

RESOLUTION 2022-12

Re: Camp Spelman investigation of transfer options

- WHEREAS:** The Portage Park District purchased the 58-acre property known as Camp Spelman in Franklin Township in 2005 with restrictions on the deed that limit uses to those associated with conservation, education and recreation, and
- WHEREAS:** The property features include mature woods, high quality wetlands, meadow and approximately 10 acres of an approximately 13-acre manmade lake constructed in approximately 1955, with the remaining lake acreage on private properties, and
- WHEREAS:** The property had a history of use by Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, as a church camp, and as the site of a summer day camp by Kent Parks and Recreation prior to park district acquisition. The Park District has continued to allow group use of the property on a permit-only basis with public interest declining significantly over the years, and
- WHEREAS:** In 2019, the Park District requested that the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Dam Safety inspect the dam and appurtenances to determine regulatory requirements. That inspection resulted in its first-ever classification as a Class I dam now under regulation by ODNR due to the downstream homes that would be impacted in the event of dam failure. The Park District owns the earthen dam; the primary and emergency spillways are on an adjacent private property, and
- WHEREAS:** The Park District proceeded with the initial requirements of regulatory compliance, including removing woody vegetation from the dam, hiring qualified engineers to develop an Operations Maintenance and Inspection Manual (approved by ODNR) and Emergency Action Plan (now in its final draft stage), informing the PC Emergency Management Agency and obtaining rough cost estimates for options which include continued maintenance of the dam or removal of the dam with restoration of the lake to its previous state of wetlands, and
- WHEREAS:** The Board discussed the immediate costs of required improvements, along with ongoing inspections and maintenance, relative to the overall public interest, potential uses and benefits of continuing to maintain the dam over time, NOW THEREFORE BE IT
- RESOLVED:** The Board of Commissioners of the Portage Park District that maintaining the Camp Spelman Lake poses an unreasonable financial liability to the Park District due to investments in mandated improvements and ongoing maintenance, which would be an imprudent use of funds relative to the minimal public use and benefit from maintaining the lake. The Board hereby directs the Executive Director to investigate the sale or transfer of Camp Spelman including the following steps:
1. Continue to consult with legal counsel and the Portage County Probate Court Judge on the status of Camp Spelman and the Park District's possible transfer or sale of the property, as-is, by public bid per Ohio Revised Code 1545.12

2. Contact nearby public entities to determine their interest in owning and managing Camp Spelman as-is, for possible transfer from the Park District.
3. Inform the neighbors, other lakeside landowners and downstream property owners who would be potentially impacted and request their phone and email contact information for notification purposes in the event of an emergency.

Upon a motion by Hrdy and second by Orashan, the vote was as follows:

Scott McKinney absent; Allan Orashan Yes; Tom Hrdy Yes; Charles Engelhart Yes; Kurt Ruehr Yes

I certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a resolution passed and action taken in an open meeting on
March 28, 2022


Christine Craycroft, Executive Director