

**PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
JANUARY 28, 2020**

The Special 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 60035.

The meeting was called to order at 7:28 p.m.

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: None

Staff Present: Executive Director Romes; Director Carr; Director Smith; Director Voss; Director Peters; Assistant Director Maliszewski; Assistant Director Henriques; Executive Coordinator Hejnowski

OPEN TO PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD - None

GREENPRINT 2024 REVIEW

Executive Director Romes thanked the GreenPrint Review Committee which was chaired by Park Board Liaisons Commissioner Bernstein and Commissioner Flores Weisskopf. He also thanked all the Department Heads, especially the Planning Department and Amalia Schwartz, who led this GreenPrint 2024 Review Process. The 2019 GreenPrint 2024 Review initiative provides a progress update of the plans stated initiatives, re-evaluates priorities and continues to assess available funding and resources based on changes in the community. The review recommends an amendment to the capital development initiatives outlined in the GreenPrint 2024 plan approved in 2015.

Executive Director Romes recapped the original GreenPrint 2024 process in which the Park District hired a consulting firm, the Lakota Group, to provide guidance to the District through an extensive community engagement effort as well as an audit of our facilities, parks, programs, and services. The Plan intends to address current and future community needs and ensure that they align with the Park District's mission of enriching community life, and our vision to provide extraordinary programs and services. The result of GreenPrint 2024 was a significant update and 10-year outlook for the District's Capital Repair and Replacement plan, the development of important Planning Initiatives, and specific Capital Development Initiatives. The entire GreenPrint 2024 report can be found on the Park District's website.

Executive Director Romes explained the difference between Capital Repair and Replacement Projects, which are projects and equipment greater than \$10,000 that support Park District operations and are identified in the Park District's Annual and 5-year Capital Plan versus Capital Development Initiatives which represent investment in the acquisition, renovation or construction of buildings, parks or properties based on community priorities that support GreenPrint master-planning goals, and the Park District's mission. These span a 10-year time horizon, live in the GreenPrint 2024 Master Plan and are typically greater than \$1,000,000.

The 2019 review of GreenPrint 2024 process used a similar approach to the development of the original document by reviewing community through a statistically valid, community-wide attitude and interest survey, as well as an audit to programs and facilities. Executive Director Romes reported that the GreenPrint committee acknowledged that the current Planning Initiatives and the current Capital Repair and Replacement Plan have separate living documents that are reviewed and tracked separately on an annual basis, and therefore the focus of this review was on Capital Development Initiatives that live in the GreenPrint 2024 Plan. The 2019 proposed amendments to the Plan solely focus on these Capital Development Initiatives.

To begin the review process, Executive Director Romes reported on GreenPrint 2024 Track 1 Capital Development Initiatives, noting that these projects are funded through the District's Capital Fund. Sunset Valley Golf Club improvements were completed in 2018. These renovations of the course and clubhouse resulted in increased visits and paid rounds, with over 30,000 rounds in its first full season and a net surplus of approximately \$200,000. Recreation Center of Highland Park improvements were completed in 2017 addressing its increasing membership, as well as the demand for increased fitness programming space as identified in the community survey. Sunset Woods Park was a Track 1 project that will receive playground renovation at the District's largest, most used, and centrally located park and playground. The designs have been approved and construction will begin this year. Lastly, Centennial Ice Area renovations which include the entrance, locker/restrooms, and office area have been approved and construction is planned to begin in 2021. For now, gymnastics renovations have been removed from this project and will be addressed in the proposed amendment. It is the opinion of the Board and staff that there is growth opportunity for gymnastics if the District expands to higher age levels, but this requires a larger space than what is now available at Centennial Ice Arena. Staff will be exploring the idea of offering gymnastics at alternative locations, including West Ridge.

Executive Director Romes continued by reporting on the progress of Track 2 Capital Development Initiatives. These projects were unfunded at the time the plan was developed and included an expansion of Centennial Ice Arena, Lakefront enhancements, Athletic field improvements and the construction of the multi-purpose facility at the Highland Park Country Club (HPCC) building. It was noted that the Park District did not end up acquiring the HPCC building but did acquire the golf course parcel. Therefore, plans have already been approved for a site master plan to include the construction of passive recreation areas, open space, walking and biking trails. Additionally, the Park District has completed numerous planning initiatives including The Sustainability Plan, Land Management Plan, Athletic Field Master Plan, and Lakefront Master Plan, which is pending approval.

After reviewing the Plan's progress and analyzing new data from the community survey and program/facility assessments, the GreenPrint review committee provided a recommendation for amended Track 1 and Track 2 Capital Development Initiatives. It was noted general priorities included continued maintenance of District facilities that support core programs, expansion or construction of a multi-purpose facility to include gymnastics and other multi-generational activities, synthetic turf, improved features at the outdoor water park, and community gathering spaces. As a result of the committee's review, Track 1 and Track 2 Capital Development Initiatives were amended. Track 1 initiatives were once again funded through the current Park District's Capital Fund. Projects include the completion of the renovation/conversion of Community Park at the Recreation Center of Highland Park, completion of the Centennial Ice Arena renovations, but without expansion of the gymnastics room, and the completion of the Sunset Woods Playground. Updated Track 2 Projects were still considered unfunded and include continued the development/expansion of a multi-generational, multi-purpose recreation facility which may include a gymnastics expansion and the installation of synthetic turf for athletic competition. Remaining steps for track 2 Capital Development Initiatives include researching partnerships and synergies with other government or private agencies, funding strategies and grant opportunities.

Commissioners shared their thoughts regarding GreenPrint 2024 initiatives and projects. Discussion included the consideration of expansion or new construction at West Ridge Center versus plans that are already in place for Capital Repairs and Replacement. This included the possibility of researching the concept of a Multi-Purpose Facility at this location.

Staff explained that renovation plans at Centennial Ice Arena include expanding the multi-purpose rooms and locker rooms, updating the entry area and lobby, relocating the concession area, and utilizing that space as a viewing area for gymnastics.

Commissioner Grossberg asked if there was a succession plan for Board members to be liaisons to Board committees. President Kaplan asked Executive Director Romes to notify the Park Board about upcoming committee meetings.

The Park Board agreed that the District is on the right path with Track 1 and 2 of GreenPrint 2024.

President Kaplan asked that a discussion should take place with North Shore School District 112, Township District 113, and City of Highland Park to discuss the possibility of working together to create a plan for a Multi-Use Facility. Executive Director Romes explained that he meets monthly with these groups.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made by Vice President Ruttenberg seconded by Commissioner Bernstein. The Special Meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Romes, Secretary