

**PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF WORKSHOP MEETING
FEBRUARY 14, 2024**

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m. President Grossberg.

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 Schwartz;

Guest Speakers: None

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Executive Director Romes requested he would like to provided a brief update regarding potential revisions for the Full-Time and Part-Time Employee Personnel Policy manuals under Other Business.

PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

None.

2024 ADA ACCESSIBILITY AUDIT AND TRANSITION PLAN

Manager Schwartz reported that the Park District of Highland Park is committed to inclusion and providing equal public recreation opportunities in the most integrated setting to individuals with disabilities, as defined under applicable law. This includes complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Illinois Human Rights Act (IHRA), and all other applicable local, state, and federal laws.

As a Distinguished Accredited Agency with IAPD, The Park District of Highland Park regularly reviews and updates an ADA Transition Plan annually. This Plan identifies physical obstacles to accessibility, describes the methods to be used to make facilities accessible; provides a recommended schedule for making the access modifications; and a yearly schedule for making the modifications. At least every 5 years the Park Board will formally review the plan and at least every 10 years the Park Board will formally approve the Park District ADA Transition Plan. Consistent with this practice, the Park District will hire a consulting firm to conduct a comprehensive access audit to ADA compliance and overall inclusive access at all facilities and parks.

The Park District has budgeted funds in 2024 to complete an ADA Access Audit and update the Park District's ADA Access Transition Plan. The Park District's most recently reviewed this plan with the Park

Board in 2019 and an ADA audit was last completed in 2010 by Recreation Accessibility Consultants. The Park District sought a proposal for the 2024 Audit from the same consulting group which is now referred to as the Accessibility Practice of the WT Group. The project team has extensive experience with Park District's in the region and experience with accessibility, particularly as it relates to recreational facilities. Staff will provide a project overview and review the proposal which includes an audit, site reports, transition plan, community and staff engagement facilitation, and a final report. The proposed scope also follows Distinguished Accreditation standard requirements.

There is \$68,000 in the capital budget for this project. The Proposal from WT Group came in at \$54,790, \$13,210 under budget.

President Grossberg would like to know how many hours this audit and transition takes to perform. What is the per hour rate for this work?

Manager Schwartz reported that she does not have that information on hand, so staff will follow up to provide the requested information to the Park Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if WT Group will review plans for current renovations, such as the renovations at Park Avenue Beach. Manager Schwartz reported that WT Group can review plans. Additionally, Executive Director Romes noted that permitting for all projects are going to require ADA compliance.

Vice President Freeman would like to know what districts do an evaluation of programming. Her and Commissioner Ruttenberg recommends a broader look, beyond just facility requirements to understand programming and is it meeting needs.

Staff received consensus from the Park Board of Commissioners to place the 2024 ADA Accessibility Audit and Transition Plan Proposal from WT Group on the consent agenda at the February 28, 2024 Regular Meeting.

CONSTRUCTION PROJECT UPDATES

A. Sunset Woods Park Improvements project

Executive Director Romes reminded the Park Board of Commissioner's approved a Design Agreement with Lamar Johnson Collaborative for improvements to Sunset Woods Park, consistent with and Illinois Department of Natural Resource (IDNR) OSLAD Grant Aware. The Project is based on a concept plan in the Sunset Woods Master Plan. Before beginning schematic design, Architects at LJC will be confirming the plan vision by holding meetings with key stakeholders.

A Neighborhood Stakeholder Meeting will be held tomorrow, Thursday, February 15, 2024, at 5:00pm at the Sunset Woods Field House with neighbors that live directly adjacent to the park. At this meeting,

LJC will explain the project scope and will facilitate a conversation about cares and concerns as we kick off design.

An Open House Public Meeting will be held on February 21, 2024, from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. at the Highland Park Police Station, which will be open to the entire community.

REVIEW OF VOUCHERS

Director Peters reported the only remarkable items was a check to Holabird and Root Architects for \$81,000 for the new community center at West Ridge Park, a check for \$199,000 to PDRMA for employee health insurance, and lastly, there was a \$117,000 check to Stuckey Construction for the Hidden Creek AquaPark water park deck.

OTHER BUSINESS

Executive Director Romes reported that as part of the Park District’s Annual Work Plan, staff intends to conduct a full review of the Park District’s Full Time and Part Time Employee Policy Manuals. This review will include Legal compliance and industry best practice including consistency with our values and diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

At the February 28, 2024 Regular Meeting of the Park Board staff will be requesting approval for four (4) new policies that are required for compliance with new legislation. Additionally, staff would like to adopt a new wellness policy and add the Park District Values to the PT and FT Employee Personnel Policy Manuals. As a Park District whose Mission is to enrich community life, we know that community and employee wellness is already a priority and is reflected in various policies in the employee manuals and park district policy manual, we feel an employee wellness policy will formally commit our efforts to provide opportunities, activities and resources that support physical, emotional, and mental well-being. Additionally, although the agency is already embedding our Values into our organizational practices and procedures, staff feel that formally including these in our employee manuals emphasizes our commitment to being a Welcoming, Caring, and Extraordinary Organization.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

None.

CLOSED SESSION

A motion was made by Vice President Freeman, seconded by Commissioner Ruttenberg 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)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)12: the establishment of reserves or settlement of claims as provided in the Local Governmental and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act, if otherwise the disposition of a claim or potential claim might be prejudiced, or the review or discussion of claims, loss or risk management information, records, data, advice or communications from or with respect to any insurer of the public body

or any intergovernmental risk management association or self insurance pool of which the public body is a member;

Roll Call:

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

Nay: None

Absent: Commissioner Kaplan

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

The meeting adjourned into Closed Session at 6:28 p.m.

The meeting reconvened into Open Session at 7:25 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)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)12: the establishment of reserves or settlement of claims as provided in the Local Governmental and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act, if otherwise the disposition of a claim or potential claim might be prejudiced, or the review or discussion of claims, loss or risk management information, records, data, advice or communications from or with respect to any insurer of the public body or any intergovernmental risk management association or self insurance pool of which the public body is a member;

No action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Ruttenberg and seconded by Commissioner Bernstein and approved by a unanimous vote. The Board Meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxanne Hejnowski

Roxanne Hejnowski, Assistant Secretary