

MINUTES OF A FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS OF THE PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK HELD ON THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2020, 4:02PM. THE MEETING 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 FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING AND SUBMIT ITEMS FOR PUBLIC COMMENT VIA EMAIL TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO BE READ ALOUD DURING THE MEETING.

Present: Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Grossberg, President Ruttenberg

Also, Present: Executive Director Romes; Director Peters; Director Voss; Director Carr; Director Smith; Assistant Director Maliszewski, Manager Ochs, Manager Schwartz; Manager Warsaw; Accountant Rosen; Accounts Payable Lakoske; Executive Coordinator Hejnowski

Guest Speaker: None

Public Comment for Items on the Agenda

None.

September 10, 2020, and September 17, 2020, Finance Committee Meeting minutes were approved.

Draft of the 5-Year Capital Plan

Director Smith reported that this presentation will be shared with the Park Board of Commissioners at the Tuesday, October 13 Workshop Meeting. The first item reviewed was a graph summarizing the yearly projected costs for capital projects over the next 5 years.

President Ruttenberg would like this graph updated to included spent to date and the yearend projections for 2020.

Prioritization Tiers for Capital Projects

The next item reviewed was the prioritization tiers for capital projects. Director Smith provided a brief overview of each tier, reminding staff and liaisons that tier one projects are of the highest priority.

Tier 1 is the highest priority, which are projects falling under safety and legal compliance, such as grants, intergovernmental agreements, or laws.

Tier 2 are projects in need of critical repairs or items that need to be replaced, as these projects could pose a safety hazard, impact operations, or lead to a larger expense if ignored.

Tier 3 are existing assets that are scheduled to be replaced as these assets have met their useful life. A large portion of the capital plan falls under Tier 3.

Tier 4 projects are improvements to existing items. If ignored it would not limit or impact operations.

Tier 5 are projects that would add capacity or improve programming. If ignored it would have no impact on the District's status quo.

Planning Calendar and Budget for GreenPrint Projects

The next item reviewed was the planning calendar and budget for GreenPrint Projects. Director Smith highlighted where each item falls within the 5-Year Capital plan, how much money is currently budgeted for those projects, and an overview of when those projects should be completed over the next 5-years.

A. *The Preserve of Highland Park*

Director Smith reported that this is a tier 1 project, which is fully funded and should be completed in 2023.

B. *Sunset Woods Playground and Master Plan*

Director Smith reported that this is a tier 2 project, which is fully funded and should be completed in 2021.

C. *Centennial Ice Arena (Lobby and Entry Renovations)*

Director Smith reported that this is a tier 3 project, in which staff has applied for a park grant in hopes of receiving state funding to help cover renovation costs.

D. *Centennial Ice Arena (Gymnastics Improvements)*

Director Smith reported that planning costs are budgeted for 2021 in conjunction with the planning costs for West Ridge Center since staff will be taking a holistic approach to determine where gymnastics shall be located should the Park District move forward with a multi-purpose facility.

E. *West Ridge Center (Multi-Purpose Facility Planning)*

Director Smith reported that there is \$50,000 budgeted for planning in 2021. He and Manager Schwartz will further discuss this item before the end of today's meeting.

F. *West Ridge Center Building Repairs*

Director Smith reported that there are funds set aside for scheduled repairs as of 2022, however, these could change or be relocated based on the decisions regarding a multi-purpose facility.

G. *Athletic Field Synthetic Turf*

Director Smith reported that there are no funds reserved for this project over the next 5-years.

President Ruttenberg would like to know if the Sunset Woods Playground Renovation needs to occur in 2021.

Director Smith reported that staff feels it is necessary, suggesting that the playground could become a safety issue if the renovation is deferred.

5-Year Capital Plan Summary by Tier

The next item reviewed was the 5-Year Capital Plan Summary by Tier, which indicates how much the District is planning to allocate each year for capital repair, replacement, and improvement projects based

on the established prioritization tiers for capital projects. He reported that maintenance projects have been prioritized under tier's 1-3 vs. improvement projects which have been prioritized under tier's 4-5.

Commissioner Grossberg would like the 5-Year Capital Plan Summary by Tier to include columns for the 2020 budgeted projects and the 2020 projected projects as a reference for the rest of the Park Board of Commissioners.

5-Year Funding Model

The next item reviewed the Park District's 5-Year Funding Model if the Park Board of Commissioners approves spending tiers 1-3 capital projects. Director Peters reported that the Park District is projecting to spend \$4.7 million by the end of 2020 in tiers 1-3 capital projects, additionally, she is pleased to report that the Park District has enough funds available over the next 5-years to cover tiers 1-3 capital projects. During this time staff are projecting a \$5 million bond issuance in 2024 to help cover costs, and plan to reduce transfers from both the recreation and special recreation funds. If the Park Board of Commissioners approves spending all tiers, which covers scheduled maintenance, improvements, and new projects, Director Peters reported that the District will deplete the capital fund by 2022.

President Ruttenberg would like staff to create alternates of the 5-Year Funding Model which removes the renovations for Centennial Ice Arena and a separate model that removes the plans for West Ridge Center/Multi-Purpose Facility.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know how the tax levy is incorporated in the 5-Year Funding Model.

Director Peters reported that staff are assuming a full tax levy each year when developing the 5-Year Funding Model.

Since the tier 4 and 5 projects scheduled for 2021 will deplete the capital fund, Director Smith provided a list of those projects for staff and liaisons to discuss. Those projects include \$12,000 for waste and recycling containers, \$50,000 towards Edgewood Middle School for use of their gym, \$60,000 to repair and replace the fishing deck at Danny Cunniff Park, \$50,000 for the drainage improvements at Centennial Ice Arena, \$15,000 set aside for master planning funds at the Golf Learning Center, \$48,250 to install an automatic gate at Park Avenue Beach and \$15,000 for site improvements, \$35,000 for planning costs for the Recreation Center of Highland Park locker room renovations so construction can begin in 2022, and \$11,900 to install door fobs on the classrooms at West Ridge Center. Director Smith reported that most of these are planning items, however, still recommends completing these projects in 2021.

Executive Director Romes reported that these projects will be assessed each quarter to see if there is still a strong enough need to move forward and complete these projects in 2021 based on revenue from operations.

President Ruttenberg would like to know if the Park District still plans on making a contribution to Edgewood Middle School.

Executive Director Romes reported that based on the terms of our intergovernmental agreement with District 112 the Park District can utilize those facilities until 2026, so the contribution may not be necessary.

President Ruttenberg suggests removing the \$50,000 contribution to Edgewood Middle School from the 5-Year Capital Plan. Additionally, he would like to know how often the community and District utilize the fishing desk at Danny Cunniff.

Director Voss reported that the fishing deck has low usage, most residents fish from the shoreline.

President Ruttenberg would like Director Smith to explain the benefits of installing an automatic gate at Park Avenue Beach.

Director Smith reported that an automatic gate would reduce staffing costs.

Executive Director Romes reported that the automatic gate would not replace or eliminate security personnel and costs, as safety and supervision is still needed at the site.

Budget Discussion Items

The next item Director Smith reviewed was the Budget Discussion Items as the Finance Committee liaisons requested that these items be presented to the entire Park Board of Commissioners to decide whether the District includes these projects in the 5-Year Capital Plan.

A. Rory David Deutsch Park Playground Replacement

Director Smith reported that this is a tier 3 project, which the Park District has \$300,000 reserved in 2021 to replace the playground, however the current agreement between the Park District and the homeowner's association has a 20-year initial term which expires in July of 2021. Staff shared letters with the homeowner's association asking to set up a meeting to discuss the next steps since the current agreement is expiring. The current terms state that the agreement will be renewed annually after the 20 year term and the Park District is responsible for maintaining the playground, however, if the Park District chooses not to renew the agreement, the District is responsible for removing the playground, so staff would like to discuss the terms, create a new agreement, and replace the playground.

President Ruttenberg advised against replacing the playground until a new agreement is executed.

Commissioner Bernstein knows the Deutsch family, so he will contact them to see what their thoughts are.

B. Moraine Park Path Repair

Director Smith reported that this is a tier 1 project, which the Park District is projecting to spend \$50,000 this year, \$35,000 of which would cover the construction documents, and in 2021 the District set aside \$450,000 to cover construction costs. Staff would like to know if the Park Board of Commissioners would still like to move forward with the presented schedule, or if staff should defer the project a year.

C. Rosewood Beach Boardwalk Repair

Director Smith reported that this is a tier 2 project, which the Park District spent \$83,350 this year, so SmithGroup could investigate the boardwalk and provide repair options, which they presented 3 solutions, however, staff have found a cheaper solution which will be discussed at the October 13th Workshop Meeting.

D. Rosewood Beach Revetment

Director Smith reported that this is a tier 2 project, which the Park District is projecting to spend \$38,700 this year for planning documents and \$750,000 in 2021 to cover construction. Director Smith reported, that the \$750,000 budgeted for 2021 is a worst-case scenario in which SmithGroup would install the revetment in the Interpretive and Swimming Coves. He is pleased to report that staff are working with SmithGroup on a mid-term solution, which is a significantly reduced cost that will provide several years of protection in the Interpretive Cove and discussing possible short term solutions should the Park Board of Commissioners want extra protection through our the Fall and Winter months of 2020 – 2021. Margaret Boshek of SmithGroup will present these solutions at the October 13th Workshop Meeting.

E. Centennial Ice Arena Renovation

Director Smith reported that this is a tier 3 project, in which the Park District is projecting to spend \$150,000 in 2021 for planning documents and \$1.9 million in 2022 to cover construction.

President Ruttenberg requested that Sunset Woods Playground Renovation and Master Planning be placed on this list.

Draft of the West Ridge Center Master Plan

Manager Schwartz shared a gnat chart of the West Ridge Center Project Schedule and reviewed the next steps, which are categorized under pre-design/scoping, design, and construction, and highlighted the anticipated completion dates. This Fall, staff will establish available funding and determine what funding mechanisms are available for this project. Once determined, staff will review and confirm their findings from last year’s review of GreenPrint. Manager Schwartz reported that the idea is to determine which of the three multi-purpose facility options identified in the 2019 review of GreenPrint is the most feasible solution. The three options identified include, repairing and replacing West Ridge Center, renovating West Ridge Center, or new construction of a multi-purpose facility. The 2019 review of GreenPrint determined that the Park District needs a multi-purpose facility and West Ridge Center, and its location offers the most opportunity.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if the Park District acquires the dome at the Golf Learning Center, would staff still feel a need for a multi-purpose facility.

Manager Schwartz reported that acquisition of the dome will be included in the pre-design and scoping conversations to see if a multi-purpose facility is still identified as a need.

President Ruttenberg would like the project schedule accelerated if possible.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if the schools have time to discuss partnership opportunities considering the pandemic and the challenges they are facing.

Executive Director Romes says they are interested in a multi-purpose facility; however, they do not have a lot of time to focus on this effort.

President Ruttenberg would like a decision made in November of this year.

Executive Director Romes reported that staff plan to schedule a kickoff call in November and will work on an accelerated schedule.

Manager Schwartz reported that this is a target timeline, however, staff can accelerate the schedule so long as other players permit. Once staff understands the needs of the District, they can explore partnership opportunities and locations which concludes the pre-design elements. The next steps would include schematic planning, design development, and review, which should be completed in 2022, allowing construction to begin in 2023.

President Ruttenberg would like to know when the Park District plans to engage with the City of Highland Park to receive approval to build.

Manager Schwartz reported that staff will engage with the City of Highland Park early on during the pre-design elements, specifically when staff are exploring possible locations.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know what kind of setbacks are anticipated since the Park District will be requesting a zoning change if the location is in a residential area.

Manager Schwartz reported that staff are familiar with the process as a zoning change was required to build the Parks Operations and Golf Operations facility. Additionally, all the design specifications are conditional within that zone and would need approval.

Commissioner Grossberg would like to know if a special use permit is required in order to build.

Manager Schwartz reported that those questions would be included during the discussions with the City of Highland Park.

Commissioner Grossberg would like to know if private partnership opportunities are permissible.

Executive Director Romes reported that the Park District is open to any opportunities, whether that be public or private.

Manager Schwartz reported that staff are establishing a project committee and looking for board liaisons to oversee the committee, so a kickoff call can be scheduled in November.

President Ruttenberg requested that staff share the invitation at the October 13 Workshop Meeting. Both President Ruttenberg and Commissioner Bernstein would like to be liaisons to the committee, but the formal invitation will be shared with the entire Park Board of Commissioners.

Other Business

Director Peters reminded the committee that the next meeting will be Thursday, October 22, 2020, at 4:00 p.m.

President Ruttenberg would like to know if usage at the Recreation Center of Highland Park has increased.

Executive Director Romes reported that staff are seeing an increase in fitness floor, group exercise, personal training, and the usage of lap swim. Participation was at the highest level two weeks ago since reopening, which includes participation for unique users. The increase in participation could be due to the new pass promotion which runs through the end of October. Another promotion will begin in November,

which is a bridge membership option, which staff hope will entice the community to utilize the fitness center during the winter months.

President Ruttenberg would like to know the number of unique users.

Executive Director Romes reported that he will include that information in the weekly report to the Park Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Grossberg would like to know what staff attributes the comeback too.

Executive Director Romes reported that the fitness staff have done a tremendous job with engaging the community through promotions, tours, and videos to show the District's dedication to keeping our programs and facilities safe.

Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that several classes were canceled last week due to inclement weather, and as a result, we have seen an increase and shift from outdoor to indoor usage.

Executive Director Romes reported that the combined unique users since the Recreation Center reopened is 433 users, with fitness floor at 172 users, personal training at 103 users, and lap swim at 82 users. Staff are pleased to see participation increasing as well as the frequency of visits.

The number of users concerns President Ruttenberg.

Commissioner Bernstein requested a presentation for other activities and how they are doing and would like an update regarding the Park District's plans addressing COVID exposures.

Executive Director Romes reported that the Park District has a return to work document so staff can review those procedures with the Park Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Bernstein requested that staff continue messaging the community and have plans available for worst-case scenarios.

President Ruttenberg would like that discussion to include what the Park District's plans are for contact tracing regarding patron exposures

The meeting adjourned at 6:09 p.m.