

**PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF WORKSHOP MEETING
JANUARY 8, 2013**

The Workshop Meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners of the Park District of Highland Park, was held in the Board Room at the West Ridge Center, 636 Ridge Road, Highland Park, Illinois.

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by President Meyers.

ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Flores Weisskopf, Commissioner Waxman, President Meyers

Absent: Vice President Kaplan

Staff Present: Executive Director McElroy, Director Becker, Director Stumpf, Director Baker, Director Gienger, Director Donahue, Asst. Director Malartsik, Asst. Director Romes, Special Projects Manager Steve Meyer, Associate Project Manager Mary Gardocki and Recording Secretary Jendreas

Guests: Residents Barnett Ruttenberg and Mike Schaffer, Attorney Bill Schur, and Scott Freres of The Lakota Group

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA - None

SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET

Director Becker explained that each fiscal year, the Park District prepares its annual budget for the succeeding year, and sometimes unanticipated events that materially impact the budget occur after it has been approved. When this occurs, it is the District's obligation to prepare and approve a supplemental budget and appropriation ordinance.

If the Board agrees with the proposed revisions, Director Becker said the Public Hearing for the Supplemental B&A Ordinance will be held on February 26, 2013.

Commissioner Bernstein requested that a "fund balance worksheet" be prepared for each of the funds for easier review. Director Becker said he would make these worksheets part of the monthly Treasurer's Report.

President Meyers stated, and all Commissioners concurred, that this item would be placed on the January 22, 2013 Board Meeting Agenda.

CAPITAL PLAN FORMAT

Director Becker stated the Capital Plan for Fiscal Year 2013 was presented to the Board on December 6, 2012. The Board supported the plan, but suggested that a more useful way of viewing the document would be to separate those items which are essentially maintenance related, such as vehicle replacement, from items that occur very infrequently. Director Becker revised the Capital Plan using a different format and all Commissioners were in agreement that it was now easier to understand.

Commissioner Bernstein had questions on the actual Plan. President Meyers explained that this agenda item related to format only and previous discussion had taken place on the actual Plan. He suggested that Commissioners contact Ms. McElroy with any further questions before the next Regular Board Meeting.

NOVEMBER TREASURER REPORT

Director Becker reported that revenues at Sunset Valley Golf Course have continued to increase over the prior year due to above average weather conditions. He gave a brief review of the funds.

Director Becker said that he is continuing to explore different formats for the Treasurer Report to make it more user friendly. Commissioners commented that the current format was fine.

Vice President Kaplan now present at 6:35 p.m.

TRANSFER OF FUNDS

Director Becker explained that due to subsequent events impacting expenditures, staff recognizes that transfer of excess fund balances from the Corporate Fund to Capital Projects will leave the Corporate Fund with inadequate resources to cover those expenditures. As a result, staff is requesting that the Board approve a transfer from the Capital Projects Fund to the Corporate Fund to provide these resources. In accordance with the Illinois Parks Code, this approval is best supported by a resolution.

President Meyers stated, and all Commissioners concurred, that this item would be placed on the January 22, 2013 Board Meeting Agenda.

MILITARY DISCOUNT POLICY

Director McElroy introduced Attorney Bill Schur, Military Liaison for the Village of Highland Park.

Attorney Schur stated his concerns regarding the nature of the Park District's Military Discount Policy. He felt it should be an across the board 15% discount, taken off the resident rate, which would apply to any facility and any application for recreational program, as long as the person or family presents a military ID. This discount would apply to active duty personnel only.

A discussion ensued among Commissioners as to whether this 15% discount should be taken off the resident or non-resident rate. There were also concerns of how many people would take advantage of the discount, what impact this would have on Highland Park residents, and how this would affect the senior programs which are not extended out of the community.

Ms. McElroy said staff would contact the park districts of Lake Forest and Lake Bluff to determine what policies they have in place.

President Meyers commented that the Board is not opposed to supporting active military personnel, but there is a balancing issue which needs to be studied further. This issue will be placed on a future agenda for further discussion.

Attorney Schur exited the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

MASTER PLAN

Ms. McElroy said that Commissioners Bernstein and Flores Weisskopf, along with staff, interviewed consultants for the Park District of Highland Park's Master Plan. The development of this plan is critical for setting direction for the District. She said there were five submittals, three of the firms were interviewed, and it was a unanimous decision to bring The Lakota Group back for a second interview with the Board. She introduced Scott Freres who was present tonight to discuss the process and answer questions.

Mr. Freres explained that The Lakota Group is a full spectrum company that works on national issues as well as local. They have put together a resource team which can address various issues such as engineering, forestry, ecology, real estate, architecture, and budgeting. The process includes: engagement (of the community), analyzing or expectations, and envisioning of ideas. The end result is the action or implementation strategy – how do we make it work. Mr. Freres said that the Master Plan is a living document, which goes from vision to built reality, and needs to be re-visited from time to time.

Commissioners posed questions regarding such issues as timeframe of the project, concerns of possibly acquiring the Highland Park Country Club, and creative funding examples. There was a question of what projects the District should undertake while the Master Plan is being created, and Mr. Freres said that the District should move forward with whatever is currently planned and this will be incorporated into the Master Plan.

Manager Gardocki, Park District Associate Project Manager, felt that Mr. Freres covered the whole concept. She said the Master Plan process is important and it is about the uniqueness of the agency and what we are trying to deliver to the community.

Mr. Freres exited the meeting at 8:20 p.m.

President Meyers said further discussion on this matter would continue at the end of the meeting.

PARK BENCH DONATION

Steve Meyer, Special Projects Manager, explained that as the District rebuilds and renovates parks and playgrounds and receives requests for new donations, staff has to consider replacement of previously donated items, most notably benches, which have existed beyond their useful life.

Manager Meyer offered three options for consideration when notifying past donors: Park District assumes all cost and replaces the bench, and plaque if necessary, while affixing the current policy to the replacement bench; donor is given the opportunity to renew the donation at the new cost solely at the donors expense in accord with the new policy; donor is given the opportunity to renew the donation at the new cost and with new policy pinned with that expense being shared 50:50 between the donor and the Park District.

After considerable discussion, Commissioners felt that the District should assume all costs for replacement of existing donation benches and renew the donations with the new policy attached. They felt it would create good will and clean up any inconsistencies. An idea was brought up about the possibility of having a memorial plaque, or something similar, at Rosewood Beach, to replace the donor benches.

President Meyers asked Ms. McElroy to prepare a proposal regarding this matter for the next Board Meeting.

OPEN TO PUBLIC TO ADDRESS BOARD – None

MASTER PLAN (continuation)

President Meyers asked Manager Gardocki to state her feelings about The Lakota Group. Manager Gardocki said she felt Mr. Freres gave a fresh perspective. She said it is about process and the end product. They have an understanding of complex issues and have the resources that are needed for gathering information and putting it together to get to an end product.

Commissioner Bernstein expressed his concerns with the fact that The Lakota Group has never done a system-wide, park district comprehensive global plan. He felt that they excelled at community forums, but was not sure about their ability to address financial aspects. After tonight's presentation, his concerns were relieved. He also stated The Lakota Group has an outstanding reputation.

President Meyers asked Commissioners if they were in favor of directing staff to negotiate a scope of work contract and fee with The Lakota Group. All Commissioners said they were in favor.

CLOSED SESSION

Motion was made by Commissioner Flores Weisskopf, seconded by Vice President Kaplan, to adjourn into Closed Session for discussion of Section 2(c)(1) – the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline of the District including legal counsel for the District; Section 2(c)5 –

the purchase or lease of real estate including discussion on whether a certain parcel of property should be acquired; Section 2(c)6 – the setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the District; Section 2(c)11 – litigation against or on behalf of the District or where the District finds that an action is probable or imminent; Section 2(c)21 – the discussion of minutes lawfully closed under the Act, whether for the purposes of approval of said minutes or for conducting the semi-annual review of the minutes as set forth in Section 2.06 of the Act; Section 2(c)29 – for discussions between internal or external auditors and the Board.

Roll Call:

Aye: Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Flores Weisskopf, Commissioner Waxman, Vice President Kaplan, President Meyers

Nay: None

Absent: None

Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned into Closed Session at 9:10 p.m.

The Board reconvened from Closed Session at 10:00 p.m. Motion by Commissioner Waxman, seconded by Commissioner Flores Weisskopf, and approved by unanimous voice vote.

President Meyers reported that the Board met in Closed Session under Section 2(c)(1) – the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline of the District including legal counsel for the District; Section 2(c)5 – the purchase or lease of real estate including discussion on whether a certain parcel of property should be acquired; Section 2(c)6 – the setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the District; Section 2(c)11 – litigation against or on behalf of the District or where the District finds that an action is probable or imminent; Section 2(c)21 – the discussion of minutes lawfully closed under the Act, whether for the purposes of approval of said minutes or for conducting the semi-annual review of the minutes as set forth in Section 2.06 of the Act; Section 2(c)29 – for discussions between internal or external auditors and the Board.

No action needs to be taken.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Waxman, seconded by Commissioner Kaplan, and approved by unanimous voice vote. The Board Meeting adjourned at 10:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Liza McElroy
Secretary