

**PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 28, 2024**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 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; Assistant Director Reyes; Assistant Director Acevedo; Superintendent/Manager Ochs; Manager Meredith; Coordinator Hejnowski

Guest Speakers: None

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

None.

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Ruttenberg, seconded by Vice President Freeman to approve the Minutes January 10, 2024 Workshop Meeting, the Minutes January 17, 2024 Facility and Recreation Committee Meeting, the Minutes January 31, 2024 Regular Meeting, Policy 7.14 Social Media Policy to the Policy Manual, Adding the Mission, Vision, Values Statements to the Full-Time/Part-Time Personnel Policy Manuals, Changes to Policy 4.3 Access to Personnel Files to the Full-Time/Part-Time Personnel Policy Manuals, Changes to Policy 8.5 Bereavement Leave Full-Time Personnel Policy Manual, Policy 8.11 Wellness Policy to the Part-Time Personnel Policy Manual, Policy 8.15 Wellness Policy to the Full-Time Personnel Policy Manual, Changes to Policy 10.3 Illinois Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA) to the Full-Time/Part-Time Personnel Policy Manuals, Changes to Policy 10.7 Blood Donation Leave to the Full-Time Personnel Policy Manual, the Emergency Evacuation Agreement North Shore School District 112, the 2024 Park Avenue Dredging Project Bid, the 2024 ADA Accessibility Audit and Transition Plan, and Bills and Payroll in the amount of \$1,994,154.33

Roll Call:

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

Nay: None

Absent: Commissioner Kaplan

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

FINANCIAL FORECASTS AND TREASURER’S REPORT

Operations (General and Recreation Funds) Budget vs. Actual

Director Peters shared the end-of-year projections and actual figures as of January 31, 2024. She is pleased to report that Actual Revenues exceeded budgeted revenues by almost \$500,000. Actual Expenses were less than budgeted by \$375,000, for a year-to-date surplus of almost \$900,000.

Conclusion

The following Park District programs and facilities are performing better than budget: dance exceeded the budget by \$39,000, tennis exceeded the budgeted by \$92,000, and interest income exceeded budget by \$93,000.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Lot 3 Paddle Facility Update

Director Baird reported that staff are working with Sourcewell, a Cooperative Purchasing Advantage, to replace the dome located on Lot 3. Sourcewell’s analysts streamline the procurement process by developing Request for Proposals (RFP’s) for national, competitive solicitations that meet or exceed local requirements. Sourcewell’s rigorous process is continually refined to best meet the needs of participating agencies and allows them to offer exceptional products from nationally acclaimed suppliers.

The proposed supplier through Sourcewell is Air Structures American Technologies, INC (ASATI). They have over 60years of successful business. ASATI has been directly involved in developing the technical specifications for air structures and constructing sports domes for Harvard University, Rutgers University, Alabama University, Columbia University, Texas Tech University, The University of Illinois, several State Universities of New York, and eleven NFL football practice facilities: the Philadelphia Eagles, Denver Broncos, Seattle Seahawks, Chicago Bears, New York Giants, New York Jets, Minnesota Vikings, Miami Dolphins, and Washington Redskins.

The new dome structure includes a state-of-the-art full-bias cable net system, ensuring a substantial advancement in safety and durability of the structure. The distinctive feature of this system is its ability to evenly distribute the fabric load across the entire structure, resulting in a remarkable 25-30x increase in the safety factor. The selection of the heaviest fabric, averaging 32 ounces, underscores the commitment to optimal structural capabilities, enhancing durability and resistance to wear and tear.

This innovative cable system gives air structures the ability to withstand extreme environmental conditions such as heavy winds up to 150 miles per hour and will support up to 50lbs of roof snow load.

He shared images of the conceptual floor plan, showcasing the number of courts.

Thanks to Sourcewell's discount pricing, the Park District is able to save \$43,886 to replace the dome. The total cost from ASATI is \$1.4 million.

To date staff has completed the preliminary proforma, the Lot 3 Amendment between the City of Highland Park and the Park District was approved, the Park Board of Commissioners approved the Donation and Reservation Agreement from Ronald Saslow, staff submitted the Design Review Commission Application, staff received the final proposal for the dome, staff received a proposal from architects and civil engineers for the new structure.

On March 19, 2024, Staff and ASATI will be attending the Design and Review Commission meeting with the City of Highland Park. On March 20, 2024, staff will be requesting the Park Board of Commissioners approve the dome contract with ASATI at the Regular Meeting of the Park Board. Installation is anticipated for the fall.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Parks Foundation

Vice President Freeman reported that members are busy preparing and selling tickets for the 2024 Parks Foundation Champions Gala and Charity Auction. The event will be held at Sunset Ridge Country Club in Northfield on Saturday, April 13, 2024, from 6:30 – 9:00 p.m. She is pleased to report the guest speaker is 12-year Chicago Bears Linebacker and Seve-Time Pro Bowler, Lance Briggs.

B. Board Committee Updates

Executive Director Romes reported that at the February 14, 2024 Facility and Recreation Committee Meeting Architects Holabird and Root reviewed the schematic design for the New Community Center at West Ridge Park. The schematic design includes two key elements, the development of the site master plan and how the new building correlates to the site. The plan will be shared with W.B. Olsen so that they can generate cost estimates.

At the February 15, 2024 Finance Committee Meeting staff reviewed the 2023-Year End financial figures the general, recreation, special recreation, and capital funds and the cost centers.

Staff reviewed the Capital Plan Ten-Year Funding Model.

Staff reviewed the 2023 fourth quarter financials for the Recreation Center of Highland Park.

C. Heller Nature Center and Rosewood Interpretive Center Annual Report

Manager Meredith reviewed the number of users and visitations to the Heller Nature Center and the Rosewood Interpretive Center in 2023. She compared the 2022 to 2023 program and camp participant utilization and revenues for the Heller Nature Center. The team’s course was utilized by 62 groups in 2023 which resulted in a 31% increase in revenue from the previous year. Additionally, lots of new events were launched in 2023 to continue with the Park District’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives which helped to bring in more than 936 people to community events. Heller Events included Enchanted Forest, Fishing Derby, and Break Cabin Fever. She concluded the report with a five-year financial analysis for the Heller Nature Center and the Rosewood Interpretive Center.

D. Directors Report

Executive Director Romes reviewed upcoming Special Events highlighting Cosmic Skate, Neon Night, on Friday March 1, from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m., Family Skate Night with your favorite movie characters such as Nemo, Sully, Minions, and Princesses on Friday, March 9, from 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. and Swiftie Skate Night on Friday, March 15 from 6:00 -7:30 p.m. where you can dress in your favorite era, bring a friendship bracelet to trade, listen to Taylor Swift music all night long, make friendship bracelets, and take photos! Also, there is a Women in the Woods with Wine Friday, March 8, from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. at Heller Nature Center to celebrate International Women’s Day with speaker Anna Marcolin: Psychotherapist and Life Coach as well as like-minded women, surrounded by nature. Delve into the transformative world of mindfulness, mental health, and the profound impact of nature on our well-being with Anna’s presentation “Embracing Mindfulness and Nature: A Journey to Enhanced Mental Health for Women”.

E. Board Comments

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

None.

CLOSED SESSION

A motion was made by Commissioner Bernstein, 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 6:59 p.m.

The meeting reconvened into Open Session at 7:20 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.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bernstein and seconded by Vice President Freeman to approve the Executive Director's Compensation effective January 1, 2024.

Roll Call:

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

Nay: None

Absent: Commissioner Kaplan

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Ruttenberg and seconded by Commissioner Bernstein and approved by a unanimous vote. The Board Meeting adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxanne Hejnowski
Roxanne Hejnowski, Assistant Secretary