

MINUTES OF A THE FACILITY COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK HELD ON NOVEMBER 2, 2021, 4:01 PM. 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/](https://www.pdhp.org/park-board/meetings/)

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

Also, Present: Executive Director Romes; Director Smith; Director Carr, Director Gogola; Manager Ochs, Manager Schwartz, Manager Johnson; Coordinator Hejnowski

Guest Speaker: None

Approval of the Facility Committee Meeting Minutes from October 14, 2021

The minutes from the October 14, 2021, Facility Committee Meeting Minutes were approved.

Highland Park Golf Learning Center Property Name Recommendation

With the onset of COVID-19, Director Gogola reported that there was a newfound interest in outdoor recreational activities to which participation significantly increased in private lessons and golf camps, along with usage of the driving range and miniature golf course at the Golf Learning Center. Since this property connects to the Preserve of Highland Park, which will be opening in the spring of 2022, staff are confident the uniqueness of The Preserve will undoubtedly draw local and regional visitors, so staff would like to rebrand and rename the Golf Learning Center to maximize the opportunity for more visitors.

Director Gogola provided an overview of both facilities reporting that the Golf Learning Center features a driving range, miniature golf course, concessions, restrooms, rental spaces and offers lessons and camps. The Preserve of Highland Park is a 100-acre natural area with more than 5 miles of paths for walking and biking, has designated picnic areas and green spaces for gatherings, has a pond and wetland overlooks, a pollinator garden, a nature maze, and a turtle meadow with a sand play area. Both facilities have a physical connection attracting similar audiences and providing a family-friendly location. Combined, both facilities provide a unique outdoor recreational destination with more amenities and opportunities for visitors to enjoy.

Staff are recommending the Highland Park Golf Learning Center and River's Edge Adventure Golf be renamed The Preserve of Highland Park Golf Learning Center and Mini Golf. The new name will expand The Preserve's offering for visitors to enjoy the natural areas and the amenities offered at the Golf Learning Center, including the driving range, mini-golf, concessions, and restrooms. Connecting the two properties in "name" will help position The Preserve as a destination in the Park District's marketing and the public's mind.

Commissioner Freeman and Commissioner Kaplan support staff's recommendation.

President Ruttenberg would like to know why staff included Golf Learning Center in the rename.

Director Gogola reported that based on the services being offered at that facility staff were opposed to removing that element from the rename.

Vice President Grossberg would like to know if staff plan to enhance landscaping at the Golf Learning Center property so that it mimics vegetation at the Preserve.

Executive Director Romes reported that staff plan to enhance landscaping down the road to better connect the properties.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if the parking lot at the Golf Learning Center can support visitors to the Preserve. He is not opposed to the rename, however, he does not want to deprive golfers of the amenities at the Golf Learning Center since guests wanting to visit the Preserve will utilize parking spots at the Golf Learning Center to access paths. As a result, he recommends staff conduct a parking analysis to see if the current lot can support both uses. Lastly, he would like to know if approvals are required from the City of Highland Park to rename the property.

Executive Director Romes reported that a name change does not require approval from the City of Highland Park. Regardless, City Officials have been included in discussions regarding the name recommendation.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know what type of consulting or data collection was conducted to ensure the renaming would not deter or reduce the golf audience.

Executive Director Romes reported that staff can follow up and share those findings at a future meeting.

Director Gogola shared the next steps, reporting that per Section 4.02.2 of the Park District of Highland Park Policy & Procedure Manual, following today's discussion, a formal recommendation will be provided at a Regular Board Meeting. After which, the recommendation must sit for at least 60 days before the Board of Park Commissioners votes upon the name recommendation. Staff are hoping to seek approval for the recommended name change in January of 2022. An affirmative vote of four-fifths majority of the Board of Park Commissioners is required to rename the Highland Park Golf Learning Center and River's Edge Adventure Golf property to the Preserve of Highland Park Golf Learning Center and Mini Golf.

West Ridge Center Request for Qualifications Update

Manager Schwartz provided an update of the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) indicating that staff issued the RFQ on September 30, and since then received 13 submittals. An internal team reviewed the submittals and narrowed it down to 4 finalists, Holabird and Root, Woodhouse Tinucci Architects, Williams Architects/Aquaitcs', and Wight and Company. The RFQ specified our evaluation criteria, which included organization and completeness of submittal, demonstrated understanding of the project, sustainable design, firm size, size familiarity when working with park districts, representative project experience, and the proposed plan for approaching this project. Manager Schwartz highlighted key elements supporting the team's decision when selecting the finalists.

Holabird and Root had a mission-driven approach, their data-driven approach allowed them to stand out, their sustainability qualifications stood out, along with their innovative designs.

Woodhouse Tinucci Architects had a thoughtful approach to the project, they have experience working with our District and the Highland Park Community, their sustainability and innovative designs stood out, along with their extensive relevant experience. Some of their most recent work includes the Robert Crown Center in Evanston and the new NSSRA facility.

Wight and Company have experience working with NSSD112 and the Highland Park Community, they have extensive relevant experience designing facilities with gymnastics studios, early childhood wings, and administrative areas, and they have innovative designs. Some of their most recent work includes Northwood and Edgewood Middle Schools and the Northbrook T-Pac facility.

Williams Architects/Aquaitcs' has extensive relevant experience designing community centers and early childhood facilities, they have experience working with a variety of local park districts, and their designs were innovative. Their most recent work includes the Glenview Ice Arena.

As a result, these four candidates will be brought in for interviews on November 17.

Executive Director Romes would like to know if any members of the Park Board would like to attend the interviews on November 17.

Commissioner Bernstein reminded the Committee that 2 members of the Board of Park Commissioners attended the interviews for Rosewood Beach, so, if possible, he would like 2 members to attend the interviews for the new facility at West Ridge.

Commissioner Kaplan reported that he, unfortunately, does not have the time, but he encourages other members of the Board to attend the interviews.

Commissioner Freeman reported that she is happy to attend the interviews on November 17.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know who will interact with the architect and share communications.

Executive Director Romes reported that a team of staff, which includes myself, Director Carr, Director Smith, Director Voss, Director Gogola, Assistant Director Maliszewski, and Manager Schwartz interact with the architectural team. PDHP staff will provide regular updates at Facility Committee Meetings.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know what the vision is for the building, are staff looking to make a statement or focus on functionality.

Manager Schwartz reported that visuals being presented at the interviews will be schematic focusing on massing and layout, it will not be used for design. The look and layout of the building will be determined in a collaborative fashion that involves inclusion from the community. Furthermore, the next steps include, providing a preferred team recommendation to the Facility Committee on December 2. That same recommendation will be presented to the Board of Park Commissioners at the December 7 Workshop Meeting. Staff will finalize negotiations and the contract the week of December 2 – 9, so that a draft contract can be presented to the Finance Committee on December 8. Lastly, staff will request contract award approval from the Board of Park Commissioners at the December 16 Regular Board Meeting.

President Ruttenberg would like something attractive, however, he would not like the design to stick out like a sore thumb. He would like to attend the interviews on November 17.

Commissioner Freeman reported that this facility is a hub, however, she wants to work with an architect who understands the District's interests and visions so she is eager to attend the interviews.

Vice President Grossberg does not want to be intrusive; he does not wish to attend the interviews.

Commissioner Bernstein and Commissioner Kaplan feel there is a benefit to having board members attend the interviews, unfortunately, neither are available to attend the interviews.

President Ruttenberg requested that all the interviews be recorded so that the Park Board can review and follow up with staff on a recommendation.

Commissioner Bernstein reported that staff will need to contact the firms to get permission to record the interviews, and he requests that staff provide a virtual option.

President Ruttenberg would like to know how much time is allotted for interviews.

Manager Schwartz reported that an hour and 30minutes are allotted for each interview and 30minutes breaks in between.

Commissioner Bernstein requested a copy of the interview questions and scope and to record the interviews if permission is granted from the firms.

Public Comment for Items on the Agenda

Katie Braznichenko

2354 Tennyson Lane, Highland Park

We hosted a block party over Halloween weekend, which 70 people attended. Tons of young families and lots of new faces. Everyone was excited to meet neighbors. A new park in this neighborhood would provide further sense of community. Since there are many young kids in this neighborhood, she would like to see the playground completed before her kids are too old. She would like to be a project manager.

Commissioner Bernstein requested that she share her questions with Executive Director Romes regarding the playground. Additionally, he requested to continue the discussion at the next Parks and Natural Areas Committee Meeting.

Deer Creek Racquet Club Solar Panel Update

Director Smith reported that the panels are onsite, but they have yet to be installed. There has been quite a bit of back and forth with the City of Highland Park and the installers regarding the layout and structural calculations. Additionally, there has been a change request in the layout, all of which has delayed the process. Regardless the City's building department has approved the design review, so staff are awaiting approval from the planning department. It is anticipated that the installers will be able to mobilize and be on site within two weeks after the approval. The installation should take a month to complete once on site.

Sunset Valley Golf Club Project Update

Manager Ochs shared an image of the Skokie Canal which runs through the golf course at Sunset Valley Golf Club. At the last Facility Committee Meeting, it was requested that staff explore opportunities to improve the overall aesthetic appearance of the canal. As a result, staff contacted V3 Consulting and they are recommending a Soil Lift along 1470 linear feet of the canal and a Native Slope Restoration along 3,420 linear feet of the canal, for a total of 5,200 linear feet of naturalized bank.

A Soil Lift consists of slope grading, rock, and soil wrap installation costs \$336 per linear foot and requires permitting. A Native Slope Restoration focuses on planting and overseeding costs \$46 per linear foot and does not require permitting, however, it will take more than 3 years to get things established since the slopes on the creek are very steep. The estimated construction for the Soil Lift is \$493,920 and \$157,320 for the Native Slope Restoration. Furthermore, to initiate design and permitting is estimated at \$68,000, construction costs for the entire project are estimated at \$675,000, and annual maintenance is estimated at \$61,000, so Manager Ochs would like feedback from the Board of Park Commissioners since this project is currently unfunded in the 5-Year Capital Plan.

Vice President Grossberg would like to know if there are any short-term solutions.

Manager Ochs reported that this project could be expanded over 10-years, completing small areas each year, such as budgeting \$25,000 a year to complete 43 linear feet of Native Slope Restoration.

Commissioner Bernstein agrees with Manager Ochs's recommendation to extend this project over 10 years, to reduce costs, and identify certain areas for Native Slope Restorations. Due to the bridge restoration, he's not willing to commit to another million-dollar project.

Manager Ochs reported that the Native Slope Restoration is most cost-effective and recommends conducting the restoration near the third tee-box where a bridge is being replaced in 2022. Staff can see how the plantings and seedings developed over 3 years.

President Ruttenberg requested that Manager Ochs update the 2022 budget to include a Native Slope Restoration around the third tee box.

Other Business

Executive Director Romes reported that the next Facility Committee Meeting is Tuesday, December 2 at 4:00 p.m.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:24 p.m.