

**Jon King**

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**From:** Steve Williams <willise79@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 26, 2021 9:26 PM  
**To:** Brenda Plank; Brenda Plank (bkplank@comcast.net); Carol Griffith; Carol Griffith (carol@griffithrealty.com); Carol Reader; Carol Sue Reader (judgecsr@gmail.com); Douglas Helzerman; Douglas Helzerman (helzdoug@yahoo.com); Jay Drick; Jay Gross; Jay Gross (jaygross38@gmail.com); Kate Lawrence; Kate Lawrence; Mitchell Zajac; Mitchell Zajac; Wes Nakagiri  
**Cc:** Amy Mcmillan; Nathan Burd; Robert Marans  
**Subject:** Re: [EXT] Re: Steve Williams HCMA reappointment request  
**Attachments:** Metroparks say you're racist if you are white, Get involved and stop this hate-filled narrative.html; HCMA revenue by county.pdf; Livingston County specific Metroparks data as of May 2021.docx

Hello Livingston County Commissioners,

Below is the email from Natalie confirming that my full HCMA Commissioner reappointment application was received before the April 30 application deadline. As Commissioner stated during the Monday May 24 full Board meeting, Livingston County has a longstanding policy of not accepting applications accepted after the posted deadline.

Despite being subjected to unfounded, false attacks before and during Monday's BOC meeting, I am still willing to continue my service to Livingston County by being reappointed as our HCMA Commissioner.

The attachments and links included in this email provided definitive proof that I was telling the truth in my HCMA appointment application, during the May 19 Personnel Committee meeting and during the May 24 LC BOC full Board meeting. You are welcome to contact me with any questions and I have copied HCMA Board of Commissioners Chair Robert Marans and HCMA Director Amy McMillan on this email in case you want to contact them directly.

Commissioner Nakagiri and several people who spoke at the call to the public in response to his call to action emails (below and attached) have stated that the Huron Clinton Metroparks are experiencing "unfavorable financial trends". Nothing is further from the truth. As you can see for yourself in the published HCMA Meeting Minutes and Financial Statements <https://www.metroparks.com/about-us/board-of-commissioners/board-packets-and-minutes/> per HCMA Chief of Finance Rebecca Franchock the Metroparks are in excellent financial shape.

Some speakers claimed that the HCMA Metroparks finances should be audited, implying that audits are not currently performed. I corrected those misstatements during my testimony and you should be aware that HCMA Financial Statements, Board Packets and Board minutes are available for review online going back to 2010. This is essentially the same information as Livingston County makes available where Budget Books are only available back to 2011 but Single Audits and Financial Statements are available from 2009 on.

Tami Carlone stated during her testimony that HCMA Metroparks administrative costs are excessive. However, if you examine administrative costs for Livingston County, HCMA and similar organizations, you will find that is not true. In addition, while Livingston County government services a population of under 200,000 within just 585 square miles, the Metroparks provide services for approximately 4.6 million residents in 13 sprawling facilities spread over 3,310 square miles.

This is the link to the FY2019 independent audit: <https://www.metroparks.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/128777-Huron-Clinton-Metroparks-Authority-CAFR-1219-Final.pdf?x91894>

Some speakers were giving the impression that Livingston County contributed \$2M toward the \$6M arrangement with the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy partnership. Actually \$2M is the entire annual property tax millage collected from Livingston County or just 6% of total tax revenues collected from the five counties. With two Metroparks within our borders and another four just a few miles away, Livingston County receives a very outsized benefit from the Metroparks. We are the only one of the five counties without a Parks Department, which saves Livingston County taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars. Livingston County contains just 4% of the population in the five Metroparks counties, yet because the HCMA Commissioners seats are not weighted by population as they are for Michigan legislators, county commissioners, SEMCOG Executive Committee members, etc. we receive a full 1/7 vote on the HCMA Board.

This is the link to the 2021 budget: <https://www.metroparks.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/2021-Budget-Document-compressed.pdf?x91894>

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The very negative image many Michiganders and other Americans have of Livingston County and Howell in particular is real and should be taken into account by all public officials who are interested in correcting the false narrative. I was not exaggerating during my call to the public statement Monday that I have had people from around the USA bring up Howell and Livingston County's supposed racist history when they find out where I am from. A quick Google search for Howell AND racism produces 1,210,000 results in a half-second. Some examples are listed below. As I said Monday, I certainly don't agree with the portrayal of Livingston County as a racist community and have fought that stereotype since grade school. Perhaps a transplant doesn't understand that perception, but it exists and ignoring that reality is a disservice to our residents. As you know, I did vote against funding for the DEI Speaker Series because I thought the cost was excessive, but I was the only HCMA Commissioner to vote against any portion of the program. If you appoint a Livingston County HCMA Commissioner who continuously attacks and votes against one small part of Metroparks programming, it will only reinforce negative stereotypes about our county including the claim that we are intolerant and not open to hearing other points of view.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Howell,\\_Michigan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Howell,_Michigan)

<https://thelivingstonpost.com/death-of-a-klansman-25-years-later-how-the-sick-legacy-of-bob-miles-continues-to-haunt-howell/>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/23/us/auctioning-memories-in-a-town-haunted-by-the-klan.html>

<https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/michigan/2020/06/18/michigan-worker-suspended-suggesting-howell-would-first-burn/3218245001/>

[https://www.mlive.com/news/ann-arbor/2014/03/a\\_tale\\_of\\_two\\_towns\\_newest\\_rac.html](https://www.mlive.com/news/ann-arbor/2014/03/a_tale_of_two_towns_newest_rac.html)

<https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/michigan/2021/03/05/michigan-student-says-school-officials-ignored-racist-taunts/4594116001/>

Unlike what many people who spoke during the Monday BOC meeting call to the public, the Metroparks DEI program

- is NOT directed at children but only presented to adult employees
- does NOT include any aspects of Critical Race Theory
- has been fully vetted by the HCMA legal counsel to insure that it abides by state and national non-discrimination laws. That was done at my request.
- has NOT resulted in any complaints from Metroparks customers throughout the five county region until it was used as a way to derail my reappointment as Livingston County's HCMA Commissioner.

Respectfully,

Steve Williams  
mobile (906)370-2242

On Wed, Apr 28, 2021 at 12:20 PM Commissioners <[commissioners@livgov.com](mailto:commissioners@livgov.com)> wrote:

Good afternoon,

Your application was received with three pages attached. Feel free to email me if there is anything else you would like to have included with your submission to the Commissioners.

Thanks,

*Natalie*

**From:** Steve Williams <[willise79@gmail.com](mailto:willise79@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 27, 2021 1:56 PM  
**To:** Commissioners <[commissioners@livgov.com](mailto:commissioners@livgov.com)>  
**Subject:** Re: [EXT] Re: Steve Williams HCMA reappointment request

"The e-mail below is from an external source. Please do not open attachments or click links from an unknown or suspicious origin."

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Hi Natalie,

I came to the same conclusion earlier and thought that my application was submitted correctly. Can you tell if it is in the system? I included three attachments.

Thanks,

Steve

## Livingston County specific Huron Clinton Metroparks data

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During the pandemic the Metroparks were able to stay open and provide a safe, healthy environment for Livingston County residents. Estimated park attendance during 2020 grew to eight million visitors. Currently, the Metroparks are again seeing strong demand from the public:

- General park attendance is up 43% above average.
- Year-to-date rounds of golf are also up significantly.
- Rounds of golf at Huron Meadows specifically (which is located within Livingston County) is up nearly three times the three-year average.

The following is a summary of barcode scanning activity in Livingston County for the period between Aug. 16 through Sept. 15, 2020.

Place	Zip Code	2019 Passes	Annual Pass	Barcode Error	Daily Pass	Total	Place Total
BRIGHTON	48116		1,874	3		1877	3926
	48114	1	2,048			2049	
HOWELL	48855		251			251	1544
	48843	4	1,289			1293	
PINCKNEY	48169		607			607	607
FENTON	48430		286	2		288	288
HARTLAND	48353		262			262	262
GREGORY	48137		149			149	149
FOWLerville	48836		106			106	106
LINDEN	48451		62	2		64	64
LAKELAND	48143		36			36	36
WEBBERVILLE	48892		31			31	31
HAMBURG	48139		20			20	20
STOCKBRIDGE	49285		15			15	15
BYRON	48418		10			10	10
PERRY	48872		2			2	2
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>7,048</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7,060</b>	<b>7,060</b>

The Metroparks are a stable, well managed organization which has worked to live within its available funding and to meet its obligations to the community and employees.

One example of this, is the effort to fund the Other Post Employment Obligations associated with retiree health care. The Metroparks are currently fully funded (105%). In addition, the Defined Benefit Pension obligation is funded at more than 75% using updated, conservative valuation criteria.

Livingston County contributes six percent of the Metroparks Property Tax revenue (\$2.0 million). Total property tax revenue from all five counties is \$33.9 million.

At the end of 2020 the Metroparks unassigned fund balance was \$23.9 million, which represents 43% of annual revenue.

During 2020, the Metroparks employed 105 Livingston County Residents.

**Initiatives while Commissioner Williams has served:**

- Metroparks partnered with schools in Livingston County to help increase science and STEP testing scores (in the past Pinckney and Fowlerville).
- Metroparks have also engaged with library senior programs as well as other service organizations throughout the county.
- Partnered with Fowlerville County Fair and other agricultural activities including 4H and the local farm bureau agencies promoting agricultural science.
- The Metroparks are providing hot spots through a library program in Livingston County to help close the digital divide.
- Livingston County libraries are also participating in the Michigan Activities Pass which provides free access to the Metroparks.

**From:** Wes Nakagiri <[WNakagiri@livgov.com](mailto:WNakagiri@livgov.com)>

**Date:** April 23, 2021 at 10:06:21 PM EDT

**To:** Brenda Plank <[BPlank@livgov.com](mailto:BPlank@livgov.com)>, "Brenda Plank ([bkplank@comcast.net](mailto:bkplank@comcast.net))" <[bkplank@comcast.net](mailto:bkplank@comcast.net)>, "Carol Reader ([carol@griffithrealty.com](mailto:carol@griffithrealty.com))" <[carol@griffithrealty.com](mailto:carol@griffithrealty.com)>, Carol Reader <[CReader@livgov.com](mailto:CReader@livgov.com)>, "Carol Sue Reader ([judgecsr@livgov.com](mailto:judgecsr@livgov.com))" <[judgecsr@livgov.com](mailto:judgecsr@livgov.com)>, "Douglas Helzerman ([helzdoug@yahoo.com](mailto:helzdoug@yahoo.com))" <[helzdoug@yahoo.com](mailto:helzdoug@yahoo.com)>, Jay Drick <[JDrick@livgov.com](mailto:JDrick@livgov.com)>, "Jay Gross ([jaygross38@gmail.com](mailto:jaygross38@gmail.com))" <[jaygross38@gmail.com](mailto:jaygross38@gmail.com)>, Kate Lawrence <[KLawrence@livgov.com](mailto:KLawrence@livgov.com)>, "Mitchell S. Zajac" <[MZajac@livgov.com](mailto:MZajac@livgov.com)>, [mitchell.s.zajac@gmail.com](mailto:mitchell.s.zajac@gmail.com), Wes Nakagiri <[WNakagiri@livgov.com](mailto:WNakagiri@livgov.com)>

**Cc:** Nathan Burd <[NBurd@livgov.com](mailto:NBurd@livgov.com)>

**Subject:** Huron-Clinton Metroparks Analysis

In preparation for Monday presentation by the Director of Huron-Clinton Metropark Authority (HCMA) I re

- The HCMA presentation
- The proposed 2021 HCMA Budget

- The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) program in place at HCMA

I summarized my findings in the attached PowerPoint document.

It is troubling to see the unfavorable financial trends in place at HCMA. These trends are exacerbated by HC

In addition to consuming precious taxpayer resources, DEI will only serve to further divide our society along

PS: I surfed around looking at Meeting Minutes for the HCMA. I wanted to gain an understanding of what ty spending \$6 million on the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy. Surprising given HCMA's unfavorable financia

Regards,

Wes Nakagiri

Commissioner – District 3

Livingston County Board of Commissioners

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517-540-8796