PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
NOVEMBER 12, 2019

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by President Kaplan

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: None

Staff Present: Executive Director Romes; Director Smith; Director Voss; Director Gogola; Interim Director Becker; Assistant Director Maliszewski; Assistant Director Henriques; Manager Ochs; Supervisor Sangern; Manager Saunders; Coordinator Hejnowski

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA – None

PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA - None

CONSENT AGENDA
Minutes of the October 15, 2019 Workshop Meeting; Minutes from the October 22, 2019 Board Meeting; Approval of the SMC Grant Agreement for Community Park North Pond Shoreline; Approval of Resolution 19-07 To Grant A Temporary Construction Easement; Approval of the Community Park Colvert Replacement Project; Approval of the 2020 Board Meeting Calendar; IAPD/IPRA Credentials Certification; Bills and Payroll in the amount of $1,542,292.10.

President Kaplan asked that Item D be removed from the Consent Agenda as Resolution 19-07 Approval to Grant A Temporary Construction Easement is still being discussed.

Motion was made by Vice President Ruttenberg to approve items A – C & E – H on the Consent Agenda, seconded by Commissioner Grossberg.

Roll Call:

Aye: Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Grossberg, Commissioner Flores Weisskopf, Vice President Ruttenberg, President Kaplan

Nay: None
Absent: None
Abstain: None

Motion Carried

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Ordinance 19-11 – Surplus Property
Interim Director Becker reported that Pursuant to 70 ILCS 1205/8-22 the Park District of Highland Park disposes of property it deems to be of no use to the Agency. With each item disposed of, the District will determine which method of the property cannot be sold or donated. The District will dispose of it in the most economical method possible.

Staff recommends approval of Ordinance 19-11 from the Park Board of Commissioners authorizing the Park District of Highland Park to dispose of surplus property as indicated in Addendum 1 of the Ordinance.

Motion was made by Vice President Ruttenberg to approve Ordinance 19-11 Surplus Property, seconded by Commissioner Bernstein.

Roll Call:

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

Motion Carried.

B. Resolution 19-06 – Truth in Taxation
Interim Director Becker stated that under Illinois law, if a Park District is considering extending an aggregate property tax levy more than 5% greater than the preceding year’s levy, it must publicly disclose its intention and hold a public hearing. Aggregate levy is defined as real estate taxes, exclusive of the election costs and debt service. Also, the District must prepare a Truth in Taxation Resolution at least 20 days prior to adopting the levy ordinance.

At the October 25, 2019 Finance Committee meeting, the Tax levy was discussed. The Resolution was presented at the November 5 workshop and again tonight for approval. The 2019 levy ordinance will be presented on December 12 at the Regular Board Meeting.

The 2019 Truth in Taxation resolution reflects a 4.58% increase over the prior year’s extension. This is essentially a cost of living increase based on the CPI while trying to capture new growth.
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Staff recommends the Board of Park Commissioners approve the Truth in Taxation Resolution 19-06.

Motion was made by Commissioner Grossberg to approve Resolution 19 – 06 Truth in Taxation, seconded by Commissioner Bernstein.

Roll Call:

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

Motion Carried

TREASURER’S REPORT
Interim Director Becker reported that the Park District is well under budget in most of its line items.

Interim Director Becker presented the vouchers for checks written October 17, 2019 through November 6, 2019 for an amount totaling $1,542,292.19. There were no questions from the Board.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Approval of the PMA Security Dissemination Agreement
Interim Director Becker shared that PMA, (Prudent Man Advisors), has served as the Park District’s financial advisor since 2012. In that role, they ensure that the District is in compliance with the Security and Exchange Commission’s continuing disclosure requirements, including working closely with the Park District when reportable events occur.

Annually, the District signs an agreement with PMA. The agreement clearly reflects the scope of services for both PMA and the Park District. The District’s chief compliance item is to provide PMA with its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) and that the information provided by the District is accurate in all material respects.

Should the District choose another advisor, it must provide thirty days advance notice to PMA. Likewise, PMA is bound by the same process.

The District will not be required to pay an annual fee as long as the District’s CAFR provides the adequate operating data for their filing. If that is not the case, the fee is $2,000.
Commissioner Bernstein stated that the Park District of Highland Park has been working very well with Prudent Man Advisors.

Motion was made by Commissioner Bernstein to approve the PMA Security Dissemination Agreement, seconded by Commissioner Grossberg.

**Roll Call:**

**Aye:** Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Grossberg, Commissioner Flores Weisskopf, Vice President Ruttenberg, President Kaplan

**Nay:** None

**Absent:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Motion Carried**

**B. American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO)**

Mr. Henry Kalter of AYSO addressed the Board regarding a proposal to join forces with the Park District of Highland Park, the City and North Shore School District 112 for the redevelopment of Olson Park. AYSO would like to participate financially in improvement of the fields at Olson by installing a Hybrid Turf Field which is part grass, part turf. Mr. Kalter reported that other improvements might include paving the parking lot, adding a building to be used for bathrooms, storage and concessions. Mr. Kalter discussed the possibility of making lights possible by providing an infrastructure for them.

Commissioner Bernstein added that he is pleased to participate in these public/private partnerships. President Kaplan suggested that AYSO, a Park District Staff member and Commissioner Bernstein meet soon to discuss the feasibility of this renovation. Commissioner Bernstein stated that School District 112 will need to be a part of these discussions. Mr. Kalter stated that the location for this project does not need to be at Olson but that that has been AYSO headquarters for some time. Vice President Ruttenberg requested that more information regarding the hybrid turf be presented to the Board.

**C. Sunset Valley Seasonal Report**

Superintendent Ochs reported that the golf season started on March 23 and the anticipated closing date is December 2 (weather permitting). He stated that the goals heading into the 2019 season were: produce a positive net revenue reach, 30,000 rounds and have 1,000 players for our new Loyalty Program. All goals were achieved. Manager Ochs stated that there is a projected operational surplus of $200,000 at the end of the calendar year. As of October 31,
2019, rounds were at 30,049 and there are 500 rounds projected for November. There are 2,186 players for the Loyalty Program.

Superintendent Ochs stated that the tournaments and events at Sunset Valley Golf Club included: North Shore Amateur, CDGA, IJGA, Nine & Dine Chili Open. The awards and achievements were: 2019 Golf Inc. Magazine Renovation of Year, 3rd Place, American Society of Golf Course Architects (ASGCA) Design Excellence, and IPRA Outstanding Facility of the Year.

Staff spent the winter months creating custom built tee markers using a custom branding iron made by staff. Manager Ochs reported that typically the growing season for turf on the north shore is the beginning of May through the end of October. Staff top-dressed greens every three weeks to create a smooth playing surface. Staff will apply a heavy topdressing on greens after the course closes to help protect the crown of the plant.

Superintendent Ochs stated goals for 2020 include: increasing the average dollar per round by 10%, maintaining outstanding net promoter score, generating 5% more revenue from the previous year and beginning construction on the Youth Development and Short Game area. Vice President Ruttenberg asked to receive an overview of the development of the Short Game area, including timeline and expectations.

Commissioner Bernstein is pleased with the report stating how the district was losing $300,000/year in golf revenue prior to the renovations and closing of the Highland Park Country Club. Commissioner Bernstein predicts a better year in 2020 and feels the renovations at Sunset Valley Golf Club were a wise decision. He stated that the course will be an ever-growing attraction and become a community jewel. Commissioner Flores Weisskopf would like more outreach to the neighbors, reminding residents that the clubhouse is available to everyone, not just for golfers. She would like traffic and rentals to increase for non-golf related functions at the clubhouse. Superintendent Ochs shared the clubhouse hosted trick or treating from 4:00-5:00 p.m. Commissioner Grossberg asked how staff are capturing and creating profiles of a type of user, such as a club house user vs a golfer. Superintendent Ochs stated that there was a tool that was used to capture this information.

Sunset Valley Golf Club will continue with successful campaigns such as CDGA and The Score Radio and implement some new ones such as Comcast TV. A goal is to be mindful of staffing hours based on need as well as adding an extra ranger on busy weekend days. Superintendent Ochs stated that staff will reach out to other courses’ leagues and permanent tee time players and host tournaments such as the North Shore Amateur. The North Shore Amateur will be moved to a Wednesday-Thursday from previously being held on a weekend, to maximize the weekend earning potential. Some other tournaments will include: IJGA, CDGA, Mid-Amateur Qualifier and CDGA Scramble Qualifier. Sunset Valley Golf Course will also feature the Adopt A Hole Club. President Kaplan asked if 13Ninety was still open. Superintendent Ochs confirmed the restaurant will be open from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. through the end of November.

Manager Saunders reported that Highland Park Golf Learning Center outdoor season began April 1st and ended October 31st. Some goals heading into the 2019 season were to: increase
participation in golf camps by adding PGA golf only camps by 42 or more people. Two additional professional staff were hired to expand lesson programs during the day and increase private lessons by at least 20%. There was an increase in participation in the miniature golf course and range bucket sales by 10% each. All goals were achieved. Manager Saunders reported that there was increased participation by only 18 from PGA Camps. The district was unable to find additional professionals but have increased the private lessons income by 15%. There was increased participation in the miniature golf course by over 17% and the range buckets sold by over 20%.

Manager Saunders shared that in 2018 the Park District of Highland Park took over the Highland Park golf Learning Center. The range and miniature golf course needed a lot of work. The pump for the miniature golf course was replaced so water would create a river effect. The range was adequately maintained but needed a professional touch to get it to where it should be. Assistant Superintendent, Harry Pierson, created a better maintenance practice area. He worked on the irrigation system by replacing many of the old sprinkler heads and changed the seed and fill divots procedure which overall created better hitting conditions for the players. On the range, new white rocks were placed around the target greens which now make the greens look like real greens. The Greens have been enlarged, mowed and are treated as greens. In the short game practice area, the lip of the bunker has been lowered so players have a chance to practice this shot. The putting green has been enlarged as well. The overall conditions of the range have improved greatly.

Manager Saunders stated that looking to the future, the district is hoping to double the size of Golf Academy by having morning and afternoon sessions and increase participation in the miniature golf course and range bucket sales by 5%. Manager Saunders stated that having fund raisers for schools is a plan to increase miniature golf sales. The district is planning on working with five golf professionals to become “Renters” for the 2020 season. An additional plan is to create a pro forma for artificial turf on the range. Vice President Ruttenberg asked if there was a correlation between driving range and golf users. Manager Saunders stated that many patrons come to the driving range to hit balls and then go play at round at Sunset Valley Golf Club. Those patrons receive a 50% off a bucket (cross promotion).

**D. Parks Foundation Update**
Commissioner Grossberg reported that there were no updates at this time. The next meeting is scheduled on Tuesday, November 19.

**E. Director’s Report**
Executive Director Romes reported on events occurring in December at the Park District of Highland Park. The Polar Express will be leaving the station on Saturday December 7 and Saturday December 14. There are two rides each day. This program is sold out and there is a wait list. Santa’s Workshop is scheduled for Sunday, December 15 at Sunset Valley Golf Club.
F. Board Comments - None

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS BOARD
Michelle Sasveld, 904 Park Avenue, West, Highland Park
Is concerned that funding for Park Avenue Beach will be highly limited or might not exist.

David Sogan, 1092 Wade, Highland Park
At Park Ave. Beach, very little has been put into regarding improvements. He would like to see a before and after to show present decay. Even though the site looks decrypted, and we only have a one-way ramp to launch there’s still a tremendous amount of usage despite the poor weather this year. Park Ave is not only used by boaters.

Michael Homer, 725 Byron Court, Deerfield
Is concerned about the lack of funding for repairs/replacement to the barge. He sails at the beach. The barge shelters the beach for launching for small crafts and kayaks.

Frances Jane Peszek, 146 Towers Keep, Highland Park
She moved here because of the lake six years ago. The barge protects that cove. If we put a little money the returns will be much greater.

Elizabeth Riesche, 808 Chestnut St. Deerfield
Has been running the kayak program for the last five years with the North Shore Yacht Club. The barge provides launch and erosion protection. The city has a huge investment in the water facility plant. Has there been any discussion of a possible joint venture with the city to protect the entire area? Brian Romes responded, since there’s no threat to the water facility, that has not been a discussion with the city.

Commissioner Bernstein left the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Michael West, 1342 Ferndale, Highland Park
Michael has been a member of North Shore Yacht Club before the barge went in. The Fire Department announced they couldn’t launch rescue boats one weekend due to the damage from the barge. This is a concern.

Lynn West, 1900 Green Bay Road, Highland Park
Lynn recently took sailing and kayaking lessons. It’s a draw to be in this community and have the boating experiencing available. It is very important to keep it up. I want to live in a community that encourages those experiences.

Ronaldo Borger, 1601 Oakwood Avenue, #103, Highland Park
Ronaldo has been a part of North Shore Yacht Club for 11 years. This is a resilient community, and the club has been there for decades.
Ofer Meged, 957 Green Bay Road, Highland Park  
Wanted to know if the Park District could get funding from Homeland Security.

**ADJOURNMENT**  
A motion was made by Vice President Ruttenberg and seconded by Commissioner Grossberg and approved by a unanimous vote. The Board Meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Romes, Secretary