



**Russell Township  
Citizens' 511 Park  
Commission  
Report and  
Recommendations**



March 2017

## INTRODUCTION

The Russell Township Trustees, along with many of the residents, desire to establish a Park Commission that is focused solely on the needs and desires of Russell Township. In order to have a Park Commission that is exclusive to Russell Township, and not the county, it is recommended that a new Russell Township Park Commission be formed and voted upon at the next General Election, pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 511.

This proposed Park Commission would answer to the Russell Township Trustees and the residents of Russell Township. Input and guidance from both Trustees and residents would be considered by the new Park Commission when deciding policies and making decisions.

## MISSION

- Conservation
  - Protection and preservation of all designated properties and natural life.
  - Preserve and expand the green space in Russell Township.
  - Implement conservation restrictions to ensure the future of our protected land.
- Educational opportunities
  - When possible, potential educational opportunities will be considered as part of the ongoing efforts to broaden the understanding and capabilities of our community.
- Historic preservation
  - When appropriate, preservation of historical landmarks and buildings will be taken into consideration.
  - Appropriate use of these facilities would be discussed with the Trustees and input taken from the residents to ensure the suitable use-cases are implemented.

## BY-LAWS

### ARTICLE I: STATEMENT AND PURPOSE

Russell Township Citizens' 511 Park District ("Citizens' Park District") is established in accordance with Chapter 511 of the Ohio Revised Code and shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of that chapter. The Citizens' Park District was created to exercise the powers and duties set forth in Section 511.23 of the Ohio Revised Code to locate, establish, improve, maintain, and operate a public park or parks. In exercising those powers and duties, the goal of the Citizens' Park District is to be transparent and responsive to the citizens of Russell Township. The priorities of the Citizens' Park District are to conserve, preserve, and protect the natural resources of Russell Township while allowing for sustainable and reasonable enjoyment and appreciation of those resources.

### ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP AND OFFICERS

The Board of Park Commissioners shall consist of three (3) Russell Township residents appointed by the Russell Township Trustees pursuant to Section 511.19 of the Ohio Revised Code, unless the Township Trustees decide pursuant to that section to convert the Board to a five-member board. The officers of this Board shall consist of a Chair and a Vice-Chair who shall be elected by the Board annually at its June meeting.

### ARTICLE III: DUTIES OF OFFICERS

The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Board and with the consent of the Board shall appoint all committees of the Board. In the absence or disability of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall serve in place of the chair.

### ARTICLE IV: REGULAR SESSIONS

The regular sessions of the Board shall be held once a month on a regular day at a regular time unless otherwise ordered by the Board. Regular session day and time are to be determined by action of the Board. All regular sessions shall be open to the public and shall allow for a period of public comment.

## ARTICLE V: EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

The Board may hold an executive session only after a majority of the Board determines, by a roll call vote, to hold such a session and only during a regular, special, or emergency meeting and only for the purpose of consideration of personnel, land acquisition, litigation, security arrangements, collective bargaining, or other matters permitted or required to be kept confidential by federal law, federal rule, or state statutes.

## ARTICLE VI: SPECIAL SESSIONS

Special sessions of the Board shall be held upon call of the Chair upon request by a member or members of the Board. Notices of special sessions shall be given by telephone, and also mailed or emailed or personally served on each member, at least forty-eight (48) hours before the time of such session. If any member of the Board is out of the county or otherwise unavailable for a period of at least forty-eight (48) hours before such special session, failure of such member to receive notice of a special session shall not invalidate such session or any of its proceedings.

## ARTICLE VII: EMERGENCY SESSIONS

Emergency sessions of the Board may be held upon the call of the Chair upon the request of a member or members of the Board. Notices of emergency sessions shall be given by telephone or personally served on each member at least one (1) hour before the time of such session.

## ARTICLE VIII: QUORUM

Two (2) members shall constitute a quorum of the Board for any session. Action of the Board may be by motion or resolution. The affirmative votes of at least two (2) members shall be necessary to adopt any motion or resolution. All votes shall be taken by call of the roll and answered by yes, no, or abstain. Votes to abstain shall not be counted.

#### **ARTICLE IX: PUBLIC MEETINGS**

The Board shall perform its business, including the adoption of resolutions and motions, at public meetings held and conducted in accordance with applicable provisions of the Ohio Revised Code and these bylaws. A period for public comment shall be provided at each such meeting.

#### **ARTICLE X: PUBLIC RECORDS**

An accurate and permanent record of the proceedings and minutes of all sessions, regular or special, shall be maintained by the Fiscal Officer or Russell Township, and shall be and constitute the only evidence of the acts of the Board at such sessions when signed at the end of the records of such session by the presiding officer. The official custodian of all records of the Board shall be the Russell Township Fiscal Office.

#### **ARTICLE XI: AMENDING BYLAWS**

These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Board by an affirmative vote of two (2) members of the Board provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting.

#### **ARTICLE XII: RECORDS RETENTION**

As a special taxing district once voted in, the Russell Township Citizens' Park Commission will form a Records Commission comprised of the chairperson, fiscal representative, and legal representative of the governing board as pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 149.412. This commission will adopt and adhere to a records retention schedule and meet at least once every twelve (12) months upon the call of the chairperson. No record will be removed or destroyed unless following the proper disposal as per the adopted records retention schedule.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

To eliminate confusion within the Township, renaming the 511 Park Board to the "Russell Township Citizens' Park Board" is not only distinctive, but does serve to also distinguish between the ORC 511 and the existing ORC 1545.

Consideration should first be given to public approval of the Russell Township Citizens' Park Commission in November 2017 before a levy is placed before the citizens. This will ensure that the fledgling Russell Township Citizens' Park Commission receives the full support of the Russell community.