

MINUTES OF A REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS OF THE PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK HELD THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2009 AT 6:00 P.M. AT WEST RIDGE CENTER IN THE BOARD ROOM, 636 RIDGE ROAD, HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS 60035

Present: President Werhane, Vice President Waxman, Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Rosenbaum and Commissioner Weiss

Also Present: Executive Director McElroy, Director Baker, Director Coutts, Director Stumpf, Director Swan, Manager Carlo, Manager Meo, Manager Meyer, Manager Naatz, Manager Smith, Supervisor Harkness, Supervisor Rivi, Landscape Architect Evans, MIS Specialist Huegel and Coordinator Stockdale

Guests: Pete Koukos, Mesirow Financial, and Rob Gardner

The Regular Meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

OPEN TO PUBLIC TO ADDRESS BOARD

CORRESPONDENCE – HARRIET AND LEONARD KLEIN LETTER

President Werhane read a letter from Harriet and Leonard Klein, neighbors to Foley's Pond, thanking staff for their hard work to renew Foley's Pond. President Werhane encouraged everyone to check out the new renovation and thanked the Kleins for their letter.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Board approved the following items on the Consent Agenda subject to attorney review.

Minutes of the September 10, 2009 Workshop and September 24, 2009 Regular Board Meeting, Bills and Payroll in the amount of \$973,490.16, IAPD Credentials Certificate, First and Final Payout/2009 Asphalt Project (Sunset Woods Tennis Courts)/MC Sport Systems, Inc./\$9,760.00, First and Final Payout/L. Fink Park Renovation Project/Leafblad Enterprises/\$44,525.00, First Payout/2009 Asphalt Project/Allstar Asphalt, Inc./\$93,645.00. First and Second Payouts/Skokie River Woods Wetland Restoration and Enhancement Project/JFNew/\$13,500.00, and Bid/L. Fink Park Tot Lot Surfacing Project/Rejection of All Bids.

Motion by Commissioner Weiss to accept the Consent Agenda as presented.
Seconded by Vice President Waxman.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Rosenbaum, Vice President Waxman, Commissioner Weiss, President Werhane

Nays: None

Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Director Swan highlighted a few items of interest to the Board:

1. The year-to-date tax receipts of \$10,291,512 represent 101% of the budgeted amount of \$10,197,000. This amount includes \$1,292,431 in real estate tax receipts collected for debt service payment. Last year's year-to-date figure was \$9,754,634.
2. The year-to-date net for the Recreation Fund is \$3,643,731 compared to \$3,265,025 a year ago.
3. The District is in receipt of \$9,000 in impact fees from the City of Highland Park and has also recorded \$125,000 from NSSRA for accessible projects in Highland Park including accessible features at Heller Nature Center as well as playground accessibility features at C. Snyder, Olson, Sherwood and Sunset Woods Parks.

Director Swan reported that staff is working diligently to prepare the proposed budget for fiscal year 2010-2011 which will be brought to the Board over the next several workshop meetings.

Commissioner Bernstein asked why the Recreation Fund Expenses went down \$50,000. Director Swan replied that this was due to timing and a reduction in certain salary accounts. Commissioner Bernstein also mentioned that income was up significantly, and commended and thanked staff for their hard work and efforts.

NEW BUSINESS

Parameters Ordinance No. 09-04 Authorizing Issuance of Not to Exceed \$1,300,000 General Obligation Limited Tax Park Bonds

Director Swan explained that the Parameters Ordinance is a regular course of business for the District which gives the President, Executive Director/Secretary and the Treasurer the authority to execute the sale of bonds. Director Swan introduced Pete Koukos, from Mesirow Financial, who was present to answer any questions. There were no questions or public comments.

Motion by Vice President Waxman to approve Parameters Ordinance No. 09-04.
Seconded by Commissioner Weiss.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Rosenbaum, Vice President Waxman, Commissioner Weiss, President Werhane

Nays: None

Motion carried.

Cagwood Consulting Contract

Executive Director McElroy stated that the District entered into a contract with Cagwood Consulting to help solicit outside funds for projects at both the federal and state levels. This contract expires November 10.

Manager Meyer and Executive Director McElroy met with Chris Ganschow, Cagwood Consulting, to discuss the services he could provide as the District moves forward. Mr. Ganschow has made many contacts and helped the District secure \$250,000 from the Capital Bill for the Rosewood Beach pavilion. The federal FY 2011 budget will begin early in 2010. There might be some stimulus money available specifically for lakefront projects. The District needs to keep the lakefront at the forefront, and Mr. Ganschow will seek funding both through the state and federal appropriations process, especially for environmental components. Staff recommended extending the contract with Cagwood Consulting, at the same fee, for an additional six months.

After discussion the Board agreed on extending the contract with Cagwood Consulting for a not-to-exceed six-month period.

Motion by Commissioner Weiss to approve an extension of the Cagwood Consulting Contract not to exceed six months. Seconded by Vice President Waxman.

Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Rosenbaum, Vice President Waxman, Commissioner Weiss, President Werhane

Nays: None

Motion carried.

Recreation Advisory Committee Report

Manager Naatz reported that the Recreation Advisory Committee met on Monday evening. Staff presented reports on camps, visual arts, early childhood programs, affiliates, the S.M.I.L.E. Fund, scholarships, special events and variety programs.

Comments/suggestions received from the committee included: offer more parent/child sports and nature classes; keep fees to a minimum; collaborate with the Library, the Art Center and other local organizations on joint programming; continue to utilize the School District to promote camps and programs; offer more options for middle school age children; and minimize the preschool offerings which lead to cancelled classes. Members also commented on how wonderful the instructors were at West Ridge.

Commissioner Rosenbaum commended staff on a great job and thanked the community for their involvement.

Heller Advisory Committee Report

Supervisor Smith reported that the Heller Advisory Committee met Tuesday evening. Staff reviewed Heller's school, public and preschool programs, summer camps, natural areas, beekeeping program and the recent renovation to the trails.

Discussion/suggestions included offering more 'green' programs and increasing awareness of Heller.

President Werhane stated that Heller is a well-kept secret that offers a variety of programs for all ages and thanked staff for reinstating and offering dog training classes.

Commissioner Weiss commented that Heller is the best place in town to have a birthday party and thanked staff for all that they do. Commissioner Bernstein suggested that as many parties are held at the Recreation Center of Highland Park, Heller rentals could be coordinated with the Recreation Center. Recreation Center staff should promote Heller as another option to increase awareness of Heller.

Lakefront Advisory Committee Report

Supervisor Harkness reported that the Lakefront Advisory Committee met on Tuesday evening. Staff presented season overviews on Park Avenue Beach, Rosewood Beach, and Moraine and Millard Parks.

Staff presented the following recommendations: a 2.5% fee increase for season launch and storage at Park Avenue; daily launching fees and seasonal parking decal fees would remain constant; enhance and continue to work with the Highland Park Police regarding parking at all lakefront facilities; closely monitor the testing and dredging process at Park Avenue; continue to work closely with the Lake County Health Department on bacterial levels at Rosewood Beach; and investigate a more permanent solution to the restrooms at Rosewood Beach.

Discussion and comments included: researching a second dog park; evaluating the options for the Central Park stairway; City use of lakefront properties for depositing excess snow during winter months; government monies available from the stimulus package for shorelines, ravines and bluffs; the canoe/kayak area at Rosewood Beach which has accumulated miscellaneous debris needs to be addressed; EPA concerns; and park districts seeking relief and legislation regarding EPA mandates.

End of Season Hidden Creek AquaPark Report

Manager Meo reviewed the 2009 season at Hidden Creek AquaPark with a PowerPoint presentation.

Hidden Creek was open for its 13th season. The concession stand was run by Stash's, the flooring in the offices and guard rooms were updated, and special events included Flick 'n Float, Family Poolside BBQs featuring local musicians, and the Fourth of July annual Float & Watch Fireworks. Season pass and overall attendance was down this year due to the weather. Out-of-District camp attendance and party rentals were also down due to weather-related cancellations, but Park District camp attendance was up.

Staff recommendations included: repaint locker rooms, family bathroom and concessions; paint pool surface; continue to replace old deck chairs; resurface the kiddie slide; investigate replacement of the kiddie play area roof; rebuild pool pumps for the speed and curly slides; upgrade the pool drain system; consider changes to membership fees/structure and the weather/pool closing policy; revisit pool hours for consistency with neighboring area pools; and repair the tiles in the pool basin.

Staff is currently working with Metro Design to upgrade the pool drain system in order to be fully compliant with the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act (VGBA).

Surveys were distributed to patrons and 104 surveys were returned. Positive comments were received about the staff and family BBQs, but there were concerns with the concession stand pricing and the changed hours of the facility. Discussion took place regarding making adjustments to the park such as: adding new features to enhance the facility; investigating concession and pricing options; and considering later hours of operation for after-work lap swimmers/exercisers.

Director Coutts commended Manager Meo and Supervisor Rivi for an outstanding job and the Board expressed their appreciation.

Carrol F. Snyder Park Improvements Update

Director Stumpf reported that the Carrol F. Snyder Park neighborhood advisory committee first met in May to choose their preference in play-style and design-type equipment for the park. Staff created a design based on the committee's needs and wants. Layout on-site confirmed the design which was sent again to the committee. The final design is now ready for the construction phase.

Director Stumpf introduced Landscape Architect Evans to update the Board on the project.

Landscape Architect Evans thanked the committee who was very helpful and knowledgeable throughout the process. He reviewed the changes/additions to the park which included: relocating a smaller sand play area to the northeast; the main structure, which is in a circuit play format, will be for ages 2-5 on the south side and ages 5-12 on the north side; installation of four elementary swings, two tot swings, a tandem seesaw and an arch net climber; possible shade structure over the sand area; addition of a water tap near the sand area; replacing some site amenities and landscaping; and the addition of a concrete curb around the perimeter of the playgrounds.

Commissioner Weiss stated that she loves how the District approaches the renovation of parks with neighborhood advisory committees. The neighbors are fortunate to be involved in the process and give their input. She complimented staff and thanked them for their hard work and efforts.

Commissioner Weiss also mentioned how fun it was to see the transformation of Fink Park during its renovation and encouraged everyone to visit Fink Park.

COMMISSIONER/COMMITTEE/STAFF REPORTS

Commissioner Bernstein noted that some District facilities now have hand washers. He wondered what precautions the District was taking in regard to the H1N1 virus and suggested putting the District's concerns and intentions on the website.

Commissioner Bernstein also commended Senior Athletic Supervisor Golmon, Athletic Supervisor Dumas and Heller staff on a great job assisting with the Northwood 3-on-3 Tournament.

Commissioner Weiss expressed her regret that the Haunted Hayride had to be cancelled this year due to weather and thanked staff for all of their hard work and efforts.

Commissioner Rosenbaum wished everyone a nice, safe holiday.

President Werhane encouraged people to enjoy the season's brilliant trees and colors throughout the City and parks.

Commissioner Rosenbaum stated that Sunset Valley Golf Course is in fabulous condition and encouraged everyone to take advantage of it before closing.

Executive Director McElroy stated that the Community Attitude and Interest Survey, which was approved by the Board in July, was being sent today and tomorrow to random households in a bright yellow envelope. She encouraged all to complete this survey which will help the District with a needs assessment and future planning. Results will be available in December on our website and a report will be given at the December Board Meeting.

Executive Director McElroy reminded everyone that as ComCast is closing its doors, the District has contracted with Granicus to streaming live on our website effective January 1, 2010 which will allow the community to view meetings and videos at their convenience 24/7.

Commissioner Waxman reported that the fall community newsletter was sent to residents. This newsletter keeps the community well-informed on all that the Park District does and offerings.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Bernstein, seconded by Vice President Waxman, to adjourn the Board Meeting at 6:55 p.m.

Motion carried.