

**PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
MINUTES OF WORKSHOP MEETING  
MAY 18, 2022**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by President Ruttenberg.

A motion was made by Commissioner Freeman and seconded by Vice President Grossberg to allow Commissioner Kaplan to participate by electronic means.

**ROLL CALL**

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

**Absent:** None

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

**Guest Speakers:** None

**ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

None.

**PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS NOT ON AGENDA**

None.

**THE PRESERVE OF HIGHLAND PARK GRAND OPENING EVENTS**

Manager Sanchez reported that the Preserve of Highland Park was converted from its historical use as a golf course began in November 2020. Today, The Preserve of Highland Park celebrates nature and our place in it. The unique 100+ acre property was designed to take advantage of the interesting golf-related topography and includes green lawns, nature-based play areas, specialized native gardens, restored woodlands, and walking and biking trails that connect neighborhoods and downtown Highland Park, and regional biking trails. Visitors can immerse themselves in the sights, sounds, and experiences of nature and outdoor play.

The Park District of Highland Park is celebrating the grand opening of The Preserve of Highland Park at a partner event on Thursday, June 2, 2022, from 5-7:30 pm, and a public event on Saturday, June 4, 2022, from 10 am-noon. During the partner event, a ribbon-cutting ceremony will take place at 5:30 pm, with a reception and tour of the facility. The public event on June 4 includes a variety of family activities.

Commissioner Bernstein requested that the invitation for the partner event be extended to City of Highland Park officials.

President Ruttenberg would like to know if ADA accommodations will be offered.

Manager Sanchez reported that golf carts will be utilized to provide tours to those with ADA accommodations.

**ADOPTION OF THE BEACH AND BOATING SAFETY WEEK PROCLAMATION**

President Ruttenberg reported that the Park District of Highland Park manages 4 lakefront properties including Rosewood Beach as our dedicated swimming beach, and Park Avenue Boating Facility, as our dedicated recreational boating facility. With the summer swimming and boating season beginning Memorial Day Weekend, the Park District, along with the City of Highland Park, wishes to approve the following Beach and Boating Safety Week Proclamation drawing attention to beach safety practices all summer.

Commissioner Freeman read aloud the Beach and Boating Safety Week Proclamation.

A motion was made by Commissioner Freeman and seconded by Commissioner Kaplan to adopt the Beach and Boating Safety Week Proclamation declaring May 23-30 as Highland Park Beach and Boating Safety Week.

**Roll Call:**

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

**Nay:** None

**Absent:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Motion Carried**

**APPROVAL OF THE 2022 LAKEFRONT SECURITY SERVICES**

Assistant Director Murrin reported that the Park District of Highland Park contracts security services to patrol and secure our lakefront properties from 6:00 pm to Midnight, seven days a week from Memorial Day to Labor Day through September 5, and weekends only (Friday-Sunday) September 9-25. One security officer will be positioned at Rosewood Beach and a second at Park Avenue Beach and Boating Facility with the ability to drive to other lakefront and park properties in a marked vehicle.

The Park Board of Commissioners approved an agreement with Securalex at the April 27, 2022 Regular Board Meeting for Lakefront Security Services. As of May 10, Securalex is no longer able to meet the terms

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of its proposal. Since lakefront security services are needed to begin in less than one week, The Park District does not have adequate time to issue another RFP. Therefore, staff contacted Gamma Team Security, Inc. to review summer security needs and associated agreement terms. After review with Park District legal counsel, staff is recommending the Park Board reconsider action taken at the April 27 Park Board Meeting by rejecting all proposals received for 2022 Lakefront Security Services and consider a motion for emergency approval to enter into an agreement with Gamma Team Security for Lakefront Security Services.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bernstein and seconded by Commissioner Kaplan to reconsider approval by the Park Board of Commissioners to enter into an agreement with Securalex, and reject all proposals received for 2022 Lakefront Security Services RFP.

**Roll Call:**

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

**Nay:** None

**Absent:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Motion Carried.**

A second motion was made by Commissioner Kaplan and seconded by Commissioner Freeman for emergency approval to allow the Executive Director to enter into an agreement with Gamma Team Security, Inc. for 2022 Lakefront Security Services.

**Roll Call:**

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

**Nay:** None

**Absent:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Motion Carried.**

President Ruttenberg would like to know the cost differential.

Assistant Director Murrin reported that there is a \$596 savings by entering into a contract with Gamma Team Security, Inc.

**APPROVAL OF THE 2022 MORAINES PARK PATH IMPROVEMENT PROJECT REBID**

Director Smith stated that the last discussion was at the April 20 Finance Committee meeting. Five bids were received. Staff is recommending Integral Construction which was the low bid. During the Finance Committee meeting, it had come up that there was an outside group that had reached out to the Park District to express concerns regarding Integral Construction. Concerns were regarding violations from the Illinois Department of Labor, OSHA violations, and contract issues with past projects. Staff researched and worked with Park District counsel and came to the conclusion this wasn't an issue and we could still move forward with them. However, as part of this process, it was discovered that Integral Construction failed to disclose the information about past violations which is a requirement of our bid documents. Unfortunately, we are in a position where we are essentially forced to determine that Integral Construction is not the lowest responsible bidder which means we now look to the second-lowest bidder which is Team REIL. Team REIL is significantly higher than Integral Construction. This is a firm that we worked with and have a positive relationship with. Staff reached out to Team REIL to see what they could do to reduce their cost. They were able and willing to reduce their cost by \$28,000. The anticipated amount over budget is \$137,580. Staff is recommending moving forward with this project with a total contract of \$586,314. Construction would start in mid-July 2022 with construction completion in late September 2022.

President Ruttenberg reported that this park will be open for dog-friendly uses, however, it will no longer be restricted to a dog beach.

Director Smith reported that while there will still be a fenced area so that users can transition from leach to off-leash for dogs, the beach will no longer be restricted to a dog beach.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to discuss how this project along with other capital projects exceeding the budgeted amount will impact the five and ten-year capital plans at upcoming Finance Committee Meetings.

President Ruttenberg will vote in favor of this project since the beach will be dual-use for the community and dogs.

A motion was made by Vice President Grossberg and seconded by Commissioner Freeman to approve Base Bid Items 1, 2, and 3 and Alternates 1 and 2 from Team REIL Inc. for the 2022 Moraine Park Path Improvement Project and authorize the Executive Director to enter into an agreement in the amount of \$586,314.

**Roll Call:**

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

**Nay:** None

**Absent:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Motion Carried.**

**HIDDEN CREEK AQUAPARK CONCRETE DECK REPLACEMENT ENGINEERING**

Director Smith reported that the concrete deck surrounding the Hidden Creek Aqua Park (HCAP) pool which was installed in 1966 is starting to deteriorate and needs replacement. Sections are cracking and heaving which could create hazardous conditions. The replacement of the concrete deck will also address ADA accessibility throughout the deck. The 2022 approved capital budget includes \$30,000 for engineering services (excluding construction administration) to develop a design to bid on the project in 2022. The actual deck replacement would take place in 2023 before the 2023 swim season.

This project is also taking on the scope of the shade structure replacements. Combining these two projects maximizes efficiency.

The scope of this project is specialized, and the Park District requested proposals from civil engineers the Park District has existing relationships. The Park District received two proposals for engineering services for this project. The scope includes survey work, engineering, and construction drawings, as well as participating in the bidding process. The bidding process would not occur until the fall of 2023. The anticipated costs for this project include \$35,800 for the proposal from Gewalt Hamilton Associates and \$6,500 to survey the existing conditions for a total cost of \$42,300, which is \$12,300 over budget. If approved, staff would receive construction documents by this fall, the bid would be awarded this winter, and construction would occur in the spring of 2023.

Staff recommends that the Park Board of Commissioners consider the Gewalt Hamilton and Associate (GHA) proposal. The Park District has a positive existing relationship with GHA, and they were involved with the HCAP original construction.

President Ruttenberg would like to know the anticipated cost to replace all the concrete.

Director Smith reported that staff budgeted \$400,000 in 2023, however, staff anticipates the costs to increase. Based on feedback from the civil engineers, staff will make changes to the 2023 capital plan.

President Ruttenberg and Vice President Grossberg would like staff to contact the civil engineers to see if there are alternative options instead of concrete to replace the deck.

Commissioner Bernstein requested that the civil engineers provide industry best standard solutions and possible alternatives with staff.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if there will be reduced capacities this summer due to COVID-19.

Executive Director Romes reported that the aquapark will operate at full capacity.

Vice President Grossberg would like to know if the concessions will be open this summer.

Assistant Director Murrin reported that staff is in the final negotiations to secure a vendor to operate concessions at the aquapark this summer.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if the District is still in need of lifeguards.

Assistant Director Murrin reported that the District has filled 96% of the vacant lifeguard positions.

### **SUNSET VALLEY GOLF CLUB PROJECT UPDATES**

#### **A. Bridge Replacement and Removal**

Director Smith reported that Sunset Valley Golf Club has a total of ten bridges that are used by golfers to navigate the course during play across the Skokie River. Required inspection of these bridges revealed that eight of these bridges need replacement over the next several years. He is pleased to report that Bridges 1, 7, and 9 have already been replaced and Bridge 8 was removed, completing the first phase of this project. As for the second phase of this project, the bid will be released in September, the bid will be awarded in October, and construction will begin in December to replace Bridges 2, 3, and 5, along with the removal of Bridge 6. Staff anticipates the second phase of the project will be completed in April of 2023. Lastly, he is pleased to report that this project is coming in \$50,000 under budget.

#### **B. Phase One of the Cart Path Resurfacing**

Manager Ochs reported that the cart path resurfacing project will be completed over the next three years in three phases. Construction for Phase One will occur this fall, resurfacing the cart paths at holes 1 – 5, 8, and 9. Staff budgeted \$130,000. Phase Two is scheduled for 2023 and staff budgeted \$130,000. Phase Three is scheduled for 2024 and staff budgeted \$140,000.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if there is a need for the cart path along the southern end of the course.

Manager Ochs reported that staff will investigate to see if there is a need-based on utilization.

President Ruttenberg and Commissioner Bernstein asked staff to evaluate all the cart paths to see if any can be eliminated and turned into green space.

### **CENTENNIAL ICE ARENA RENOVATION UPDATE**

Director Smith reported that staff recently attended a Plan and Design Commission Meeting hosted by the City of Highland Park to request a variance to not include and replace the island in the parking lot renovation to maximize the number of parking spaces, to request approval of the proposed traffic pattern in the parking lot, which no longer permits two-way traffic, and to request approval of the proposed lighting schedule and kelvin color temperature to illuminate the parking lot. The City approved staff's requests.

President Ruttenberg wanted confirmation that the reduction of the kelvin color temperature will not negatively impact the brightness of the parking lot.

Director Smith reported that while the kelvin color changed, there was no impact on the brightness.

The bid will be issued on May 23, there will be a pre-bid meeting on May 26, the bids will be due June 6, staff will review the bid results at the June Finance Committee Meeting, and staff will request approval of a contract from the Park Board at the June Regular Board Meeting. If approved, construction would begin in July, with an anticipated completion by the end of this year.

**APPROVAL OF THE REVISIONS TO SECTION 8.9 PARTICIPATION IN PROGRAMS AND USE OF FACILITIES IN THE PART-TIME EMPLOYEE PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL**

Director Kopka reported that the employment market has yet to recover from the pandemic’s impact. Many companies, including the Park District, are finding it more difficult to discover, hire, and keep talented staff. As an employee recruitment tool, and in an effort to increase retention, reduce attrition and improve engagement, staff reviewed the Park District’s “Employee Perks Program” (formally known as the “Employee Ambassador Program”) and is proposing numerous updates.

Particular attention has been given to seasonal employees, specifically summer staff, to incentivize their return to the Park District each summer, in addition, to referring other quality candidates.

Vice President Grossberg fully supports the recommended changes, however, he would like to know if the revisions were based on recommendations from employees.

Director Kopka reported that the revisions were based on incentives and benefits which our neighboring districts offer.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kaplan and seconded by Commissioner Freeman to approve the revisions to Section 8.9 Participation in Programs and Use of Facilities in the Part-Time Employee Personnel Policy Manual.

**Roll Call:**

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

**Nay:** None

**Absent:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Motion Carried.**

**APPROVAL OF THE REVISIONS TO SECTION 8.13 PARTICIPATION IN PROGRAMS AND USE OF FACILITIES IN THE FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL**

Director Kopka reported that the employment market has yet to recover from the pandemic’s impact. Many companies, including the Park District, are finding it more difficult to discover, hire, and keep talented staff.

As an employee recruitment tool, and in an effort to increase retention, reduce attrition and improve engagement, staff reviewed the Park District’s “Employee Perks Program” (formally known as the “Employee Ambassador Program”) and is proposing numerous updates.

Proposed additions for the Full-Time Employee addressed expanding current employee benefits to their Spouse and Family Members (under 21) at:

Deer Creek, the Recreation Center, and Rosewood Beach. The language was also clarified in regard to the fee assessed for Facility Rentals (20%) and for classes in the event they are at maximum capacity (20%).

A motion was made by Commissioner Bernstein and seconded by Commissioner Kaplan to approve the revisions to Section 8.13 Participation in Programs and Use of Facilities in the Full-Time Employee Personnel Policy Manual.

**Roll Call:**

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

**Nay:** None

**Absent:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Motion Carried.**

**APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 2022-04 – AUTHORIZING AND PROVIDING FOR THE CONVEYANCE OR SALE OF SURPLUS PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Director Peters reported that Pursuant to 70 ILCS 1205/8-22 the Park District of Highland Park disposes of property it deems to be of no use to the Agency. With each item disposed of, the District will determine which method of disposal is in its best interests. As indicated in the ordinance, this could be through sale to the highest bidder, trade-in, or donation. Most of the property has some value, although in most cases it is minimal. If the property cannot be sold or donated, the District will dispose of it in the most economical method possible. Also, pursuant to 70 ILCS 1205/8-22 the District must pass the attached ordinance by approval of at least three-fifths of the Park Board.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kaplan and seconded by Vice President Grossberg to approve Ordinance 2022-04: Authorizing and Providing for the Conveyance or Sale of Surplus Personal Property so that the Park District of Highland Park can dispose of surplus property as indicated in Addendum 1 of the Ordinance.



**Roll Call:**

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

**Nay:** None

**Absent:** None

**Abstain:** None

**REVIEW OF VOUCHERS**

President Ruttenberg and Commissioner Bernstein reported that they reviewed the vouchers and there were no discrepancies.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Vice President Grossberg reported that he attended a recent symphony conducted by the Highland Park Strings, and to his surprise the Park District was not referenced in the program or mentioned throughout the symphony.

Executive Director Romes reported that staff will contact Larry Block to make sure that the Park District is referenced and recognized moving forward.

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

None.

**CLOSED SESSION**

A motion was made by Commissioner Bernstein, seconded by Commissioner Freeman, 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.

**Roll Call:**

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

**Nay:** None

**Absent:** None

**Abstain:** None

**Motion Carried**

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The meeting adjourned into Closed Session at 7:04 p.m.

The meeting reconvened into Open Session at 7:22 p.m.

**Action From Closed Session If Any**

President Ruttenberg reported that the Park Board of Commissioners 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.

No action was taken.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Commissioner Bernstein and seconded by Vice President Grossberg and approved by a unanimous vote. The Board Meeting adjourned at 7:24p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Roxanne Hejnowski*

Roxanne Hejnowski, Assistant Secretary