

## GOALS OF THE RUSSELL TOWNSHIP PARK DISTRICT

1. The Russell Township Park District will aggressively support and uphold its primary obligations to preserve, manage and promote the enjoyment of the area's natural resources, as mandated by the State of Ohio, the residents of Russell Township, and the general public.
2. The Russell Township Park District will acquire land within or without the park district for conversion into forest reserves and for the conservation of the natural resources of the state, including streams, lakes, submerged lands, and swamplands, and to those ends, for the creation of parks, parkways, forest reservations, and other reservations and to afforest, develop, improve, protect, and promote the use of the same in such manner as the Russell Township Park District deems conducive to the general welfare.
3. The Russell Township Park District may provide year-round recreation activities and facilities which are fully compatible with all other aspects of its responsibilities.
4. The Russell Township Park District will direct its efforts toward cooperation and coordination with other organizations and jurisdictions.
5. The Russell Township Park District will operate with fiscal responsibility in its funding and expenditures.
6. The Russell Township Park District will direct its efforts to promote and utilize the natural environment as an educational resource.
7. The Russell Township Park District may make efforts to promote adequate and equitable access to its facilities for all residents of Russell Township.
8. The Russell Township Park District will seek opinions and respond to the needs of the public which it serves.
9. The Russell Township Park District will develop and adopt specific policies related to its responsibilities, activities and interests, as it sees fit.

RUSSELL TOWNSHIP PARK DISTRICT  
BY-LAWS

---

ARTICLE I  
PURPOSE

Section 1. Purpose.

The purposes and duties of the Board of Park Commissioners of the Russell Township Park District (hereinafter referred to as the “Board”) shall be as follows:

- (a) To develop and adopt specific policies relating to its responsibilities, activities and interests, and to promulgate rules and regulations pursuant to Section 1545.09 of the Ohio Revised Code as the Board deems advisable for the preservation of good order within and adjacent to parks and reservations of land, and for the protection and preservation of the parks, parkways and other reservations of land under its jurisdiction and control, and of property and natural life therein.
- (b) To support and uphold its primary obligations to preserve, manage and promote the enjoyment of the area’s natural resources, as mandated by the State and general public.
- (c) To acquire land within or without the park district for conversion into forest reserves and for the conservation of the natural resources of the state, including streams, lakes, submerged lands, and swamplands, and to those ends, for the creation of parks, parkways, forest reservations, and other reservations and to afforest, develop, improve, protect, and promote the use of the same in such manner as the Russell Township Park District deems conducive to the general welfare.
- (d) To direct efforts toward cooperation and coordination with other organizations and jurisdictions, to review annually the recreational needs of the community, and to implement any necessary and practical changes in the use of and facilities on the lands so as to assure that the recreational needs of the community continue to be met as fully as possible.
- (e) To direct efforts to promote and utilize the natural environment as an educational resource.
- (f) To operate with fiscal responsibility in its funding and expenditures.
- (g) To direct efforts toward cooperation and coordination with other organizations and jurisdictions.
- (h) To seek opinions and respond to the needs of the public which it serves.

- (i) To make efforts to promote adequate and equitable access to its facilities for all residents of Russell Township.

ARTICLE II  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

Section 1. Powers.

The Board shall possess all of the powers and shall be subject to all of the responsibilities conferred on it by Chapter 1545 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Section 2. Membership.

The Board shall consist of the three (3) members appointed by the Geauga County Probate Judge pursuant to the provisions of Section 1545.05 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Section 3. Term of Office.

The original three (3) Park Commissioners appointed by the Geauga County Probate Judge shall take office immediately and their respective terms shall expire one (1), two (2), and three (3) years from the first day of January next after the date of their appointment. Thereafter, the successors to each expiring term of Park Commissioner shall be appointed by the Geauga County Probate Judge for a term of three (3) years, subject to taking an oath of office and providing a bond to the Geauga County Auditor for the faithful performance of the duties of the office in the sum of \$5,000.00.

Section 4. Service without Compensation.

All Park Commissioners shall serve without compensation but shall be allowed their actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

Section 5. Removal and Vacancy.

Any Park Commissioner may be removed at the discretion of the Geauga County Probate Judge as provided in Section 1545.06 of the Ohio Revised Code. No such removal shall be made without giving such Park Commissioner not less than ten days' notice and a full opportunity to be heard in his own behalf in a public hearing. The order removing such Park Commissioner shall state the reasons therefor and shall be entered upon the records of the probate court. In case of such removal, or in case of other vacancy in the office of Park Commissioner, the vacancy shall be filled by the judge by appointment for the unexpired term. In the case of removal or in the case of a vacancy occurring for any other reason, such vacancy shall be filled by the Geauga County Probate Judge by appointment for the unexpired term.

Section 6. Reappointment.

Any member of the Board may be reappointed at the end of his or her term of service, if the Geauga County Probate Judge makes such reappointment.

Section 7. Designation of Officers.

The officers of the Russell Township Park District shall be elected by members of the Board and shall be as follows:

- (a) Chairman. The Chairman shall preside at all meetings, shall sign all documents authorized by the Board, shall make all committee assignments, shall be responsible for all reports required by law, and generally perform all duties incident to such office.
- (b) Treasurer. The Treasurer shall act as custodian of the Board's funds and as fiscal officer for the Russell Township Park District Park and shall certify funds for any expenditure or contract which the Board approves if he or she determines that such funds are available and unencumbered.
- (c) Such other officers as may be necessary for the efficient conduct of the activities of the Russell Township Park District.

Section 8. Election of Officers.

The election of officers shall be held at the annual meeting of the Russell Township Park District or at a special meeting called for that purpose. The election shall be by a majority vote of the members of the Board for the nominees to the respective offices. Balloting shall continue until a majority vote is obtained from the members for each office.

Section 9. Employment of Other Persons.

The Board may employ a secretary and such other employees as are necessary in the performance of the powers conferred in such sections. For the purposes of acquiring, planning, developing, protecting, maintaining, or improving lands and facilities thereon under section 1545.11 of the Ohio Revised Code, and for other types of assistance which it finds necessary in carrying out its duties under Chapter 1545 of the Ohio Revised Code, the Board may hire and contract for professional, technical, consulting, and other special services.

If the Board appoints a secretary, such secretary shall keep an accurate record of all meetings of the Board, whether regular, special or emergency meetings, give all notices required by law and all notices required by the By-Laws of the Russell Township Park District. He or she shall perform such duties as may be required by the Chairman or other members of the Board. At the expiration of his or her term of office, he or she shall deliver all books, papers or property of the Russell Township Park District to the Chairman, or his or her successor.

Section 10. Contracts and Purchases.

In carrying out its duties, the Board may purchase goods. In procuring any goods, the Board shall contract as a contracting authority under Ohio Revised Code Sections 307.86 to

through 307.910 of the Ohio Revised Code inclusive, to the same extent and with the same limitations as a board of county commissioners.

In procuring services, the Board shall contract in the manner and under the following procedures established by the By-Laws of the Board as required under Section 1545.09 of the Ohio Revised Code:

- (a) No contract of the Board involving the expenditure of money shall become effective until the Treasurer certifies that there are funds for the Board otherwise unappropriated sufficient to provide therefor. The Treasurer shall issue a warrant to disburse the funds of the Board upon order of the Board, evidenced by the certificate of the Treasurer.
- (b) Any contract for the purchase of goods, employment of personnel and for services shall require a majority vote of the Board, and be evidenced by two signatures on each check or purchase order.
- (c) Any acquisition of land will require a majority vote of the Board, regardless of whether any money will be expended in such acquisition. The Board of Park Commissioners may sell and dispose of land it has acquired and which is not necessary for the purposes for which it was acquired with the approval of the Geauga County Probate Court as provided in Section 1545.12 of the Ohio Revised Code. The Board may also lease or permit the use of any of its land for purposes not inconsistent with the purposes for which such lands were acquired, and upon such terms as the Board deems advisable.
- (d) In the event of an emergency, the Chairman shall be deemed authorized, after considering the competence, ability, availability and price of any person, firm, or corporation, with respect to any services or goods, to hire the person, firm, or corporation and to execute a contract with such person, firm or corporation on behalf of the Board, provided that the Chairman shall report such action to each member of the Board by telephone, e-mail or facsimile transmission within one (1) workday of such action and by written summary of such action containing the determination and the reasons therefore at the next meeting of the Board for ratification of the emergency contract by the Board.

#### Section 11. Donations.

The Board may accept donations of money or other property. The Board may act as trustees of land, money or other property and use and administer the same as stipulated by the donor or as provided in the trust agreement, subject to approval of each donation or trust by the Geauga County Probate Judge before acceptance by the Board.

#### Section 12. Police Powers.

The Board may designate certain employees as police officers to exercise police powers within and adjacent to the lands under the jurisdiction and control of such Board. Before

exercising such power, such employees shall take an oath and give a bond to the State in such sum as the Board prescribes for the proper performance of their duties in such respect.

### ARTICLE III MEETINGS

#### Section 1. Annual Meeting.

The annual meeting of the Russell Township Park District shall be held at a location within Russell Township designated by the Board on the second Monday of January of each year at the hour designated in the written notice therefor.

#### Section 2. Regular Meeting.

The regular meeting of the Russell Township Park District shall be held on the second Monday of every month at 7:00 p.m. at a previously designated location within Russell Township, or other location designated by the Board and provided in the public notice.

#### Section 3. Special or Emergency Meeting.

A special or emergency meeting of the Board may be held at any time upon call of the Chairman or a majority of the members of the Board. Written notice of a special meeting shall be delivered to the Board by regular mail or given by telephone, email, or personally served on each Park Commissioner by the Secretary of the Board at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the special meeting. Failure of such member to receive notice of a special meeting shall not invalidate such meeting or any of its proceedings. Written notice is not required for an emergency meeting.

#### Section 4. Quorum.

A minimum of two (2) members constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Board, and a vote of two (2) members present at the meeting shall be sufficient for conduct of Russell Township Park District business.

#### Section 5. Public Notice of Meetings.

All meetings of the Russell Township Park District shall conform to the notice requirements established by Section 121.11 of the Ohio Revised Code (also known as the "Sunshine Law") as follows:

- (a) A schedule of the regular meetings of the Board, including information as to the time and place, shall be posted on the Park District's website. In the event of a cancellation or change of a regularly scheduled meeting date, the Board will make every reasonable effort, including the use of newspaper notice, to notify all interested parties of such change. The news media and persons requesting direct notification shall be notified of such change as soon as possible.

- (b) When a special meeting of the Board has been scheduled, notice of such special meeting shall be posted on the Park District's website and notice of such special meeting shall be mailed or otherwise served (such as by way or email or facsimile) to all persons requesting such notification as provided by these rules. No special meeting shall be held unless at least twenty-four (24) hours advance notice has been given to the news media that have requested notification except in the event of an emergency requiring immediate official action. In the event of an emergency meeting, the member or members calling such meeting shall immediately notify the news media that have requested notification of the time, place and purpose of the meeting.
- (c) Any person may request reasonable advance notification of all meetings of the Board including mailing of the agenda of the meeting, if requested, or by emailing or faxing such advance notice. If requested notice by mail, such person shall provide the Board with self-addressed and stamped envelopes. In the case of a special or emergency meeting, the Board will make a reasonable effort to notify such persons by email or telephone if mailed notice will not be timely.
- (d) The minutes of the regular, special or emergency meetings of the Board shall be promptly recorded and open to the public for inspection.
- (e) The Board may hold an executive session only at a regular or special meeting for the sole purpose of the consideration of any of the following matters:
  - (1) to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official, licensee, or regulated individual, or the investigation of charges or complaints against a public employee or official, or regulated individual, unless the employee or official, licensee or regulated official requests a public hearing;
  - (2) to consider the purchase of property, or for the sale of property at competitive bidding, if premature disclosure of information would give an unfair competitive or bargaining advantage to a person whose personal, private interest is adverse to the general public interest;
  - (3) conferences with an attorney for the Board concerning disputes involving the Board that are the subject of pending or imminent court action;
  - (4) preparing for, conducting or reviewing negotiations or bargaining sessions with public employees concerning their compensation or other terms and conditions of their employment;
  - (5) matters required to be kept confidential by federal law or rules or State statutes;
  - (6) specialized details of security arrangements where disclosure of the matters discussed could reasonably be expected to jeopardize the security of the public body or office; and

- (7) to consider confidential information related to the marketing plans, specific business strategy, production techniques, trade secrets, or personal financial statements of an applicant for economic development assistance, or to negotiations with other political subdivisions respecting requests for economic development assistance, provided that both of the following conditions apply: (a) the information is directly related to a request for economic development assistance that is to be provided or administered under any provision of Chapter 715., 725., 1724., or 1728. or sections 701.07, 3735.67 to 3735.70, 5709.40 to 5709.43, 5709.61 to 5709.69, 5709.73 to 5709.75, or 5709.77 to 5709.81 of the Revised Code, or that involves public infrastructure improvements or the extension of utility services that are directly related to an economic development project; and (b) a unanimous quorum of the public body determines, by a roll call vote, that the executive session is necessary to protect the interests of the applicant or the possible investment or expenditure of public funds to be made in connection with the economic development project.

#### ARTICLE IV COMMITTEES

Section 1. Designation of Committee Members.

The Chairman of the Board shall be responsible for the appointment of standing committee members, and for the creation of special committees and the appointment of their members.

Section 2. Standing Committees.

The Board shall act as a committee of the whole for all standing committees.

Section 3. Committees of the Board shall be considered public bodies for the purposes of compliance with Ohio's Sunshine Law in Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code and subject to Ohio's Public Records Act in Section 149.43 of the Ohio Revised Code.

#### ARTICLE V RECORDS

Section 1. Custodian of Records.

The Secretary of the Russell Township Park District shall be the custodian of all of the records of the Board excepting Board records which may properly be in the custody of the Treasurer of the Board. The Board shall compile and publish records and information relating to the Russell Township Park District and other proceedings and functions of the Board and shall keep an accurate and permanent public record of all of its proceedings.



Section 2. Records Available to Public.

In accordance with Ohio Public Records Law, any person may inspect and request copies of the public records of the Board.

ARTICLE VI  
ETHICS

Section 1. The Board and all of its employees are bound by Ohio's Ethics Laws as codified in Chapters 102 and 2921 of the Ohio Revised Code and as interpreted by the courts of Ohio and by the Opinions of the Ohio Ethics Commission and shall act in full compliance therewith. Additionally, the Board and all of its employees shall not violate any other provision of Ohio Law including, but not limited to, bribery and theft prohibitions. To assist with compliance of the Ethics Laws, the Board and its employees shall disclose to the Chairman any potential conflicts of interest as they become known.

ARTICLE VII  
REPEAL AND AMENDMENT OF BY-LAWS

Section 1.

In accordance with Sections 1545.09 and 731.21 of the Ohio Revised Code, these By-Laws may be repealed or amended by a majority vote of the Board at a meeting called for that purpose.