

MINUTES OF A THE POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK HELD ON FEBRUARY 23, 2022, 5:00 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, Vice President Grossberg, President Ruttenberg

Absent: Commissioner Kaplan

Also, Present: Executive Director Romes; Director Smith; Director Voss; Director Peters; Director Carr; Director Gogola; Assistant Director Maliszewski; Assistant Director Murrin; Manager Johnson; Coordinator Hejnowski

Guest Speaker: None

Additions to the Agenda

None.

Public Comment for Items on the Agenda

None.

Renewal of the IGA with District 113 for Maintenance and Use of Park and School Property

Director Maliszewski reported that the current intergovernmental agreement between School District 113 and the Park District for maintenance and use of certain park and school property is expiring in March 2022. Staff has been meeting with District 113 Administration to discuss updated terms and working through provisions that would be included as exhibits within the agreement. Staff will request approval from the Park Board of Commissioners after both legal counsels agree to the updated terms.

IAPD Park Board Self-Evaluation Program

Executive Director Romes reported that at the July 15, 2021 Policy Committee Meeting, staff, and board liaisons discussed the potential of conducting a Park Board Self-Evaluation with the Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD). This program evaluates the quality and effectiveness of our agency and Park Board governance. Discussions regarding the Board Self-Evaluation were postponed due to the Pandemic since this program is most effectively completed in person and Meetings have been conducted virtually. Staff will review the Self-Evaluation Program to determine the next steps. It's been 6 years since the last evaluation was facilitated, as a result, the District has tentatively scheduled an in-person evaluation for Tuesday, May 3 at 5:30 p.m. The Policy Committee liaisons support staff's recommendation and will follow up with Executive Director Romes regarding availability.

COVID-19 Emergency Operations Planning Update

A. PDHP Indoor Mask Mandate

Executive Director Romes reported that Governor Pritzker announced plans to partially lift Illinois' indoor mask mandate by February 28, assuming state COVID-19 metrics continue to decline.

While the Park District of Highland Park strongly encourages everyone to make a conscious decision regarding their own health and safety, we are following these new guidelines as we have done throughout the pandemic by moving to a "mask optional" position in Park District facilities and programs for both participants and staff beginning on Monday, February 28. Additionally, the Park District is following the North Shore School District 112 mask-optional position for all our youth programming, including pre-school-aged programs beginning on Monday, February 28.

The Policy Committee requested that the Park District follow the City's stance regarding the indoor mask mandate due to home rule.

Councilwoman Lidawer reported that the City of Highland Park will most likely follow the Governor's recommendation, however, she appreciates that the Park District will support the City's stance.

B. PDHP Employee Vaccination and Testing Policy

Executive Director Romes reported that the Park District's COVID-19 Vaccine Policy will remain in effect for all employees, which requires employees to be fully vaccinated as defined by the CDC, or complete weekly COVID-19 screenings, however, if the numbers continue to decline, staff would like to suspend the vaccination and testing policy. Staff will continue to monitor the numbers and will provide a recommendation in 30 days.

The Policy Committee supports staff's recommendation to lift the vaccination and testing policy if the numbers continue to decline over the next 30 days.

C. Resume In-Person Public Meetings

Executive Director Romes reported that the emergency order is still in effect, however, staff are recommending in-person public meetings resume in March with a hybrid option.

Commissioner Freeman is in favor of in-person public meetings, however, if people are uncomfortable, she would like to offer the virtual option for those individuals.

Commissioner Bernstein requested flexibility allowing remote participation for Committee Meetings since they are scheduled during work hours.

Executive Director Romes reported that virtual participation is only permissible under the Governor's emergency order or the guidelines outlined in the Open Meetings Act (illness, employment conflicts, or an emergency).

President Ruttenberg requested that staff follow up with legal counsel regarding exemptions for in-person attendance and share relevant guidelines from the Open Meetings Act.

Other Business

None.

Open to the Public to Address the Board

None.

Closed Session

A motion was made by Vice President Grossberg, seconded by President Ruttenberg, to adjourn into Closed Session for discussion of Section 2(c)1: The employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or specific volunteers of the public body or legal counsel for the public body; Section 2(c)2: Collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberation concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees.

Roll Call:

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

Nay: None

Absent: Commissioner Kaplan

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

The meeting adjourned into Closed Session at 5:38 p.m.

The meeting reconvened into Open Session at 5:48 p.m.

Action From Closed Session If Any

Commissioner Freeman reported that the Policy Committee met in Closed Session under Section 2(c)1: The employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or specific volunteers of the public body or legal counsel for the public body; Section 2(c)2: Collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberation concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees.

No action was taken.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxanne Hejnowski

Roxanne Hejnowski, Assistant Secretary