

**PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 23, 2022**

Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of the Park District of Highland Park held on February 23, 2022. Pursuant to Section 7(e) of the Open Meetings Act, The President of the Board of Park Commissioners has made a finding that it is not practical or prudent to hold in person meetings because of the COVID-19 public health emergency. Neither the elected officials nor the public will be allowed to attend Regular or Committee Meetings in person but will participate virtually. Links to the virtual meeting can be found on the Park District website <https://www.pdhp.org/government/board-of-park-commissioners-meetings/>

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by President Ruttenberg.

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: None.

Staff Present: Executive Director Romes; Director Smith; Director Voss; Director Peters; Director Gogola; Director Carr; Assistant Director Maliszewski; Assistant Director Murrin; General Manager/Superintendent of Golf Operations Ochs; Manager Johnson; Manager Schwartz; 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 Vice President Grossberg, seconded by Commissioner Kaplan, to approve the Minutes from the January 11, 2022 Workshop Meeting; the Minutes from the January 26, 2022 Regular Board Meeting; the Revised Full Time Staff Salary Schedule in the Compensation Plan; Approval to Authorize the Professional Services Agreement with Holabird and Root; Resolution 2022-01 Authorizing the Purchase of Electricity for Park District Facilities and Meters and Authorizing the Director to Approve a Contract with the Lowest Cost Electricity Provider For a Period up to 3 years; Resolution 2022-02 Authorizing a Sole Source Contract for Procurement of the Centennial Ice Arena Zamboni Replacement; Resolution 2022-03 Authorizing an Increase in the Budgeted Year-End Fund Transfer Amounts; Ordinance 2022-03 Authorizing and Providing for the Conveyance or Sale of Surplus Personal Property; Bills and Payroll in the amount of \$1,957,967.62.

Roll Call:

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

Nay: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

FINANCIAL FORECASTS AND TREASURER'S REPORT

Operations (General and Recreation Funds) Budget vs. Actual

Director Peters reported that actual revenue surpassed the budgeted amount by \$375,869. Concurrently, actual expenses were \$20,583 less than budgeted. Overall, the Park District had a \$396,452 surplus as of January 31, 2022. When compared to the three-year average, the Park District has a \$456,780 surplus.

Conclusion

As of January 31, 2022, West Ridge Center has a \$97,000 surplus due to child enrichment programs, Centennial Ice Arena has a \$60,000 surplus due to skating school and gymnastics programming as each had over 100 participants, and Athletics has an \$18,000 surplus due to travel baseball and basketball for grades 3 and 4 having more enrollment. Lastly, there is a \$21,000 savings in salaries and wages due to open positions. At the end of January, the District is in a very favorable position.

Vice President Grossberg requested Manager Nichols provide a presentation of ParkSchool and recreation programs since these programs are in high demand and helping contribute to the surplus of revenue.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. 2022 Highland Park Strings Stipend Request

Director Carr reported that at the December 16, 2021 Park Board Regular Meeting, the Board of Commissioners approved an Agreement with the Highland Park Strings per the District's Affiliate and Sponsored Group Policy. The agreement did not include a financial stipend as in years past but did continue to provide free and reduced facility space and in-kind professional and administrative services.

At the request of the Park Board, Highland Park Strings founder, Larry Block, attended the January 11 Park Board Workshop Meeting to provide a short presentation regarding the organization's history, impact on the community, and request for a \$15,000 financial stipend from the Park District in support of providing services to the community.

He requested that the Park Board of Commissioners consider a Motion to amend the currently approved 2022 Highland Park Strings Agreement to include a financial stipend.

Commissioner Kaplan and Commissioner Freeman are opposed to providing a financial stipend to the Highland Park Strings. They favor other services outlined in the affiliate agreement.

Vice President Grossberg, President Ruttenberg, and Commissioner Bernstein would like to provide a \$10,000 financial stipend for one year.

Vice President Grossberg and President Ruttenberg requested that staff work directly with the Strings during the 2022 year to determine ways to utilize the Park District resources and relationships to help identify funding possibilities and/or help reduce some of the expenses for the Strings. Furthermore, Vice President Grossberg offered his time to help be a liaison this year to assist in the achievement of those goals.

A motion was made by Vice President Grossberg, seconded by Commissioner Bernstein, to approve to amend the 2022 Highland Park Strings Agreement to include a \$10,000 financial stipend for one year.

Roll Call:

Aye: Commissioner Bernstein, Vice President Grossberg, President Ruttenberg

Nay: Commissioner Kaplan, Commissioner Freeman

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

NEW BUSINESS

A. Parks Foundation

Vice President Grossberg reported that the President of the Foundation noted that the community group surpassed the \$300,000 mark for the lakefront effort and is now approaching \$370,000. Over 600 separate people have provided support for the project.

Vice President Grossberg reported that the Michael Goldman Golf Scholarship has not received any applications for the program this year. Looking for different outreach ways to try to find people to fill slots. Talking about a 2022-2023 strategic plan that echoes the model that is used at the Park District. They are starting elections and appointments to the Board. Creating a calendar and honing down projects that the Foundation wants to tackle, so rather than doing six small projects, two to three larger projects. There is talk about a single-day pickleball tournament or large golf outing but there are financial challenges. Thinking about having a revamped championship banquet but might look at something

different than has been done in the past. Starting to do a major gift strategy to try to get larger donors to contribute this coming year.

Director of Communications Liz Gogola plugged Sunset Woods Park Playground seating area brick sales. Currently are 19 bricks short of the goal of \$25,000. Bricks can be purchased online on the Park District website for \$200.

B. Director's Report

Executive Director Romes reported that Assistant Director Chris Maliszewski and Athletic Director Mike DiVincenzo are leading an effort with a group of parents who are calling themselves the Athletic Boosters and working with Parks Foundation of Highland Park. The group met, along with Commissioner Bernstein and Commissioner Freeman, to talk about a fundraising effort to carry forward some specific projects that are outlined in District's Athletic Field Management Plan. They are an extremely dedicated group of parents, coaches, etc. and are dedicated to fundraising up to \$1 million to do a renovation at Larry Fink Memorial Park with new artificial field turf that can be used for all age groups. Would be one step forward at looking at all of the improvements that are noted in the District's Athletic Field Master Plan.

Executive Director Romes reported that staff tentatively have Thursday, June 2 from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. reserved for a VIP event for the grand opening of the Preserve of Highland Park followed by a daytime public event on Saturday, June 4.

The Park Board will follow up with Executive Director Romes regarding availability.

Additionally, staff tentatively have Saturday, June 11 reserved for a daytime public event for the grand opening of the Sunset Woods Park Playground.

The Park Board will follow up with Executive Director Romes regarding availability.

Recreation Center has new membership options along with new spin bikes.

As for upcoming meetings, Executive Director Romes reported that there is a Facility and Recreation Committee at 5:00 p.m. on March 9. The Workshop Meeting will immediately follow. There is a Lakefront, Parks, and Natural Areas Committee Meeting at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 16. The Finance Committee Meeting will immediately follow. There is a Regular Board Meeting on Wednesday, March 30 at 6:00 p.m.

C. Board Comments

None.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

None.

CLOSED SESSION

A motion was made by Commissioner Kaplan and seconded by Vice President Grossberg 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.

Roll Call:

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

Nay: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

Meeting was adjourned into closed session at 6:36 p.m.

Meeting was reconvened into open session at 7:49 p.m.

ACTION FROM CLOSED SESSION IF ANY

President Ruttenberg reported that the Board 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.

No action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Bernstein and seconded by Commissioner Kaplan and approved by a unanimous vote. The Board Meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxanne Hejnowski

Roxanne Hejnowski, Assistant Secretary