

**PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF WORKSHOP MEETING
MARCH 10, 2020**

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 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 Dunn, Director Peters, Director Gogola, Director Carr; Assistant Director Henriques; General Manager/Superintendent of Golf Operations Ochs; Manager DiTomasso, Manager Grill; Executive Coordinator Hejnowski

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLANNING AND RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Executive Director Romes reported that staff, including Donna Dunn, Director of Human Resources and Risk Management, Mitch Carr, Director of Recreation and Facilities, Liz Gogola, Director of Communications and Marketing, and himself have been closely monitoring the coronavirus (COVID-19) and associated health advisories issued by the World Health Organization, the Center for Disease Control, the Lake County Health Department and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). The District wants to ensure the Park Board and the community, that the health and safety of program participants, facility patrons, and staff is of the utmost priority.

The District is in regular communication with the City of Highland Park, as well as our other community partners at District 112 and 113. The City is in constant communication with the Highland Park Hospital and working with local, state, and national partners to ensure both the City and the Park District are taking precautionary measures to develop an Emergency Operations Plan.

Fortunately, the Illinois Department of Public Health continues to emphasize that the immediate health risk to the general public remains low, and the practices being implemented are focused on prevention, preparedness, continued education, and communication.

From a prevention standpoint, the Park District encourages staff, program participants, and community members to practice every day preventative actions, including staying home when sick, covering coughs and sneezes, frequent handwashing, avoiding the touching of eyes, nose, and mouth, and routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces and objects.

Park District facilities have been provided extra cleaning supplies and are implementing additional measures to keep all facilities clean and safe.

The District is encouraging everyone to follow the three C's; Clean, Cover, and Contain. Clean your hands often with soap and water, cover your mouth when you sneeze, and stay home when you are sick to contain the spreading of germs. The Park District has even adopted germ-free greetings including the elbow bump or the foot shake.

In addition to regular communication with local and state agencies regarding COVID-19, the District is meeting weekly with local government partners including the Cities of Highland Park, Highwood, and Deerfield, the Highland Park Hospital, the Highland Park Library, Lake County, Moraine Township, and North Shore School District's 112 and 113; to ensure all parties are working together to prevent and prepare.

AFFILIATE AND SPONSORED GROUPS

Assistant Director Henriques reported that policy 6.05, which governs the District's relationship with Affiliate and Sponsored Organizations, requires Park Board approval of yearly agreements. The District has asked current Affiliates and Sponsored Organizations, as well as a new Highland Park not-for-profit organization seeking affiliate status, to provide a brief presentation describing who they are, what they do, and how their organization benefits the Highland Park Community. Presenting groups include the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO), Highland Park Pops, Highland Park Strings, Highland Park Players, and Uptown Music Theater.

American Youth Soccer Organization

Assistant Director Henrique introduced Henry Kalter, Field and Safety Director and Brian Pastroff, Treasurer, from AYSO. Mr. Kolter reported that AYSO has been an affiliate of the Park District for over 40 years serving around 650 Highwood and Highland Park residents. Mr. Kolter reported the organization is not asking for financial contributions from the District. Instead, they are seeking continued use of Olson Park for soccer practices and games and would like to offer funds to renovate fields to show their appreciation and meet the needs of the soccer community. They are seeking approval from the Park Board and the District to renew an agreement with the Park District.

Highland Park Pops

President Kaplan introduced Mark Zarr, Leader, Highland Park Pops. Mark Zarr reported that the Highland Park Pops is a 17-piece jazz band playing music from the early 1900s through today. The organization conducts weekly rehearsals at West Ridge Center and stores their instruments and equipment at the facility. The organization has a long-standing commitment and relationship with the City and Park District. The purpose of the organization is to provide a structured framework for big band musicians to play jazz in a structured setting on a weekly basis and to perform at civic functions throughout Highland Park and the north shore. 40% of the organization's members are Highland Park Residents. Mr. Zarr reported the organization is not asking for financial contributions from the District. The Highland Park Pops are seeking approval from the Park Board and the District to renew the current agreement so the 17-piece band can continue rehearsing and utilizing West Ridge Center.

Commissioner Grossberg would like to know if the organization is paid for their performances.

Mr. Zarr reported the musicians are not paid, but depending on the function, sometimes the organization receives donations.

Commissioner Grossberg would like to know if the Highland Park Pops would be available to play at some of the Districts events.

Mr. Zarr thanked Commissioner Grossberg reporting the Highland Park Pops are always available and eager to perform at events and functions offered by the District.

Highland Park Players

President Kaplan introduced Ira Rosenthal, Vice President of the Highland Park Players. Mr. Rosenthal reported that the Highland Park Players have been an affiliate of the Park District for 32 years, conducting over 40 performances and award-winning musicals. Some productions are held in Highland Park and the board consists of 10 members, 5 of whom are residents. The Highland Park Players are a non-profit organization whose purpose is to enrich, educate, and entertain the community by providing area residents the opportunity to attend or participate in a unique theater experience. All organization funds are generated from grants, small donations, tickets, and ad sales. The Highland Park Players are seeking rehearsal space, possibly a venue to host large scale productions, and are seeking approval from the Park Board and the District to renew the current agreement.

Commissioner Grossberg would like to know if the organization has been in contact with the local schools for production space?

Mr. Rosenthal reported the Highland Park Players have been in communication with the local high school, with no luck since they require 3 weekends to host a production.

Highland Park Strings

President Kaplan introduced Larry Block, Founder of the Highland Park Strings. Mr. Block reported that the Highland Park Strings have been an affiliate of the Park District for 41 years, beginning in 1979. The mission of the organization is to provide community classical concerts free of charge to Highland Park residents. Each concert caters to crowds ranging from 800 – 1000 residents. Mr. Block thanked the Park District for their contributions, ranging from rehearsal space to annual stipends to support the organization. The Highland Park Strings are seeking approval from the Park Board and the District to renew the current agreement.

Uptown Music Theater

President Kaplan introduced Jamie Davidson from the Uptown Theater Group. Mr. Davidson reported that the Uptown Theater Group is a non-profit organization who provides educational instruction and training to help individuals in Highland Park to improve their theater abilities. Mr. Davidson reported that all rehearsals and performances will be held exclusively in Highland Park and 90% of the organization and participants are residents. The organization is seeking rehearsal space from the District and hopes to become an affiliate or sponsored organization.

ROSEWOOD BEACH

Director Smith reported that at the February 25 Board Meeting staff reviewed options to further address erosion at Rosewood Beach due to record high lake levels and increased storm activity in Lake Michigan. Staff discussed with the Park Board a proposal from SmithGroup to develop construction documents for back of the beach revetments in the Interpretive and Swimming Coves. Staff also presented options to the Park Board for addressing erosion in the Recreation Cove. The Park Board approved staff entering into an agreement with SmithGroup to develop construction documents for the back of the beach revetments in the Interpretive and Swimming Coves, as well as construction documents for sand nourishment and breakwater enhancement in the Recreation Cove.

Director Smith reported that Margaret Boshek from SmithGroup will present detailed plans for sand nourishment and breakwater enhancement in the Recreation Cove. To ensure this work is completed prior to the opening of Rosewood Beach this summer, a construction bid packet will need to be released by March 12.

Director Smith reported that staff is seeking direction from the Park Board on proceeding with this bid for the Recreation Cove. If the Park Board elects to move forward, bid results will be shared at the March 31 Regular Park Board Meeting.

Ms. Boshek provided images of Rosewood Beach from 2015 through today and identified recession points forming in the Recreation Cove as a result of storm damages. She reported that waves are toppling over the breakwaters, crashing into the coves, and reaching the boardwalk causing exposure of rubble. She indicated that the first three breakwaters have sheetpile stems built within them which prevents a loss of sand from side-to-side or cove-to-cove. Unfortunately, the south breakwater in the Recreation Cove (the breakwater closest to the bluff), does not have a sheetpile stem built within it. This is causing it to be permeable. The high lake levels are allowing waves to pass through the rubble stones of this breakwater, resulting in a loss of sand in the cove and erosion along the backside of the breakwater.

Ms. Boshek recommends rock bedding stone and geo-textile fabric be placed along the south breakwater near the stem. Also, sand is recommended to be brought in and placed along the breakwater, and throughout the cove, to rebuild the shoreline. Her estimation of how much sand would be needed is based on the 2019 survey. She is determining the slope based on engineering trends and evidence gathered from the sand placement conducted in the Interpretive and Swimming Coves. Ms. Boshek estimates 5,500 cubic yards of sand will need to be placed and extend 64ft from the eroded areas within the cove, for an estimated cost of \$300,000.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if there are more affordable options.

Ms. Boshek reported that the district could shave the project costs to \$250,000, but areas of the cove will be negatively impacted. The current estimate will create an impermeable breakwater which will prevent further loss of sand.

Vice President Ruttenberg would like to know what the District would have to do if the Park Board does not approve the recommended construction and nourishment for the Recreation Cove.

Ms. Boshek and Director Smith reported that the playground and shade structures would need to be removed. The cove would have to be fenced off and signage would need to be placed to prevent individuals from accessing the cove since it poses a safety hazard.

Vice President Ruttenberg would like to know if the boardwalk would have to be fenced off.

Ms. Boshek reported that severe storms will continue to undermine the boardwalk. Staff will need to evaluate the boardwalk after each storm and block off it poses safety issues.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if the Park Board approves the recommended construction and nourishment for \$300,000, what will the Recreation Cove look like after the lake levels recede.

Ms. Boshek estimates the slope will flatten as intended, but the District will have the ability to move sand at lower levels to create a perched beach.

Commissioner Bernstein reported that Ms. Boshkek stated that 80% of the sand replenishment for the Interpretive and Swimming Coves would work and asked if she still stands by that.

Ms. Boshkek believes the nourishment in the Swimming Cove has exceeded her expectations and is preventing scouring. She feels the nourishment in the Interpretive Cove has suffered some loss due to the ravine as predicted, but the sand placed in front of the Interpretive Center has built resilience and is protecting the facilities infrastructure which was the greatest concern.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know what the beaches will look like this summer assuming the Park Board approves the recommended construction and nourishment.

Ms. Boshkek reported that the sand placed in Swimming and Interpretive Coves is stable, so she does not see any changes occurring before and throughout the summer months. If the construction and nourishment is approved for the Recreation Cove, the community will have a new beach, but it may not be as flat as needed since placement will occur in the late Spring.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know what is recommended come the Fall.

Ms. Boshkek suggested waiting until the Fall to reanalyze all three coves and determine if revetments are needed since this work can be done in the winter.

President Kaplan would like to know what the life expectancy of the Recreation Cove would be if the construction and nourishment are approved.

Ms. Boshkek estimated 1-2 years if the water levels continue to rise.

Vice President Ruttenberg would like to know how much of the \$300,000 is for the breakwater vs. the sand replenishment.

Ms. Boshkek and Director Smith reported that it is \$50,000 for the materials and \$250,000 for the sand. Sand is currently \$23 per cubic yard. The mobilization is included in the \$250,000.

Commissioner Bernstein feels that the District needs to move forward with the recommended construction and sand replenishment in the Recreation Cove. President Kaplan and Vice President Ruttenberg agreed.

Commissioner Grossberg is worried about the costs for other beaches and the future work it will take to make those usable, so he is cautious to spend more money at Rosewood Beach.

Commissioner Bernstein reported that two of the District's four beaches should not require a lot of money from capital, and Park Avenue's primary function is boating, so it should be tackled differently. He feels the District has made a significant investment at Rosewood Beach, so it would be irresponsible to not protect that investment.

President Kaplan reported that 4 members of the Park Board are electing to move forward, so Director Smith will release a construction bid packet by March 12 and share bid results at the March 31 Regular Park Board Meeting.

SUNSET VALLEY YOUTH GOLF DEVELOPMENT AND SHORT GAME AREA

Superintendent Ochs reported that the Parks Foundation of Highland Park, with significant contribution from Illinois Golf Hall of Famer, Joel Hirsch, has been raising funds for a new state-of-the-art Youth Golf Development and Short Game Area at Sunset Valley Golf Club. This facility is designed to encourage younger and newer golfers, as well as entice more seasoned golfers who wish to concentrate on their short game. Also, this will be an area for the Highland Park High School golf teams to warm up before they begin their matches. Golfers will be able to access the new “Youth Golf Development and Short Game Area” very easily, as it is planned to be adjacent to the south parking lot at Sunset Valley Golf Club. Staff has contracted Rick Jacobson to design and develop the short game area. Bids for construction were released to the public on February 11, 2020.

Staff received two bids for the Sunset Valley Youth Golf Development and Short Game Area on March 3 from two golf course construction companies. The lowest responsible bidder was Wadsworth Golf Construction at \$148,046.50. Wadsworth was also the Golf Course Construction Company for Sunset Valley in 2017 and has worked on numerous local golf course renovations and staff is pleased with their results.

This project is solely funded by donations and a grant. The estimated overall budget for all hard costs and soft costs is \$200,000. Currently, the Parks Foundation has received approximately \$175,000 in donations and grant funds for the Sunset Valley Youth Golf Development and Short Game Area. The Parks Foundation continues to accept donations for the necessary construction funding including a golf outing scheduled on July 27.

Superintendent Ochs provided an overview of the project timeline. He explained that bidding and permitting began in February, the contract was approved the end of March, construction should begin in July, the project should be completed by August, and the Sunset Valley Youth Golf and Short Game Area should open in Spring 2021. Staff will be seeking final approval from the Park Board of Commissioners at the March 31 Park Board Meeting.

Vice President Ruttenberg would like to know if there will be access to the short game area from the clubhouse.

Superintendent Ochs reported that there is currently a separate bid for a paved path, which is budgeted at \$25,000, which allows for one-way traffic.

Commissioner Grossberg and President Kaplan would like to know if the short game area will be staffed and operational details.

Executive Director Romes reported that operations are still being worked out and will be discussed in detail when the District gets closer to the opening date.

RECREATION CENTER OF HIGHLAND PARK SPIN CYCLE REPLACEMENT

Manager DiTomasso reported that there are 33 Keiser cycles located at the Recreation Center of Highland Park which were purchased in 2013. The cycles have met their useful life and need to be replaced. Staff will discuss with the Park Board of Commissioners the overall process taken to evaluate and recommend a cycle replacement.

The cycle industry has changed over the past 7 years and so have expectations of our members. As a result, staff has conducted significant research about the latest trends in cycling, participated in various cycle classes, solicited feedback from current RCHP instructors and members, and consulted industry experts and nearby fitness club managers to gain insight into overall market changes.

Manager DiTomasso reported that staff asked for member feedback, and 50% of members said they would prefer the new immersive experience. Staff consulted with equipment and media companies, attended webinars, and live classes to determine which were the top cycles and associated technologies. The top three were Life Fitness and the Coach by Colors program, Stages and the Flight program, and Keiser with the Motosumo program so demos were brought on site.

Stages cycles and the associated Flight program is the overall preferred equipment and technology of both RCHP staff and members. 9 of 9 RCHP instructors and 29 of 32 RCHP members selected Stages and Flight as their preferred choice due to the overall comfort and ease of use by the rider. Other significant factors included upgraded technology, members' ability to have a choice on how they use the equipment and associated technology, as well as the instructor's ability to plan their class in advance and save their program for future use. Manager DiTomasso provided a short video clip of the immersive experience to the Park Board.

Manager DiTomasso noted the local supplier of the Stages cycles and the associated Flight program is Direct Fitness Solutions. They have provided a proposal quote of \$57,770 which includes 28 new Stages cycles and the associated Flight program. The budgeted project expense in the 2020 Capital Budget is \$60,000. Staff will recommend at the March 31 Park Board Meeting approval by the Park Board of Commissioners to purchase the Stages cycle and the Flight program by Sole Source from Direct Fitness Solutions.

Vice President Ruttenberg reported that a significant number of participants do not want to be shown on video.

Manager DiTomasso reported that the Stages cycles and Flight program allows participants to anonymously ride and not share their statistics and progress with the group.

OPEN TO PUBLIC TO ADDRESS BOARD

President Kaplan moved Public Comment up the agenda to allow speakers to address the board. The following were comments from the public.

Allison Pearson

324 Seven Pines Circle, Highland Park

Mrs. Pearson would like to know if there is additional land available for the District to build another enclosed dog park since the dog park at the Fink regularly floods.

COMMUNITY PARK AT THE RECREATION CENTER OF HIGHLAND PARK PROPERTY NAMING

Director Gogola reported that in accordance with the Park District's GreenPrint 2024 Master Plan and as part of the Park District's Capital Development Initiative to convert the property previously known as the Highland Park Country Club, currently referred to as Community Park at the Recreation Center of Highland Park, to a one-of-a-kind passive recreation area, staff was tasked to develop a new name for the property. The naming of the property was led by seven staff members from the Planning, Natural Areas, and Marketing Departments who were involved in the property development planning. Five residents, who also served on the Property Project Advisory Committee, volunteered to serve on the Property Naming Resident Advisory Committee. Nine staff members volunteered to serve on a Naming Staff Advisory Committee as well. Over a series of meetings, the committees considered a new name for the property that meets the criteria of the Park District Naming Policy, that best reflects the interest of the community and ensures a worthy and enduring legacy for the District's park and recreation system including; ensuring the property is easily identified and located; providing a name that will engender a strong public image and will have public support.

Director Gogola reported that the committees' final recommended name "The Preserve of Highland Park" reflects the property's unique nature as a one-of-a-kind green space and passive recreation destination for the public and provides a classic distinction that is representative of the Highland Park community and the entities adjacent to the property – Recreation Center of Highland Park, banquet facilities, Highland Park Golf Learning Center, and the future Senior Center. Staff will recommend at the March 31 Park Board Meeting approval by the Park Board of Commissioners to name the park property (currently referred to as Community Park at the Recreation Center of Highland Park) The Preserve of Highland Park.

President Kaplan wanted to know why the Park Board decided against the current name, Community Park.

Director Gogola reported that the committees felt it doesn't capture the essence of the property.

Vice President Ruttenberg feels the name becomes the name of the entire property, so the Preserve encompasses the property and becomes the brand.

Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Grossberg, and Commissioner Flores Weisskopf feel it's important to include Highland Park in the name, even if the community refers to the property as the Preserve, the brand is the "Preserve of Highland Park".

COMMUNITY PARK AT THE RECREATION CENTER OF HIGHLAND PARK / SKOKIE RIVER WOODS PROJECT

Vice President Ruttenberg would like to know if the Park District needs to inform third parties of the property renaming.

Manager Grill suggests staff confer with the City of Highland Park since they own the property.

Manager Grill reported that the Lake County Forest Preserve District approved the first amendment to the intergovernmental agreement by, between, and among the Lake County Forest Preserve District, The Park District of Highland Park, and the City of Highland Park concerning the properties known as Skokie River Woods and Community Park.

Director Smith provided a brief overview of the next steps, reporting that the intergovernmental agreement will be presented to the Park Board for approval at the March 31 Regular Board Meeting, then the agreement will be presented to the City for approval.

Director Smith noted that the Park District submitted several grant applications and was awarded federal and state funds. The OSLAD grant, which was awarded by the state, indicates the project cannot commence until the grant agreement is signed. Director Smith estimates the grant should be available within a month. The federally funded grant could not provide an estimated timeline of when the agreement and funds will be available to the District. Director Smith recommends completing the project in phases, in hopes of completing a portion this summer, but chances are the trail work will not be completed until 2021.

President Kaplan recommends meeting with City Council to address the changes to the project timeline since the Park District will no longer be able to meet the agreed-upon completion dates.

Director Smith and Manager Grill will contact City Council to see if a project update is required.

Manager Grill reported that this project encompasses several pieces including the Golf Conversion, which is the purchase of the golf course from the City of Highland Park, the Skokie River Woods Gateway Path and Overlook, which is related to the recently approved IGA shared between the Lake County Forest Preserve District, the Park District, and the City, and added amenities which includes a restroom facility, interpretative signage, and a pedestrian traffic circle, which are being funded by grants. The entire enhancement project is estimated at \$2.1million. Since the District secured \$600,000 in grant funds, the total cost for the District has been reduced to \$1.5million.

Vice President Ruttenberg thanked staff for their hard work to obtain such significant grant contributions.

Commissioner Grossberg would like to know why the District is using asphalt trails.

Manager Grill reported that the property is on a flood plain so soft surfacing on trails would wash away. She noted that the District has a routine asphalt replacement program, so this property would be included with the maintenance budget moving forward. In addition, the property includes 50 acres of natural areas, which will have a soft surface mud trail and a mile circuit for cross country skiers.

ROSEWOOD PARK DRAINAGE & GRADING IMPROVEMENTS

Director Smith provided visuals of Rosewood Park and the pathways from the upper parking lot to the beach, identifying the pathway from the stairs and the alternative pathway which runs along the ravine. The ravine path regularly experiences washout damage during rainstorms from water traveling down the path and over the bluff. Staff has worked with Dan Creaney Company to develop a solution that will mitigate the impacts storms have on the trail and the bluff. The plan calls for regrading a 75-foot portion of the path and installation of drains in portions of the park. Water will be diverted to a drainpipe daylighting into the ravine. The park will not be damaged as a result of the drainage installation.

This project was bid out and four fully responsive sealed bids were received February 13, 2020. Drainage improvements were the Base Bid and path regrading was Alternate #1. The lowest bid came from Joel Kennedy Construction Corp. for \$310,491. Staff reached out to Joel Kennedy

Construction Corp., to negotiate a lower price. The contractor reduced the cost of Alternate #1 by \$10,600 for an updated Total Bid amount of \$299,881. Director Smith reported that staff will recommend at the March 31 Park Board Meeting approval of the Base Bid and Alternate #1 from Joel Kennedy Construction Corp.

REVIEW OF VOUCHERS

Vice President Ruttenberg reviewed the Park District's vouchers stating they are all consistent with the District's policies.

Executive Director Romes provided a farewell and thanked Assistant Director Henriques for her time and services spent with the Park District, stating she will truly be missed.

Commissioner Flores Weisskopf thanked Assistant Director Henriques for her services noting she is a smart individual with a great personality so she and the District will miss her.

CLOSED SESSION

Motion was made Commissioner Grossberg, seconded by Vice President Ruttenberg 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 – for discussions between internal or external auditors and the Board.

Roll Call:

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

Motion Carried

The meeting adjourned into Closed Session at 8:46 p.m.

The meeting reconvened into Open Session at 9:51 p.m.

ACTION FROM CLOSED SESSION IF ANY

President Kaplan reported that the Board met in Closed Session Section 2(c)5 – the purchase or lease of real estate including discussion on whether a certain parcel of property should be acquired.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Ruttenberg and seconded by Commissioner Bernstein and approved by a unanimous vote. The Board Meeting adjourned at 9:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Romes, Secretary