

**MINUTES OF A THE FACILITY & RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK
HELD ON JULY 20, 2022 5:03 PM**

Present: Commissioner Bernstein, Vice President Freeman, President Grossberg

Commissioner Ruttenberg and Commissioner Kaplan participated by electronic means

Absent: None

Also, Present: Executive Director Romes; Director Voss; Director Carr; Director Gogola; Assistant Director Murrin, Assistant Director Maliszewski, Manager Schwartz; Manager Sassorossi; Coordinator Hejnowski

Guest Speakers:

Additions to the Agenda

None.

Approval of the Facility and Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes from June 15, 2022

The minutes from the June 15, 2022 Facility and Recreation Committee Minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

2022 Heller Nature Center Exhibition Fabrication and Installation Bid

Manager Reyes reported that the Park District of Highland Park received two (2) sealed bids on Wednesday, June 8, 2022, for materials and labor to complete the 2022 Heller Nature Center Exhibition Fabrication and Installation Project. Heller’s exhibit was originally installed in 2006 and has suffered damage and wear and tear. In addition to repairs being made to existing elements, Heller will be adding an educational mural around the existing aquarium, an interactive food chain panel, a hands-on learning table, and covert our existing vernal pond exhibit to a static educational panel and change our Prairie root exhibit to become more interactive. The intent of the project is to enhance the patron experience, educate the community on natural areas, and to encourage patrons to take what they’ve learned inside and apply it to their hike through the Heller Nature Center grounds. Heller Nature Center has increased revenue in the past two years and continues to see an increase in daily visitors. The exhibit is a beloved space to all who come as it’s an environment to explore, learn and appreciate the natural world.

Staff budgeted \$55,378 for this project. The low bidder was Wilderness Graphics Inc. This contractor has favorable references working with nature centers, state organizations, and conservation districts. The bid from Wilderness Graphics Inc. is \$36,565.86 over budget. The budget overage is due to a significant increase in materials costs, such as lumber and acrylic.

If approved by the Park Board of Commissioners the project is scheduled to take place from July 18 through October 3, 2022.

President Grossberg would like to know if there are any donations available to help support the project.

Manager Reyes reported that the Nature Center received two donations.

Commissioner Ruttenberg would like to know the repairs included in the cost of the bid.

Manager Reyes reported some of the fiberglass needs to be repaired and resealed, foliage needs to be replaced on the landscaping mold, and alike.

Commissioner Bernstein requested that Committee Meetings be held at other facilities so the Park Board could tour those facilities.

Staff received consensus from the Facility and Recreation Committee to place the total base bid from Wilderness Graphics, Inc. in the amount of \$91,943.86 on the consent agenda at the July 27 Regular Board Meeting.

Centennial Ice Arena Update

Director Smith reported that at the June 22 Finance Committee Meeting, staff reported that the ice rink at Centennial Ice Arena has been experiencing some issues. Staff has been working with the engineering firm that designed the new compressor system to attempt to resolve these issues. Once the ice was removed this June, further issues were found. Staff recommended that a formal, independent engineering assessment be conducted before the ice rink reopens for use. At the June 29 Regular Meeting, the Park Board of Commissioners approved a contract with Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates to investigate the issue and determine the cause, risk, and potential solutions. He introduced Dunja Vla from Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates (WJE) to present.

The facility was constructed in 1972. In 2020, the ice rink slab was replaced with improved installation, and a heating and drainage system was installed. Since then significant heaving occurred, so WJE Engineering conducted an investigation as to what damage has occurred and why it occurred. No structural damages were found during the investigation; however, it was determined that voids between the installation and the ice rink slab, and improper water drainage caused the heaving. An elevation survey confirmed that the ice rink surface is uneven, and there is a difference in elevation ranging from 4-6 inches from east to west. Furthermore, the team found a presence of glycol, so a pressure test needs to be conducted to see if the heating system under the rink is operational.

If the heating system is operational the Park District can place heating strips on the perimeter of the ice, install a heating mat under the ice rink, place sub-pumps in the trench, install a drainage mat along the

west wall, and seal the cracks and voids with expandable foam for a short-term solution to improve drainage.

If the heating system is not operational, the Park District will need to remove and replace the existing system and explore long-term solutions.

Executive Director Romes reported that the short-term repairs do not fully address the elevation issues, so the surface of the ice-skating slab will not be leveled.

Commissioner Bernstein if any of the items from the 2020 replacement are still under warranty and if staff has notified the contractor.

Executive Director Romes reported that the contractor was contacted less than a year after the 2020 replacement and installation. The contractor reported that the heaving is due to permafrost. There was no investigation, their conclusion was based on observation.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if the investigation report from WJE Engineering was shared with the contractor.

Executive Director Romes reported that the contractor has not received the findings from the investigative report as it was shared with staff moments before this meeting.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if staff has communication pieces ready to inform user groups and the community.

Executive Director Romes reported that user groups were notified to find alternative ice time, however, there is a slight possibility that the rink may be operational to users' groups in September. Staff are working with consultants to determine whether the elevation change is safe for use, should the short-term repairs be a viable option.

Commissioner Bernstein requested that updated be shared promptly with the Park Board of Commissioners and the District's Legal Counsel.

Commissioner Ruttenberg would like a complete analysis including costs before making any decisions. He also requested a copy of tonight's report from WJE Engineering.

West Ridge Park and Site Project Update

Manager Schwartz reported that at the Regular Meeting on February 23, 2022, the Park District Board of Commissioners approved authorization to enter into a professional services agreement with Holabird and Root for conceptual planning and with Gilbane Construction Company for preliminary pre-construction services. The project team has been meeting weekly since March.

Holabird and Root are wrapping up the visioning/strategic plan services and site selection services. This step is intended to confirm and validate the project approach prior to the design phase. To address these sections the Holabird and Root team has met with staff and board to understand program needs, reviewed the Districts existing plans, and analyzed the site to understand efficient and buildable areas of the West Ridge site. The deliverable at the end of this phase will be a program book that reports Holabird and Roots findings to guide the design process. The program book will include site planning, program needs, spatial needs, and desired program adjacencies. From this effort, the team will determine the expected size of the building based on need and from that the anticipated massing of the building (scale, size, and placement in relation to the site).

Manager Schwartz reported that staff are considering bringing a working draft of the program document as Gilbane is working through pricing, staff reviews the program book and layout, and before the community at a neighborhood meeting on August 4. Staff would like Holabird and Root to present a Program Book to the Park Board on August 17. Staff will present a proposal for the next phase from Holabird and Root and Gilbane at the August Finance Committee Meeting. Staff will request the Park Board to consider approval of a design contract with Holabird and Root and a construction contract with Gilbane at the August 24 Regular Board Meeting.

Commissioner Ruttenberg would like the Program Book presented to the Park Board before hosting a neighborhood meeting. He is opposed to the proposed timeline.

President Grossberg would like to know if and when the proposed sequencing was used to construct current parks or facilities.

Manager Schwartz reported that the goal of the community meeting is to better understand the community concerns if the new location was constructed on the same site or a new location.

Commissioner Kaplan requested that staff put together a detailed report listing what they would like to present to the public at the neighborhood meeting to the Park Board so that the Board can decide when to have the community meeting.

Executive Director Romes reported that staff will request Holabird and Root to put together an agenda/presentation for the proposed community meeting so it can be shared with the Park Board, so they may decide when to schedule a community meeting.

Commissioner Kaplan would like the Board to have input before the community, supporting Commissioner Ruttenberg's recommendation.

President Grossberg requested that the report from Holabird and Root be shared via email with the Park Board. They will provide feedback to Executive Director Romes.

Other Business

None.

Open to the Public to Address the Board

None.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxanne Hejnowski

Roxanne Hejnowski, Assistant Secretary