

**PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
NOVEMBER 16, 2021**

Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of the Park District of Highland Park Held on November 16, 2021. Pursuant to Section 7(e) of the Open Meetings Act, The President of the Board of Park Commissioners has made a finding that it is not practical or prudent to hold in person meetings because of the COVID-19 public health emergency. Neither the elected officials nor the public will be allowed to attend Regular or Committee Meetings in person but will participate virtually. Links to the virtual meeting can be found on the Park District website <https://www.pdhp.org/park-board/meetings/>

The meeting was called to order at 6:37 p.m. by President Ruttenberg.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Kaplan, Commissioner Freeman, Vice President Grossberg, President Ruttenberg

**Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** Executive Director Romes; Director Smith, Director Voss, Director Dunn, Director Peters, Director Gogola, Director Carr; Assistant Director Maliszewski; Assistant Director Murrin; General Manager/Superintendent of Golf Operations Ochs; Manager Johnson

**Guest Speakers:** None

**ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

None

**PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

None.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

A motion was made by Vice President Grossberg, seconded by Commissioner Freeman to approve the Minutes from the September 13, 2021 Policy Committee Meeting, the Minutes from the October 26, 2021 Regular Board Meeting, the Sunset Valley Golf Club Cart Path Bridge Fabrication Bid, the 2022 IAPD/IPRA Credentials Certificate, the Truth in Taxation Resolution #2021-06, the 2022 Board Meeting Calendar, Resolution #2021-08: Authorizing a Contract with the Lowest Cost Electricity Provider, and Bills and Payroll in the amount of \$1,366,353.12

**Roll Call:**

**Aye:** Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Kaplan, Commissioner Freeman,  
Vice President Grossberg, President Ruttenberg

**Nay:** None

**Absent:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Motion Carried**

**FINANCIAL FORECASTS AND TREASURERS REPORT**

***Operations (General and Recreation Funds) Budget vs. Actual***

Director Peters reported that as of October 31, 2021, staff budgeted \$17.7 million in operating revenue and she is pleased to report the actual revenue is \$20 million, surpassing the budgeted amount this is due to several cost centers surpassing their budgeted amount (athletics, camps, tennis, golf, recreation, West Ridge Center, and Centennial Ice Arena) and the District receiving additional property taxes. Additionally, the actual expenses are significantly less than the budgeted amount due to a \$420,000 savings from salaries and wages, along with significant savings from insurance and pension costs. The actual expenses as of October 31, were \$11.7 million vs. the budgeted \$13.3 million, resulting in a year-to-date net surplus of \$3.9 million. When compared to the 3-year average it's a \$2.9 million year-to-date net surplus.

***General Fund***

As of October 31, 2021, the District's actual revenue was \$5.9 million vs. the budget of \$5.7 million. Whereas actual expenses are significantly less than the budgeted amount. The actual expenses as of October 31, were \$3.5 million vs. the budgeted \$4.5 million, which contributed to a \$1.1 million year-to-date net difference. When compared to the 3-year average it's a \$659,117 year-to-date net surplus.

***Recreation Fund***

As of October 31, 2021, staff budgeted \$11.9 million in revenue, whereas the actual revenue is significantly higher at \$14 million. Likewise, actual expenses are less than the budgeted amount. The actual expenses were \$8.1 million vs. the budgeted \$8.8 million, resulting in a year-to-date surplus of \$2.8 million. When compared to 2019, pre-covid, the District had a 1.3 million year-to-date surplus.

***Conclusion***

Director Peters reported in January 2021, Park District programs and facilities were either partially closed or canceled due to COVID mitigation effect and since then the Park District was able to significantly adjust expenses, especially payroll at \$420,000 below budget resulting in roughly \$4 million above budget net revenue. This number contains a couple hundred thousand dollars of the camp busing expenses that have yet to hit the books but will come through in November. For the period ended October 31, 2021, athletics has a surplus of \$264,000, camps have a \$220,000 surplus, tennis has a \$360,000 surplus, golf has a

\$755,000 surplus, recreation has a \$216,000 surplus, West Ridge Center has a \$128,000 surplus, and Centennial Ice Arena has a \$179,000 surplus. Overall, all cost centers except for one are operating at a surplus, which places the Park District at a very favorable financial position.

President Ruttenberg would like to know if the District is losing the ability to generate revenue due to staff shortages.

Executive Director Romes reported that services have not been limited due to staff shortages, however, the District is still experiencing this.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

#### **A. Approval of the Park Avenue South Storage Lot Design and Engineering Repair Contract**

Director Smith reported that in the spring of 2019, high Lake Michigan water levels and an associated increase in storm intensity resulted in erosion to the southeast corner of the south storage pad at Park Avenue Boating Facility. He shared images of the erosion and damages. As a result, the damage has reduced the boat storage area available for use. Although lake levels have receded since the record highs in 2020, this area is undergoing active erosion and the failed area continues to increase in size, so a revetment is needed to repair the south storage pad.

Director Smith provided a brief overview of the financial impacts if the District fails to repair the south storage pad reporting that 11 storage spaces have been impacted. A storage spaces costs between \$900 - \$1,300 resulting in a loss of \$9,900 - \$14,300 over 1 year, \$52,500 - \$76,000 over 5 years, and \$113,500 - \$164,000 over 10 years. As a result, staff reached out to several engineering firms and received proposals from three firms, V3, SmithGroup, and AECOM, for the development of a repair approach for this area. The scope of work includes preparation of construction documents that can be bid out and securing the necessary permits from IDNR, IEPA, and the US Army Corps. AECOM provided the lowest cost proposal for \$32,500. Their proposed Agreement will include an assessment of the design wave height and characteristics such as wave load forces on the lot perimeter walls and overtopping/runup potential.

At the previous meeting, there was a discussion to see if this project could be phased, so the first step would be the planning phase costing \$7,000. During the planning phase, AECOM would provide the Park District with design concepts, schematic plans, and preliminary probable cost estimates, so for \$7,000 the Park District will have a clear understanding of available options and those associated costs. From there the remaining amount of \$25,500 on the proposal would cover permitting and construction documents.

As far as a possible schedule, Director Smith reported that staff are here this evening seeking approval from the Park Board of Commissioners to enter into an agreement with AECOM for \$32,500. If

approved, the bid would be released in March of 2022, construction would begin in April of 2022, with an estimated completion date in May of 2022.

Vice President Grossberg would like to know if there is there a way to repair the south storage pad for under \$32,500.

Director Smith reported that staff feels the proposal from AECOM is an appropriate amount to reopen that area. If repairs are ignored the damage will extend further north and west.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if the revetments will need to be extended further north.

Director Smith reported that the length of the revetments will be identified during the planning phase.

President Ruttenberg requested that staff connect with the neighbors to the south.

A motion was made by Commissioner Freeman, seconded by Commissioner Kaplan to authorize the Executive Director to enter into an agreement with AECOM for the Park Avenue Boat Launch South Storage Lot Repair Design and Engineering Contract in the amount of \$32,500.

**Roll Call:**

**Aye:** Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Kaplan, Commissioner Freeman, Vice President Grossberg, President Ruttenberg

**Nay:** None

**Absent:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Motion Carried**

**B. Highland Park Golf Learning Center Name Recommendation**

President Ruttenberg reported that staff would like to remove this item from tonight's agenda to permit further discussion on the name recommendation.

A motion was made by Commissioner Freeman, seconded by Vice President Grossberg to remove the Highland Park Golf Learning Center Name Recommendation from the agenda.

**Roll Call:**

**Aye:** Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Kaplan, Commissioner Freeman,  
Vice President Grossberg, President Ruttenberg

**Nay:** None

**Absent:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Motion Carried**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Parks Foundation Update**

Vice President Grossberg reported that there is no update for this evening since the Parks Foundation is meeting tomorrow evening.

**B. Director's Report**

Executive Director Romes provided a couple of community updates on special events, reporting that the Highland Park Dome opened on, Monday, November 15 and the dog park at the Golf Learning Center will be opening next week. Please check our website for an official opening date, the golf course at Sunset Valley Golf Club will be open through Thanksgiving.

Get your calories out before taking them in by participating in the Twisted Turkey Triathlon on Sunday, November 21 from 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 a.m. This non-competitive triathlon consists of a 10-minute swim, 20-minute outdoor run, and 40-minutes of outdoor cycle. If there is inclement weather, the run and cycle will move indoors. Fee is \$35 for Res / \$40 for Non-Res.

Santa's Workshop on Saturday, December 4 from 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. at Sunset Valley Golf Club is sold out! Registered participants will enjoy games with Santa's elves, help Mrs. Claus make reindeer food and decorations, and everyone will get to take a photo with Santa. All participants take home a gift made specially at the North pole.

The North Shore Winter Classic skating competition is Sunday, December 5 from 9 – 5:00 p.m. at Centennial Ice Arena. This is a USA-sanctioned competition that provides a fun introductory competitive experience for beginner to advanced skaters. All skater levels are eligible to participate, and all participants will receive an award. The event is free to watch, and the schedule will be posted on the [centennialice.org](http://centennialice.org) website approximately four to five days prior to the competition.

Currently, there is a waitlist for this year's Polar Parade, which is Friday, December 17 from 4:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Registered families will listen for the jingle bells and keep their eyes peeled as Santa, Mrs. Claus, and Elf will be riding in their one-horse-open-sleigh throughout Highland Park and dropping off special gifts from the North pole.

**C. Board Comments**

President Ruttenberg would like to know when the solar panels will be installed at Deer Creek Racquet Club.

Director Smith reported that he spoke with the installation firm today, and they are working closely with the City of Highland Park to finalize the last steps regarding design and review. Staff should have an answer next week.

President Ruttenberg asked Councilwoman Lidawer to look into this since there has been a delay for several months.

Executive Director Romes reported that staff will check in with the City Manager and follow up.

Councilwoman Lidawer reported that she will look into it.

**OPEN TO THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD**

*Councilwoman Lidawer*

*1707 St. Johns Avenue, Highland Park*

Commended Meghan Meredith for her hard work at a recent event she worked at Rosewood Beach. It was a large event for 50 people that went off without a hitch.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Vice President Grossberg and seconded by Commissioner Freeman and approved by a unanimous vote. The Board Meeting adjourned at 7:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Roxanne Hejnowski*

Roxanne Hejnowski, Assistant Secretary