

**PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
MINUTES OF WORKSHOP MEETING  
MAY 12, 2020**

The Workshop 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 Workshop Board Meeting.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 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 Maliszewski; General Manager/Superintendent of Golf Operations Ochs; Manager Schwartz; Manager Grill; Executive Coordinator Hejnowski

**ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA** – None

**ROSEWOOD BEACH PROJECT UPDATE**

Director Smith reported that the Rosewood Beach Recreation Cove Protection Project has been completed. The cove was replenished with Birdseye Sand to provide protection of the cove, the adjacent boardwalk, and the playground. Stone was placed along the interior of the south breakwater to mitigate the passage of sand through this area. Director Smith introduced Margaret Boshek of SmithGroup to provide an overview of the project and discuss how all three coves have responded to recent storms.

Margaret Boshek provided images of the Recreation Cove prior to the nourishment. The images depicted significant erosion, loss of shoreline, and jeopardized equipment and play structures. She reported that the Recreation Cove Protection Project was completed on April 27<sup>th</sup> and shared images of the restored cove. Unfortunately, a severe storm occurred on April 30<sup>th</sup>. The images depicted debris throughout the cove, and the placed sand had flattened, but the distance to the bench is still significant, so there is a large barrier from the bench and the boardwalk. The nourishment withstood the storm, and the additional stone placed along the South breakwater remained in place. Since the water levels are still high, small storms will cause waves to crash onto the beach and run off, but these waves will not pull material offshore.

She provided images and a brief update on the Swimming and Interpretative Coves since both areas were re-nourished last year. The sand in the Swimming Cove has flattened, but due to the high-water levels, waves are running up and over the board walk and hitting the concessions and restrooms during storms. Her recommendation is to protect electrical and plumbing that could be damaged from water seeping into the building, which could be as simple as raising items a foot or so off the ground. As the water levels lower the waves will no longer run up the beach and strike the building.

She reported there are challenges in the Interpretative Cove. Benching is occurring along the boardwalk and the beach has been flattened considerably. The high-water levels and the size of gap between the breakwaters is allowing significant waves to enter the cove, resulting in lost materials. She advised against another replenishment at this time, as the beach will no longer be comfortable for recreational use. The District could reduce the gap width of the breakwaters, but as discussed in previous meetings is very costly. Regarding the benching, areas of the boardwalk near the ravine outfall are no longer safe due to the amount of sand lost. She recommends fencing off those areas or removing that portion of the boardwalk.

Looking at long term defensive measures, she provided a brief update on a back of beach revetment for the Interpretative Cove. The revetment would be placed and buried along the backside of the building and the parking lot. This solution does not protect the beach and shoreline, but it is a last defense to protect the foundation. In addition, to the revetment SmithGroup noticed the pavers that are adjacent to the boardwalk are separating, which is an indication of movement, so their architectural engineer is putting together a forensics plan and will provide solutions to stabilize the area.

In the Interpretative Cove, Commissioner Grossberg's greatest concerns are the boardwalk and the movement of the pavers adjacent to the boardwalk. He would like to know if the weight of the trucks could have caused the pavers to separate while delivering loads of sand and stones for the breakwater.

Ms. Boshek reported that the boardwalk has been exhibiting signs of movement for the past year, and now the pavers are showing similar signs of movement as they are separating. She feels that this is a long-term issue, and it was not caused by construction.

Vice President Ruttenberg would like to know if the back of beach revetment will help stabilize the parking lot and the possible movement of the pavers.

Ms. Boshek reported the back of beach revetment and sheetpile are planned for the lakeside of the parking lot, so a portion of the parking lot will be stabilized. SmithGroup's architectural

engineer needs to come to the site and check the foundation to get a better idea of where the movement could be coming from and what solutions could be used to stabilize the area.

In the Swimming Cove, Vice President Ruttenberg would like to know if the utility lines are at risk since the waves are running up and hitting the buildings during storms.

Ms. Boshek will examine the building and architectural construction designs for the buildings in the Interpretative Cove and the Swimming Cove to ensure there are no risk for utility lines and outlets.

In the Recreation Cove, Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if staff should be concerned about the small hole which formed along the breakwater near the toe of the bluff.

Ms. Boshek reported that SmithGroup could fill the hole with additional stone, but at this time it's not advised. She recommends keeping an eye on the area. As the water levels recede the hole will naturalize.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if there is a groin in this area.

Ms. Boshek reported that this breakwater is made completely of stone and does not contain a groin.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if benching occurred in the Recreation Cove after the April 30<sup>th</sup> storm.

Ms. Boshek reported severe storms such as the one on April 30<sup>th</sup>, flattens the shoreline. The shoreline will continue to settle out over the summer months.

In the Swimming Cove, Commissioner Bernstein's greatest concerns are waves running over the board walk and hitting the concession and restrooms. He would like to know if the boardwalk and building we're damaged from the recent storm.

Director Smith reported that he inspected Rosewood Beach after the April 30<sup>th</sup> storm. Neither the boardwalk or the concessions and restrooms we're damaged. He inspected the exterior and interior of the building.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if staff should place sandbags in front of the building to protect the utility lines and outlets.

Director Smith reported that he is working with other Directors to provide temporary measures to protect those buildings.

Ms. Boshek reported that this is an area being addressed in the beach management plan which SmithGroup is working on.

In the Interpretative Cove, Commissioner Bernstein would like to know SmithGroup's recommendation for the bench and the cantilevered deck.

Ms. Boshek advises the removal of the bench and the deck or roping off the areas since both areas are problematic and pose a safety risk till the water levels recede. Currently, there is a significant drop off from the bench and the deck.

Vice President Ruttenberg asked if placing a sheetpile around or in front of the bench and deck would address the drop off.

Ms. Boshek reported that the sheetpile is a temporary solution. So long as the sheetpile is buried the area is safe, but as sand is washed away the stone will be exposed, and the risk returns.

Director Smith reported that that staff are exploring options for this area. SmithGroup is currently working on construction drawings for this area. No decisions need to be made at this point in time.

For the parking lot, Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if staff have construction documents for the parking lot foundation and the pavers.

Ms. Boshek reported that there are construction documents from the repairs to the ravine rockfall, but the documents could not provide a clear indication of what is occurring in that area, so SmithGroup will conduct a site inspection to help identify and assess the issue.

Commissioner Bernstein asked if staff shared the original documents from when the parking lot was installed and constructed.

Director Smith reported that those documents were shared but the information is limited.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if the installation, construction, and repairs were completed by the Army Core of Engineers.

Director Smith will review the documents and follow up.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if retention of the Architectural Engineer is included in the scope of the current project.

Ms. Boshkek reported that this would be a new proposal outside of the construction documents for the revetment. She is still waiting on a proposal from engineer. She estimates the investigation and alternative solutions could be \$20,000.

Vice President Ruttenberg suggests contacting Andy Tinnuci to see if the Army Corps of Engineers constructed the parking lot. In addition, he asked if SmithGroup could examine the bridge and its structure. If the parking lot is shifting, he fears the bridge may be compromised as well.

Ms. Boshkek reported that SmithGroup can extend the project and the Architectural Engineer can examine both the parking lot and the bridge.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

#### **Andrew Cohen**

#### **271 Charal Lane, Highland Park**

I am a North Shore Yacht Club member and I am also a new owner of a wave runner that I purchased mainly for use on Lake Michigan because of Highland Park's proximity and access to the lake.

I've heard recently that the Park District and the City of HP decided to keep the road to the beach, boat launch and boating facility closed due to COVID-19. I was surprised to hear this, given Governor Pritzker's 5 phase recovery plan that was outlined a few weeks ago. As a reference, I pasted the recovery plan that was provided to the media below. As you probably know, Phase 2 started on May 1st.

Phase 2 specifically states that people "...can begin enjoying additional outdoor activities like golf, boating, and fishing..." So, although the Governor feels it is safe to resume these activities, the Park District and the City of Highland Park for some reason do not.

I am all for protecting the community and the residents to keep them safe to prevent the spread of the deadly virus, but with boating being an outdoor activity that can be done either solo or with only 2 people, I fail to see where the danger lies. Other than the contact with the boat launch attendant, which could be done at a safe distance while wearing a mask, getting on a 1-2 person wave runner or jet ski, or a kayak, etc. to go out into Lake Michigan seems to me to be a pretty safe activity.

I would like to ask that you reconsider your decision to keep this area, including the boat launch, closed. There is already such a limited window of warm weather in the upper Midwest, keeping this area closed longer than needed seems harsh in a time when the Governor says these activities can resume. Additionally, keeping this outdoor area closed to people who have been "sheltering in place" for the last 2 months, people who really need to get outside, just seems like an overabundance of caution that isn't needed.

Again, I am all for keeping people safe during the current pandemic. But I fail to see where the danger is in this situation. I would like to ask that my email to you be read at the next meeting for public comment.

**Michael West**  
**1342 Ferndale, Highland Park**

As it appears that just about everything relating to boating is on hold pending COVID-19 developments, why not use this time for needed repairs?

A good place to start would be to take some action to prevent or at least delay further undercutting and collapse of the southern boat parking area.

As evidenced by the attached photos, the situation is fast deteriorating.

**Steve Knapp**  
**700 College Place, Highland Park**

Please open the Park Ave. beach for boating. Those with boating stickers should be allowed down (with vehicles) to boat. There is no need to staff the venue, as the boaters can take care of themselves. We just need access to the lake.

**Ben Wernick**  
**1089 Ridgewood Drive, Highland Park**

I would like to go on record as in support of the City and Park District allowing permitted access to Park Ave beach so that we can launch non-motorized small crafts. I rent space 4 in the SUP storage garage last season and this season and really want to begin using it now. I do not think us regular small craft boaters present any reasonable risk of congregating and spreading infection, nor do residents who regularly make the loop walking, fishing, or biking for exercise. If you can find a way to make this happen I'm confident that all permitted folks like myself (vehicle stickers, boat storage stickers or pedestrians) will make an extra effort to self-enforce common sense rules like not swimming or gathering in groups, etc.. This will not overburden our emergency services either because we all enjoy the lake responsibly and the very tragic events from the last few years were swimmers and non-permitted boaters. If we are allowed to get down there soon, we will watch for those things and make sure it is understood they are not allowed or welcomed.

**Forest Barbieri**

**303 Ravine Drive, Highland Park**

I am writing to request opening of our outdoor tennis courts. Highland Park is home to a couple of the top junior National USTA players in the nation. These young players compete nationally and internationally. They need to practice and go to great lengths such as traveling to Wisconsin and Georgia just to hit. Their peers in several other states are practice and they need to soon compete against them. Lincolnshire and Libertyville have opened their courts so of course we go there. However, Highland Park should open their courts.

Tennis is a sport that encourages social distance. Balls are numbered so players can pick up their own or use a hands-free hopper. We have a ball machine for a one player practice. The Governor has opened golf, boating, and fishing...do any politicians play tennis? You have two of the top girls at G12/14 in the country living here, why do they have to travel so far to play?

**SUNSET WOODS PLAYGROUND RENOVATION DESIGN SERVICE RFQ**

Manager Schwartz reported that two playgrounds at Sunset Woods Park are scheduled for replacement in 2020/2021: the 21st Century Playland and Titanic Tides tot lot. The Park District's Master Plan, GreenPrint 2024, identifies the renovation of these Sunset Woods Playgrounds as a priority project. In Fall 2019, the Park District conducted a reassessment of GreenPrint 2024, which included the completion of a statistically valid, community-wide survey. The results of this assessment showed continued support for the renovation of the Sunset Woods Playgrounds. Playground design is budgeted in the 2020 Capital Plan and was deemed a priority project as part of the recent Capital Plan review. Construction is budgeted in the 2021 Capital Plan.

Manager Schwartz provided an overview of the process which includes solicitation, request for qualifications, design, and construction. Since Sunset Woods Park is a flagship park and centrally located, staff would like an outside firm to design and replace those play structures. Requests for Qualifications (RFQ) were submitted to the Park District on Friday, April 24. Staff received proposals from 12 firms which included general firm information, a letter of interest, understanding of the scope, plan of approach, examples of previous work, and the proposed team. The required RFQ process is qualifications-based and cannot take fees into consideration. Staff evaluated all submissions and selected 5 firms to conduct interviews with.

Manager Schwartz reported that staff selected Hitchcock Design Group as the top ranked firm due to their proven ability to create a "wow" playground and they demonstrated an unmatched mastery in custom design play equipment. Hitchcock went beyond working with manufactures in standard play equipment. They sketch and design unique pieces and have an extensive portfolio of playgrounds completed in the region. In addition, they designed the Adventure Playhouse Playground at Sunset Woods Park. Manager Schwartz shared images of the sketches and design

pieces from Hitchcock portfolio which included a nautical theme and a story tale theme. The second ranked firm is Upland Design LTD, which they too have an impressive portfolio, proven experience working with Park District's, and the proven ability to create unique pieces and mix those structures with standard pieces. Manager Schwartz reported that staff are seeking consensus from the Park Board to proceed with negotiating a fee with the top-ranked firm, Hitchcock Design Group, and would like Board Liaisons selected for the internal committee to oversee this project.

Commissioner Bernstein does not feel this project is a need considering all the pressures from COVID-19 and would like to postpone the project till the Finance Committee Liaisons have a better idea of the district's finances.

President Kaplan would like to know if staff are seeking approval to move forward with contract negotiations.

Director Smith reported that if the Park Board provides consensus to move forward with staff's recommendation of Hitchcock Design Group, he could reach out to the firm letting them know they have been the top selected firm for the project, begin negotiating a price, present the price to the Park Board then request approval to enter into an agreement at a later date based on the circumstances.

Commissioner Bernstein approves of Hitchcock Design Group and staff negotiating a fee but does not feel comfortable entering into an agreement and starting the project till he has a better understanding of the District's finances. He understands that this is an important project as indicated in GreenPrint and the Attitude and Interest Survey but would like to reanalyze all capital projects before moving forward with this one. Commissioner Bernstein commented that the Park District has deferred several capital projects and thinks we need to conduct another analysis.

Commissioner Grossberg asked if there is budgeted money available for this project.

Commissioner Bernstein reported that the District received impact fees from the Downtown Development Project, which was provided by the City of Highland Park. Prior to COVID-19, those funds were to be used for development and construction of parks located in Downtown Highland Park, which Sunset Woods Park fits that location. It is not a condition that those funds need to be spent on a downtown park, nor was an agreement signed, or a promise made. Commissioner Bernstein would prefer putting this project on hold till the Finance Committee has a better understanding of the District's financials.

Commissioner Grossberg would like to know how much the District received in impact fees.

Directors Peters reported that the District received around \$800,000 at the end of 2019 and another \$8,000 in 2020 in impact fees.

Vice President Ruttenberg would prefer staff focus on present projects until the Finance Committee gets a better handle on financials. In addition, he would like to know why the other two playgrounds have not been included in the renovation project.

Manager Schwartz reported that the other play structures are not nearing their useful lives.

Vice President Ruttenberg mentioned a master plan for Sunset Woods Park.

Manager Schwartz reported that the firms looked at connectivity, which was addressed in GreenPrint 2024.

Vice President Ruttenberg continued to present and interest in a master plan for Sunset Woods Park and would like clarity on the impact fees and how the funds should be spent.

Executive Director Romes reported that this project was deemed a priority in GreenPrint. Regarding the impact fees, those were funds received from recent construction projects. City Manager Nuekirch expressed that residents of the community would like those fees spent towards parks and areas surrounding the downtown development project. Executive Director Romes reported that impact fees are not necessarily associated with a particular project, and instead are to be used to support the impact of new residents being added to the community as a whole; but since Sunset Woods Park was deemed a priority maybe the fees could be used towards that project. This was a discussion, there is no formal agreement regarding where those fees will be used.

President Kaplan would like to revisit at the June 9 Workshop Meeting, he asked if placing this project on hold till then would have a detrimental effect.

Manager Schwartz reported that staff would like to see this project completed in 2021 since it has been deferred several times but revisiting in a few weeks will not have a detrimental impact on the project.

Commissioner Flores Weisskopf would like to know if staff would be happy with the second firm, Upland Design, LTD should the Park Board select them based on their price.

Manager Schwartz reported that staff would be pleased to work with either of the two top-ranked firms.

Commissioner Grossberg feels a master plan is not required and feels there is an advantage to completing projects in segments.

Vice President Ruttenberg is not opposed to completing projects in segments so long as they are tied into a master plan.

President Kaplan reported that staff and the Park Board will revisit this project at the next meeting.

### **THE PRESERVE OF HIGHLAND PARK PROJECT UPDATE**

Manager Grill reported that staff continues working with Landscape Architecture Firm Hey & Associates on finalizing construction documents for the Preserve of Highland Park. Staff expects to submit the final construction documents to Lake County Stormwater Management Commission (SMC) and the City of Highland Park for Watershed Development Ordinance permitting this month.

In addition, the District received the awarded OSLAD grant agreement documents from IDNR last week which includes \$400,000 for trail work, park amenities, and landscaping. Signage is updated along with the planting plan. Grass is growing in as well as movements in landscape. Mowing and reseeded will provide a meadow appearance for areas which will have enhanced landscape designs. Construction for this project cannot be bid until the grant agreement(s) are signed by the Park District, returned, and have been fully executed by the Director of IDNR.

Lastly, she reported, that the Park District's application for IDNR's Recreational Trails Program was forwarded to the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration for consideration. Once approved, the grant will fund trail amenities including a restroom, additional signage, trail markers, and a traffic circle to enhance pedestrian/bike flow around the site's nature maze. The restroom component of the site amenities is estimated to cost \$72,300, with requested grant funds of \$57,500. Staff worked with Hey & Associates to determine the best restroom option, knowing that the site currently does not have access to water or sanitation. The recommended restroom is a single user, vault-style restroom called the CXT Rocky Mountain. The interior of the restroom is ADA accessible, and is also shown below with standard features. Available upgrades that are within the allocated budget include a tile floor, wainscoting, solar lighting, a mirror, and solar fan. A different interior paint color is also optional and would not increase the cost.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if staff have a plan which to create handicap accessible trails.

Manager Grill reported that ADA mapping is included with the project and will begin once the trail work is underway.

Commissioner Grossberg would like to know if new plantings will be added to the demonstration garden.

Manager Grill reported that staff have been weeding, mulching, and adding plants to that garden.

Commissioner Grossberg would like to know what the plans are for the nursery.

Manager Grill reported that staff are working with the City of Highland Park to improve that area, specifically the nursery.

Commissioner Flores Weisskopf congratulated staff for their efforts and securing grant funds. She is excited to see how the site evolves.

### **COVID-19 EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLANNING UPDATE**

Executive Director Romes provided an update of staff's *Emergency Response and Business Planning efforts in relations to the COVID-19 Pandemic*. The focus is, has been, and will continue to be on three priorities: Emergency Planning, which ensures the health and safety of residents and staff; Strategic Planning, which ensures the delivery of essential, enriching services; Financial Planning, which ensures responsible fiscal management and stewardship of District physical resources.

Executive Director Romes reported that he would like to focus tonight on the Park District's strategic planning efforts as it relates to the opening of facilities and the delivery of services, in response to the Governor's Stay at Home Order and the recently released 5 Phases of *Restore Illinois*.

The Park Board and staff receive dozens of calls daily from residents, wanting to know the status of facilities, programs, and services. Although staff send out weekly emails, post on Facebook, Instagram, and the website, we understand that the community is anxious to return to the physical enjoyment, emotionally enriching, and physically healthy activities provided by the Park District. He reported that staff's goal is to return to recreation activities safely and responsibly to parks, beaches, and sports fields for the social, emotional, and physical wellbeing of the Highland Park Community, as soon as permissible.

While staff consider themselves experts in preventative health care through recreation and leisure, Park District employees are not Health Care experts, epidemiologists, first responders, nor state or city officials. However, Park District employees are providers of essential services, absorbing new information every day from the Illinois Department of Public Health and Center for Disease Control (CDC), while taking direction from the Governor's Office, Department of

Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). Executive Director Romes reported that these updates change almost daily, and staff are learning and responding at an unprecedented rate. Staff are working with Park District Risk Management Association (PDRMA), the Illinois Associations of Park District (IAPD), and the Illinois Park and Recreation Association (IPRA) to extensively review and develop new policies and new procedures that ensure employee and participant safety once facilities reopen.

Staff are also in regular communication with industry specific organizations such as the Allied Golf Association (AGA), United States Tennis Association (USTA), International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association (IHRSA) and many others.

With this information, staff are in daily communication with the City of Highland Park, discussing safe transitioning for the opening of Park District Facilities and programs.

He reported that Lake County is currently in phase 2 of the Governor's Restore Illinois Plan, and are starting to permit certain outdoor activities in small groups, it is not until phase 3 where staff can permit congregating and participating in programs or services that serve groups of up to 10 people. The Park District has a very comprehensive plan for Restoring Highland Park. Noting that this plan is fluid and updated almost daily. Executive Director Romes reported that as of tonight, staff would like to present the services currently being provided in phase two, highlight what staff hope to provide in phase 3, and discuss some difficult decisions staff and the Park Board will have to make regarding restricted activities due to social distancing, personal protection, and necessary sanitization.

Executive Director Romes invited Director Gogola to provide a brief update on our Free Happy and Healthy at Home activities.

***Happy and Healthy at Home Activities*** - Director Gogola reported that staff have engaged the community with no cost online educational, fitness, and human-interest activities and videos. All can be found on the home page of our website. The videos are promoted and delivered via emails and our social media outlets. New content is added daily. She reported that as of today, there are over 111 videos and activities and the videos have been viewed more than 36,000 times. This week the athletics team is launching a coach's spotlight, which will feature interviews with local high-level coaches. In addition, staff provided dozens of Nature, Early Childhood, and Fitness Programs videos and activities at no charge which are being promoted and delivered daily.

President Kaplan would like to know if the district is offering live classes.

Director Gogola reported that staff are offering live classes through May and June. As of June, some will require registration.

Executive Director Romes introduced Manger Ochs to provide a brief update on golf operations.

***Golf Operations*** - Manager Ochs reported that staff are adhering to the restrictions and guidelines provided in Phase 2 of the Governor's plan, which only allows for twosomes per group and 15-minute tee-time intervals on the golf course. The practice green, driving range, and clubhouse are closed, so tee-time reservations must be made in advance either online or by phone. No outside staff is present, which includes starters, rangers, and cart attendants.

As of Phase 3, Manager Ochs is hopeful and preparing for the use of single rider carts, foursomes to resume, and the reduction of tee-time intervals to 10-12 minutes. The club house will re-open, permitting 10 or less people in the facility at a time, which will allow for on-site reservations and payments to be taken. For the safety of employees and players, plexiglass sneeze guards will be installed at the proshop and check-in counters.

He is also expecting to re-open the driving range and mini golf course at the Golf Learning Center. Staff are working with specialists at EZ Links, which is the Tee-Time Reservation software used at Sunset Valley Golf Club, to create a reservations system for mini golf. Mini Golf reservations will be on 15-minute intervals. Manager Ochs reported that hitting stations at the driving range will be placed every 8ft to adhere to the social distancing guidelines. On-site reservations and payments will be permitted at the pick-up window, which the current design adheres to prevention and sanitization requirements. In addition, private lessons, camps, and programs will be permitted, so long as the groups are 10 people or less.

Lastly, Manager Ochs reported that 563 rounds of golf were played during the first week of May, which brought in around \$22,795, which is an average of \$40.49 per round of golf. Whereas the first week of May (May 1-7<sup>th</sup>) of 2019, there was 536 rounds of golf, which brought in around 19,221, which is an average of \$36.42 per round of golf. He reported that the weather has been favorable, so golf operations are doing well.

Commissioner Grossberg would like to know if foursomes will be permitted in Phase 2.

Manager Ochs reported that he cannot say for certain, and staff are hoping foursomes will be permitted before Phase 3.

Commissioner Grossberg would like to increase staffing at Sunset Valley Golf Club during the current phase.

Manager Ochs is not opposed to his recommendation and will discuss the idea with Directors.

Executive Director Romes introduced Assistant Director Maliszewski to provide an update on virtual and outdoor programming.

***Virtual Programs*** - Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that staff are in the second week of offering virtual recreational programming to the community. Programs will be implemented and offered on a month to month basis to best adapt to the guidelines and requirements provided by the governor and the above-mentioned agencies. Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that the catalog offered in May included tennis and athletic skill instruction, nature activities, dance,

theater, and ParkSchool classes. He noted that as of today, there are 153 participants registered for those programs. In addition, staff are gathering feedback from participants and the community regarding virtual programs and anticipate the June catalog to be released May 20. He reported that staff does not want to be a deterrent to any of those interested in participating in virtual activities so families are encouraged to contact staff if they have financial restraints due to the impacts of COVID-19.

Vice President Ruttenberg would like to know how staff are communicating to the public that staff have the ability to adjust or waive fees.

Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that there is verbiage regarding financial restraints included in the virtual catalogs.

Executive Director Romes reported that staff are working with Director Gogola to better communicate that message.

Commissioner Flores Weisskopf would like to see an enrollment report in the coming weeks, to see which classes are most popular.

Executive Director Romes reported that this will be included in the May Directors report, which will be shared on the 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Outdoor Programs** - Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that staff are anxiously awaiting the transition into Phase 3, which would allow for in-person programs with groups of 10 people to resume. Types of considerations include outdoor tennis classes, athletic clinics, theater, nature, education, and art classes and various special event type activities.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if outdoor programs can resume before Phase 3.

Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that outdoor programs can not resume until Phase 3, which could begin in June.

**Fitness Programs** - Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that fitness staff began offering online tutorials shortly after the closure on March 13. During the month of March 13 virtual tutorials were provided to the community through social media. Those tutorials received 4,000 views. As of April, staff offered free tutorial and virtual group formatted classes lasting anywhere from 30-60 minutes. The group formatted classes had a monthly usage of 7,400 participants across 41 various videos. As of May, staff continued to offer the virtual group formatted classes, introduced trainer tips, and has been connecting with those participants through Facebook Live to offer Fitness advice, discuss goals, and share healthy recipes. Lastly, Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that Phase 3 allows for indoor personal training to resume and outdoor fitness classes to be conducted, with groups of 10 people or less, so staff are preparing for the transition. These will be pre-registered classes, which participants will have to pay a fee.

Executive Director Romes provided a brief update on parks, reporting that basketball courts will remain closed for public during Phase 2 and 3. Basketball courts will be permitted for programs, where strict guidelines can be followed and enforced. Skate parks and dog parks will likely be open as of Phase 3, and staff are reviewing the guidelines for natural areas since groups of 10 people or less will be permitted to congregate. Rentals and pavilions will reopen as of Phase 4.

Executive Director Romes introduced Director Carr to provide a brief update for outdoor facilities, summer camp, and some difficult decisions staff and the Park Board need to make.

***Heller Nature Trails*** - Director Carr reported that the trails at the Heller Nature Center opened to the public on Friday, May 8. The trails are open daily from 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. The capacity of the parking lot has been reduced to 50% to prevent crowds. The trails allow for one-way traffic, and there is signage throughout the trails to notify the community of these changes. Director Carr reported that public access is not available for wander woods or the facility, so restrooms will not be available for public use during this time. the facility for restrooms. As of Phase 3 staff are preparing to offer educational programs.

***Rosewood Beach*** - Director Carr reported that Rosewood Beach is currently closed for sunbathing, swimming, and congregating along with the gated to the parking lots, however the trails to walk the paths re-opened on Friday, May 8. As weather improves, staff will supervise to ensure people are not congregating and the guidelines are being enforced. Director Carr reported that staff are planning to open the lower level parking lot for as of Memorial Day Weekend for resident access only. Additional staff will be scheduled. As of Phase 3, Director Carr noted that there will be significant challenges at this site. Currently, staff need more guidance from the state to better determine how to manage the beach depending on the limits. Staff are considering several options, including only offering beach access to residents. Swimming will not be permitted until lifeguards are trained and scheduled. He estimates it will take 3-4 weeks to get lifeguards hired, trained, and scheduled so they can monitor water safety.

***Park Avenue Boating Facility*** - Director Carr reported that City of Highland Park and the Park District met with boating community and the North Shore Yacht Club to inform them that the Mayor released an emergency declaration prohibiting all water activities during Phase 2. The City of Highland Park reported public safety concerns, regarding staffing since there is limited resources and mutual aid due to the pandemic. However, the pathway will be open allowing people to walk along the lakefront at Park Avenue. The City of Highland Park and the Park District will keep in communication with the boating community and the North Shore Yacht Club to report on any access changes. As of Phase 3, the Park District can work on a timeline for boating which will be discussed with the Park Board, the City of Highland Park, and the North Shore Yacht Club. Director Carr reported that the Park District would need to develop an open maintenance plan, which includes preparing the building, storage area, and buoys to allow boating operations to resume which the North Shore Yacht Club would manage, including kayaking, stand up paddle, and small craft sailing. Staff anticipates it will take 2-3weeks to develop a plan. Director Carr reported that there is a separate plan and timeline for power boating since there are other elements effective those operations including the need to dredge and installation of the floating dock.

***Outdoor Tennis and Pickleball Courts*** - Director Carr reported that staff plans to open the outdoor tennis courts to the public as of next week. There will be limited court access at Larry Fink Park, Sunset Woods Park, and Danny Cuniff Park between the hours of 9:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. He reported that court capacity will be reduced to 50% or less and play will be limited to singles only. Both Larry Fink Park and Danny Cuniff Park will have 7 tennis courts and 4 pickleball courts available free of charge. The clay courts at Sunset Woods Park will require a usage fee to help cover the maintenance costs. Staff are proposing \$10 for Deer Creek Racquet Club Members, \$15 for residents, and \$20 for non-residents. Director Carr reported that reservations will need to be made online for a 1-hour time block. All these guidelines follow the United States Tennis Association (USTA) to prevent overcrowding of the courts. To ensure these guidelines are followed staff will schedule a full-time tennis pro amongst these locations. In addition, this will allow those tennis pros to schedule private lessons.

Director Carr opened the floor for questions from the Park Board.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know why the tennis and pickleball courts will close at 5:30pm.

Director Carr reported that there will only be one tennis pro scheduled daily, working an 8.5hour day.

Commissioner Grossberg would like to know where the guidelines and rules will be posted for tennis and pickleball.

Director Carr reported that the reservation system includes a waiver, containing the guidelines and rules. In addition, this information will be posted at facilities and outdoor courts.

Commissioner Grossberg would like to know if staff are promoting the tennis and pickleball courts being open.

Director Gogola reported that staff are sending out an e-blast to the entire database, and notification will be posted on the homepage of the website, and social media accounts.

Executive Director Romes reported that the City is including Park District updates in their email newsletters.

Vice President Ruttenberg asked if Deer Creek Racquet Club members are still suspended?

Director Carr reported that Deer Creek Racquet Club memberships are currently suspended, as soon as the outdoor courts re-open, the membership fees would resume.

Barney advised against offering a discount rate for Deer Creek Racquet Club members and would like to keep those memberships suspended till the facility re-opens. He would also like to

know why staff are only opening the larger tennis courts when there are several outdoor courts available throughout the District.

Director Carr reported that staff are taking a cautious approach to ensure the guidelines are being followed, and since there is limited amount of tennis pros available to monitor courts, staff are opening at a limited capacity.

Vice President Ruttenberg would like to know why staff are allowing private tennis lessons, and not offering private fitness classes.

Director Carr reported that staff are exploring the idea of outdoor personal training style activities to allow such classes to resume.

Vice President Ruttenberg would like to know how staff will be enforcing the rules and guidelines when dealing with irate patrons.

Director Carr reported that are looking at hiring CPA's since they have experience in such areas.

Commissioner Flores Weisskopf would like to know if the district is replacing the Safety Coordinator.

Executive Director Romes reported that the District is in a hiring freeze and the responsibilities have been distributed amongst Directors. In addition, staff have formed a Homecoming Committee who attends weekly webinars regarding the safety requirements and responsibilities.

Commissioner Flores Weisskopf would like to know if staff assuming those responsibilities are qualified.

Executive Director Romes reported that there is a learning curve since Megan had several years of experience, but he feels Directors and staff assuming those responsibilities are qualified.

Vice President Ruttenberg would like PDRMA to review any newly created guidelines and policies pertaining to safety written by the Park District.

**Summer Camp** - Director Carr thanked Manager Fiori for her efforts since it typically takes 7-8 months to prepare for the District's traditional summer camps. He reported that staff will be offering a 6-week modified summer camp, beginning July 6. The modified camp does not include the use of District 112 facilities, so camp will be located at various Park District facilities, which will not impact the experience. AM and PM busing will no longer be offered, however staff are offering extended hours for before and aftercare. In addition, the modified camp will not take field trips outside of Highland Park. If needed, buses will strictly be used to transport to facilities throughout the District.

Director Carr reported that the group ratios have significantly been reduced to 10 campers and 2 instructors. Each group will have a designated pick up and drop off area, classroom, restroom,

and storage area when inside facilities. pick Camp groups will not be permitted to intermingle under the COVID-19 guidelines. Director Carr reported that the modified camp will be able to accommodate 125 – 150 campers, which is a significant reduction operating at 10%. As of today, the District has 948 registrations for the traditional summer camp. Refunds will be processed for those registrations and they will be able to register for the modified camp as of June 8. Residents who are not currently registered can register as of June 15. Director Carr reported that specialized camps will not be offered, with the exception of golf and tennis.

Due to the reduction of summer programs, full time staff will be placed as site directors to reduce the amount of seasonal hires. Staff trainings will occur in June as well as site preparations.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know how staff plan to prioritize registration.

Director Carr reported that the plan is to develop a message to community, regarding the significantly reduced and limited capacity. Staff are encouraging families to try to provide opportunities to essential workers. Registration will be based on a lottery, since first come first served will not work under these reductions. A finalized plan will be shared with the Park Board.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know what other Park Districts are doing.

Director Carr reported that most other District have yet to create a plan or they are utilizing a lottery system.

Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that priority registration will be limited to residents.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if this is due to reduction of facilities.

Director Carr reported that staff are examining every measure, but the loss of District 112 facilities under these guidelines leaves limited options and residents are the priority.

Vice president Ruttenberg would like staff to make it a priority that spots should go to essential workers, not families who have already registered for the traditional camp.

***Hidden Creek Aquatic Park*** - Director Carr reported that aqua parks are creating significant challenges, and staff is waiting for guidance from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). He noted that as of today, 25 Districts have closed their outdoor pools, including Northbrook, Barrington, Wheeling, Hoffman Estates, Glencoe, etc. While transmission of the disease is not likely through the water, the challenge is social distancing and trying to clean high touch surfaces and areas, such as slides, lounges, flotation devices, and restrooms. If the Park Board decides to open the AquaPark this summer, staffing would have to be significantly increased to ensure regular sanitization is occurring. He reported that part-time lifeguards are furloughed, and there hiring freeze impacts seasonal employees, both returning and new employees. He noted, in a typically year it takes 6-8 weeks to onboard and train those staff.

If the state permits outdoor pools and aqua parks to open as of June 1, Hidden Creek AquaPark would not be ready and able to operate till July. Director Carr reported that it does not seem financially feasible to operate the AquaPark this Summer. He recommends closing Hidden Creek AquaPark for the 2020 season. In addition, he recommends taking those part-time furloughed lifeguards' staff and scheduling those employees at Rosewood Beach, which would be more suited for a swimming season under these guidelines.

If the Park Board does not want to close Hidden Creek AquaPark at this time, the District can wait for further guidance from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). He reported that a final decision will need to be made by the Park Board at the May 26 Regular Board Meeting.

Commissioner Bernstein would prefer to wait to see what Deerfield and Glenview are doing.

Commissioner Grossberg is in favor of closing for the 2020 season.

Vice President Ruttenberg is in favor of closing the AquaPark for the 2020 season.

Commissioner Flores Weisskopf is in favor of closing the AquaPark.

President Kaplan is in favor of closing the AquaPark.

***Homecoming Committee and Facilities Re-Opening*** - Director Carr reported that the Homecoming Committee is working within the guidelines provided by the CDC and IDPH to establish facility re-opening procedures and protocols. The first primary goal is to implement standardize practices, such as providing personal protective equipment to employees, conduct employee trainings, and implement enhanced cleaning schedules for each facility. These enhanced building operational procedures will reduce the amount of touch points throughout facilities. The Homecoming Committee would like to have a re-opening plan finalized by the end of May.

Vice President Ruttenberg would like two (2) Park Board Liaisons to oversee the Homecoming Committee to facilitate those re-opening plans.

President Kaplan asked to meet offline with Executive Director Romes to further discuss Vice president Ruttenberg's recommendation.

### **REVIEW OF VOUCHERS**

President Kaplan reported that he reviewed the vouchers and does not have any questions. He asked if any members of the Park board had questions, to which none of them did.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Commissioner Bernstein and seconded by Vice President Ruttenberg to adjourn. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote. The Board Meeting adjourned at 9:21 p.m.

Workshop Meeting Minutes  
May 12, 2020

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Romes, Secretary