist as much as possible to get them started after COVID restrictions were lifted.

**11. Discussion and possible action on revised seating for Board Meetings** – Commissioner Hemingway revisited the concept of a revised seating arrangement for board meetings from seating based on seniority to alphabetically by last name. Commissioner Hemingway motioned to approve. Commissioner Hamm second the motion. The motion passed (5 ayes, 0 nays)

**12. Open Commissioner Presentation and discussion of future agenda items** – Commissioner Hamm asked for more information on the strategic plan and how the vision statement the board had previously developed would be utilized for that development.

6:57 PM Meeting adjourned on motion from Hamm, second by Edwards. The motion passed (5 ayes, 0 nays).

Respectfully submitted

Rachel Lenz, Secretary  
Macomb Park District