

**MINUTES OF A THE LAKEFRONT, PARKS, AND NATURAL AREAS COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK
HELD ON APRIL 20, 2022 5:01 PM**

Present: Commissioner Freeman, Vice President Grossberg

Absent: None.

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

Guest Speaker: None.

Commissioner Kaplan joined the meeting by electronic means at 5:12 p.m.

Additions to the Agenda

None.

Approval of the Lakefront, Parks, and Natural Areas Committee Meeting Minutes from March 16, 2022

The Minutes from the March 16, 2022 Lakefront, Parks, and Natural Areas Committee Meeting were approved.

Moraine Beach Fence Improvement Project Update

Manager Schwartz reported that Moraine Park and Beach is Highland Park's northernmost park with beach access. Currently, the beach access path is closed. The path is planned for renovation during the summer of 2022. The goal of the Moraine Fence Improvement Project is to install a fence to create a space for both a dog beach and a people beach, an initiative identified through the Lakefront Master Plan Update. Staff assessed the feasibility of a permanent/fixed fence and are not recommending this option based on beach conditions. Instead, staff are proposing a fence structure along the ravine outfall to create a clear entry to the public beach and a temporary barricade to separate the public beach from the dog beach. While the dog beach is not fully enclosed, the barricade should prevent dogs from accessing public property. The budget is \$20,000. If approved, construction would begin in the Fall after the path is repaired.

Vice President Grossberg is concerned that the public who used this beach prior to the closure, may be opposed to a shared beach.

Commissioner Freeman would like to know how much the dog beach has been reduced by turning Moraine Beach into a shared beach.

Director Smith reported that staff took this approach based on recommendations from President Ruttenberg in previous meetings.

Vice President Grossberg would like to know how much the beach has been reduced by erosion.

Director Smith reported that the water levels have significantly impacted the beach, however, he does not have the exact numbers this evening, but he can follow up.

Vice President Grossberg has mixed feelings regarding a shared beach, especially since so much of the beach area has been reduced.

Commissioner Freeman is looking for guidance from those who used the dog beach prior to the closure. She would not visit this beach if she was not using the dog beach.

Executive Director Romes would like to know if the recommended option of a shared beach is supported by the Lakefront, Parks, and Natural Areas Committee.

Vice President Grossberg, Commissioner Freeman, and Commissioner Kaplan are opposed to the recommended option of a shared beach, instead, they prefer the beach for all option where dogs share the same beach as the public, with no division.

Sunset Woods Park Playground Renovation Project Update

Manager Schwartz reported that after a brief pause in construction due to winter weather conditions, construction of the playground started back up in mid-March which includes curbing, layout for the future seating area, grading for the hillside play area, pouring concrete, and beginning phases of the Rocketship installation. Additionally, landscaping for the entry and patio areas has begun. The project is currently on budget and staff are anticipating a grand opening in June of 2022. Lastly, she is pleased to report that the Parks Foundation raised \$25,000 in donations to support this project to help offset costs.

Vice President Grossberg would like to know if any of the stone was repurposed.

Manager Schwartz reported that any usable stone was repurposed.

Vice President Grossberg would like to know if this project includes lighting improvements.

Manager Schwartz reported that lighting improvements are not included in this project.

Sunset Woods Park Sheahan Woods Update

Director Smith reported that in 1998, a Sheahan Woods monument sign was installed at Sunset Woods Park to recognize the history of the park and its original ownership by the Sheahan family. As part of the Sunset Woods Park Playground Renovation Project, all Sunset Woods Park monument signs will be replaced, and the Sheahan Woods monument sign will be removed. Staff proposed installing an interpretive sign similar to the ones at Heller and the Preserve to recognize the Sheahan Woods family and their history in Sunset Woods Park. He shared images of the signs and the proposed locations where they would be installed throughout the park.

Commissioner Kaplan supports staff's recommendation.

Commissioner Freeman is pleased with the looks of the sign and thinks similar signs could be placed at other Parks recognizing other families or groups, specifically the Historical Society. For the Historical Society, she would like the sign to have a QR code that could link to their website.

Director Smith reported that Manager Schwartz has been in communication with the Historical Society. Vice President Grossberg supports staff's recommendation so long as the Sheahan family supports the sign.

Director Smith confirmed that the Sheahan family approved the sign.

Other Business

None.

Open to the Public to Address the Board

None.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxanne Hejnowski

Roxanne Hejnowski, Assistant Secretary