

MINUTES OF A FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS OF THE PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK HELD ON THURSDAY, MARCH 4, 2021, 4:07 PM. 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, Vice President Kaplan, President Ruttenberg (arrived at 4:09pm).

Also, Present: Executive Director Romes; Director Peters, Director Dunn, Director Gogola, Director Voss, Director Smith, Director Carr; Assistant Director Maliszewski; Manager Ochs, Manager Warsaw; Accountant Rosen; Accountant Bhardwaj; Manager Johnson; Coordinator Hejnowski

Guest Speaker: None

Public Comment for Items on the Agenda:

None

President Ruttenberg joined the meeting 4:09 p.m.

Park Avenue Gate Proposal

Director Smith reported that the purpose of the gate installation project at Park Avenue Boating Facility is to control access to the boat launch area. Director Smith shared images of the proposed gate style and location, which is on Park Avenue near the north parking lot entrance and intersection of Egandale Road. Staff conducted extensive research for the proposed location of the gate along with a turning analysis to determine how much space is needed for large vehicles and trailers to pass through the gate. In addition to the access control gate, operators and sensors will be placed around the gate, a card reader will be installed along Park Avenue, and a shed will be placed in the corner of the north parking lot to store power and internet supply. Staff are working with JULIE to survey the underground utility lines and confirm the current location does not pose any issues. In the case that the proposed location disrupts underground utility lines, Director Smith reported that there is an alternative location for the gate. Users of the Park Avenue Boating Facility will need to purchase a pass to enter the site and will receive a fob, whereas boaters who rent storage space, will be supplied remote control.

Director Smith reported that staff has spoken with several gate contractors to determine the best fit for the site and are recommending the \$24,999 proposal from Gate Systems. If staff receive consensus from the Finance Committee, then the Park District will sign the agreement and begin the next steps, as the goal is to have the project completed and the gate fully operational by Memorial Day weekend. Additional steps include the installation of power and low voltage, which is estimated at \$30,000, and the access control company creating the fobs and remotes, which is estimated at \$6,850. The total estimated project cost is \$61,649 and the Park District budgeted \$75,000 in the 2021 Capital Fund.

President Ruttenberg was concerned that the proposed location might not provide enough of a turn radius for larger vehicles and preferred the alternative location.

Director Smith offered to share the turn radius analysis.

Executive Director Romes reported that staff also plan to paint lines along the road to guide vehicles and prevent impacts. Additionally, the preferred location allows vehicles to enter the parking lot or exit up Egandale Road to prevent back-ups.

President Ruttenberg approved the preferred location and thanked staff for exploring other opportunities to help navigate vehicles. Additionally, he would like to know if boaters renting storage space will have to pay a deposit for the remote control to open the gate.

Executive Director Romes reported that staff are discussing operations and plan to require a deposit.

President Ruttenberg would like to know if the system allows daily pass sales.

Director Smith reported that the system permits daily fees. Currently, patrons will need to purchase a temporary card from the Recreation Center of Highland Park. Electricity and internet will be installed to allow for a pay station similar to the one at Rosewood Beach to be added in the future.

Executive Director Romes reported that the system permits numerous payment options, so the first year will help staff determine the best solution before installation.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if the road is wide enough to permit two-way traffic.

Director Smith reported that the road currently permits two-way traffic, however, when larger vehicles are passing drivers will have to follow the rules of the road and permit common courtesy.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if staff will be scheduled to monitor traffic entering and exiting through the gate.

Executive Director Romes reported that a sign will be installed asking exiting vehicles to yield to oncoming traffic entering the lower parking lot and boat launch. Additionally, there will no longer be an employee monitoring traffic entering and exiting the site, which is a significant factor in determining the feasibility of installing the gate. However, an employee will be on-site, every day during the summer, a phone number will be posted on the gate in case of emergency, and staff can also open the gate remotely or even manually should any issues arise.

Commissioner Bernstein requested that a camera be installed at the site near the gate so staff can remotely monitor the area.

Executive Director Romes reported that the City of Highland Park has a camera at the site, which the Park District could access if needed. If issues arise a camera can be installed down the road.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if staff explored other alternatives aside from the gate or scheduling an employee.

President Ruttenberg reported that the gate will provide access control to the boat launch, which is a viable solution recommended by members of the yacht club and the Park Avenue Working Group.

Commissioner Bernstein requested scheduling an employee to monitor the gate after the installation so issues can quickly be addressed if any arise.

Executive Director Romes reported that staff will be on-site during peak times.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if PDRMA, the Park District's Risk Management Agency, approved the gate.

Director Smith reported that PDRMA is aware of the gate and did not express any concerns.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if neighboring districts or harbors have a similar system for access control and their experience and feedback.

Director Smith and Director Carr reported that Winthrop Harbor utilizes a similar system and they have not expressed any concerns. Staff will follow up with additional feedback.

Commissioner Bernstein requested that staff relay any feedback regarding potential issues or challenges neighboring harbors, or districts faced from their access control system, and asked staff to provide solutions to address those issues should they occur at Park Avenue.

Director Smith reported that the City of Highland Park utilizes this gate company and referred them to the Park District.

Staff received consensus from the Finance Committee liaisons to proceed with the Park Avenue Boating Facility Access Gate Project estimated at \$61,849. However, they requested that staff present this project to the Park Board of Commissioners at the next meeting for consensus.

Sunset Valley Golf Bridge Replacement Proposal

Director Smith reported that there are a total of nine bridges that cross the Skokie River at Sunset Valley Golf Club. These bridges are inspected annually. Recent inspections have indicated that eight of the nine bridged need to be replaced in the next several years. Additionally, it was determined that two of the bridges are no longer necessary and staff are recommending their removal. Director Smith shared images of the current bridges so the Finance Committee liaisons could see the current style and conditions and compared those with images of the proposed replacements, which are prefabricated steel truss bridges similar to what was recently installed at Sleepy Hollow. He reported that the aesthetics could change but the design will not. Regardless, the Park Board of Commissioners will be involved with the aesthetic discussions.

Timeline

Director Smith reported that this project will span several years. In 2021, staff plan to have the engineering, design, and construction documents completed by the end of the year. In 2022, construction will begin with the replacement of bridges 1 and 9 and removing bridge 8 during the spring. In 2023, construction will resume replacing bridges 5 and 7 and remove bridge 6. In 2024, final construction will occur with the replacement of bridges 2 and 3.

Proposals

Staff reached out to four engineering firms that the Park District currently has a relationship with, including Christopher Burke Engineering, Daniel Creany Company, Gewalt Hamilton Associates, and Hey and Associates. Engineering and design costs would incur in 2021, whereas the construction administration costs would incur over the next three years beginning in 2022. Staff are recommending Gewalt Hamilton Associates' proposal of \$189,800 as they have extensive knowledge of the golf course as they were the engineers for the renovation project.

Vice President Kaplan would like to know if the bridges would pose a safety issue if they were not replaced.

Director Smith reported that the bridges will pose a safety issue in the future and would be closed.

President Ruttenberg would like to know if portions of this project could be deferred.

Director Smith reported that the proposal is for the Gewalt Hamilton Associates to provide drawings for all the bridges and to provide a replacement plan over the next several years. The Park District could pause the project for a year possibly two, however permitting could change, so the Park District should be committed to the proposal.

President Ruttenberg would like to know if the Park District intends to bid out all seven bridges to try to negotiate a better price.

Director Smith reported that there will be three separate bids for each year beginning in 2022. However, staff will use the same set of construction plans for each bid. Additionally, the construction administration locks in their current hourly rates to prevent those rates from increasing year over year.

Commissioner Bernstein fully supports the proposal and encouraged the Finance Committee liaisons to support the proposal and commit to the entire project, since the engineering documents may no longer be applicable if the project is paused. Additionally, Sunset Valley Golf Club had a great year in 2020, and he is anticipating another good year in 2021. During the discussions regarding the course renovations, liaisons and staff knew the bridges would need to be replaced in the near future, so this is the second part of the master plan which needs to be completed.

Staff received consensus from the Finance Committee liaisons to place the proposal from Gewalt Hamilton Associates on the consent agenda for the March 9 Workshop meeting.

Rosewood Park Drainage and Grading Improvements Project

Director Smith reported that the goals of this project are to improve drainage along the ravine path running between Rosewood Park and Rosewood Beach to address the runoff from park and bluff, which creates significant ruts and washes out portions of the path and to regrade a steep portion of the path when traveling from the park to the beach. Director Smith shared a map of the site to highlight the portions of the trail in need of repair. The repairs require the installation of drains and catch basins and regrading in the upper park to direct water to the catch basin. Additionally, PVC pipe will be installed by underground boring and discharge into the ravine.

Financial Impact

The Park District received ten bids for this project, and the lowest bid came from V3 Construction Group, which is a company that the Park District has worked with in the past for projects at the Preserve of Highland Park, which staff has had nothing but positive experiences. There is \$300,000 allocated in the 2021 Capital Fund Budget for this project, and V3 Construction Group's proposal was \$211,00. Staff plan to recommend approval from the Park Board of Commissioners at the March 9 Workshop since the project came in \$89,000 under budget. If approved, the project will occur between mid-April and mid-May with an anticipated completion prior to Memorial Day weekend.

Staff received consensus from the Finance Committee liaisons to place the proposal from V3 Construction Group on the consent agenda for the March 9 Workshop meeting.

Other Business

Director Peters reported that the next Finance Committee meetings are Thursday, March 18 at 4:00 p.m.

President Ruttenberg requested that staff conduct a cost analysis to compare electric vs. disesal vehicles at some point in the future.

The meeting adjourned at 5:13 p.m.