

**PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
MINUTES OF WORKSHOP MEETING  
OCTOBER 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 6:03 p.m. by President Meyers.

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Flores Weisskopf, Commissioner Ruttenberg, Vice President Kaplan, President Meyers

**Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** Executive Director McElroy, Director Becker, Director Stumpf, Director Baker, Director Behlow, Director Donahue, Asst. Director Malartsik, Asst. Director Romes, and Recording Secretary Jendreas

**Guests:** Resident Janet Bernstein; Highland Park Councilman Alyssa Knobel; Lake County Tax Extension Supervisor Kipp Wilson; and Paul Weise from SmithgroupJJR.

**ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA**

President Meyers removed *Item XI Closed Session* from the Agenda.

**TAX LEVY PRESENTATION**

Kipp Wilson, Lake County Tax Extension Supervisor, presented an overview regarding declining Equalized Assessed Valuations (EAVs), levy abatement and Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL). He explained why EAV declines and taxes still go up, and commented that PTELL means the same as a tax cap.

Mr. Wilson exited the meeting at 6:37 p.m.

**DEER CREEK CONSTRUCTION UPDATE**

Assistant Director Malartsik provided an update on change orders associated with the Deer Creek construction project. Unanticipated changes included relocating plumbing and electrical, and installing carpet in Lobby area; changes required by the City of Highland Park were a new fire alarm panel, new electrical panel, and new exit sign; and a concrete retaining wall was

needed as part of making the entrance ADA compliant. The project is currently \$15,902.67 over the original project budget of \$400,000.00.

### **NOVA UPDATE**

Director McElroy provided a draft intergovernmental agreement between the Park District and High School District 113 to provide space at the High School for the NOVA Program. The Park District would be acting as an administrative body on behalf of NOVA at the high school. NOVA would provide certificate of insurance, supervision, custodial, and out of pocket costs. The Park District would provide other facilities at no costs and supervision, if not at the high school.

Commissioners had many concerns, and President Meyers directed Director McElroy to contact the Agency's law firm for their determination on the following: Define measurable goals of the program; determine all possible liability and risk; explore all possible conflicts of interest in terms of programming; develop agreement for monetary security for the high school building; level of service must meet Park District standards; and branding needs to be addressed.

There was discussion that NOVA has not secured funding, and Park District staff recommends no additional financial support. It was noted that the City of Highland Park is currently going through its budget process, and Councilman Knobel said they will not have any update on possible funding until November.

### **CENTRAL PARK STAIRS**

Paul Weise, of the design and engineering firm SmithgroupJJR, provided a presentation on the Central Park Bluff Staircase Project, which is now at 80% completion. He highlighted design/construction considerations which were to keep the design airy and light, protect the stability of the bluff, and use sustainable materials where possible which are of minimal maintenance. He noted materials in the design include aluminum grading, weathered steel, stainless steel wire mesh, and wood products for seating.

Commissioners expressed the following concerns about the project: the beach stair landing may cause safety issues with pedestrians present on the beach which is filled with boats and cars moving around, especially on the weekend; current landing at the bottom is next to a trash area; additional vegetation/landscaping may be necessary; consideration of a landing and platform, walking path, or gated area could be solutions; concern about moving plans for landing because of no build zone; concerns about materials and wanting to view other stairways already built using these same materials. Highland Park City Councilman Knobel agreed with concerns explained by the Board.

Park District Staff will meet with City Staff and SmithgroupJJR to resolve the exit and aesthetic issues with the stairs, and will present further options to the Board.

President Meyers announced a short break at 8:08 p.m., and called the meeting back to order at 8:16 p.m.

### **AUDIT MANAGEMENT RESPONSE**

Director Becker explained that the District received a management letter from Ron Amen, Auditor, along with the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the period ending March 31, 2013. This letter is intended to point out potential deficiencies within the organization, and to make the District aware of any new pronouncements by the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB).

Staff believes that the District will not be subject to GASB 61, as it has no component units, but will meet with its auditors to verify. The management letter commented about expenditures in excess of budget in both the Debt Service Fund and the Special Recreation Fund. Director Becker explained that the Debt Service Fund had two unanticipated debt issuances: an Advanced Refunding of the District's 2004/2005 Debt, and an issuance to replenish District reserves after it paid off its Unfunded Accrued Actuarial Liability with IMRF. The excess over budget in the Special Revenue Fund reflects a change in accounting policy at the District.

### **REVIEW OF VOUCHERS**

The vouchers were reviewed and there were no comments or questions.

President Meyers asked Director McElroy to prepare a detailed project list, with timeline, for the next Workshop Meeting.

There was discussion regarding how to handle removal of approximately 15 dedicated benches at Rosewood Beach, and staff will draft an appropriate letter notifying donors.

### **OPEN TO PUBLIC TO ADDRESS BOARD** - None

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, a motion was made by Commissioner Bernstein, seconded by Vice President Kaplan, and approved by unanimous voice vote. The Board Meeting adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Liza McElroy, Secretary