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

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by President Kaplan.

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: Commissioner Flores Weisskopf arrived at 6:05 p.m.

Staff Present: Executive Director Romes; Director Smith, Director Peters; Interim Director Becker; Peters; Assistant Director Maliszewski, Assistant Director Henriques; Director Carr; Director Gogola; Manager Schwartz; Supervisor Rendler; Executive Coordinator Hejnowski

CLOSED SESSION

Motion was made by Vice President Ruttenberg, seconded by Commissioner Bernstein to adjourn into Closed Session for discussion of 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 – for discussions between internal or external auditors and the Board.

ROLL CALL:

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

Nay: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

Meeting was adjourned into closed session at 6:06 p.m.

Meeting was reconvened into open session at 6:49 p.m.
ACTION FROM CLOSED SESSION IF ANY
President Kaplan reported that the Board met in Closed Session under Section 2(c)5 – the purchase or lease of real estate including a 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.

No action was taken.

OPEN PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD
Park Avenue Statement

President Kaplan explained that if someone from the public would like to speak, they must sign in and come to the microphone. President Kaplan reviewed the rules for public comment.

Peter Mordini, 1853 Sheahen Court, Highland Park
Mr. Mordini would like to see a commitment from the Park District of Highland Park and offered to donate $1000 toward getting the issues resolved at Park Avenue Boating Facility. He is a power boater and fisherman.

Paul Nellis, 266 Walker Avenue, Highland Park
Mr. Nellis feels there is a misunderstanding regarding who uses the boat launch. He explained that it is not just for power boaters but sail boats as well. Mr. Nellis feels that the launch should not be self-funded. He feels that safety is paramount.

Josh Holleb, 1475 Sheridan Road, Highland Park
He has been a power boater for five years, and he also sails. Mr. Holleb wants to preserve the ramp. He would like to see the boating fees increased a bit to fund the work. Mr. Holleb feels that Park Avenue Beach is an asset to the community and will bring in revenue.

David Mecklenberger, 1180 Hilary Lane, Highland Park
Mr. Mecklenberger explained that the barge is part of the infrastructure of Highland Park. He was rescued off the ramp in 1972 and has been sailing ever since that time.

Lindsey Burkun, 1240 Park Avenue West, #332, Highland Park
Ms. Burkun uses the facility but does not own a boat. She feels that Park Avenue Beach is a selling point for people looking to move to Highland Park.

Laura Santucci, 1419 Glencoe Avenue, Highland Park
Ms. Santucci is surprised at the Board for not acting on this problem. She wanted to know why the money which was budgeted for this project was removed.

Leslie Berish, 111 Vine Avenue, Highland Park
Ms. Berish just bought two pair of jets skis that she can no longer use at Park Avenue Beach. She would like to see this area of Highland Park become more of a gateway to the City and
presently it is not.

Sally Martin, 232 Green Bay Road, Highland Park
Ms. Martin said that her family saved the lives of a family of four. She has also helped paddle boaters. She explained that towns along the lake are expected to offer certain amenities. She recommended selling additional passes, like day passes which could bring more money into the downtown area.

Stephanie Swinski, 580 Hillside Drive, Highland Park
Ms. Swinski discussed the safety component of the boat launch.

Daniel Hirsh, 276 Walker Avenue, Highland Park
Mr. Hirsh stated that he felt the Park District will be making two mistakes if the boat launch is not repaired/replaced. There is a business component and a personal component. He asked the Park District to stop waffling on the issue and put the job out to bid again.

David Sogin, 292 Wade Avenue, Highland Park
Mr. Sogin explained that a properly engineered structure must be built. He asked if the District has received any natural resources grants. He stated that the grant would be due the middle of January.

Jean Sogin, 292 Wade Avenue, Highland Park
Ms. Sogin agreed with her husband and recalled teaching youth sailing for School District 113 with Vice President Ruttenberg years ago.

Frances Peszek, 146 Towers Keep, Highland Park
Ms. Peszek stated that IDNR has another fund available for 2.5 million dollars and the deadline is 1/17/20. She asked the Park District of Highland Park if they would apply for this grant.

Aria Peszek, 146 Towers Keep, Highland Park
Ms. Peszek said she learned all types of water sports because of the boat launch and she feels it needs to be preserved.

James Martin, 232 Green Bay Road, Highland Park
He has had four rescues in his family this year. He was there when the kayaker died. They always check on the kayakers now. The ramp should be made wider and more money should be charged for bigger boats. Yearly passes should be sold. The District should apply for the grant.

Cristiane Unseth, 440 Broadview Avenue, Highland Park
Ms. Unseth said it’s not about the numbers at Park Avenue Beach, but all about the community there. She wants to look toward the future for the children to use and enjoy Park Avenue Beach.

Laura Knapp, 700 College, Highland Park
Ms. Knapp is the new commodore at the North Shore Yacht Club. She is dedicated to working
with the Park District of Highland Park to try to find funding solutions for the barge. Ms. Knapp asked if another boating task force could be organized.

Steve Knapp, 700 College, Mr. Knapp expressed that he feels there is a lack of communication between the Park District and the City. He wanted to know how many people will need to speak up for the new barge. He said that the District would have to look at some long-term spending and stressed better communication with the City.

Ofer Meged, 957 Green Bay Road, Highland Park Mr. Meged shared that the southern parking lot is collapsing. He stated that the boat launch is the protector for the entire area. He feels that Homeland Security should be involved in this process.

Elizabeth Riesche, 808 Chestnut St. Deerfield If there is no barge, there is no Park Avenue Beach.

Mira Zell, 2140 Grange Avenue, Highland Park Ms. Zell uses her friend’s boat and has her boating license.

Ries Kolenas, 1268 Lynn Terrace, Highland Park Ms. Kolenas does not own a boat and said that the boat launch is not just for Highland Park residents.

Nesa Sweet, 400 Park Avenue, Highland Park Ms. Sweet stated that the community at the beach affects the community of Highland Park. She stated that a vibrant beachfront community is important.

Michelle Kolenas, 1268 Lynn Terrace, Highland Park Ms. Kolenas expressed that her daughter has really benefitted from spending time at Park Avenue Beach. She said that if there was no boat launch her children will lose an important piece of Highland Park.

Commissioner Bernstein has other commitments and left the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

President Kaplan called for a five-minute recess.

The Meeting reconvened at 8:03 p.m.

**ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA** - None

**RESOLUTION 19-07 TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION EASEMENT**
Director Smith reported that Albion Jacobs Highland Park, LLC will be constructing a residential building at 1850 Green Bay Road. This development borders Sunset Woods Park and will
require some work on a portion of Sunset Woods Park. This work includes demolition of the Firehouse Activity Center, replacement of an existing stormwater pipe, connecting to existing sanitary sewer, rerouting of a watermain and improvements to an existing pedestrian path. In addition, Albion Jacobs has requested permission to place a construction trailer and stage equipment and materials on this portion of Sunset Woods Park. In order to allow for these activities to occur on Park District property, a Temporary Construction Easement must be granted. Albion Jacobs will reimburse the Park District for restoration work to establish native plantings in the work area. Additionally, Albion Jacobs will reimburse the Park District for natural areas restoration in the adjacent wooded area.

Director Smith stated that changes have been made to the document. President Kaplan asked Director Smith if he agrees with the resolution and he confirmed he does and that the District has been working with legal counsel.

Staff will recommend the Park Board of Commissioners approve Resolution 19-07 To Grant A Temporary Construction Easement to Albion Jacobs at the December 12 Park Board meeting.

**PLATFORM TENNIS**

Executive Director Romes presented an overview of the locations which were vetted for the possible District platform tennis sites. Possible sites include: Sunset Woods Park, Sunset Valley Golf Club, Danny Cunniff Park, Deer Creek Racquet Club and the Golf Learning Center.

Executive Director Romes stated that he and staff toured Winnetka, Wilmette and Glenview Park District platform tennis venues. The configuration of said paddle courts would include courts with heaters and lights, warming house with a bar, tables, chairs, restrooms, and fireplace. These facilities can cost upwards of 1 million dollars to construct.

Executive Director Romes shared that there are pros and cons to each site. The sites which are in a floodplain will cost more to construct and Sunset Woods Park is not in a floodplain. It has good synergy with the tennis courts there, and there are already lights. It is centrally located in town. This site would require building a new hub and facilities.

Executive Director Romes explained that Sunset Valley Golf Club has synergy with golf and there is access to lights. There is no warming hut, but the club house is there. Cons include limited parking and neighbors close to the facility. There are three locations at Danny Cunniff Park. 1) The south side is next to the current fieldhouse which could be renovated. It is located on a flood plain. 2) The central location has new pickle ball and tennis courts. This area is also located in a flood plain. There is a hut there and not a lot of homes close by. 3) The north area has a parking lot, an underutilized athletic shelter and would not affect the athletic fields. It is also in a flood plain.

Deer Creek Racquet Club is in a flood plain and parking is limited.

The Golf Learning Center would allow for year-round use and has synergy with golf. There are space issues and parking will need to be added.
Vice President Ruttenberg asked about the cost to install four courts in a non-flood plain. Executive Director Romes stated that staff will get a breakdown of costs and detailed estimates. Executive Director Romes stated that the thought was to build four courts and possibly expand to six courts. Vice President Ruttenberg asked if renovated Sunset Woods Park would be less than 1 million. Commissioner Grossberg stated that the warming house should be adjacent to the courts. Vice President Ruttenberg shared that staff should look at the least cost option which may not be the most desirable location. He stated that the Board will need to see more definitive costs. Vice President Ruttenberg stated that there is a family who wants to help the District enhance Sunset Park. He asked if the skate park was still being utilized.

**SMILE GRANT-IN-AID-SCHOLARSHIP LIMITS**

The Park District of Highland Park has administered and supported the SMILE Grant-In-Aid program since 1992. For almost three decades, these scholarships have provided recreational opportunities to Highland Park families in need of financial assistance. Through the generous support of community residents and businesses, and the Parks Foundation of Highland Park, the District provided approximately $75,000 in scholarship funds to 64 resident households in 2019, who in turn were able to participate in 91 programs and 75 memberships. Below is a summary of the past three years of scholarship activity:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
<th>2019 (Projected Year End)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scholarship Funds</td>
<td>$126,150</td>
<td>$101,536</td>
<td>$74,707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memberships</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scholarships are awarded based on community need and cover either 50% or 100% of program fees. The maximum award amount is determined by family size, ranging from $800 for an individual, to $2,400 for a family of four or more.

Scholarship maximums were last adjusted in 2012 to provide additional financial support to SMILE Grant-In-Aid families. The cost of living continues to rise, as do Park District program fees. Today’s scholarship award does not cover as much as it did in the past. Out-of-pocket expenses for Park District camps have risen more than 35% since 2012.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Camp</th>
<th>2012 Program Fee</th>
<th>2019 Program Fee</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Junior Crew – 7 weeks no bus</td>
<td>$1,754</td>
<td>$2,369</td>
<td>+ 35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trekkers – 4 weeks with bus</td>
<td>$1,844</td>
<td>$2,494</td>
<td>+ 35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp Sunshine – MWF 7 weeks</td>
<td>$762</td>
<td>$1138</td>
<td>+ 49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As a result of program fee inflation, staff recommends the maximum scholarship limit be increased to provide additional financial support for SMILE Grant-In-Aid families. Below is the current and proposed scholarship limit.
President Kaplan asked Supervisor Rendler why fewer scholarships are being awarded now. Supervisor Rendler explained that it is due to the state of the current economy and that the community is aging and there are less children in the community now. Vice President Ruttenberg asked if the program would apply to seniors who might be in need. Supervisor Rendler stated that it does. Commissioner Grossberg asked if the District is considering a change in the formula for the of level of need. Supervisor Rendler stated that standard poverty guidelines are used. Vice President Ruttenberg wanted to know if a family needs more than the subsidy can the District accommodate that. Executive Director Romes stated that our current policy limits the maximum amount.

Executive Director Romes explained that patrons must qualify through the standards for Grant-In-Aid. If patrons are on the borderline or close for GIA, the District will work with the family to ensure they are able to participate in the program. However, he further stated that how much aid is available to a family in a calendar year is not negotiable. Commissioner Flores Weisskopf shared that it’s more important than ever to support expenses for all families and Vice President Ruttenberg agreed. The Board discussed the need to provide funding comparisons from other Districts.

**POLICE CONTRACT**

Executive Director Romes shared that Park District has had a formalized agreement with the Highland Park Police Department since 1978. The agreement has provided a wide range of services to the District. While these services have evolved, a few highlights of the current agreement include the following:

- Dedicated weekend Community Policing Assistants (CPA) at Rosewood Beach and Park Avenue Boating Facility, during the summer months.
- CPA’s to monitor parks in the summer, and close park bathrooms at the end of the night.
- Police daily, year-round, opening and closing of District gates at a variety of lakefront and park locations.
- A dedicated Police liaison to the District.
- Monitoring and safeguarding District Special Events.
- Enforcement of District Ordinances

The fee for the agreement has increased 3% each year. Executive Director Romes shared that in 2014 the District reevaluated its agreement with the Police Department and made some changes which brought the cost down. President Ruttenberg requested that staff review the services in the agreement to see what can be done to reduce the fee. Executive Director Romes explained that by eliminating the opening and closing of gates at some of the facilities by the police department will bring down the cost of the contract. The Park District could assume that responsibility.
Commissioner Grossberg asked if the District was getting value for the money being spent. Executive Director Romes reiterated that doing away with the gate opening and closing will reduce the cost to the Park District.

Past agreements between the Highland Park Police Department and Park District have been reviewed by Park District Staff and renewed annually in April. The current agreement was set to expire at the end of December in effort to move renewal dates to the calendar year. Going forward, staff will be the requesting approval of a Police Contract from the Park Board of Commissioners.

**CENTENNIAL ICE ARENA COMPRESSOR REPLACEMENT**

Manager Schwartz reported that the Park District released a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Engineering Services on November 11, 2019 to hire an engineering firm to evaluate the existing ice refrigeration system, guide the Park District on options for replacement, and design a replacement ice refrigeration system. The replacement of the compressor is prompted by the upcoming discontinuation of the R-22 refrigerant that is used by the current compressor system.

Manager Schwartz stated that on November 21, 2019 the Park District received Statements of Qualifications from two firms. Vice President Ruttenberg asked about the cost for engineering. Manager Schwartz stated that the District is currently in negotiations with the firm and will report at the December 12 Park Board Meeting what that dollar amount is. Vice President Ruttenberg asked Manager Schwartz if she had an ideal of what that number will be. Assistant Director Maliszewski stated that the construction cost would be somewhere between $800,000-$1,000,000 and the engineering cost would run somewhere between $60,000-$100,000.

**ROSEWOOD BEACH**

Director Smith shared that the sand nourishment project at Rosewood Beach is now complete and that 9,600 cubic yards of sand was placed on the beach. The Interpretive and Swim Coves had material placed due to threat to structures. These issues were mitigated by adding torpedo and birdseye sand.

Director Smith reported that SmithGroup will continue to explore options for longer term solutions and will report back at the next Workshop Meeting. The three options that have previously been discussed are: Underwater weir, Reduced gap and some sort of revetment along the Boardwalk. Director Smith closed by saying that since the material has been placed, there have been a few storms and things look good at Rosewood.

**COMMUNITY PARK AT THE RCHP – PROPERTY NAME RECOMMENDATION**

Director Gogola stated that in accordance with the Park District’s GreenPrint 2024 Master Plan capital initiative to convert the recently acquired 100-acre property adjacent to the Recreation Center of Highland Park to a unique, passive recreation area, staff was tasked with creating a new name for the property. The property is currently referred to as Community Park at the Recreation Center of Highland Park.
An important component when considering the naming of this newly acquired property is to comply with District’s Naming Policy by creating a name that best serves the interest of the community and ensures a worthy and enduring legacy for the District’s park and recreation system including:

- To ensure that parks, buildings and facilities are easily identified and located
- To ensure that names will engender a strong public image and have public support

Director Gogola explained that a definer and descriptor are used to define and differentiate. In this case, the definer was meadow or preserve. The descriptors discussed were, East Fork Meadow and The Preserve of Highland Park. She stated that there will be four entities at this location, and they each need to be a part of the new name. Director Gogola shared that the committee is recommending the Preserve of Highland Park. President Kaplan said he liked the name. Vice President Ruttenberg asked what the City was going to call the Senior Center and asked if the Park District should ask the City if they had any ideas for naming the new park. Vice President Ruttenberg wanted to know how the Preserve of Highland Park will fit in with the Recreation Center of Highland Park. Vice President Ruttenberg stated that the Openlands Lakefront Preserve might be in conflict or cause some confusion with the name The Preserve of Highland Park. Commissioner Flores Weisskopf stated that she would like to hear what Commissioner Bernstein has to say about the naming.

Director Gogola shared that the Board will be asked to discuss and consider the recommended name. Section 4.02.2 of the Park District of Highland Park Policy & Procedure Manual authorizes the naming of a Park District facility or park by the affirmative vote of a four-fifths majority of the Board of Commissioners after discussion and a wait of at least sixty days before voting. The Park Board’s approval for naming this park would occur at the February 18, 2020 Regular Board Meeting.

**ORDINANCE 19-09 TAX LEVY**

On November 12, 2019 the Park Board passed the Truth in Taxation Resolution for the 2019 tax levy (2020 collections). By law, the District must wait for 20 days to officially pass the 2019 tax levy ordinance to formalize the estimated levy described in the resolution. No changes have been made since the Board approved the resolution.

The 2019 tax levy ordinance represents the District’s request for property taxes and reflects an increase of 4.58% from the 2018 property taxes collected during 2019 and is based on a CPI increase of 1.9% for those funds which are under the property tax cap and four cents per $100 Equalized Assessed Valuation for the Special Recreation Fund. This levy focuses on capturing new growth within the District. The levy request, exclusive of debt service, totals $12,032,280 (twelve million, thirty-two thousand, two hundred eighty dollars).

Upon passage of the ordinance at December’s Board meeting, staff will deliver an executed copy to Lake County so that it may be recorded by legal deadline of the last Tuesday of the year.
As the Truth in Taxation Resolution for the 2019 tax levy has stood for at least 20 days, the District recommends approval from the Park Board of Commissioners at the December 12 Board Meeting of the 2019 tax levy ordinance and formalize the estimated tax levy.

**REVIEW OF VOUCHERS**

Director Peters presented the vouchers for checks written November 7, 2019 through November 25, 2019 for an amount totaling $668,372.71. There were no questions from the Board. Vice President Ruttenberg reviewed the vouchers and had no further questions.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, a motion was made by Vice President Ruttenberg and seconded by Commissioner Grossberg and approved by unanimous vote. The Board Meeting adjourned at 9:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Romes, Secretary