

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
November 17, 2022

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 Jim Goetz, Vice President Linda Lee Thomas, Commissioner Susan Castellini, Commissioner Molly North, and Commissioner Brad Lindner. President Goetz called the meeting to order at 9:02 A.M.

Acknowledgement of Public Comments

President Goetz acknowledged public comments pertaining to skate park discussions, positive and negative comments about a dog park in Burnet Woods, and Bramble Park.

Current vacancies and timeline to fill positions

HR Manager Derrick Gentry shared that they are in the process of hiring 2 Florists, 1 Laborer, Architect, and an Electrical/HVAC specialist. Mr. Gentry stated competitive salaries levels and difficulty attracting applicants for the Planning & Design positions as a challenge for the department.

Approval of October 20th Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Castellini motioned to approve the meeting minutes. Vice President Thomas seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

INFORMATION/ UPDATES

Planning & Design Update

Division Manager Joel Gross presented to the Board the four (4) pivot tables showing:

1. Currently funded project work in progress.
2. 2023 projects in progress (all other approved and initiated work not yet assigned capital dollars in CFS).
3. Considerations and new project developments beyond those on the other two lists.
4. Capital Projects completed to date in FY 2022 / 2023.

Asset Management system planning has begun with the goals to provide a more detailed and comprehensive tracking plan for the Facilities and Maintenance team.

Two Co-Op students nearly completed the internal inventory of hard-copy maps containing underground utilities that have not yet been converted into geospatially relatable digital data. P&D is working to partner with the City GIS Department for help in digitization assets. This work will save countless hours and is anticipated to cost between \$150,000 and \$200,000. Once the actual number of maps to be digitized has been conveyed to GIS, P&D will be able to formulate an accurate request for allocation of funds to account for these costs. It is anticipated that this funding request will be included in the December 2022 Board meeting agenda. Collaborating with community utility partners to access their GIS mapping to further complete the Parks Planning GIS map.

Co-Ops will inventory projects for both playgrounds and artwork in support of the asset management system. Both inventories are critical to the timely maintenance and historic preservation of our parks.

Parks has extended an offer to an Architect Intern and are interviewing for the Senior Engineering Technician position. The Engineering Intern position has received applications and to begin interviews in late November. Sharmaine Moore has unfortunately left P&D for another opportunity within the city.

Monthly Project Update:

The remainder of November and December will focus heavily on project prioritization and compilation of the FY 2024 and 2025 capital budget request, due in December.

Memorandums of Understanding and / Right of Entry Requests:

· Fernbank Park MOU - MSD and Parks have completed an MOU for the upcoming sewer work at Fernbank Park, which will focus on the replacement of a combined sewer outfall, utility access hole and other appurtenances necessary to improve the sewer system. A copy of this MOU will be stored within the CAGIS documents system. The MOU is in effect until July 1, 2025. A copy of the MOU is available to the Board upon request.

Current Design Focus:

- Alms Park Sanitary Sewer – Design is complete and in final review. Emergency procurement via RFP is underway. Quotes will be received and reviewed in late November with work to follow over the winter.
- Alms, Ault, and French Park Water Main - Design work is also nearing completion on the water main improvements for Alms, Ault, and French Parks. Work will be bid under traditional RFP, with construction anticipated over the winter.
- International Friendship Park Rebuild –P&D anticipates ROM costs in December. Human Nature is working on inventory of existing assets with Prus providing costs. P&D is targeting a summer 2023 reconstruction.
- Parks DNR Headquarters – Highest priority for our division. P&D has conducted several internal meetings to finalize interior renovations and layouts. Construction Document level plans are scheduled for submittal from our consultant on 11/11. P&D will review and return comments and work to solicit the interior package. Site improvements will follow as a separate bid in attempt to minimize any temporary conditions for our staff during transition. It is anticipated that this project will be bid under the Third-Party Administrator agreement (TPA) through Megen Construction which will enable Parks to expedite the construction November 17 and procurement processes under their pre-established construction terms. The Director's office is assisting in coordination with Niosh and the relocation timeline. Additional internal coordination in anticipation of relocation includes the assessment and planning the temporary conditions for DNR staff locations. Conceptual design for activation of the Diehl Road site has also been completed and sent to our consultant for implementation into the site development plans. Activation if this site will include a temporary home for a portion of the Greenspace team as the Diehl Road facility (and biochar) is constructed. P&D will continue to work to minimize the disruption to our DNR team as they transition to their new operations centers.
- Owl's Nest Pavilion – Community meeting is scheduled for December 6, with Parks and consulting staff coordinating the event at the Evanston Recreation Center.
- Western River Edge – This project awarded \$1.25 Million in funding in October 2022. This initial money will be used to fund design and initial stabilization of the riverbank such that more erosion is avoided as the more substantial final purpose of this portion of the river's edge is designed and developed for activation.
- West and East Operations Facilities – P&D is beginning work to bring both the West and Eastern (Sinton) facilities up to at least a minimum acceptable standard. Both current operations sites will receive much-needed upgrades to facilities, and surrounding equipment and material storage areas.

Current Construction Projects:

- Bellevue Park Rock Catchment – Final fence work by Prus is anticipated to be completed in November. Removable bollards to allow blockage of the paved circle are being quoted.
- Bramble Park Little Duck Creek Restoration – Creek restoration and armoring work is complete.

- Eden Park Administration Building Roof – Final trim work delayed due to supply issues. Work is anticipated to be complete by the end of November.
- Eden Park Tom Jones Commons – Grading work, drilled seeding, and sodding has been completed. Vehicular vandalism to the field areas on 11/6 has prompted P&D to consider additional safety measures and features.
- Lytle Park Renovation – Renovation work is officially underway. The Lincoln statue and London Plane Tree are tentatively set to be moved the weeks of November 14 and 21, respectively with drone footage to capture the process. Underground utility relocation work will follow in December.

Construction Complete:

- Mt. Airy Forest – The Area 10 accessible spinner has been installed and is in use.
- Hauck Gibson House Exterior Rehabilitation – Phase 1 – Work to complete wood and painting repairs to the exterior of the Gibson House has been substantially completed. P&D will provide final walkthrough, punch list, and project closeout.

December Project Focus:

- California Woods – P&D is working to revise consultant quotations to include more comprehensive watershed analysis, planning and permitting assistance for the project.
- Inwood Park – Total funding for improvements is \$4 Million. P&D is working to solicit consulting firms for master planning efforts. Community engagement to start January 2023. Staff is confident of the future basketball site with proper community feedback and the court could be completed sooner than the entire project if necessary.

Commissioner North asked for the criteria for projects to make the update list and asked for the boat dock timeline. Mr. Gross updated that staff meets biweekly with designers and permitting, a topographic survey is being created to assess ADA needs, staff is working through final law term sheet. He expects the final design renderings in early 2023 and the boat dock to be complete in Spring 2024. He also noted that projects make the update list according to urgency, community concerns or needing future board attention and action.

Director Barron explained that the Owl’s Nest community meeting goal will be to present development options and engage the community for feedback to include them in the decision-making process with clear explanation of the needs and budget constraints. President Goetz briefly asked about Lot 23 Mt. Airy fundraising. Mr. Barron explained that fundraising discussions and opportunities for this project continue in partnership with the Foundation.

Commissioner Lindner asked about a standard engagement process. Mr. Barron explained this is a priority and community engagement protocols or rules of engagement have been discussed with CEV and staff is working toward setting a procedure for communicating and engaging with the public. Vice President Thomas agreed and expressed sharing the responsibility with community councils and CPACS.

ACTION ITEMS

Tree Fund Sooty Acres

Parks CFO Craig Sherman shared that the Division of Natural Resources (DNR) Conservation and Land Management Section (CLM) is seeking commissioner approval for appropriation of \$15,600 from the Sooty Acres Commissioners’ Fund for the pruning, removal, and hauling fees of hazard trees located within the Sooty Acres property by Tree Care Inc. (TCI). Staff requested that \$15,600 be allocated to cover the contractual services.

Commissioner Castellini motioned to approve the request. Commissioner North seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

In-Kind Donations

Staff requested approval to accept of the QTR3 2022 in-kind contributions of \$25,802.

Donor	Total
☐ Parks Foundation	\$ 24,252.00
Equipment	\$ 1,411.55
Horticultural Supplies	\$ 16,046.28
Supplies	\$ 6,794.17
☐ The Lafayette Trail, Inc	\$ 1,550.00
Supply	\$ 1,550.00
Grand Total	\$ 25,802.00

Commissioner Lindner motioned to approve the request from staff. Commissioner North seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

Explore Nature Grant

Staff requested approval to apply for and accept a grant from the Cincinnati Parks Foundation for \$3,500, Stevenson Sisters' Scholarship Fund. The scholarship will provide 1 free spot at each Explore Nature Camp 2023 season (approx. 36 spots).

Staff requested the Board approve the application and acceptance of grant funds made to the Cincinnati Parks Foundation in the amount up to \$3,500.

Commissioner North motioned to approve the request. Commissioner Castellini seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

ODNR Grant Acceptance

Staff is requesting approval to accept the project dollars from House Bill 687 in the amount of \$350,000, for hiking trails and playground refurbishment.

Ault Park Trails: The project encompasses professional assessment, redesign, and installation of the trail system to make the trails compatible with the natural topography of the park while eliminating trail runs that are not sustainable. **Ault Park Playground:** The project seeks to reinforce and enhance the existing Ault Park play areas and structures to enable a safe and sustainable playground that promotes the health, enjoyment and well-being of children and families visiting the park.

Staff requested the Board approve the acceptance of the 2022 ODNR Ault Park Hiking Trails and Playground Refurbishment Grant in an amount up to \$350,000.

Commissioner North motioned to approve the request. Commissioner Castellini seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

The board discussed the need and possibilities for hiring an in-house Grant writer or contractor and developing relationships with lobbyist to help funding future park needs and developments.

DIRECTOR COMMENTS

President Goetz opened the floor to the Director for comments. Director Jason Barron highlighted the following topics:

- Park Finance update in packet
- Walnut Woods Grand Opening
- 2nd Place award for Enhancement
- Krohn Holiday show runs Nov 5 – Jan 8
- Dec. 1 Krohn Tree Lighting
- 21 – 22 Annual Report will be released soon
- Values of Organization, Parks won the Best Safety Innovation of the Year in partnership DPS
- Join Owl’s Nest meeting Dec 6, Take feedback survey
- Additional funding received from Council: total of \$4.5M (\$1M Inwood, \$1.5M California, \$1.75M Smale, and \$750K MLK)
- Parks event list and events for Commissioners to attend
- Holiday Craft Workshops and other event details listed on website

OPEN COMMISSIONER DISCUSSION

President Goetz opened the floor to the Commissioners for comments. Commissioner Castellini asked about clarification on diseased ash trees being removed from forests.

Commissioner North stated the great meeting was concise and completed in a timely manner. Looks forward to planning more broadly on the mission the Commissioners will work to accomplish, i.e., trails, tree canopy, forest health, dog parks, etc.) that make Parks great. Director Barron looks forward to having those conversations with the Board, City Council and the City Administration so everyone is clear on understanding of the value of Parks and the ongoing support it needs.

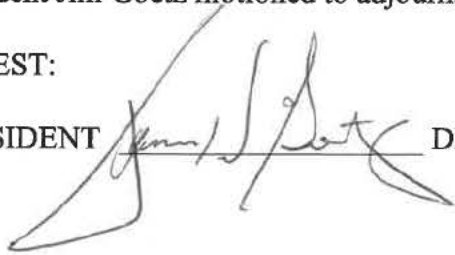
ADJOURNMENT

The next regular meeting date is December 15, 2022.

President Jim Goetz motioned to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 10:38 A.M.

ATTEST:

PRESIDENT



DIRECTOR



[External Email] Public Comment

Stich Bear [REDACTED]

Sun 11/6/2022 6:17 PM

To: Parks, Cincy Cincy.Parks@cincinnati.oh.gov

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

External Email Communication

I am writing to ask that you reconsider the location for the dog park proposed for historic Burnet Woods Park. Please give an ear to those opposing the project.

The gateway to the park, known as Pleasant Valley, has been a beloved multi-use space for close to 150 years!

To disrupt the delicate ecosystem in this important oasis for our migratory birds seems unbelievably irresponsible.

Introducing the potential for this area to become a hot spot for disease known to be problematic for dog parks is another real concern.

The echo of barking dogs in this location will spoil not only the peace of the wildlife, but the residents who live in the neighborhood, library users, business patrons, and park visitors alike.

To use funds for a project such as this, when the budget is unavailable to maintain current infrastructure, is fiscally irresponsible.

To propose removing existing greenspace to replace it with a fenced-in area of concrete, covered with plastic artificial turf, as we face the very real effects of climate change, is disheartening.

We ask that you be good stewards of the public land you are entrusted with as you think about your decision.

Kindest regards,

Shari Frost

A Clifton native, and friend of Burnet Woods Park

[External Email] Dog Park Burnet Woods

Jodie Zultowsky [REDACTED]

Tue 11/8/2022 3:00 PM

To: Parks, Cincy Cincy.Parks@cincinnati.oh.gov

[You don't often get email from [REDACTED]. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

External Email Communication

Dear Park Board,

Please consider that by continuing to propose turning rare green space to hard scape or turf in Burnet Woods, knowing that a large segment of the community will be against it, you continue to pit neighbor against neighbor, turning Burnet Woods into a battle ground. Most of you don't live here, and while I have made new friends because of my positions I have also lost some and I am tired of seeing my neighbors as on one side or the other.

Please consider the wholeness of the Burnet Woods community over your own self interests and those of the minority in our community. A dog park would be wonderful in the Clifton area if it improves an impoverished space.

Kindly,
Jodie Zultowsky

Sent from my iPhone

[External Email] PUBLIC COMMENT: Protest of Lacking Community Feedback Forums, Dog Park Proposal

Karena Miller [REDACTED]

Tue 11/15/2022 10:05 AM

To: Parks, Cincy <Cincy.Parks@cincinnati-oh.gov>

Cc: Brown, Tia <tia.brown@cincinnati-oh.gov>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED] [Learn why this is important](#)

External Email Communication

Dear Park Commissioners,

I write to you in protest of your handling of the placement of a dog park in Clifton. Parks Director, John Barron, announced to a shocked Clifton community audience at a CTM meeting that Burnet Woods' front entryway natural greenspace had been slated for development into a 10,0000 sq ft, artificial turf-covered, concrete pad, fenced in for unleashed dogs. This followed on the heels of a successful neighborhood protest of your initial Clifton site designated for conversion to "dog park" -- Dunore Park.

Dunore Park neighbors turned away the dog park through community forums, which former Parks Director, John Neyer, had assured Burnet Woods' neighbors would be forthcoming. However, for the neighbors of Burnet Woods, there have been no such forums. There *have* been at least two news reports on Clifton community objections to the proposed Dog Park. In addition, the Sunday Enquirer's Letters to the Editor section has printed letters regarding your selection of Burnet Woods for development for the last three Sundays, and more are anticipated. The voice of the Parks Board has been noticeably absent in the discussion.

Will Parks build "better communities" through pushing them into collective protest against unwanted development of shared open community greenspace? These public greenspaces in our city parks deserve responsible stewardship from our Parks Board.

Please include this letter as public comment in the minutes of your upcoming meeting in which the dog park development plan is discussed.

Sincerely,
Karena Miller
Neighbor and Friend of Burnet Woods