

## **PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST POLICY**

It is the policy of the Park District to strictly adhere to the Ohio Public Records law.

### **Public Records**

In accordance with the Ohio Revised Code [ORC§149.43] the Park District defines “records” as including any document – paper, electronic (including, but not limited to, e-mail), or other format – that is created or received by, or comes under the jurisdiction of, the Park District that documents the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the Park District. All records of the Park District are public unless they are specifically exempt from disclosure under the Ohio Revised Code. (Exemptions include, but are not limited to, confidential law enforcement investigatory records, medical records, and records the release of which is prohibited by state or federal law such as security and infrastructure records, records subject to attorney-client privilege and records subject to a constitutional right of privacy.)

It is the policy of the Park District that, as required by Ohio law, records will be organized and maintained so that they are readily available for inspection or copying. Record retention schedules are to be updated regularly and posted prominently.

### **Requests for Public Records**

Public records may be available on-line. Requests for public records not posted on-line shall be directed to the Executive Director, or their designees.

Although no specific language is required to make a request, the requester must at least identify the records requested with sufficient clarity to allow the Park District to identify, retrieve, and review the records. If it is not clear what records are being sought, the request may be denied but the records custodian must allow the requester an opportunity to revise the request by informing the requester of the manner in which the Park District maintains its records and how records are accessed in the ordinary course.

The requester does not have to put a records request in writing, and does not have to provide his or her identity or the intended use of the requested public record. If a written request or disclosure of the requester’s identity or disclosure of the requester’s intended use would enhance the ability of the Park District to identify, locate or deliver the public records sought, and if the Park District first tells the requester that neither a written request nor the requester’s identity nor the requester’s intended use is required, then the Park District may ask for the request be in writing, and/or for the requester’s identity, and/or for the requester’s intended use.

### **Provision of Public Records**

Requested public records are to be made available for inspection promptly, during regular business hours. If the requester asks for copies of public records, they must be made available within a reasonable period of time. “Prompt” and “reasonable” take into account the volume of records requested; the proximity of the location where the records are stored; and the necessity for any legal review or redactions of the records requested.

If the requester asks for a copy of a public record, the Park District shall allow the requester to choose to have the record duplicated on paper, on the same medium on which the Park District keeps it, or on any other medium on which the Park District determines it reasonably can be duplicated as part of its normal operations.

The Park District shall require the requester to pay for copies of public records, and shall ordinarily require that such payment be made in advance of the copies being supplied. The charge for paper copies and for computer files downloaded to compact discs shall reflect the actual cost to the Park District. The

current charge for photo copies will be updated annually and posted accordingly for black and white and color printed pages. There is no charge for documents sent by e-mail.

The Park District shall send copies of requested public records by U.S. mail or any other means within a reasonable time if the requester requests such delivery. The Park District shall require advance payment for costs of mailing or other transmission. The number of records requested by a person that the Park District will transmit by U.S mail shall be limited to not more than 10 per month, unless the person certified to the Park District in writing that the person does not intend to use or forward the records or the information in them for commercial purposes.

At the time of the request, the person making the request shall be informed of the estimated length of time required to gather the records. If a request seeks a voluminous number of copies or requires research or extensive redaction, the requester should be informed of an estimated number of business days it will take to satisfy the request, an estimated cost if copies are requested, and any items within the request that may be exempt from disclosure.

### **Limitations and Denials of Records Requests**

If a request for records is denied, the Park District must provide the requester with an explanation, including legal authority. If the initial request was in writing, the explanation must also be in writing.

If portions of a requested document are public and portions are exempt, the exempt portions are to be redacted and the rest released. Redactions must be plainly visible or the requester must be notified of any redactions. Each redaction must be accompanied by a supporting explanation, including legal authority.

### **Distribution and Posting of Policy**

This policy will be posted on-line and in a conspicuous place in the central administrative office of the Park District. This policy will be provided to the Park District employees who have custody of Park District records, and those employees shall acknowledge in writing their receipt of the policy. This policy will also be included in any employee handbook.