

**PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF WORKSHOP MEETING
MAY 14, 2019**

The Workshop Meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners of the Park District of Highland Park was held in the Board Room at the West Ridge Center, 636 Ridge Road, Highland Park, Illinois.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by President Kaplan.

ROLL CALL

Present: Vice President Ruttenberg, Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Flores Weisskopf, President Kaplan

Absent: Commissioner Grossberg

Staff Present: Interim Executive Director Donahue; Director Romes; Assistant Director Carr; Director Dunn; Director Voss; Assistant Director Smith; Director Gogola; Manager Laue; Superintendent Ochs; Senior Planner Schwartz

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA - None

ALBION UPDATE

Commissioner Bernstein recused himself and left the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

Assistant Director Smith stated that the Albion project will have minimal impact on Sunset Woods Park except for the parking lot, easement and restoration areas. Assistant Director Smith introduced Andrew Yule who provided a project summary to date. Mr. Yule explained that there will be an atrium at the front of the building where residents will be able to see into the park.

Mr. Yule reviewed some features that will be proposed for the project. They include: a walkway off Green Bay Road that will loop around the new building and will carry through to the park, removal of the firehouse that is in place today, construction of a pedestrian walkway which will connect to the bridge in the park, a rejuvenation and restoration area, and a new plantings area. Mr. Yule shared that Albion Group has been working with the Park District to create a palette for this work. Mr. Yule further stated that Albion would like to fund the Park District of Highland Park to do the landscaping.

Mr. Yule stated that the District's stormwater system will be connecting into the park that exists today. He stated that Albion does not want to disrupt the park, but Albion may have to increase the size of the sewer pipe near the rejuvenation area. President Kaplan asked if work would be done to the non-usable part of the park, and Mr. Yule answered yes. Vice President Ruttenberg asked if there would be signage on Green Bay Road indicating where the path starts into the

park. Mr. Yule answered that Albion will work together with the Park District to work on the various signage.

Vice President Ruttenberg asked Assistant Director Smith how he felt about the Park District doing the planting, and Assistant Director Smith thought it would be fine. Vice President Ruttenberg asked about the public parking and Mr. Yule answered that there will be 47 spots available for the public, after the Lake County Health Department closes for the day and spots will be available all day on Sundays. Vice President Ruttenberg asked if there will be a health club in the building and further asked if there had been any discussion with Staff about coordinating fitness with the Recreation Center of Highland Park. Mr. Yule said that they had not discussed this but that it sounded interesting.

Commissioner Bernstein came back to the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

WOODRIDGE PICKLE BALL COURTS

Assistant Director Smith reported that as part of the Board approved 2019 Park District Capital Plan, the two tennis courts at Woodridge Park are being converted to six dedicated pickleball courts this spring. The decision to make this conversion was guided by numerous factors including the 2017 Tennis Court Survey, community demand for dedicated pickleball courts and input from the surrounding neighborhood. After work began in April, Park District staff received additional feedback from neighborhood residents expressing concern about the removal of tennis courts from the park. In response, construction was put on hold allowing staff to gather further input.

Assistant Director Smith shared a new proposal for Woodridge after a meeting with Vice President Ruttenberg, Staff, neighbors and pickleball players. Staff recommends the conversion of the tennis courts at Woodridge into two pickleball courts and one tennis court. Assistant Director Smith shared that other locations had been considered and it was determined that this was the best way to proceed to accommodate tennis and pickleball players.

President Kaplan asked if there would be dedicated pickleball courts by the end of the summer and Assistant Director Smith said yes by mid-August. Vice President Ruttenberg asked which courts were striped for pickleball last year. Assistant Director Smith stated that Woodridge Park, Brown Park and Old Elm were striped for pickleball. President Kaplan asked about the courts at Red Oak School and Assistant Director Smith said that they are owned and maintained by District 112. Interim Executive Director Donahue stated that the District had used them a few years ago and that they are in rough shape. Commissioner Bernstein suggested that Staff check with District 112 to see if they had any interest in allowing the District to convert them into pickleball courts. Commissioner Flores Weisskopf shared her concerns regarding the loss of tennis courts to pickleball court. She felt it would be important to avoid conflict between the two parties. Vice President Ruttenberg shared that the rules for sharing should remain simple. Commissioner Flores Weisskopf stated that in order to share the courts a time limit should be imposed.

President Kaplan stated that he feels Assistant Director Smith should proceed with the District's proposed plan and Commissioner Bernstein asked Staff to contact Red Oak School.

Rita Pickard, 638 Old Elm, Highland Park shared that she was playing pickleball at the Recreation Center of Highland Park but not any longer. She does not like the proposed plan and feels the Park District is not supporting pickleball.

David Ettinger, 214 Barberry Road, Highland Park, is a tennis supporter and wanted to thank the Park District for the participation in this issue.

Stephen Dreyfus, 786 Thackeray, Highland Park stated that he feels there are not enough pickleball courts to support the patrons of the Park District of Highland Park.

Anne Stern, 252 Barberry, Highland Park, is a tennis player who is not opposed to pickleball. She thanked the District for listening.

SHORT GAME PRACTICE AREA AT SUNSET VALLEY GOLF CLUB

Director Romes reported that the Park District maximized the use of available capital funds for the golf course and clubhouse renovations, the one key amenity the golf course is still lacking is a practice facility. This is an important feature for golfers to “warm up” before their round, while also providing a dedicated location for professional instruction to golfers. While the Park District does have a practice facility at the Highland Park Golf Learning Center, it is more than three miles from SVGC, making it less attractive to golfers who are at the course. This is viewed as a missed opportunity to create a complete golf experience.

This past fall, upon re-opening the course to the public, a local amateur hall of famer, and Sunset Valley advocate, made a generous donation of \$100,000 to the Parks Foundation of Highland Park. This donation was allocated towards the development of youth golfers and improvement of the overall experience at SVGC in effort to further grow the game of golf.

Director Romes introduced Rick Jacobson who gave an overview of the project. Mr. Jacobson developed an option that will convert the available open space on the south end of the parking lot to a short game practice facility. While this is not a “full service” driving range, this proposal includes two hitting bays for full swinging, and a short game practice area that will provide ample space for youth instruction and an opportunity for all golfers to work on their “short game” and “warm up” prior to a round of golf.

On April 16, 2019, Park District staff attended the Parks Foundation meeting to discuss this project. Since the Park District does not have the capital funding for the short game practice facility, the Parks Foundation agreed to conduct a capital campaign in effort to fully fund the project, prior to construction. The total estimated cost including architectural, engineering and construction is \$175,000 - \$200,000. Therefore, the Foundation must raise an estimated \$65,000 - \$105,000 before the project begins.

In effort to receive a final design concept and a colored rendering of the short game concept plan to share with the public, the Park District is recommending that the Park District enter into a Golf

Course Design Agreement with Jacobson Golf Course Design, Inc. This agreement will include the following services and associated costs for a total of \$18,000.

Park District staff is seeking approval from the Park Board of Commissioners at the May 28, 2019 meeting to enter into a Golf Course Design Agreement with Jacobson Golf Course Design, Inc. in the amount of \$18,000.

Commissioner Bernstein asked about the access east of the cart barn and if the paths created will be wide enough for two-way traffic. Mr. Jacobson stated that a pull-over may be necessary. Commissioner Bernstein was pleased to learn that private funds were being raised for this project. President Kaplan asked if there will be room for two additional full swing bays, making a total of four full swing bays. Commissioner Flores Weisskopf asked about First on the Turf and Director Romes stated there were no plans this year to hold that event. Commissioner Flores Weisskopf discussed the possibilities for fundraisers at Sunset Valley and Commissioner Bernstein discussed an event the Monday after the North Shore Amateur Tournament.

Mr. Jacobson presented the Board and Staff with the American Society of Golf Course Architects award. A photo was taken of the group.

Commissioner Bernstein asked about the condition of the course now and Superintendent Ochs stated that all was growing in well. Mr. Jacobson shared that the course is now more playable as the turf is denser and more filled in.

GOLF DOME AGREEMENT DISCUSSION

Director Romes shared that City of Highland Park and Park District of Highland Park (PDHP) entered into a 10-year concession and site agreement (Golf Dome Agreement) with HP Indoor Facility, LLC (Grantee) on August 26, 2009. This agreement permits the Grantee to erect, operate and maintain an air supported canopy (Dome) adjacent to the Golf Learning Center at 225 Skokie Valley Rd (referred to as Lot 3 of the Highland Park Country Club (HPCC)). This agreement supports the Grantee's uses for indoor recreation such as golf, lacrosse, soccer and other field sports. Effective January 1, 2019 the Park District entered into a lease agreement with the City for Lot 3 at the Highland Park Country Club which assigned all rights described in the Golf Dome Agreement to the Park District, including payments to made directly to PDHP. The Golf Dome Agreement includes an annual payment of \$55,000 plus 2% of gross annual sales from facility rentals. Additionally, the Park District is permitted use of the dome for golf instruction at no charge, and a discounted rate for other recreational activities such as baseball, flag football and lacrosse. With the agreement expiring on April 15, 2019 the Park District has the option to either extend the lease or release an RFP.

Director Romes stated that Staff is proposing a 2-year extension with the current vendor which includes an annual payment increase to \$60,000 and 4% of annual sales. Additionally, revised terms will allow Park District staff to have exclusive use of the dome Monday – Friday, November – April, from 8am – 4pm. During these dates and times, the Park District will manage all golf operations, allowing golf staff to provide indoor golf practice, instruction and classes during winter months. This will create a full year experience for residents and golfers at the

Highland Park Learning Center. Not only will this be an attractive amenity for the community, but staff also anticipates this revised agreement will generate additional revenue to support the Golf Learning Cost Center. The revised Golf Dome Agreement has been reviewed with Park District attorneys and supports the HPCC Lot 3 Lease agreement with the City of Highland Park.

President Kaplan asked if there was a down side to this proposal and Director Romes said no. Vice President Ruttenberg asked what Director Romes estimated as payment based on 4% sales. Director Romes stated an additional \$15,000-\$20,000. Commissioner Bernstein asked if the lease agreement will provide the District with some audit rights. Director Romes said he thought it would.

ROSEWOOD BEACH UPDATE

Assistant Director Smith shared that there has been much erosion and sand loss at Rosewood and that the forecast is for continued erosion. Assistant Director Smith described the exploration of modifying the overlook area to include the placement of a railing. Assistant Director Smith described the railing as being like the railing erected at the ravine.

Commissioner Bernstein asked if the railing would still provide for enough room for yoga classes, and Assistant Director Smith said yes.

DEER CREEK RACQUET CLUB UPDATE

Manager Laue presented usage and participation trends at Deer Creek Racquet Club over the past three years. He stated that class enrollment has been consistent and private lessons remain steady and are expected to finish well this season. Manager Laue stated that the reason there is a declining trend in memberships is that people are looking for a more a la carte experience and like to pay for things individually. He described the days of joining a club to be a member are gone. Members are looking for an immediate product.

Manager Laue shared that the Senior Drop-In Program is on an upward trend. Manager Laue also shared that pickleball is becoming popular at Deer Creek Racquet Club with both young and old. Manager Laue stated that the Summer forecast looks bright for Deer Creek Racquet Club at the Club is offering more flexibility for students who have non-traditional schedule.

Commissioner Flores Weisskopf asked if there was any kind of referral program in place. Manager Laue said there was not but that it was a good idea. Commissioner Bernstein asked how people liked the new logo for Deer Creek Racquet Club. Manager Laue said that he has seen quite a few of the magnets on cars in Highland Park.

Vice President Ruttenberg asked Manager Laue how many pickleball courts are at Deer Creek. Manager Laue stated that court 6 is the area that is used for pickleball and that Deer Creek will investigate permanent striping soon. Vice President Ruttenberg asked Manager Laue about the pricing for drills and open play. Manager Laue stated that pickleball drills are the same price as tennis drills and the open play is the same price as open play at the Recreation Center of Highland Park.

Vice President Ruttenberg stressed the importance of providing a way to accommodate the pickleball players at Deer Creek Racquet Club.

REVIEW OF VOUCHERS

Interim Executive Director Donahue presented the vouchers for checks written April 19, 2019 through May 9, 2019 for an amount totaling \$657,661.67. Vice President Ruttenberg approved the vouchers.

OPEN TO PUBLIC TO ADDRESS BOARD

Mr. Tom Luce of the Legacy Club expressed some concerns about flooding at the Community Park.

CLOSED SESSION

Motion was made by Vice President Ruttenberg, seconded by Commissioner Bernstein to adjourn into Closed Session for discussion of Section 2(c)(1) – the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline of the District including legal counsel for the District; Section 2(c)5 – the purchase or lease of real estate including discussion on whether a certain parcel of property should be acquired; Section 2(c)6 – the setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the District; Section 2(c)8 – security procedures and the use of personnel and equipment to respond to an actual, a threatened, or a reasonably potential danger to the safety of employees, students, staff, the public, or public property; Section 2(c)11 – litigation against or on behalf of the District or where the District finds that an action is probable or imminent; Section 2(c)21 – the discussion of minutes lawfully closed under the Act, whether for the purposes of approval of said minutes or for conducting the semi-annual review of the minutes as set forth in Section 2.06 of the Act; Section 2(c)29 – for discussions between internal or external auditors and the Board.
Roll Call:

Aye: Commissioner Bernstein, Vice President Ruttenberg, Commissioner Flores
Weisskopf, President Kaplan
Nay: None
Absent: Commissioner Grossberg
Abstain: None

Motion Carried

Meeting was adjourned into closed session at 8:09 p.m.

Meeting was reconvened into open session at 9:21 p.m.

ACTION FROM CLOSED SESSION IF ANY

President Kaplan reported that the Board met in Closed Session under Section 2(c)(1) – the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline of the District including legal counsel for the District.

Workshop Meeting Minutes
May 14, 2019

No action taken.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made by Vice President Ruttenberg and seconded by Commissioner Bernstein and approved by unanimous vote. The Board Meeting adjourned at 9:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Donahue, Secretary