

**PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF WORKSHOP MEETING
DECEMBER 6, 2023**

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

A motion was made by Vice President Freeman and seconded by Commissioner Ruttenberg to allow Commissioner Kaplan to participate in tonight's meeting by electronic means.

Roll Call:

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

Nay: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: Commissioner Kaplan

Staff Present: Executive Director Romes; Deputy Director Carr; Director Smith; Director Peters; Director Voss; Director Gogola; Director Hall; Director Baird; Assistant Director Acevedo; Assistant Director Reyes; Manager Kutscheid; Manager Schwartz; Manager Pierce; Coordinator Hejnowski

Guest Speakers: None

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

None.

CONSIDERATION TO APPROVE A RESTRICTED DONOR AGREEMENT WITH RON SASLOW FOR THE ENTERPRISE PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT PLAN AT 2205 SKOKIE VALLEY ROAD (LOT 3)

Executive Director Romes reported staff are not requesting approval of the Restricted Donor Agreement since the terms, conditions, and costs are still being negotiated. Staff anticipates the final draft of the donor agreement will be submitted to the Park Board of Commissioners for review before staff requests approval of the donor agreement at the December 13, 2023 Regular Meeting.

2024 LICENSE AGREEMENT WITH THE NORTH SHORE YACHT CLUB

Manager Pierce reported that the annual License Agreement between the Park District of Highland Park and the North Shore Yacht Club (NSYC) expires on December 31, 2023. Park District staff met with the NSYC Commadore to review renewal terms. No notable changes were made to the 2024 License Agreement terms, fees, maintenance schedule, and the general rules and regulation for licensed facilities. Additionally, she reminded the Park Board of Commissioners that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was developed in 2021 and approved by the Park Board of Commissioners to provide a framework and expectations regarding the NSYC commitment of contributing \$200,000 over the term of 20 years to support the breakwater and boat ramp replacement project at Park Avenue Boating Facility. The North Shore Yacht Club is up to date with their \$10,000 annual contributions over the twenty-year term.

Staff recommends the 2024 License Agreement be approved by the Park Board of Commissioners at the December 13, 2023 Regular Meeting.

The Park Board of Commissioners recommends placing this item on the consent agenda at the December 13, 2023 Regular Meeting.

CONSTRUCTION PROJECT UPDATES

A. Park Avenue North Project

Manager Kutscheid reported that the design layout plans of the site, furniture, pergola and fencing options, and boardwalk materials were shared with the community and the Park Avenue Working. He shared feedback from the community and the Park Avenue Working Group with the Park Board of Commissioners.

Staff hope to bid the project out in February 2024, construction is expected to commence in the Summer and anticipated to be completed in the Fall.

Commissioner Ruttenberg would like staff to reevaluate parking operations suggesting the permit restrictions should be lifted so more people can access the site and utilize the proposed amenities.

Commissioner Bernstein would like staff to follow up with engineers to determine if a revetment is needed to protect the proposed amenities, structures, and parking lot during high lake levels. He requested that the engineers present their findings and recommendations at a future meeting.

Commissioner Bernstein requested that staff share renderings with the Park Board of Commissioners when readily available.

B. New Community Center at West Ridge Park

Manager Schwartz reviewed the adjacency diagram which covers program uses for the new building and site goals. She reviewed the preferred master plan for the site. She is pleased to report the project is still on track. Staff and Holabird and Root are working towards developing refinements which can be shared with the community.

C. Port Clinton and Old Elm Park Playground projects

Manager Schwartz reported that In April, the District hired Teska and Associates to design Old Elm and Port Clinton's playground replacements. Over the summer, the District sent out preliminary engagement surveys to residents within half a mile of each playground to collect feedback about preferred playground equipment and other park specific design elements. Feedback collected was given to Teska to begin design work. PDHP worked with Teska to further refine the designs. Next week, staff would like to hold two community meetings to share the new playground layouts and to collect community feedback on the proposed playground equipment options. Feedback will then be incorporated into final designs, and the projects will be bid out in January 2024. Construction is anticipated for Summer 2024.

Teska developed two site layouts for each park which were shared with the Park Board of Commissioners and the community. She shared community feedback.

Staff are meeting with the Design Team tomorrow to discuss next steps.

D. The Preserve of Highland Park Compton Avenue Trail Connection Update

Director Voss reported that part of the Intergovernmental Agreement between the Park District of Highland Park, City of Highland Park, and Lake County Forest Preserves includes, the Park District constructing a trail connection from the Preserve to Half Day Road along Compton Avenue.

The Hidden Oak Development, consisting of ten new homes, is currently being constructed at the corner of Livingston Street and Compton Avenue, adjacent to the Preserve of Highland Park. As part of this project, a sidewalk is being constructed to provide pedestrian access from the development to Half Day Road. As a result, the Park District's only obligation is to reconstruct a section of trail at the Preserve of Highland Park and connect it to this new sidewalk.

The Park District has a bid opening on December 19, 2023. Staff will review the bid openings at the January Finance Committee, staff will request bid approval at the January Regular Meeting. Construction is anticipated to begin in May of 2024 with a project completion in July of 2024.

2024 INDEPENDENCE DAY PLANNING UPDATE

Executive Director Romes reported that the City of Highland Park and the Park District of Highland Park have been meeting to discuss events planned for July 4, 2024. Traditionally the City of Highland Park orchestrates the parade and the evening events at Wolters Field, and the Park District orchestrates the mid-day events at Sunset Woods Park. The City of Highland Park and the Park District are discussing working together to host an evening event, which kicks off with a parade, followed by a festival in Sunset Woods Park, and concludes with a drone show (in lieu of fireworks).

Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Ruttenberg, and Vice President Freeman are opposed to a combined evening event. They recommend the Park District stick to offering a midday event (Fourth Fest) and let the City of Highland Park orchestrate the parade and evening event.

Executive Director Romes will share the Park Board of Commissioners feedback with City Officials.

REVIEW OF VOUCHERS

Director Peters reported the only remarkable items was a check for Absolute Home Improvements for districtwide signage installation, \$13,000 check covering annual maintenance for the clay courts, and a member contribution check from the Park District to Northern Suburban Special Recreation Association (NSSRA).

Commissioner Bernstein requested that staff revisit the annual maintenance fee for clay courts when discussing the master plan for racquet sports.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

None.

CLOSED SESSION

A motion was made by Commissioner Ruttenberg, seconded by Vice President 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; Section 2(c) 11 – litigation against or on behalf of the District or where the District finds that an action is probable or imminent;

Roll Call:

Aye: Commissioner Bernstein; Commissioner Rутtenberg, Vice President Freeman, President Grossberg

Nay: None

Absent: Commissioner Kaplan

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

The meeting adjourned into Closed Session at 7:30 p.m.

The meeting reconvened into Open Session at 8:07 p.m.

Action From Closed Session If Any

President Grossberg 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; Section 2(c) 11 – litigation against or on behalf of the District or where the District finds that an action is probable or imminent;

No action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Rутtenberg and seconded by Commissioner Kaplan and approved by a unanimous vote. The Board Meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxanne Hejnowski

Roxanne Hejnowski, Assistant Secretary