

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS OF THE CLEVELAND METROPOLITAN PARK DISTRICT POLICY STATEMENT

SUBJECT: Virtual Public Meetings Policy
EFFECTIVE DATE: April 17, 2025

PURPOSE

To provide guidance for virtual public meetings of the Board of Park Commissioners of the Cleveland Metropolitan Park District (Board) in compliance with Ohio Revised Code §121.221.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Board to utilize virtual public meetings to facilitate the efficient business of the Board in compliance with ORC §121.221.

PROCEDURE

A. Virtual Meetings Are Permitted.

1. The Board may hold and attend meetings and may conduct and attend hearings by means of video conference or any other similar electronic technology, and all of the following apply:
 - a. Any resolution, regulation, rule, or formal action of any kind has the same effect as if it occurred during an open meeting or hearing of the public body.
 - b. Notwithstanding division (C) of section 121.22 of the Revised Code, Board members who attend meetings or hearings by means of video conference or any other similar electronic technology shall be considered present as if in person at the meeting or hearing, shall be permitted to vote, and shall be counted for purposes of determining whether a quorum is present at the meeting or hearing.
2. When the Board conducts a meeting or hearing by means of video conference or any other similar electronic technology, the Board shall establish a means, through the use of electronic equipment that is widely available to the general public, to converse with witnesses, receive documentary testimony and physical evidence, and permit public comment, if applicable.

B. Public Access.

1. The Board shall provide the public access to a public meeting, and to any hearing held that the public would otherwise be entitled to attend, according to Ohio law, commensurate with the method in which the meeting or hearing is being conducted, including for example, livestreaming by means of the internet, television, cable, or public access channels, or by means of any other similar electronic technology.
2. The Board shall ensure that the public can observe and hear the discussions and deliberations of all the members of the Board, whether the member is participating in person or electronically. Members of the Board shall have sufficient internet or other electronic connection to allow the member to be seen and heard clearly, and shall be visible at all times.

C. Voting and Attendance.

1. All votes taken in the meeting or hearing shall be taken by roll call vote unless there is a motion for unanimous consent, and the motion is not objected to by a member of the Board. If a vote is taken

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unanimously, the Board shall provide the public with information on how the members of the Board voted, including any members who abstained from voting.

2. Any member of the Board who intends to attend a meeting by means of video conference or other similar electronic technology shall notify the Board President of that intent not less than forty-eight (48) hours before the meeting, except in the case of an emergency defined as "an unforeseen combination of circumstances or the resulting state that calls for immediate action."

D. When Virtual Meetings Are Not Permitted.

1. The Board may not hold, and no Board member may attend meetings or conduct and attend hearings by means of video conference or other similar electronic technology if any of the following apply:
 - a. The meeting or hearing involves a vote to approve a "major non-routine expenditure" defined as "a one-time or infrequent cost that Cleveland Metroparks incurred and does not expect to pay again which may have been caused by a significant change at Cleveland Metroparks or events outside of normal business operations."
 - b. The meeting or hearing involves a vote to approve the hiring of either the Chief Executive Officer or the Chief Financial Officer;
 - c. The meeting or hearing involves a purpose to propose, approve, or vote on a tax issue or tax increase;
2. If, upon the notification of an upcoming Board meeting, and not later than forty-eight (48) hours before the meeting, two Board members, notify the Board President that an item in the agenda must be acted upon at a meeting conducted fully in person, upon the Board President's acknowledgment of receipt of the notification, the Board shall take action on the item of the agenda only at a meeting conducted fully in person.
3. The Board shall not hold a hearing, and Board members shall not attend a hearing, by means of video conference or other similar electronic technology without the consent of all parties to the hearing.

E. Notifications of Virtual Meetings

1. The Board shall provide notification of meetings and hearings pursuant to Article 2 of the Board of Park Commissioners of the Cleveland Metropolitan Park District By-Laws.

Reference: ORC 121.221


Yvette Iltu
Board of Park Commissioners President

4/17/25
Approval Date


Brian M. Zimmerman
Cleveland Metroparks Chief Executive Officer

April 2030
Review Date