

# Drone Permit Policy

Adopted: February 8, 2021

Pursuant to the Fairfield County Park District Rules and Regulations (effective January 1, 2019) no drones may be operated in any Fairfield County Park District (FCPD) property without a permit. The Director of the FCPD is hereby authorized to issue permits for the operation of drones in FCPD property in accordance with this policy. The Director shall issue no more than one permit per property for any specific timeframe. The Director shall issue permits on a first-come, first-served basis, except that the operation of a drone by law enforcement for emergency situations shall always take precedent over any other permit issued by the Director.

## **1. Definitions.**

As used in this policy, the term “drone” means any powered unmanned aerial vehicle or unmanned aircraft system that uses aerodynamic forces to provide vehicle lift flown by a pilot via a ground control system or autonomously through use of an onboard computer.

As used in this policy, term “FCPD property” means any real property owned, leased, or operated by the Fairfield County Park District and the immediate reaches of the airspace above said real property, consisting of at least as much of the space above the ground as can be used in connection with the real property (for purposes including, but not limited to, conservation and public enjoyment of the property).

## **2. Law enforcement use.**

All local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies shall be considered to have a standing permit to operate drones in all FCPD properties when the operation of the drone is for a legitimate law enforcement purpose. When possible, law enforcement agencies should notify the Director in advance of their planned operation of a drone in FCPD properties.

## **3. Use by Political Subdivisions of the State of Ohio.**

All political subdivisions of the State of Ohio and the United States Government may apply to the Director for a permit to operate a drone in all FCPD properties for legitimate government purposes. The Director may issue such a permit without requiring said subdivisions to comply with other provisions of this policy.

## **4. Contractors operating on behalf of the Park District.**

The Director may issue a permit to operate a drone in any park to a contractor operating said drone on behalf of the Park District without requiring the contractor to comply with other provisions of this policy.

## **5. Commercial/recreational use.**

The Director may issue a permit to operate a drone for commercial or recreational use in certain FCPD properties provided the following conditions are met by the permit applicant:

- (a) The commercial or recreational use of drones shall be permitted only for scientific purposes, educational purposes, or other purposes of public or great general interest. Such purposes include, but are not limited to, activities that serve to protect and conserve the natural and



historical features of Fairfield County and inspire outdoor exploration. The determination of whether the proposed use of a drone serves a scientific purpose, educational purpose, or other purpose of public or great general interest shall be left to the sound discretion of the Director. In the event that a permit is denied, an applicant may request review of the decision at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners. If the Board determines that the proposed use of the drone does serve a scientific purpose, educational purpose, or other purpose of public or great general interest, it may authorize the issuance of the permit provided that all other requirements of this policy have been met.

- (b) Applicants shall pay a fee of \$100 before a permit for the operation of a drone is issued (said fee shall not be required if the application for a permit is denied). In addition to said fee, Applicants shall be required to pay any additional costs deemed necessary by the FCPD associated with the proposed flight, including, but not limited to, the cost of Sheriff Deputies in the event a road or park area must be closed; additional park staff for crowd control; and/or the temporary movement of utility lines or other park infrastructure.
- (c) Permits for the commercial or recreational operation of a drone shall not be issued for Stebelton Park at Rock Mill, Wahkeena Nature Preserve, or Wagner Preserve (heron rookery) and/or other location used specifically for conservation/preservation of wildlife (flora or fauna).
- (d) Applicants shall provide proof of a minimum \$2,000,000.00 liability insurance policy. Applicants shall execute an indemnification agreement with the Park District prior to the operation of the drone.
- (e) Applicants shall provide proof of Remote Pilot Certificate under Small UAS Rule (Part 107) with the applications.
- (f) If the proposed operation of the drone is over a populated area, applicants shall provide proof of Part 107 Operational Waiver from FAA allowing drone to fly over a populated area.
- (g) Applicants shall provide proof of a registered, UAS certificate number, including address type/model of UAS, weight/dimensions, power source.
- (h) Applicants shall provide a valid, government-issued photo IDs with their applications.
- (i) During operation of the drone:
  - i. Pilots shall first conduct risk assessment in case of malfunction.
  - ii. Pilots shall only operate a drone in FCPD properties during the times and at the location specified in the permit.
  - iii. Only pilots listed on the permit shall operate the drone in the permitted location.
  - iv. Pilots may not be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol during the operation of the drone in FCPD properties.
  - v. A spotter shall be required at all times during the operation of the drone in FCPD



properties.

- vi. Pilots must obey all FAA rules; anyone breaking FAA rules will be reported to FAA.
  - vii. Pilots must obey on-site instructions received from FCPD staff or authorized representatives.
- (j) All applications shall be made on the form attached to this policy and shall not be considered by the Director until complete.

**6. Non-compliance.**

Failure to comply with this policy shall result in the revocation of any permit issued under this policy and may be considered a violation of the FCPD Rules and Regulations and/or Ohio Revised Code Section 1545.99. The FCPD reserves the right to refuse to issue subsequent permits to any applicant who has previously been found to be in violation of this policy.

