

**PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 28, 2020**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners of the Park District of Highland Park was conducted remotely due to the Governor’s Declaration of Emergency as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Members of the public were able to view a live stream of the Regular Board Meeting.

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 Peters; Director Gogola, Director Dunn; Director Carr; General Manager/Superintendent of Golf Operations Ochs, Assistant Director Maliszewski; Manager Johnson; Executive Coordinator Hejnowski

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA – None

PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Executive Director Romes read the comments submitted by the public.

Mark A. Stang, 584 Hyacinth Place in Highland Park

I have been a Highland Park resident since April 9, 1987, continuously at my present address. My property borders the north side of Old Elm Park. I am a sole practitioner now, with a home law office in a half-finished basement. I have a direct view of Old Elm Park from my kitchen windows. I have lived alone since December 14, 2009, when my wife Cathy (who lettered in tennis on her high school team) died in our family room of brain cancer. During my 33 years in Highland Park, I have consistently played on one of the two courts in Old Elm Courts behind my house, or when those courts are filled, on one of the courts in Centennial, or on the “clay” courts in Sunset Park, and during the winter at Deer Creek, though I prefer racquetball during the winter.

I discovered for the first time on April 7, 2020, when I went over to the Centennial tennis courts, just to use the practice wall by myself, obviously a solitary activity with no social distancing considerations. The Centennial courts were all padlocked and chained, and I soon learned that all of the tennis courts in Highland Park have been chained and padlocked with warning signs

posted stating that this action has been taken pursuant to Governor Pritzker's executive orders. I first contacted my former law partner, Steven Elrod, who directed me to Rob Bush, counsel for the Park District. I am former trial counsel for the City of Highland Park and its Police Department, as well as Lake Forest and Northbrook; I have also served as a Special State's Attorney for Lake County.

I have studied each and every paragraph, line, and word of the relevant gubernatorial executive orders, specifically Executive Order 2010-10 (COVID-19 Executive Order No.8) and Executive Order 2020-18 (COVID-19 Executive Order No. 16). Nothing in the Orders, expressly or implicitly, prohibits outdoor tennis-playing activity. In fact, such outdoor activity clearly is permitted under section 5(c) of COVID-19 Executive Order No. 8. Rob Bush subsequently sent me a letter written to one of his law partners, a state representative, from the Illinois Department of Commerce, clearly concerning tennis courts operating as a business. The Illinois Department of Commerce has no jurisdiction whatsoever over the governmental or proprietary functions of a public body like the Park District of Highland Park.

The District's physical Lockdown of its outdoor tennis courts and Lockout of Highland Park residents, citizens, and taxpayers is completely illegal and a violation of the constitutional rights of Highland Park citizens to use public recreational facilities, the importance and need for which is undisputed, and for which the taxpayers pay more taxes than they do to the City of Highland Park itself. The unconstitutionality of the closure would invalidate the Lockdown and Lockout even if it were facially legal and harms the physical and mental well-being of Highland Park residents, myself included. Thus, the Park District is exposed to potential litigation over the closure under Section 1983 as well as personal injury litigation for citizens physically or mentally harmed by the illegal closure. This is not to say that I am contemplating litigation myself.

If I were able to attend in person, I would have been happy to answer any questions you might have about my legal views, forthrightly and transparently. Tonight, I mostly want to address the human costs of the closure, which goes beyond weight gain and physical lethargy. I just walked 1 ½ miles on the Green Bay Trail on Sunday, and it did not compare to hitting against an opponent 40 to 60 feet away, nor even to hitting against a practice wall.

In addition to the negative impacts on me physically, I am frankly depressed about not being able to use a tennis court that lies empty whenever I look out my kitchen windows; not clinically depressed, at least not yet, but depressed. I know that many of my tennis-loving friends and neighbors feel the same way, especially with the depressive effects of the general Lockdown and the economic devastation that the Lockdown is bringing in its wake. Having lost a good friend

and former client in the Highlands, Mike Fisher, to suicide in August 2018, a remarkable man and citizen who devoted 12 years of his life to service on this Board, I believe the Board needs to consider the risks of the community's loss of the vitally important hedonic benefits of tennis in a community under psychological siege against the infinitesimal risks posed by playing tennis in the open air while using common sense precautions. If I ever am forced to litigation, it will be only because I thought, What Would Mike Have Done, and then did it. Thank your courtesy in considering my comments tonight. I will be in touch with Rob Bush tomorrow.

Garrett Flynn, 365 N. Deere Park Drive E in Highland Park

The boaters, sailors, paddle boarders, and kayaks, collectively referred to as water activists, that use the launch area have zero interest in congregating on land. We want access to the water. With other lakefront parks closed, this will no doubt increase traffic at the boat launch. To control, I suggest putting a keycard gate at the top of the hill to allow access to Water Activists with permits. Additionally, to address anyone walking down the hill, leverage staff that would have otherwise been working at other sites to stand at the top of both hills (in and out) to limit/restrict foot traffic.

The boaters are all similarly focused on staying safe and healthy. North Point Marina can be used as an example of how to do this correctly. North Point will be opening as of May 1. It is a metered/manned launch that requires a permit to control flow. This is also how smaller inland lakes handle it (you either launch from a metered/manned site, or you have property on the lake. We are not like Chicago. Chicago has a much more expansive lakefront, beaches, and path that cannot be controlled like Park Avenue, with its single point of access. The audience for boating and water activities is not assumed to be like a normal season where we have the kid's, their friends, and other families on the boat or watercraft. It would be restricted to just those that I am sheltering in-place with my immediate family so we would continue to abide by the state level guidance.

Dr. Frances Peszek, 146 Towers Keep in Highland Park

Not only am an avid water enthusiast, I am also a healthcare provider. I would never risk putting the public's health over pleasure pursuits. I am happy to help establish protocol at outdoor recreational facilities to ensure the safety of the public. I believe this is a critical time for the park district of highland park to really invoke its mission and vision statement. The citizens physical and mental well-being depend on the availability and accessibility of outdoor pursuits at this time of uncertainty.

Sally Martin, 232 Green Bay Road in Highland Park

I am reaching out to encourage the Park District to open Park Avenue Beach for boating and recreation. Now more than ever our community needs lake access. Please let me know if there is anything I can do as a citizen to help.

Sam Kashy, 184 Oak Knoll Terrace in Highland Park

I am reaching out to lend my enthusiastic support to make Park Avenue Beach boat ramp open in 2020. As a taxpayer, resident, and supporter of the Park District this is an important season for the sanity of our residents. It is unclear if camps will be open so having a safe and accessible launch is important. He would like Park Avenue beach open for Memorial Day weekend.

Laura Knapp, Commodore for the North Shore Yacht Club, 700 College Pl in Highland Park

The North Shore Yacht Club encourages the Board to accept and sign the 2020 license agreement for NSYC to have boating access and use of the Park Avenue Boating Facility. Our member families look forward to getting back to experiencing Lake Michigan and having fresh air and sunshine. The COVID-19 Pandemic is a serious safety and health issue that has altered the way we live. Because we understand this, the NSYC has cancelled activities, modified, and adjusted our operations, in order to make sure that boating at Park Avenue Boating Facility can be safe and can still occur during this Pandemic.

I thank the Park District Board and staff for working with the City and continuing the dialogue to resolve outstanding issues in order to open Park Avenue Boating Facility during the Stay-at-Home order and beyond. Please see the NSYC guidelines on social distance boating during the Illinois Governors Stay-at-Home order, that has been given to Director Romes. As a safety measure, NSYC asks that you consider allowing our safety and powerboats to launch if and when non-motorized boats are allowed access to Lake Michigan from Park Avenue. We are happy to discuss logistics. Thank you very much for your consideration.

The Commodore's comment was not read during the meeting, but the submission was received before the closing deadline, so the comment is being reflected in the meeting minutes.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLANNING AND RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Executive Director Romes reported that it has been roughly six weeks since the Park District closed all facilities and cancelled programs to help protect the community and staff from the spread of COVID-19. This past Friday, staff received the unfortunate news from Governor Pritzker's office and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), that the number of coronavirus cases has not yet reached its peak in Illinois, and therefore the Stay At Home order will be extended through May 30. That is 30 more days where the District's indoor facilities will remain closed, playgrounds and sport courts will continue to be off limits, and social distancing standards must be strictly adhered to. As community service providers who exist to serve the communities recreational needs, staff understand that these are uncomfortable and frustrating times. Staff continue to work closely with the City of Highland Park, following recommendations from the CDC, IDPH, and Governor's office on protecting the community,

health care workers, and first responders, while trying to find new and different ways to keep patrons, customers, and the community connected, engaged, and healthy.

The District is pleased to report that in accordance with the Governor's announcement last week, numerous restrictions have been lifted from the Stay At Home order, which begins a transition for residents to expand their opportunity to enjoy recreation, leisure, and appreciation of the natural world. Effective this Friday, May 1, golfers can once again experience outdoor recreation, leisure, and sport at Sunset Valley Golf Club. Golfers will be able to participate in groups of two, while adhering to strict safety guidelines from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. Staff are pleased to report that even during these unprecedented times there is a high demand for golf since 300 tee time reservations were made within the first hour for opening weekend. Staff we will aim to deliver an extraordinary recreational experience, while making sure this privilege is executed in a responsible and healthy manner.

Executive Director Romes reported in addition to golf, the Governor's revised order allows for boating, for up to two people. While staff understands the value the Lake brings to the community and the enjoyment residents receive from boating there are associated risks with allowing these amenities to be delivered during a time where the focus of Highland Park police, fire, and health care workers is on the COVID-19 Pandemic. Additionally, the Park District's resources are limited due to the furloughing of part-time employees and a reduction of hours for full-time staff. Therefore, the Park District has been working with the North Shore Yacht Club, and the City of Highland Park to ensure appropriate guidelines that are in compliance with CDC recommendations for social distancing and sanitization as well as guidelines from IDNR, EPA, and National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) are in place, prior to announcing an opening.

Lastly, with the opening of state parks, the Park District is also considering the opening of other park sites for safe and healthy leisure enjoyment, specifically the trails at Heller Nature Center. To ensure the District is adhering to the governor's guidelines residents are encouraged to visit parks alone or with household members, practice social distancing while hiking the trails, and return another time if crowds are forming. Park District staff will be continuing to closely monitor our parks, beaches, and outdoor facilities.

Executive Director Romes provided an update on the District's three essential initiatives:

1. **Emergency Planning** – Staff have developed new protocols for employee workplace safety, as recommended by the CDC and The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). This safety protocol includes standards for coming to work,

social distancing measures while at work, and procedures on how to wear required PPE. All facilities are well equipped with sanitizers, disinfectant cleaners, protective shields for service counters, and facemasks. In addition, staff have developed a “homecoming” committee who are developing an operational plan for the re-opening of each facility, ensuring that visitors and participants are safe and remain healthy. This plan includes traffic flow patterns, signage, and floor markings for keeping 6-foot distance, standards for program and service delivery, cleaning and sanitization schedules and procedures. Regarding essential work, Golf Maintenance staff will resume working full time, Parks Maintenance will be increasing throughout the month as the weather improves, and essential infrastructure continues to be maintained.

2. **Strategic Planning** - Recreation and facility staff are finding creative ways to serve the community during the stay at home order and building new scenarios for accommodating participants once the order is lifted. Director Romes reported that staff have been providing free activities, classes, and programs on Facebook, YouTube Instagram, and the park website to keep families entertained, healthy, and engaged during a time of significant need. Since the closure, the videos have received 34,000 views, 200 posts, and over 7,000 people engaging through social media. With the stay at home order extended through May 30, staff have created an entire brochure of online Virtual Programs including fitness classes and personal training, nature programs, early childhood enrichment, cooking classes, dance and theater tutorials, e-sports leagues, golf and tennis lessons. Executive Director Romes thanked the staff of Highland Park for working tirelessly over the past month to serve the community.

Regarding Summer programs, Executive Director Romes reported that the District needs to receive clear direction from the Governor and health organizations before making officials decisions whether to open or run programs. Till that information is released Executive Director Romes provided the following recommendations to the Park Board.

- a. ***Hidden Creek AquaPark*** – Delaying the opening of Hidden Creek AquaPark till late June or keeping it closed for the season. Executive Director Romes suggests it will be extremely challenging to maintain social distancing even if the number of guests are limited. This facility caters to crowds. Staff are waiting for guidance from the IDPH and hope to make a decision at the Park Board Meeting on May 12.
- b. ***Beaches and Parks*** – Staff are working to develop access guidelines to control crowds and ways to keep patrons safe while visiting beaches and parks. It is unclear if swimming will be allowed but staff plan to make a final decision at the Park Board on May 12.

- c. **Summer Camp** – Executive Director Romes reported that staff are making alternative plans based on smaller group sizes, and safety protocols, to ensure the primary focus of camp is on providing extraordinary experiences in a safe and healthy manner. With the current stay at home order extended till May 30, he recommends offering a delayed start in July, or possibly cancelling. A final decision will be made in the coming weeks.
- d. **Sports Fields and Courts** – Executive Director Romes reported that outdoor courts for all sports are to remain closed for the time being. Staff are reviewing modified plans for indoor and outdoor sports competition.

Commissioner Flores Weisskopf advised taking caution and monitoring the golf course since restrictions are being lifted.

Executive Director Romes reported that staff have implemented the strict guidelines and will strictly monitor the course to ensure players are adhering to those policies.

Commissioner Flores Weisskopf would like to know how reservations are being made.

Executive Director Romes reported that patrons can make online reservations or pay at the club house. For those who pay in person there in enhanced PPE at the registration desk.

Vice President Ruttenberg would like to know if the restaurant and club house will be open so players can use the restrooms.

Executive Director Romes reported that the restaurant is not open to the public, but players can order food and beverages and take it to go. Players may only access the club house to use the restrooms.

Vice President Ruttenberg would like to know how many staff will be on schedule, suggesting that the numbers remain low to save taxpayer costs.

Executive Director Romes reported that there will be limited employees on site, General Manager Ochs, a reservations specialist, and a member from the parks staff.

Vice President Ruttenberg requested an advanced email copy of the online brochure be shared with the Park Board.

- 3. **Financial Planning** – Executive Director Romes reported that the addition of golf and virtual programming will provide for a much-needed revenue source for the Park District. He thanked the Park Board for their support in retaining full-time staff in effort to plan, organize, and lead mission critical services to the community during the stay at home order, while also maintaining essential infrastructure. To cut costs the District deferred

over \$2.5 million in capital expenditures, cut roughly \$600,000 in operating costs, furloughed 186 part-time staff, and reduce hours for full-time staff by an average of 20%. With the extension of the stay at home order through May 30, the District will further reduce full time staffing hours by an average of 25% starting May 2. As a result, many full-time positions will have reduced hours of over 50%. He reported that staff are updating the District's financial projections every month, and believe that the changes made will help the District sustain fiscal responsibility, maintain distinguished operations, and continue to deliver award winning programs, services and facilities, that will serve the recreational needs of the community.

Commissioner Grossberg would like to know what are the implications of opening the course and is it worth it to open at this time or wait?

President Kaplan is fearful but suggests following the governor's mandates.

Commissioner Bernstein reported that there is a huge demand due to the amount of reservations made during opening weekend. He feels staff are following the governor's guidelines and taking extra precautions. He recommends following the professional guidance provided by the state.

Vice President Ruttenberg suggests additional staffing be on the course to ensure people are adhering to the rules and maintaining social distancing.

Commissioner Bernstein is not opposed to additional staffing but feels the 15-minute interval tee times reservations significantly limit the number of players so social distancing will be maintained.

Commissioner Grossberg agrees with Vice President Ruttenberg recommending additional staff.

Executive Director Romes thanked the Park Board for their support and guidance.

Commissioner Flores Weisskopf agrees with Commissioner Bernstein suggesting trusting the experts since the governor has been very conservative and placed safety first. With safety as a top priority she is concerned about staff and residents who might take their frustration out on staff and suggests added enforcement.

Vice President Ruttenberg would like to know how much the District is saving the taxpayers (in dollars and cents). He would like to know what the District is doing and how much it is saving the taxpayers.

President Kaplan would like to know how the staffing reductions will work, specifically the additional 25% for full-time employees.

Executive Director Romes reported that staff have put together a detailed plan of essential services that the Park District needs to conduct during the closure, which includes maintenance of grounds, buildings, and operations. Staff examined all 88 full-time positions, identifying what essential duties could be performed during the closure. Staff have put together a transitional approach based on the stay at home order which will determine how to further reduce those hours. Some positions have been reduced by 60% others have been reduced by 20%. He reported that the reductions depend upon what those positions are capable of doing during the time of closure. All part-time staff were furloughed which amounts to a savings of \$60,000 after the District pays unemployment. The \$600,000 in savings was created by staff reviewing each line item of the budget and eliminated purchases and items if they were not deemed essential. The same process was applied to the 2020 capital plan to cut costs. As the closure continues staff will continuously evaluate expenditures and staffing levels to ensure the District is remaining fiscally responsible.

Vice President Ruttenberg would like to know how much the District is saving for the period beginning May 2.

Executive Director Romes reported the estimated savings will be \$200,000 for the month of May. The District was spending \$600,000 a month in payroll, so it will be reduced by 1/3 for the month of May. This does not take into consideration employees paid time off.

Commissioner Flores Weisskopf would like to know what the savings is after taking into consider employees paid time off.

Executive Director Romes reported that the process has been discussed with the Park Board, which allows employees to utilize their paid time off as hours are reduced. As the stay at home order continues staff will deplete their paid time off, so once the order is lifted, staff will be available and put in the time and hours needed to deliver the essential services the community desires. If we assume the worst-case scenario and have to consider layoffs, the District will not have to pay out those personal days.

Vice President Ruttenberg would like the District to revisit these numbers, suggesting staff may have to make significant reductions during the month of May, as its owed to the taxpayers.

CONSENT AGENDA

Minutes from the March 10, 2020, Workshop Meeting; Minutes from the March 31, 2020 Board Meeting; Bills and Payroll in the Amount of \$1,173,099.72

Motion was made by Commissioner Bernstein to approve items on the Consent Agenda seconded by Vice President Ruttenberg.

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. Approval of the 2020 District HVAC Bid

Director Carr reported that the Park District budgeted \$317,000 for necessary heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) repair for Deer Creek Racquet Club, Centennial Ice Arena, West Ridge Center, and the Recreation Center of Highland Park. All the units in these facilities have met or exceeded their useful life. The Park District took a different approach to scheduled/budgeted capital repairs due to the number of units scheduled for replacement, staff decided to bundle all projects into one large bid. The expectation was that this approach would receive better pricing by using one contractor as well as create efficiencies in managing one bid and one contractor to do all HVAC replacements. The bid also includes an alternative replacement unit for the Hidden Creek AquaPark Concessions. All total project bids came in under the total budget, including the alternate for the Hidden Creek Aqua Park concessions unit. Oak Brook Mechanical was eliminated due to an incomplete bid. Tiles in Style, the low bidder, was evaluated for qualifications and unfortunately was eliminated for consideration. Their references did not show support that they were qualified to lead a large commercial HVAC replacement project. MG Mechanical was the next lowest responsive bidder with a base project bid of \$242,400 and a bid alternate of \$10,400. Director Carr reported that MC Mechanical has good references that show they can perform this work. Staff recommends moving forward with the base bid

provided by MG Mechanical which totals \$242,400. These items encompass replacing 11 total units which have met or exceeded their useful life. He recommends deferring the alternate item for Hidden Creek until 2021. This is \$74,600 under budget.

Motion was made by Vice President Ruttenberg seconded by Commissioner Grossberg to approve the 2020 District HVAC Bid.

Roll Call:

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

Nay: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

B. Approval of the 2020 License Agreement with the North Shore Yacht Club

Director Carr reported that the District has had several meetings and discussions regarding the 2020 License Agreement. The Park District is working with the North Shore Yacht Club and the City of Highland Park to determine a final plan to access the site and equipment storage. The license agreement allows the Yacht Club exclusive use of the property during identified times as outlined in the agreement as well as the ability to store equipment on the property for purposes of delivering programs to the boating community. Substantial changes in the 2020 agreement when compared to the 2019 agreement are as follows:

- a. The Agreement term will be from May 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020, to allow future contract terms to begin on the Park Districts fiscal calendar year.
- b. The License Agreement Fee for NSYC is \$5,600 which is in line with what was budgeted for 2020. Additional prorations will be applied in a similar fashion based on when we can open the facility.
- c. The Park District has agreed to provide standard season opening and season closing duties for the building and beach, as well as provide routine maintenance of the building and weekly grooming of the beach throughout the boating season. However, “Emergency” maintenance requests that may be needed to the sand ramp or dock that specifically support NSYC events, and are outside the District’s scheduled maintenance, will be billed as additional fees to NSYC.

- d. Additional schedule is being added to the agreement based on guidelines developed by the NSYC in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. The NSYC building and deck will remain closed until the stay at home order is lifted.
- e. Restrooms and storage areas will be open during the closure. The Park district will designate operation hours until the facility can re-open and the gate will operate based on the set hours.

Director Carr recommends approval from the Park Board of Commissioners authorization for the Executive Director to enter into the 2020 License Agreement with the North Shore Yacht Club.

Vice President Ruttenberg would like to know if the operational adjustments have been included in the copy of the agreement shared with the Park Board since the provisions suggested do not begin till May.

Director Carr reported that the operational adjustments are not included in the agreement shared with the Park Board, but such items will be added to the schedule.

Vice President Ruttenberg is opposed to taking a vote till he can review the revised agreement and better understand the suggested changes.

President Kaplan asked if any members of the Park Board object.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know how the objection will impact the NSYC.

Director Carr reported that the NSYC will not be able to access or utilize the site till the District has a signed license agreement. Club members have expressed concerns since they are unable to secure insurance coverage without the licensed agreement.

Commissioner Bernstein and Commissioner Grossberg would like to move forward with the agreement.

Commissioner Flores Weisskopf does not feel comfortable moving forward till all members of the Park Board are in agreeance.

Vice President Ruttenberg does not feel comfortable approving the current agreement since it excludes verbiage related to COVID-19 impacts and protocols.

President Kaplan would like to know when is the earliest the NSYC could have access to the site.

Director Carr reported that the governor's restrictions allow for boating to resume May 1, but Park District staff will not have the site ready till May 15.

Executive Director Romes reported that staff can create language that is agreeable to the recommendations from the Park Board, and can observe the right to approve the agreement through the executive orders, host a special meeting, or wait till the May 12 Workshop Meeting.

President Kaplan asked if the members of the Park Board are in favor of hosting a special meeting next Monday or allowing the President of the Park Board and Executive Director to executive their special powers and approve the 2020 License Agreement should all members of the board agree to the revised language.

All members of the park board were in favor with President Kaplans recommendation.

C. Approval of the 2020 Park Avenue Dredging Bid

Executive Director Romes recommended to delay the approval of this project due to the issues surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff are meeting with the City of Highland Park to determine if boating operations will occur this summer. He recommends differing this till the May 12 Workshop Meeting.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Director Peters reported that the combined general corporate and recreation funds are showing a favorable variance at the end of March for \$950,000. This is largely due to timing differences of accrued interest from the P-Card rebate which arrived early, brochure sponsorships, and a lag in salaries, benefits, and insurance. In addition, the capital fund has a \$2 million favorable variance since the bond issuance came in higher than estimated, and the excess unused 2019 capital funds that were transferred into the 2020 budget. The District has roughly \$14 million in capital funds and has deferred several projects as a response to COVID-19. Lastly, payments to NSSRA will be due the second half of the year. She reported that the above-mentioned items explain why the District's funds have a favorable variance.

Vice President Ruttenberg would like to know what NSSRA's funding requirements will be and if they have a payment time schedule.

Director Peters reported that the District renegotiated payment terms this past January, and as of today the District will be able to cover those payments.

Executive Director Romes reported that the capital contribution to NSSRA has been pushed back to July or August. In addition, NSSRA delayed the construction and renovations for their new facility. They along with many agencies are hoping to receive funds from the PARC grant to cover some of those costs. As a result, those payments have been delayed. In response to COVID-19 NSSRA has also furloughed employees which may reduce the amount owed for the annual contribution.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Approval of Sunset Valley Golf Club Restaurant/Bar Lease Agreement

Manager Ochs reported in 2018 The District entered into a restaurant/bar license agreement with Open Kitchens Inc. for restaurant services at Sunset Valley Golf Club. The District's agreement with Open Kitchens included a lease payment of \$28,750 for the initial term of August 2018 through December 2019 (17 months), and a one-year extension in 2020 for \$31,000.

Open Kitchens has significant experience in golf course food and beverage operations including currently managing operations for Palatine Hills Golf Course, Mount Prospect Golf Course, and will be managing the new restaurant for Sportsman Country Club in Northbrook. The patrons of Sunset Valley are pleased with the quality of food and customer service provided by the Open Kitchens staff.

Park District staff has negotiated with Open Kitchens to extend the current lease agreement for five additional years. In exchange for a long-term lease agreement, Opens Kitchens has agreed to invest in a capital improvement project to the Kitchen, which includes a larger range hood and new oven. These improvements would allow kitchen staff to operate more efficiently, which in turn will provide improved customer service to our customers. All necessary improvements to the kitchen will be paid by Open Kitchens under this new agreement. However, equipment upgrades will remain property of the Park District. The lease payment will continue to be \$31,000 per calendar year, beginning on January 1, 2021, and concluding on December 31, 2025.

Manager Ochs recommends approval from the Park Board of Commissioners authorization for the Executive Director to enter into an agreement with Open Kitchens Inc. beginning January 1, 2021, and concluding December 31, 2025, with an annual lease amount \$31,000, plus Kitchen improvements.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if there will be provisions in the agreement providing the Park Board a say in the contractors being used and the equipment being purchased.

Manager Ochs reported that the Park District will be approving the plans.

Commissioner Bernstein reported he is in favor of the agreement so long as the Park District is approving the plans, equipment, the contractors, and lean waivers are provided.

Vice President Ruttenberg wanted clarity, is the District approving the plans or the equipment.

Executive Director Romes reported that all planning documents and equipment purchases needs to be approved by Park Staff before execution.

Vice President Ruttenberg asked if the staffing issues will be addressed.

Executive Director Romes reported the addition of the larger hood and oven could deliver a larger quality of food in less time which will address the slower service issues they periodically encountered.

Motion was made by Vice President Ruttenberg seconded by Commissioner Bernstein to approve the Sunset Valley Golf Club Restaurant/Bar Lease Agreement.

Roll Call:

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

Motion Carried

B. Parks Foundation Update

Commissioner Grossberg reported most of the recent meetings are discussing governance. Unfortunately, the budget will take a significant hit if the Champions Banquet is cancelled for 2020, which will impact the contributions towards the SMILE and FYE program.

C. Director's Report

Executive Director Romes reported he does not have additional items to share.

Vice President Ruttenberg would like to know if the District still plans on offering discounts to healthcare workers and first responders.

Executive Director Romes reported that the District is committed to offering this discount and is working out the details.

Vice President Ruttenberg recommends offering a first responders' day if the Hidden Creek AquaPark opens this summer.

D. Board Comments

Commissioner Bernstein is confident that staff will think outside of the box to provide creative alternatives for programs since most traditional will likely cancel due to the governor's guidelines surrounding COVID-19.

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 7:49p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Romes, Secretary