

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
February 19, 2026

CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Cincinnati Board of Park Commissioners was held on this day at 950 Eden Park Drive. Commissioners present: President Molly North, Vice President Kick Lee, Commissioner Phyllis McCallum, and Commissioner John Neyer. Commissioner Susan Castellini was not present. President North called the meeting to order at 9:03am.

Acknowledgement of Public Comments

President North acknowledged that there were no in-person public comments, and no public comments were received via email.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

Approval of the January 15 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner McCallum motioned to approve the January 15, 2026, meeting minutes. Commissioner Neyer seconded. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

INFORMATION / UPDATE

Parks FY26 Executive Performance Review

Parks Director Jason Barron shared Parks' FY26 Executive Performance Review presentation, which was created in collaboration with the Office of Performance and Data Analytics (OPDA) and shared with the City Manager's Office on February 6, 2026. The presentation covered department data snapshots, budget opportunities, and performance measures and achievements.

ACTION ITEMS

Mt. Airy Comfort Station and ADA Pathway

Division Manager of Planning & Design, Travis Miller, summarized planned work in Area 23 of Mt. Airy Forest to support the new Bike Skills Course, specifically renovations of the comfort station and historic overlook, and the creation of an ADA pathway with a drinking fountain, benches, and bike racks. Staff requested the Board approve the following:

- 1) Award of the comfort station renovation to MegenWorks in the amount of \$291,000, with \$15,000 to be kept in reserve for contingencies.
- 2) Award of the pathway project to Prus Construction in the amount of \$156,665, with \$10,000 to be kept in reserve for contingencies.

Commissioner McCallum motioned to approve the award of the projects as outlined. Vice President Lee seconded. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

California Woods Hydrological Plan – Stream Crossing Design

Division Manager Miller updated the Board on work being done with Stantec to develop a plan of improvements to the stream system in California Woods. It has been determined a key cause of erosion problems is the spillway, which needs to be replaced with a new stream crossing. Staff recommended the contract with Stantec be amended via a change order to include the stream crossing design, and respectfully requested the Board approve an increase to the project budget in the amount of \$14,668. The Commissioners and Staff

discussed the overall project plan and budget. Commissioner Neyer motioned to approve the change order and budget increase. Commissioner McCallum seconded. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

INFORMATION / UPDATES

Planning & Design Update

Division Manager Miller provided updates on capital projects including Parks' Sinton campus and biochar facility, Owl's Nest Park, Glenway Park planning and stakeholder engagement, and collaboration with DOTE on a paved trail at Bramble Park. The Commissioners and Staff discussed strategies to encourage competitive bidding on current and future projects.

Finance / IT Update

Division Manager of Finance & IT, Herta Fairbanks, shared updates on the operating budget submission process and timeline, as well as an overview of the Finance and IT teams' current initiatives, including IT's work with CPD to inventory and replace security cameras at the riverfront parks and Krohn Conservatory. The Commissioners and Staff discussed the monthly financial reports, and discrepancies between what is shown in the reports versus actuals. Staff agreed to work to add clarity to the reports to more accurately reflect Parks' financial position.

HR Update

Supervising HR Analyst, Derrick Gentry, shared an update on classifications, work to prepare for seasonal hiring, and Parks Academy, and announced that the spring All Staff celebration will be held on April 23. The Commissioners and Staff discussed performance evaluations and work to make sure they are completed in a timely manner.

ACTION ITEMS

Grants Application / Acceptance

Director Barron presented two grant opportunities to the Board:

- 1) A grant from the Cincinnati Parks Foundation in an amount up to \$25,000 to be used to provide scholarships for 2026 summer camps for families with financial need, as well as bussing and programming for Nature Next Door.
- 2) A grant from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) in an amount up to \$150,000, to be used for the removal of rails and ties and replacement of the existing asphalt, paver, concrete, and gravel along a section of the Ohio River Trail in Sawyer Point and Yeatman's Cove.

Staff respectfully requested the Board approve the application for and acceptance of funds from the Cincinnati Parks Foundation and ODNR in a total amount up to \$175,000. Commissioner McCallum motioned to approve the application for and acceptance of the grants. Commissioner Neyer seconded. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Acceptance of Q4 2025 In-kind Contributions

Staff respectfully requested the Board approve the acceptance of \$174,698.92 in in-kind contributions from the Cincinnati Parks Foundation, provided in Q4 of 2025. Vice President Lee motioned to accept the in-kind contributions. Commissioner Neyer seconded. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS

Director Barron presented the following updates:

- Parks staff did an incredible job clearing paths and walkways during recent snow
- The Riverfront team has been working hard to enhance hardscapes and get planting beds ready for spring at Smale.
- Josh Jump, Lead Arborist, was recognized as the 2025 Parks Employee of the Year.
- Parks attended the OPRA Annual Conference, and received a second place award for the Summer in Cincy Teen Skate Nights program (in collaboration with Skate Downtown Cincy).
- Volunteer opportunities and events in Parks throughout February and early March.
- Summer Camp registration opens on February 28.

OPEN COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION & COMMENTS

Commissioner Neyer and President North shared memories and their condolences on the loss of Steven L. Schuckman.

ADJOURNMENT

President North adjourned the meeting at 10:25am.

The next regular meeting date is Thursday, March 19, at 9:00am.

ATTEST:

PRESIDENT



DIRECTOR

