

**PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF WORKSHOP MEETING
OCTOBER 13, 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 Ruttenberg.

ROLL CALL

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

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

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA – None

PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Executive Director Romes read the comments submitted by the public.

Dr. Frances Jane Peszek

146 Towers Keep, Highland Park

I would first like to thank you for serving our community. At the last meeting, you heard an outpouring of gratitude for opening Park Ave Boating Facility. If you had a chance to visit on any summer day, it was overflowing with people safely recreating along the shoreline, in and on this lake, we call home.

According to the figures I obtained from the Pdhp, boat storage, launch pass, parking pass, stand up paddleboard and kayak storage, along with the NSYC lease brought an estimated gross revenue of 100K for relatively passive income during a shortened summer season. I believe this is the low end of earning potential for this facility and with proper funding, this facility can sustain and maintain itself for generations to come. I would like to call to action the Park Board to reconvene the Park Ave Working Group so that it can complete the tasks that are listed on the Park District of Highland Park website.

The PDHP is not alone in its struggle with high water levels. In fact, there are specific grants available to coastal communities, such as Highland Park. However, we can no longer be reactive, but we must be proactive. We continue to miss grants by neglecting the PDHP's unique assets. The

FEMA pre-disaster mitigation program: *Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) is a new FEMA pre-disaster hazard mitigation program that replaces the existing Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) program. BRIC will support states, local communities, tribes, and territories, as they undertake hazard mitigation projects reducing the risks they face from disasters and natural hazards. BRIC aims to categorically shift the federal focus away from reactive disaster spending and toward research-supported, proactive investment in community resilience. The program's guiding principles are supporting communities through capability- and capacity- building; encouraging and enabling innovation; promoting partnerships; enabling large projects; maintaining flexibility; and providing consistency. The program's first Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is expected to arrive late summer 2020, with the grant application period opening during fall 2020.*

Every park district has a tennis court, golf course, swimming pool, playgrounds, but only a few have access to Lake Michigan.

Peter Mordini,
1853 Sheahen Court, Highland Park

I am calling to action the PDHP to reconvene the Park Avenue Working Group. Thank you and have a good evening.

Jodi Mordini
1853 Sheahen Court, Highland Park

I am calling to action the PDHP to reconvene the Park Ave Working Group. Thank you and have a good evening.

Garrett Flynn
365 N Deere Park Dr E, Highland Park

I hope this note finds you well. Can you help to note my support to reconvene the Park Avenue Working Group in the meeting tomorrow night?

Joanna Levine
2260 Sheridan Rd, Highland Park

I am writing to ask that the Park District reconvene the PABF Working Group so they can continue their mission to seek fiscally responsible site improvements that provide long term access to boating activities. Thank you for your consideration.

Julie Graham
306 Ashland Ave, Highwood IL

I would first like to thank you for serving our lakefront community. I am a resident of neighboring Highwood, but I use the Park Avenue boating facility several times a week for recreation with many of my friends who live in Highland Park. If you had a chance to visit Park Ave beach on any summer day this year, it was overflowing with people safely recreating along the shoreline, in and on this lake, we call home.

I have been happy to invest in the boat launch area via the annual parking pass I have purchased for the past several years. Along with revenue from fellow patrons and other proper funding, this facility can sustain and maintain itself for generations to come.

I would like to call to action the Park Board to reconvene the Park Ave Working Group so that it can complete the tasks that are listed on the Park District of Highland Park website, specifically mitigating high water levels to preserve our precious natural resource. Please actively pursue the grants available to coastal communities such as Highland Park on behalf of all residents and friends of the area. We have unique assets that are most worthy of preservation. Thank you for your consideration!

Noell Vaughn

2691 Oak St, Highland Park

I hope you and your family had a good summer and are enjoying the beauty of this Fall. I am reaching out to kindly request the Park District reconvene the Park Ave working group with the goal of finding creative solutions to protect Highland Park's recreational beach and boat launch at Park Ave. We are so fortunate to have Lake Michigan within our community and it was evident this summer especially, an increasing number of residents regularly spend their recreational time there. I am confident with collaborative effort and creativity we can work together to find a fiscally responsible approach to protecting Park Ave for generations of HP residents to enjoy.

Sean Logan

2675 Roslyn Lane, Highland Park

As an active member of the Highland Park community and as a member of two Park Advisory Committees with Rick Kupfer, I would appreciate if you would receive my concern about the Park Avenue beach funding decisions. I have been in contact with numerous local realtors who have expressed frustration that the city has become less desirable for young families. When I started my family here, we visited and enjoyed many of the park district kids centered programs at Park Avenue Beach, especially the Sand Trackers program. Recently three families have moved into our neighborhood here in the northeast section of Highland Park and they have expressed much enthusiasm for participating next summer in programs and family activities at this excellent beach.

I know, from being on those two committees, that the residents can be aggressive enough about how their tax monies are spent, that I had to intervene in the past in Rick's defense during one of our meetings.

I'm also well aware that the COVID-19 impact has had a tremendous negative hit, but, I sincerely believe that our commitment to maintain and better establish this jewel of Highland Park will have a very positive long term value to Highland Park, and to the Park District and to the lives of the families of Highland Park.

Jason M. Metnick Partner

Meltzer Purtil & Stelle LLC 300 South Wacker Drive Suite 2300, Chicago

Highland Park has a premier location on the North Shore. It is the lake shore that Highland Park's residents have enjoyed perhaps more this summer than any time in recent memory. The Park Avenue Boating Facility was front and center this year, packed from morning to night. This facility sets Highland Park apart from other communities, and this facility merits significant attention, time, and dedication of resources to preserve it for our residents. There is no doubt that it both enhances the lives of HP residents, but also adds value to real estate in Highland Park. Communities along the North Shore who have not been proactive have essentially lost their lakefront beaches and watercraft launching abilities. Highland Park can avoid a similar fate if prompt action is taken.

I would like to call to action the Park Board to reconvene the Park Avenue Working Group so that it can complete the tasks that are listed on the Park District's website. It is abundantly evident that there are several grants that would provide funding to preserve and enhance the Park Avenue Boating Facility. I urge the Park Board to take action to apply for grants, dedicate capital, and take a renewed look at Highland Park's boating facility. It is irreplaceable, and yet its loss is both imminent and avoidable. Reconvening the Park Avenue Working Group is the first necessary step to avoid loss of our Park Avenue Boating Facility. I appreciate your thoughtful consideration and efforts.

Bridgette Wolf

995 Marion Ave. Highland Park

Highland Park has many beautiful features for our community – our downtown, our parks, tennis courts, golf courses, pools... all of which can be replicated by any town, almost anywhere, but one asset is unique and distinct for Highland Park – access to Lake Michigan. Our Park District does many wonderful things but ignoring and allowing one of our best properties to decay and be at risk, is a miss for generations to come.

Park Avenue Beach is a rare gift for this community as we have seen by the usage of locals and non-residents all summer long. I ask of you to honor your commitment to the natural beauty and recreation that Lake Michigan affords and only towns like Highland Park have the ability to do. It is easy to say move to Northbrook or Deerfield or Glenview – but none of them have the lake and it is why many chose to live in Highland Park.

We need you to re-commit your money and support to the Park Avenue Boating Facility. As a lifelong resident of Highland Park, I remember the disgrace of Rosewood and the joy and pride of our investment into it. The Park District should be equally proud of Park Avenue – sadly it's hard to be with the condition of an old breakwater that will fail in a few years and a facility that many (including my husband) call "a dump." This summer people enjoyed each other and the lake boating, fishing, sitting, paddling, and just enjoying the beauty. We need to invest in this for our families and community.

We need this to be an elevated priority otherwise Highland Park will be like any town vs extraordinary. I understand there are federal and state grants available, but only if we make an effort and the PABF a priority. We need the capital improvements. We need the working group back to work. We need to be proud of all our recreation, but especially those that only Highland Park can offer. Those distinct assets make all the difference. I thank you again for the amazing work all summer long during Covid-19.

***Laura Knapp, Commodore North Shore Yacht Club
700 College Place, Highland Park***

Re-commit your money and efforts to the Park Avenue Boating Facility. The Park District should be proud to use, maintain, and promote this park. The natural beauty of Lake Michigan supports your mission. People walked, jogged, fished, gazed, and boated at the lake during the Covid-19 Pandemic and enjoyed another incredible summer at the lake. But as you know, the breakwater will fail within 3-4 years and the facility is in desperate need of maintenance and repairs.

The North Shore Yacht Club asks the five sitting commissioners to do the following:

1. Update the expired license agreement with the City for the South Beach. This will prove that the City and the Park District are invested long-term in this recreation area and can better allocate funds for maintenance and capital improvements.
2. Put your PABF Working Group back to work. The task force last met 9 months ago - in January of 2020 - they only completed 2 of 4 tasks and still need to make a recommendation to the board for the future of the boating amenity and breakwater. It is time to choose one of the breakwaters and boat launch options that were presented in the \$80,000 engineering study completed in 2018.
3. Re-Prioritize this facility. This is not a low priority park as commissioners have stated. The 2007, 2013, and 2019 survey data should be re-reviewed. User functions and needs at the park should not be separated into power boaters, non-motorized boaters, and non-boaters as was done in the 2019 survey results.
4. Fund Maintenance and Capital Improvements at this site. Third party funding will only come if the park district is invested in the site. OSLAD and PARC Grants are available and Federal funds are available - but you cannot get them if you do not put minimal funds into the budget for matching grants. Other options include using the \$800,000 development impact fees the park district received in 2019 or use limited general obligation park bonds.
5. The breakwater, boat launch, and pier were constructed forty years ago, and the entire site has not had any updates since 2004. The entire facility should be improved, and the park district can better optimize revenue opportunities at this site. The North Shore Yacht Club member families want this boating facility to be around in the future - so we ask for your help in supporting it, maintaining it, and improving it. Let us continue to work together to find the right solutions. But time is of the essence.

ROSEWOOD BEACH PROJECT UPDATES

Director Smith reported that at the August 25 Board Meeting, Adam Hammen of SmithGroup presented findings from their investigation of the boardwalk along the lower parking lot of Rosewood Beach. Mr. Hammen discussed the cause of the settling and tilting of the boardwalk and presented three repair options. Park District staff are further investigating the third repair option, as it is the most cost-efficient and least intrusive option, which would remove the boardwalk and railing, however, the existing concrete slab would remain intact. A chemical grout would be injected into the subsurface to fill the voids and lift the existing slab to stabilize the area. Once complete, the boardwalk and railing would be replaced. Staff will likely have a recommendation for the Park Board of Commissioners and hope to have repairs begin this Fall.

Additionally, Director Smith reported that Margaret Boshek of SmithGroup presented preliminary drawings, discussed the opinion of probable construction costs, and reviewed a potential project schedule for the installation of the back of beach revetments in the Interpretive Cove and the Swimming Cove at the August 25 Board Meeting, however, the Park Board requested options for short term solutions so Ms. Boshek is here this evening to discuss short and mid-term solutions which could further protect the Interpretive Cove during the Fall and Winter months.

Ms. Boshek presented the short and mid-term solutions for Rosewood Beach, beginning with a lake level forecast. She reported that the lake levels are receding, indicating that the lake level has receded by 8 inches over the past 2 months. She reported that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is predicting colder temperatures and the lake freezing over in February, so erosion and movement of sand could occur until then.

Regarding the proposed solutions, Ms. Boshek shared images of the Interpretive Cove and presented possible solutions.

A. Short-Term Solution: Trap Bags

Ms. Boshek reported that this is a stable system, as the trap bags, which are essentially large sandbags, come in a series and have a wire running through each bag functioning as a connector to provide added support should one puncture. Additionally, she recommends purchasing lids to enclose each trap bag within the system. Ms. Boshek recommends placing a double layer of trap bags to protect the chaise lounge and the surrounding boardwalk. She advised against placing trap bags in front of the Interpretive Center and the surrounding boardwalk as there is an ample amount of sand within that area which will protect those structures over the Fall and Winter months. If the proposed solution is approved, Ms. Boshek reported that minor excavation will occur in order to place the trap bags, and the Park District may need to purchase additional sand to fill the bags, however, that sand can be reused and spread throughout the cove come the Spring. Finally, scour stone will need to be placed in front of the trap bags to prevent undermining. As for probable construction costs, Ms. Boshek estimates the total cost to be around \$70,000 - \$100,000.

B. Mid-Term Solution: Trapbags

Ms. Boshek reported that a wire mesh is placed within these trap bags to prevent puncturing and provided added support for 10-15 years. Unlike the short-term solution in which the trap bags are visible along the shoreline, this solution requires a bit more excavation as the trap bags will be stacked and buried, and scour stone will be placed to prevent undermining. Overall, this mid-term solution is similar to the revetment but far less expensive. Ms. Boshek estimated the preliminary construction costs at a little under \$300,000 whereas the originally proposed revetment, which is a long-term solution with a 50 year lifespan, the estimated construction costs are a little under \$600,000.

Ms. Boshek reported that permits will be required if the mid or long-term solutions are approved. As for scheduling, Ms. Boshek recommends the short-term solutions be installed immediately, whereas the mid or long-term solutions can be installed over the winter months. Ms. Boshek reminded the Park Board of Commissioners that these solutions are defensive measures that will protect infrastructures; however, these solutions will not prevent sand from within the cove.

Executive Director Romes reported that staff are looking for direction from the Park Board of Commissioners regarding the implementation of one of the proposed solutions.

Director Smith reported that staff recommends implementing the mid-term solution, which is similar to the originally proposed steel revetment, but half the cost since this solution utilizes wire mesh trap bags vs. steel. Since SmithGroup has yet to hear back from Trap Bag, Director Smith feels the short-term solution may not be a realistic option as the implementation should have already occurred, however, staff are still pursuing this.

Commissioner Grossberg would like to know what creates stability and prevents the trap bags from being undermined in the short-term solution.

Ms. Boshek reported that scour stone will need to be placed in front of the trap bags to prevent undermining from occurring and the excavation will create a base for the bags.

Commissioner Grossberg would like to know if the trap bags in the short-term solution will be visible to guests frequenting the beach.

Ms. Boshek reported that the trap bags will be visible as it is a temporary solution.

Director Smith reported that staff are recommending that either the mid or long-term solutions be implemented in the Spring of 2021, to which staff needs direction from the Park Board of Commissioners. Additionally, since the Park Board of Commissioners proposed a short-term solution for the Fall and Winter months of 2020 – 2021, staff included this solution in tonight's discussion and would like to know if the Park Board of Commissioners still feels it's necessary to implement a short-term solution.

Ms. Boshek reported that scouring could occur near the chaise lounge over the Fall and Winter months, however, this would not be a significant loss since excavation for the mid or long-term solutions will occur in that same area.

President Ruttenberg asked Ms. Boshek if she feels the short-term solution is necessary.

Ms. Boshek reported that she does not feel the short-term solution is necessary.

Commissioner Grossberg would like to know if there is a less expensive short-term solution.

Ms. Boshek reported that traditional sandbags cannot withstand the impacts from waves, hence why she proposed the trap bag alternative.

Director Smith reported that this is the most viable and cost-efficient short-term solution.

Commissioner Flores Weisskopf would like to know if additional sand will need to be purchased to implement any of these solutions.

Director Smith reported that staff planned to purchase additional sand, however, if during mobilization it is no longer deemed necessary it will simply become a cost-saving on the project.

Vice President Kaplan is frustrated that Rosewood beach continues to be a significant expense to the District since there are several other projects which need repair.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know what the goal of the short, mid, and long-term solutions.

Ms. Boshek reported that the goal of either solution is to protect the parking lot since it lacks a foundation system.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know what the future is of the chaise lounge.

Ms. Boshek reported that the chaise lounge is in a high area, so she recommends relocating it, reporting that both the mid and long-term solutions include the removal of the lounge.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know the future of the boardwalk with the overhang.

Ms. Boshek reported that the boardwalk with the overhang would be removed as well.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if the cost of removal of the chaise lounge and the boardwalk with overhang are included in the estimated costs.

Ms. Boshek reported that the removal costs are included, and the removal will provide an additional 30feet of open sand within that location of the Interpretive Cove.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know how much of a buffer will be created between the parking lot and lake water if the Park Board of Commissioners approves a sand replenishment within this open space.

Ms. Boshek reported that the sand nourishment spread directly in front of the Interpretive Center is maintaining a barrier, however, the area in front of the chaise lounge is the focal point for waves and erosion and ravine washout so the removal of the chaise lounge and the boardwalk with overhang will not prevent erosion from occurring.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if there are plans to address this issue.

Ms. Boshek reported that the erosion levels within the Interpretive Cove are due to the high-water levels, so as the water recedes the erosion will decrease.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if there is a foundation underneath the parking lot.

Ms. Boshek reported that there is no foundation adjacent to the sand structure, so erosion will lead to sinkholes and compromise the parking pavers.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know what is the possibility that this could occur.

Ms. Boshek reported that the US Army Corps of Engineers is predicting that the lake levels could exceed historic highs, so it is not out of the realm of possibility.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if Ms. Boshek could place a percentage on the possibility of the parking lot being undermined.

Ms. Boshek believes in the cyclical trends regarding Lake Michigan and since scientists are predicting more precipitation, she believes that the lake levels will remain above normal and scientists will create a new normal. She does not feel the parking lot is in immediate danger due to the recent contributions and protective measures put in place, however, the parking lot will be compromised in the future should no further solutions be implemented, which could occur within the next 10years.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if the mid-term solution is realistic since it has a 15-year lifespan, and the parking lot may not be compromised for 10 years.

Ms. Boshek reported that her 15-year estimate is not based on the solution being impacted by waves for that time or degradation. The 15-year lifespan is an estimate based on the location, however, if water does

not impact, puncture, or penetrate the trap bags the lifespan could significantly increase. Since this is a new solution there's not enough evidence to provide a more accurate lifespan.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if deterioration or exposure has a greater impact on its useful life.

Ms. Boshek reported that the geotextile material of the trap bags will not deteriorate unless exposed to water.

President Ruttenberg would like to know if offshore protections are the best solution, as those will reduce wave energy within the cove, erosion, and sand loss, which will always be an ongoing challenge even with the implementation of onshore solutions.

Director Smith reported that the previously discussed offshores solutions will reduce erosion, however, they will not eliminate the problem with high lake levels, so the decision was made to move forward with onshore solutions and revetments.

Ms. Boshek reported that the sand within the Interpretive Cove is protecting the District's infrastructure and amenities, however, the high lake levels are causing sand loss so the implementation of offshore solutions will reduce erosion. SmithGroup presented two offshore solutions, a reduced gap, and an underwater weir, both will mitigate wave energy during high lake levels, however, as the lake recedes the coves will dry out which presents a larger and more costly issue than the onshore solutions.

President Ruttenberg asked the Park Board of Commissioners if they feel comfortable providing a recommendation this evening or if they would like to revisit this subject at the October 27 Board Meeting.

Commissioner Bernstein advised against the short-term solution and would like to revisit possible solutions for the most problematic area of the Interpretive Cove, suggesting the mid and long-term solutions do not address the full issue since those solutions fail to prevent further erosion from occurring.

Executive Director Romes reported that a decision does not need to be made this evening, however, a decision will need to be made at the October 27 Board meeting regarding the implementation of the mid or long-term solutions.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to discuss a third option, which removes the chaise lounge and boardwalk with overhang and differs the installation of a revetment. He would like to know the costs and benefits of this solution in comparison to the mid and long-term solutions.

President Ruttenberg reported that a decision will be made at the October 27 Board Meeting.

DRAFT OF THE FIVE-YEAR CAPITAL PLAN

Director Smith reported that this plan has been discussed and reviewed in detail with the Finance Committee.

Five-Year Capital Plan Summary by Area

Director Smith noted that this portion of the report reviews the approved, actual, and projected expenses for 2020 vs. the budgeted costs over the next five years for technology, parks, facilities, and district-wide capital projects. Director Smith reported that there is a \$3million difference in budgeted costs vs. projected expenses in 2020 because of the pandemic.

New Capital Plan Prioritization Tiers

The next item reviewed was the prioritization tiers for capital projects. Director Smith provided a brief overview of each tier, indicating 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 reported that a vast majority of GreenPrint projects are included in the Five-Year Capital Plan. He highlighted where each item falls within the Five-Year plan, how much money is currently budgeted for those projects and provided an overview of when those projects should be completed.

The Preserve of Highland Park Director Smith reported that this is a tier 1 project. Construction will begin this Fall and should be completed in 2023.

A. Sunset Woods Playground and Master Plan

Director Smith reported that planning will conclude this year and construction will begin next year.

B. Centennial Ice Arena (Lobby and Entry Renovations)

Director Smith reported that this is a tier 3 project, in which staff plan to spend \$150,000 on planning documents in 2021 and construction to conclude by the third quarter of 2022.

C. 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.

D. West Ridge Center (Multi-Purpose Facility Planning)

Director Smith reported that staff are reviewing findings from the 2019 GreenPrint Review and will discuss planning options for the needs of this space becoming a multi-purpose facility.

E. West Ridge Center Building Repairs

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

F. Athletic Field Synthetic Turf

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

Five-Year Capital Plan Summary by Tier

The next item reviewed was the Five-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.

Five-Year Funding Model

The next item reviewed the Park District's Five-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 five-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. Lastly, she reported that both scenarios assume a full tax levy.

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, \$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 and staff recommends completing these projects as scheduled in 2021 but will re-evaluate come the end of the year.

Budget Discussion Items

Director Smith reported that 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 Five-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.

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.

Commissioner Grossberg would like the project to commence as scheduled in the proposed project timeline. He fears the project will not be completed if differed.

Vice President Kaplan feels it is a significant cost to repair a pathway for a dog park when there are projects in need of repairs such as Park Avenue.

President Ruttenberg is not in favor of completing this project next year, suggesting there are other projects which should take priority.

Commissioner Bernstein agrees with President Ruttenberg.

Director Smith reported that planning funds can be reserved in 2021 and construction could occur in 2022 after revaluation next year.

Vice President Kaplan agrees with Director Smith's adjusted timeline.

Director Smith reported that the repairs could possibly be completed by mid-2022.

C. *Sunset Woods Playground Renovation and Master Planning*

Director Smith reported that the District will spend a little over \$51,000 in 2020 on planning documents for the playground and a master plan of the site, so construction can occur in 2021 in hopes of having the renovations completed by that Summer. Staff would like to know if this project and its proposed timeline should remain in the Five-Year Capital Plan.

D. *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.

Commissioner Bernstein still feels this is a priority project as identified in GreenPrint. He would like to keep this project to commence as proposed.

President Ruttenberg agrees with Commissioner Bernstein, reporting that this facility is utilized by thousands of patrons.

E. *Rosewood Beach Boardwalk Repair*

Director Smith reported that the Park District spent \$66,850 this year, so SmithGroup could investigate the boardwalk and provide repair options. As mentioned earlier this evening, staff hopes to have a recommendation from the Park Board of Commissioners at the October 27 Board meeting.

F. *Rosewood Beach Revetment*

Director Smith reported that 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. As mentioned earlier this evening, staff hopes to have a recommendation from the Park Board of Commissioners at the October 27 Board meeting.

Vice President Kaplan would like to know where Park Avenue fits into the Five-Year Capital Plan.

Director Smith reported that the District has site planning funds reserved in 2021 for Park Avenue.

COVID-19 EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLANNING UPDATE

Executive Director Romes reported that it has been 7 months since the Park District closed on March 13, 2020, due to the concerns surrounding the Coronavirus pandemic. Since that time, the Park District has

dedicated our time and resources to continuing the delivery of essential programs, services, and facilities while ensuring the health and safety of the community and responsible management of fiscal resources. The Park District has gone from providing free virtual programming during the Stay-At-Home Order to outdoor recreational and leisure pursuits in Phase 2 of the Restore Illinois Plan, such as golf, tennis, parks and natural areas to eventually reopening facilities as permitted in Phase 3 and 4 of the state's guidelines. Staff strictly enforced the mandated guidelines and in many cases exceeded the recommendations provided by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) in an effort to provide safe opportunities such as extended day camp programming, ParkSchool, and early childhood enrichment classes to families who have essential daycare needs. Additionally, the Park District expanded outdoor recreational programs by offering baseball, gymnastics, nature-based programs, outdoor fitness classes, swimming, boating, and drive-in movies. Overall, Executive Director Romes reported that Highland Park residents of all ages, skills, and income levels had an abundance of opportunities to live an enriched life through the Park District this Summer.

Since weather permitted, the Park District extended the beach season throughout September, which marked the start of Fall programming. As November approaches, staff are continuing to focus on creating the safest, healthiest, and most comfortable environment for the Highland Park community to enjoy essential recreation, sport, and leisure activities which they have become accustomed to. In doing so, Executive Director Romes reported that not only is the Park District following every standard and guideline provided by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), and Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), the Park District is also taking every precautionary measure to ensure the communities safety. The Park District has mandated the use of essential personal protective equipment (PPE), social distancing, reduced class sizes and participants, advanced reservations for facility and program use, and regular cleaning using environmental protection agency (EPA) registered and hospital-grade disinfectants. Additionally, the Park District has invested in state-of-the-art ultraviolet (UV) systems for each facility to sanitize the air safely and continuously from viruses and bacteria. Patrons are encouraged to visit the Park District's website and Facebook Page which provides a complete list of guidelines and safety measures being practiced at each facility. As the colder months quickly approach there will be an increase of indoor programming and facility usage so staff are continuing to keep health and safety as a priority while strategically planning for the community to participate in essential recreation activities that are important for the community's social, emotional, and physical health. Lastly, Executive Director Romes reported that staff will continue to provide outdoor and virtual recreation in many different formats over the Winter months for members of the community who do not feel comfortable entering Park District facilities. Executive Director Romes introduced Assistant Director Maliszewski who will provide Fall and Winter programming highlights.

Fall Programming Highlights

A. Centennial Ice Arena

Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that compared to 2019 participation rates are at approximately 50% for the District's "Learn to Skate" program. As of today, the Park District has 130 unique participants registered for 84 ice skating classes. In 2019 the Park District had 250 unique participants throughout 102 ice skating classes. As for gymnastics, the Park District

currently has 63 unique participants registered for 40 classes, which is a 20% participation rate compared to 2019. However, the Park District's competitive gymnastics team is continuing to grow even in light of the pandemic. As for package ice, Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that this is a new system that requires preregistration for high-level recreational skate. Currently, the Park District has 50 unique users accounting for 277 separate registrations. Assistant Director Maliszewski is pleased to report that ice rental agreements have exceeded the 2019 figures since the Park District had to eliminate public skate since it did not comply with the state's restorative guidelines.

B. Deer Creek Racquet Club

Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that tennis participation is continuing to thrive despite the pandemic. Currently, the Park District has been able to retain 83% of its adult participants and 85% of its youth participants from 2019. Last year the Park District's youth tennis classes had 410 unique participants accounting for 483 registrations over 79 classes, whereas in 2020 the Park District accumulated 350 unique youth participants for 433 registrations over 76 classes. Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that participants are willing to transition indoors since the activity permits social distancing.

C. Recreation

Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that the recreation area has retained 80% of class participation accumulating 335 registration over 43 classes as of this year vs. 2019 the Park District has 422 registrations over 56 classes. Much of this year's loss is due to the cancellation of ParkSchool Sprouts, as it would have been extremely challenging for children ages 2-3years and instructors to adhere to the safety guidelines mandated by the state.

D. Special Events

Assistant Director Maliszewski is pleased to report that all the Park District's special events offered throughout the pandemic have sold out including the upcoming Halloween Event and Fall drive-in movies. Looking ahead into 2021, the Park District will no longer be able to offer the Daddy Daughter Event, which is typically hosted I February, so staff are working on a supplemental alternative for those participants.

E. Heller Nature Center

Assistant Director Maliszewski is pleased to report that nature-based programs have been very sought after during these challenging times, specifically, participation for "Stories in the Woods" and "After School" activities has doubled, so the overall nature-based programming participation rates are comparable to 2019 with an 82% retention rate. Currently, the Park District has 77 unique users vs. 94 unique users in 2019. While Nature Discovery Day had to be canceled, staff used their creativity to offer an alternative event, "Light the Night Trail Adventure" which adheres to the state's guidelines. As it relates to Rosewood public programs, the Park District currently has 42 unique participants vs. 48 unique participants in 2019.

F. Athletics

Assistant Director Maliszewski is pleased to report that outdoor Fall baseball had 200 participants, however, as programs transition indoors basketball currently has a 32% retention rate from 2019. Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that while staff understands this is a significant reduction, basketball is current at full capacity due to the fact that the Park District only has two gymnasiums available to athletics, one court is at the Recreation Center of Highland Park the other is at West Ridge Center. Additional athletic programs will be operated from the Highland Park Field House, which participation is very promising, as the Park District's baseball academy and indoor flag football programs will begin in November. Currently, there is a combination of 74 unique participants registered between both programs. As for martial arts, it will continue to be operated from West Ridge Center, and the Fall session has a 62% retention rate from 2019.

G. Aquatics

Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that aquatics and the Park District's "Learn to Swim" program has a 34% retention rate from 2019. Currently, the Park District has 60 unique participants vs. 178 from last year, however, private lessons have doubled from August to September, and lap swim is at a 99% capacity, with some days available lanes being sold out. Additionally, the Highland Park Aqua Club is renting the indoor pool six days a week, the Northern Suburban Special Recreation Association (NSSRA) Gators are utilizing the indoor pool for activities, and the Parks Foundation is working with staff to provide more FYI funds to families in Highwood interested in swim lessons.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if the Park District is able to utilize School District 112 gymnasiums.

Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that School District 112 gymnasium is not currently available to the Park District.

H. Recreation Center of Highland Park

Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that since the Park District reopened the facility and resumed outdoor activities on June 1, the facility and various unique fitness offerings have seen a total of 742 unique users. Those fitness offerings include lap swim, group exercise classes, personal training sessions, and access to the general fitness floor. When the facility reopened, the Park District offered daily fees which have since transitioned into a monthly pass. Currently, staff are developing an even greater membership plan which is more cost effective and better caters to each individual's needs, which should be available come November. In regards to the various unique fitness offerings, Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that this past week the Park District had a total of 85 unique users, 220 fitness floor reservations which is the highest use per date with just over 2.5 uses per participant, 159 unique users for group exercise classes for a total of 333 visits,

69 unique users for personal training for a total of 86 sessions, and 53 unique users for a 117 lap swim reservations.

President Ruttenberg would like Assistant Director Maliszewski to create graphs comparing the 2019 to 2020 programming for the areas mentioned above.

Commissioner Bernstein asked that Assistant Director Maliszewski indicated key operational changes in those graphs, such as reduced facility hours as that limits programming availability.

Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that this may be challenging since reservations and registrations conducted in 2020 are significantly different than 2019, however, he will work with staff to provide better comparisons.

Safety Guidelines and Procedures Should Staff or Patrons Contract COVID-19

Director Dunn reported that the Park District has several new practices and policies in place in response to COVID-19. While all the Park District's efforts are in hopes to avoid positive cases these practices also help in the event of a positive case regardless of whether it is an employee or a patron the Park District works directly with the Lake County Health Department and follows their guidance based on the facts collected through their investigation of cases and contact tracing. Director Dunn provided an overview of the Park District's process and what staff has done when dealing with positive cases involving employees. Additionally, she reported that the process is similar when dealing with a patron who tests positive.

A. Confirmed Positive Case

Director Dunn reported that as soon as the Park District is notified of a positive test result the employee is immediately directed to stay home, and that employee is required to self-isolate until they receive further instructions from the District Human Resources Department. From there the Park District notifies the Lake County Health Department through an online portal where a caseworker will partner with the Park District while the employee is out of the office. During this time, Director Dunn will work with the employee and that employee's Supervisor to perform contact tracing, examining the hours and days spent at work. Likewise, the caseworker from the Lake County Health Department will work with that employee to perform contact tracing related to individuals and businesses that the employee may have encountered outside of work. Director Dunn reported that if Park District knows when the employee's symptoms began, Human Resources will use the 48 hour period before the onset of the symptoms to identify the indirect and the close contacts, which is the guidance provided by the IDPH and the CDC. If the Park District does not know the date that the employee began experiencing symptoms or if that employee was asymptomatic and never had symptoms, Human Resources will use the previous 14 day period to help determine who those contacts were. Director Dunn provided a summary of the procedures for an indirect exposure to a confirmed case vs. close contact to a confirmed case as outlined by IDPH and the CDC.

B. Indirect Exposure to a Positive Case

Director Dunn reported that indirect exposure would be anyone who was in the facility at the same time as the diagnosed employee or anyone who may have interacted with that employee during the 14-day tracing period but was not considered to be within close contact. Director Dunn reported if the guidelines, policies, and procedures in place for employees and patrons as well as the extra safety measures which the Park District has enacted throughout programming are followed there should be very little chance of close contact occurring under these definitions. In most cases, the Park District will have indirect contact in which case the employee will not need to self-quarantine.

C. Close Contact to a Positive Case

Director Dunn reported that close contact is anyone who was within 6ft of the diagnosed employee for a prolonged period of 10minutes or more or having direct contact with secretions from the diagnosed person, such as being coughed or sneezed on from the diagnosed employee. Anyone who is deemed a close contact will be instructed to self-quarantine for 14 days.

When the Park District is performing contact tracing for employees' interactions at work with patrons or other coworkers Human Resources uses registration logs, payroll records, security camera, meeting schedules, and any other means available to identify anyone that may have come in contact with the diagnosed employee. Additionally, she reported that Human Resources works with the diagnosed employee to make sure the contact list is accurate. Once indirect and all close contact individuals have been notified of the exposure and exposure type, Human Resources will provide recommendations from the Lake County Health Department regarding the next steps and precautionary measures for those individuals.

D. Facility Impacts

Director Dunn reported, that in combination with contact tracing Human Resources works with the employee and that employees Supervisors to determine what facilities the diagnosed employee was in over the prior 7 days, which is recommended by the IDPH and the CDC. During this time, the Lake County Health Department will partner with the Park District to determine which facilities may have been impacted. Any area that the diagnosed employee was in during the prior 7 days must be closed, cleaned, and disinfected. The Park District may decide to close isolated areas of a facility or enforce a complete closure depending on the position of an employee and the different areas of a building which that employee may have accessed during that 7 day period. If the employee has not been in a facility during the prior 7 days there is no need to close the area, the facility, or conduct any additional cleaning and disinfecting, instead the Park District's standard cleaning and disinfecting methods will suffice, which is stated by the IDPH and the CDC.

E. Employee Return to Work

Director Dunn reported that the Lake County Health Department helps to determine and notifies the Park District when an employee is released and able to return to work. This typically occurs after the employee has isolated for 10 days after the onset of their symptoms, they received a

negative COVID test result, or that employee has been without fever symptoms for at least 3 days. However, an employee who was in close contact with a positive individual, they cannot return to work until they have self-quarantined for a full 14 days, as the IDPH and CDC state that an onset of symptoms could occur during this timeframe.

Director Dunn reported that the Park District's plan and protocols were reviewed by the Lake County Health Department, who were pleased with the Park District process, response, and follow-through procedures. The Lake County Health Department does not require any additional action from the Park District. Director Dunn reported that the Lake County Health Department has been great to work with during these challenging times.

President Ruttenberg was pleased with the Park District report and is sympathetic to staff as this is a very complicated process.

Director Dunn thanked president Ruttenberg and reported that the process tends to change with each case, however, the Park District has a strong base to work from and she is grateful for the support and partnership from the Lake County Health Department.

REVIEW OF VOUCHERS

President Ruttenberg reported that he reviewed the vouchers, and the items align with the Park District's budget policy, as a result, Director Peters was not asked to present upon this item.

2021 BUDGET PLANNING

Director Peters presented the 2020 – 2021 Fall and Winter Finance Schedule and reviewed the budget planning process. She reported that staff has input their anticipated revenue and expenses into the Park District's budgetary programming software, known as Incode, which feeds into the District's general ledger, based on Illinois being in Phase 4 of the governor's Restorative Plan come 2021. Director Peters and Executive Director Romes have reviewed these amounts and held meetings with staff to discuss those figures. Currently, staff are refining those figures based on recommendations from those meetings and a draft of the budget should be available as of November 12 and presented at the November 19 Finance Committee Meeting. Based on discussions and recommendations from that meeting staff will further refine the budget and present the updated budget at the December 3 Finance Committee Meeting. If further changes are advised, the budget will be refined once again and presented at the January 7, 2021, Finance Committee Meeting. The final draft of the budget will be presented to the Park Board of Commissioners at the January 12, 2021 Workshop Meeting. As of February 11, 2021, the budget will have sat for 30 days so a publication will be shared with the community notifying them that a public hearing will be held at the February 23, 2021 Board Meeting to approve the 2021 budget. If the budget is approved by the Park Board of Commissioners at the February 23, 2021 Board Meeting, staff will file the 2021 budget with Lake County as of February 26, 2021.

President Ruttenberg reported that he is opposed to raising taxes in 2021 regardless of the effects it will have on the Park District.

Vice President Kaplan agrees with President Ruttenberg's recommendations.

Commissioner Flores Weisskopf agrees with President Ruttenberg's recommendation and would like to see staff find creative ways to implement further budget cuts.

Commissioner Grossberg would like to know why this question was posed.

President Ruttenberg reported that if the Park Board of Commissioners agrees that the Park District should not increase taxes staff needs to be aware of this as they are in the beginning phases of the budget planning process.

Commissioner Grossberg does not want to make promises he cannot keep. If the Park District has the ability to maintain parks and facilities and continue to offer a high level of services without raising taxes he is in favor of it, but he would like to know all the factors before agreeing to President Ruttenberg's recommendation.

Commissioner Bernstein reported that it is easy to say the Park District will not raise taxes, however, it is much more complicated than that. Currently, two options have been discussed in recent Finance Committee Meetings, that would impact a taxpayer's property bill, the first is the tax levy which the Park District issues every year and the other is taxing new construction in Highland Park. Commissioner Bernstein does not agree with the blanket statement that the Park District will not increase taxes, as he is in favor of taxing new construction.

President Ruttenberg reported that if a taxpayer paid \$200 to the Park District in 2020, he wants to ensure that they will be taxed the same amount in 2021.

Commissioner Bernstein reported that staff and the Park Board of Commissioners cannot control the evaluation assessed value (EAV) of a homeowners property or the equalization factor which comes from a home assessor, so he disagrees with the statement that staff or the Park Board of Commissioners can ensure if a taxpayer paid \$200 in 2020 they will only owe \$200 in 2021. With this being said, Commissioner Bernstein reported that the conversation should be regarding the tax levy, not property taxes. If the Park Board of Commissioners agrees not to increase the tax levy then staff will need to refine the 5-Year Capital Plan, as projects will need to be eliminated or differed as the Park District will run out of funds come 2023 without raising the tax levy. Commissioner Bernstein would like to know how freezing property taxes will impact the Park District's ability to fund the 5-Year Capital Plan and would like to further discuss those impacts before making any decisions.

President Rutenberg would like staff to refine the capital and operations budget based on a property tax freeze and discuss those impacts at an upcoming Finance Committee Meeting.

Commissioner Flores Weisskopf reported that the Park District needs to provide a savings to the community, especially for those individuals who are not using the Park District services, facilities, or parks, so she would like further cuts implemented.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know how much the Park District would like to increase property taxes.

Director Peters reported it would be a 2.3% increase based on the CPI, which is roughly an additional \$1.2million which the District would accumulate from taxpayers, which excludes new construction. Additionally, Director Peters reported that if the District imposes a freeze on the tax levy, a homeowners taxes will still change based on the EAV as that is controlled by Lake County, however, the Park District can keep the special recreation fund taxed at .04%, and lastly, the Park District will still tax new growth as it only impacts new homeowners and current owners with new construction. She reported that these recommendations will be implemented and discussed at an upcoming Finance Committee Meeting.

Commissioner Bernstein reported that the Park District froze the levy 10 years ago and held the freeze for 2 years. If the Park Board of Commissioners would like to follow this course, he would like to review the impacts to the Park District.

Executive Director Romes reported that staff can compare that data to today to better understand the repercussions.

Commissioner Bernstein and Commissioner Grossberg feel it is premature to state that the Park District will freeze property taxes, as they would like to review the updated budget and understand its impacts on operations and the 5-Year Capital Plan before making any decisions.

Executive Director Romes recommends all Park Board Members to attend the upcoming Finance Committee Meeting, as staff will be discussing the effects of operations and the 5-Year Capital Plan with or without the effect of a tax levy increase and with or without the effects of the CPI. Additionally, staff will discuss how those decisions will impact the community.

Director Peters reported that a Park District is taxed capped so the Park District will not have the ability to issue bonds or debt certificates for another 4 years, whereas a city or village is not tax capped so if they decide they need to issue bonds or debt certificates to generate revenue they can do so at any time.

CLOSED SESSION

Motion was made Vice President Kaplan, seconded by President Ruttenberg to adjourn into Closed Session for discussion of Section 2(c) 21 – the discussion of minutes lawfully closed under the Act, whether for the

purposes of approval of said minutes or for conducting the semi-annual review of the minutes as set forth in section 2.06 of the Act - for discussions between internal or external auditors and the Board.

Roll Call:

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

Nay: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

The meeting adjourned into Closed Session at 8:58 p.m.

The meeting reconvened into Open Session at 9:01 p.m.

ACTION FROM CLOSED SESSION IF ANY

President Ruttenberg reported that the Park Board of Commissioners met in Closed Session for the discussion of Section 2(c) 21 – the discussion of minutes lawfully closed under the Act, whether for the purposes of approval of said minutes or for conducting the semi-annual review of the minutes as set forth in section 2.06 of the Act - for discussions between internal or external auditors and the Board. As advised by legal counsel the park Board of Commissioners voted that the Closed Session Minutes from January 28, 2020, February 25, 2020, March 10, 2020, April 14, 2020, and June 9, 2020 along with Closed Session Minutes which we're reviewed and withheld in the past, not be released for public inspection.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Vice President Kaplan and seconded by Commissioner Grossberg and approved by a unanimous vote. The Board Meeting adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Romes, Secretary