

**Wood County Park District
Board of Commissioner's Minutes Regular Meeting
4/9/2024**

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Rebecca Ferguson at 3:02 p.m. at J.C. Reuthinger Memorial Preserve.

2. Roll Call

Rebecca Ferguson, present
Sandy Wiechman, present
Wendy Headley, present
Jonathan Smith, present
Kathleen Attwood, absent

Staff present: Jim Witter, Kristin Long, Steve Thomson, Andrew Kalmar, Tom Belcher, Zeb Albert, Sanja Jennings, Diana Ziems, Hayley Barrett, Justin Siler, Chris Smalley, Rob Brian

Members of the Press: Marie Thomas – Sentinel Tribune, Jane Maiolo – Perrysburg Messenger, Julie Carle – B.G. Independent News

Guests: Candace Weis and Carmel Schmidt, Friends of the Wood County Parks

3. Approval of Minutes

Ms. Ferguson stated the March meeting minutes were distributed to the Board of Park Commissioners for review prior to this meeting. No corrections were given. Ms. Ferguson approved through unanimous consent March's minutes as presented.

4. Native Plant Nursery Presentation – Sanja Jennings

Sanja Jennings presented a brief history of the J.C. Reuthinger Memorial Preserve, focusing on the native plant nursery. She stated a fundraising event was held in Spring 2006 which raised approximately \$30,000.00 to build and install a new greenhouse. From this greenhouse, the Stewardship department is dedicated to preserving plant species local to Wood county. She stated seeds are obtained from species grown at the greenhouse, local prairies throughout the 20 parks in the Wood County Park District, including Cedar Creeks Preserve, along with some private residences and properties. Currently there are 105 native species being grown in the native plant nursery from the seeds that are collected by staff members and volunteers. She stated Reuthinger has 2.55 acres with 44 raised beds and 9 in-ground beds with 5 acres of woodland area and 40 acres of wetlands. Ms. Jennings stated in September 2023, the Native Seed Nursery and Greenhouse at J.C. Reuthinger Memorial Preserve became nationally recognized by becoming a member of the American Public Gardens Association. She stated they also work with many organizations, including Green Ribbon Initiative, BGSU, Black Swamp Conservancy, along with providing plants for sale and exchange. Ms. Jennings stated the

Spring Native Plant Sale is May 3rd and 4th this year at the Wood County Fairgrounds in the Champions Building. Ms. Jennings invited board members and attendees for a tour of the greenhouse after the conclusion of the meeting.

5. Chairperson's Report

Ms. Ferguson stated the Spring Native Plant Sale is coming up on May 3rd and 4th and the Farm Breakfast is coming up on April 21st at Thompson Stone Hall. Ms. Ferguson also mentioned several other programming opportunities and advised to go to the Wood County Park District's website for more details.

6. Director's Report

Mr. Smalley stated authorization is needed for him to move forward with the purchase and acquisition of the adjacent property to the J.C. Reuthinger Memorial Preserve. Ms. Ferguson presented resolution 24-014 to the Board of Park Commissioners. Mr. Smith moved to approve the resolution. Ms. Headley seconded. A roll call vote was conducted with all in favor, motion approved.

Mr. Smalley stated seed will need to be acquired from the Ohio Prairie Nursery in the amount of \$20,773.00 to restore the new land purchased at J.C. Reuthinger Memorial Preserve. Ms. Ferguson presented resolution 24-015 to the Board of Park Commissioners. Ms. Wiechman motioned to approve the resolution. Ms. Headley seconded. A roll call vote was conducted with all in favor, motion approved.

Mr. Smalley stated the Operations department is in need of an upgrade kit for their John Deere skid steer unit. He stated they currently have a tire unit and would like to upgrade to a track-driven unit, which requires an upgrade kit in the amount of \$5,248.88. Ms. Ferguson presented resolution 24-016 to the Board of Park Commissioners. Ms. Headley motioned to approve the resolution. Mr. Smith seconded. A roll call vote was conducted with all in favor, motion approved.

In housekeeping, Mr. Smalley stated Jamie Sands worked hard to put together the new "All Parks Guide" and copies were given to the board members. He stated the latest spring newsletter from the Friends of the Wood County Parks has been distributed to the board members. Mr. Smalley extended praise to the staff of the Park District for their work during the Total Solar Eclipse. He stated staff members were scattered across the county at different park locations to help keep the parks open, clean and interact with park guests that arrived in record numbers. Mr. Smalley thanked Jamie Sands, the Programming staff, and the Friends of the Wood County Parks for a successful Volunteer Appreciation Banquet.

7. Departmental Reports

Ms. Ferguson stated departmental reports were distributed prior to the board meeting for review. No further discussion.

8. Approval of Payables

March's payables will be voted on during the 5/14/2024 meeting due to the month-ending reports from the Wood County Auditor's Office not being available for this meeting.

9. Old Business

Nothing heard at this time.

10. New Business

Nothing heard at this time.

11. Friends of the Wood County Parks

Candace Weis stated the Spring Membership Meeting is coming up on 4/14/2024 and Anna Cotterman, Historic Farm Coordinator, will be presenting "Back 90 years with Carter Historic Farm". Ms. Weis stated the Spring Native Plant Sale is coming up and will have up to 65 different plants for sale. Ms. Weis stated the Friends of the Parks Habitat Guide and Field Journal is still being worked on and she's hoping to have it ready by the Wood County Fair. She stated the Volunteer Banquet was a success. All volunteers that had enough hours submitted received a 90th anniversary t-shirt. Ms. Weis promoted the Adopt-a-Garden volunteer opportunity by offering her experience helping to build a native plant garden at Black Swamp Preserve. Ms. Wiechman asked if there will be an official plant list. Ms. Weis stated a list will be emailed to Friends members. Mr. Smith asked if there will be assistance for anyone just starting out their native plant garden. Zeb Albert, Stewardship Coordinator, stated there will be literature available at the plant sale. He also stated there will be two specialty pollinator garden flats with 15 plants for \$100.00 to help take the guess work out of the process.

12. Hearing of Visitors

Nothing heard at this time.

13. Executive Session

No executive session at this time.

14. Adjournment

Ms. Wiechman moved to adjourn. Ms. Headley seconded. Meeting adjourned 3:46 p.m.



Sandy Wiechman, Vice-Chairperson



Chris Smalley, Director

Wood County Park District Headquarters, 18729 Mercer Rd., Bowling Green, OH. 43402

