

**PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF WORKSHOP MEETING
APRIL 09, 2025**

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. President Bernstein.

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: Commissioner Ruttenberg

Staff Present: Executive Director Romes; Director Smith; Director Voss; Director Peters; Director Hall; Manager Schwartz, Manager Kutscheid, Coordinator Hejnowski

Guest Speakers: John N. McGovern, JD, Accessibility Practice Principal-in-Charge and Tatum N. Storey, MSW, Principal – Operations

Commissioner Ruttenberg joined the meeting at 6:05 p.m.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

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.

At least every 10 years The Park District of Highland Park conducts an ADA audit of all facilities and parks, and the Park Board formally adopts an ADA Transition Plan. 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 entire plan. The Park District also reviews the ADA Transition Plan annually to incorporate improvement projects into the annual and 5-year capital plan.

On February 28, 2024, the Park Board of Commissioners approved a professional services agreement with WT Group to conduct the 2024 ADA Accessibility Audit and development of an updated Transition Plan.

WT has since completed the transition plan which identifies physical barriers at Park District parks and facilities. WT has also completed a program and policy review that offers recommendations to improve accessibility to Park District programs.

Mr. McGovern, WT Group, reviewed the ADA mandates for new and existing parks and facilities, programs and public-facing policies, and community engagement. The scope of work includes audits and community engagement, staff interviews regarding programs & policies, and updated transition plan with priorities, and staff training events. The audit process includes BlueDAG app, the 2018 IAC, 2010 federal Standards, smart practices, and simple tools.

Mrs. Storey, WT Group, reported that the community engagement process is required in Transition Plan development. Two community engagement methods were utilized, in-person and stand-alone meetings, complemented by a survey. The goal of community engagement is to determine if Park District of Highland Park residents have access preferences or priorities for order of retrofit. Overall, community engagement had a modest impact on WT Group's recommendation.

The Transition Plan must identify every deficit at every site, propose a treatment or solution for each, establish a phase or schedule for solution, and identify Park District employee responsible for transition plan implementation, include cost references for planning purposes, establishes retrofit priorities based on making Park District of Highland Park opportunities available, treat unique sites differently than recurring assets such as playgrounds and sports fields, and include ongoing tasks for the Park District of Highland Park sites.

Mr. McGovern, WT Group, reported that the plan has a three-phased approach, and recommendations should be completed over thirteen (13) fiscal years. Phase one (four fiscal years), phase two (two fiscal years), phase three (seven fiscal years).

Lastly, Mr. McGovern, WT Group, reported that the Park District should brag about success stories and meet with communities of people with disabilities, make access compliance the number one discussion after a new site idea gets the green light, make all design and construction comply with IAC 2018 and Federal requirements, and exceed the minimum requirements.

MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Executive Director Romes reported that the Park Board of Commissioners approved a professional services agreement with The Lakota Group to complete and revised master plan. The Park District is working with aQuity to conduct a community wide attitude and interest survey, and Berry Dunn to conduct a recreation services assessment. This is a three-phased approach: 1.) engagement 2.) analysis 3.) planning. An online community idea board is available on the park district website. A community survey will be released to the community in May. Members of the public provided input with staff about the master plan at the Egg Hunts on April 05, 2025. There will be additional in-person input opportunities at pop-up events.

PDHP POLICY MANUAL AND ORDINANCE UPDATE

Executive Director Romes reported that in accordance with Policy 1.00 from the PDHP Policy Manual, the entire manual containing Board approved policies shall be reviewed in its entirety every five (5) years. The current Policy Manual was reviewed and approved in 2019. Staff reviewed the policy manual in 2024, made changes to the manual in its entirety and all draft policies have been reviewed by legal counsel, Ancel Glink, to ensure up-to-date compliance with the Park District Code.

Staff have begun meeting with Park Board Policy liaisons and have reviewed Chapters 1 and 2 to date. Traditionally, liaisons would review the entire Policy Manual before reviewing with the entire Park Board and requesting approval, However, since Chapters 1 and 2 specifically address the purpose of the Policy

Manual, and specific board related policies, and since we have 2 incoming Park Board Commissioners in May, staff are recommending that the current Park Board review and approve Chapters 1 and 2 prior to onboarding new commissioners, and prior to their oath of office to ensure a smooth transition. The April 09, 2025 Workshop packet included the updated policies. Executive Director Romes reviewed a summary of proposed policy changes.

In addition to review and approval of these policies, legal counsel recommended the development of an ordinance to establish a schedule for declaring park board vacancy based on absences to support policy 2.01 Organization and Operation of the Board of Park Commissioners. Executive Director Romes reviewed the ordinance drafted by Park District's legal counsel.

APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 2025-06 AUTHORIZING THE RENAMING OF THE RECREATION CENTER OF HIGHLAND PARK TO PARK FITNESS

Executive Director Romes reported that as part of the Park District's on-going branding initiatives to align with the evolving needs and demographics of our community and the overall fitness industry-- staff was tasked to develop a new brand name for the Recreation Center of Highland Park.

The goal of the new brand name would be to provide a new fresh interpretation and potential for the Recreation Center of Highland Park as well as provide the Park District with the opportunity to build stronger connections to our residents, customers, and potential customers. Staff recommends re-naming the Recreation Center of Highland Park to Park Fitness. A verbal presentation of the recommended Recreation Center re-naming was made by Director Gogola at the April 24, 2024, Board of Park Commissioners Workshop Meeting. The recommendation has sat for 60 days in accordance with Park District Policy 4.02 "Naming or Renaming Parks, Buildings and Facilities".

A motion was made by Commissioner Labrador and seconded by Commissioner Ruttenberg to approve Ordinance 2025-06 to rename the Recreation Center of Highland Park to Park Fitness.

Roll Call:

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

Nay: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

APPROVAL OF THE 2025 CENTENNIAL ICE ARENA ROOF TOP UNIT REPLACEMENT BID

Director Smith reported that the Park District of Highland Park received eight sealed bids on April 2, 2025, for the 2025 Centennial Ice Arena Roof Top Unit Replacement. The scope of this project is to replace a heating unit that has reached its useful life. Installation is scheduled to occur between June 23, 2025, and July 9, 2025. The lowest bidder was Element Contracting, LLC. This contractor had favorable references. There is \$45,000 in the capital budget. Element Contracting, LLC. Bid is \$446.68 over budget.

A motion was made by Commissioner Labrador and seconded by Commissioner Ruttenberg to approve Total Base Bid from Element Contracting, LLC for the 2025 Centennial Ice Arena Roof Top Unit Replacement and authorize the Executive Director to enter into an agreement in the amount of \$45,446.68.

Roll Call:

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

Nay: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

RECIPROCAL AGREEMENT WITH GLENCOE PARK DISTRICT

Executive Director Romes reported that staff are recommending a Reciprocal Residency-Benefit Agreement between the Park District of Highland Park and the Glencoe Park District. The agreement will allow residents of both districts to access resident rates and registration benefits for specified programs and services.

Glencoe Residents will receive Resident rates on standard Club Pickle & Padel memberships at the Park District of Highland Park and Resident rates on aquatic swim lesson programs at the Park District of Highland Park.

Highland Park Residents will receive Resident rates on outdoor ice utilization at the Glencoe Park District's Weinberg Family Recreation Center, including season passes and daily admissions.

The agreement will be effective from May 1, 2025, to April 30, 2026, and will be reviewed annually for potential renewal. Both districts will track participation and collaborate on marketing efforts to promote the reciprocal benefits to residents.

Additional Terms include proof of Residency: Residents must provide approved documentation to be eligible for resident rates; Review and Renewal: The agreement will be reviewed annually, and it cannot be canceled before Labor Day unless justified by cause; and Operational Terms: Both districts will bear their own risk in the operation of their respective programs, and no residents will have independent rights to enforce the terms of this agreement.

This partnership will provide increased access to programming for residents in both communities, and we are excited about the potential positive impact. We look forward to the board's approval of this agreement.

CONSTRUCTION PROJECT UPDATES

A. New Facility and Site Improvements at West Ridge Park

Manager Schwartz reported that the construction trailer is on site, fencing is installed, the south parking lot is restriped, and signs are displaying the temporary traffic pattern during construction. She shared demolition images and videos.

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B. Club Pickle and Padel Facility Project

Director Smith reported that the new transformer and entryway have been installed. The fabric for the dome structure has been laid and attached to anchors. The dome structure will be inflated next week. Lastly, the Illinois Department of Public Health verbally approved the plumbing variance request to support restrooms in an air-supported structure.

C. Park Avenue South Boat Storage Restoration Project

Director Smith shared aerial images of the south boat storage lot. Demolition is complete and a crane is on-site drilling sheet piles. Project is anticipated to be completed in late April.

D. Park Avenue Boating Facility North Beach Improvements Project

Manager Kutscheid provided a quick review of the site masterplan. The parking lot has been laid and striped, the pedestrian pathways, asphalt sidewalk and wooden boardwalk have been laid, and stone planters are complete. Landscaping is near completion. Project is anticipated to be completed in late April.

E. Old Elm Playground Renovation Project

Manager Kutscheid reported that the main play structure has been replaced, and curbing is complete. Project is anticipated to be completed in late April.

F. Sunset Woods Park Improvements Project

Manager Kutscheid provided a quick reminder of the overall project. The multiuse court surfacing has been placed, the bowl has been graded for the skate park, and structures have been installed for the skate park and wheel friendly plaza. Construction is anticipated to be completed in late April.

G. Larry Fink Park Tot Lot Renovation Project

Manager Kutscheid reported that the tot lot play structure is being replaced, ADA accessible seating is being installed, and pedestrian pathways are being repaved for improved ADA accessibility.

H. Lincoln Park Improvements Project

Manager Kutscheid reported that the 5-12 year old playground is being relocated and replaced, a 2-5 year old play structure is being installed, the half size basketball court is being replaced with a full-sized basketball court, the 60' baseball field is being replaced, a grass practice field is being installed, a soccer field is being installed, and a ¼ mile loop trail path is being replaced. Lastly, the entry columns from Lincoln School have been donated and will be installed at the park entrance.

REVIEW OF VOUCHERS

Commissioner Ruttenberg reported that he reviewed the vouchers and found no discrepancies.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

None.

CLOSED SESSION

A motion was made by Commissioner Labrador, seconded by Commissioner Ruttenberg to go into closed session pursuant to Section 2(c)5: the purchase or lease of real estate including discussion on whether a

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certain parcel of property should be acquired; 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 Labrador, Commissioner Ruttenberg, Commissioner Grossberg, Vice President Freeman, President Bernstein

Nay: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

The meeting adjourned into Closed Session at 7:57 p.m.

The meeting was reconvened into Open Session at 8:56 p.m.

ACTION FROM CLOSED SESSION IF ANY

President Bernstein reported that no action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Labrador and seconded by Commissioner Grossberg and approved by a unanimous vote. The Board Meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxanne Hejnowski

Roxanne Hejnowski, Assistant Secretary