

**PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 30, 2022**

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

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: None.

Staff Present: Executive Director Romes; Director Smith; Director Voss; Director Peters; Director Gogola; Director Kopka; Assistant Director Maliszewski; Assistant Director Murrin; Manager Johnson; Coordinator Hejnowski

Guest Speakers: None.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

None.

CLOSED SESSION

A motion was made by Commissioner Freeman 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 Freeman, Commissioner Kaplan, Vice President Grossberg, President Ruttenberg

Nay: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

Meeting was adjourned into closed session at 6:04 p.m.

Meeting was reconvened into open session at 6:22 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.

CONSENT AGENDA

President Ruttenberg requested that item F, Approval of Professional Services Agreement with Gewalt Hamilton Associates for Renovations to Larry Fink Baseball Field, be moved to Unfinished Business.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kaplan, seconded by Vice President Grossberg to approve the Minutes from the February 9, 2022 Workshop Meeting, the Minutes from the February 23, 2022 Policy Committee Meeting, the Minutes from the February 23, 2022 Regular Board Meeting, the Illinois Mutual Retirement Fund (IMRF) Authorized Agent Appointment to Christine Rohr Kopka and Supporting Resolution, the Dynegy Electric Service Agreement bid via Northern Illinois Municipal Electric Collaborative (NIMEC), the 2022 Preserve Ecological Management Bid, and Bills and Payroll in the amount of \$1,541,839.35

Roll Call:

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

Nay: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

FINANCIAL FORECASTS AND TREASURER'S REPORT

Director Peters is pleased to report that President Ruttenberg, along with the rest of the Park Board of Commissioners, and the District received the award of Financial Reporting Achievement of Excellence from the Government Finance Officers Association.

Operations (General and Recreation Funds) Budget vs. Actual

Director Peters reported that as of February 28, 2022, the Park District revenues are trending higher than budgeted. Likewise, expenses are less than budgeted, so the Park District has a year-to-date net difference of \$703,610.91. When compared to the three-year average, the District has a \$458,223.06 surplus.

Conclusion

As of February 28, 2022, West Ridge Center has a \$96,000 surplus due to early childhood enrichment programs, Centennial Ice Arena has a \$57,000 surplus, both gymnastics and ice programs surpassed budgeted enrollment figures by 100 participants, Athletics has a \$24,000 surplus due to travel baseball, Aquatics has a \$10,000 surplus due to swim lessons, and Recreation has a \$6,000 surplus due to open gym usage. Lastly, there is a \$178,000 savings in salaries and wages due to open positions, and \$37,000 savings from replacement taxes. Overall, the District has a \$400,000 surplus.

President Ruttenberg would like to know what a replacement tax is.

Director Peters reported that the Illinois constitution was re-written and passed in 1979 so that local governments could no longer impose or issue taxes on corporations, partnerships, and other business entities, that would fall under our domain in Highland Park. As a result, corporations pay a 2.5% replacement tax, Partnerships Trust Corporations pays a 1.5% replacement tax, and public utilities pay a 0.8% replacement tax on their Illinois income. Those replacement taxes are reallocated and distributed to local government entities.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Approval of Professional Services Agreement with Gewalt Hamilton Associates for Renovations to Larry Fink Baseball Field

Assistant Director Maliszewski provided an update on the Sports Field Master Plan to the Lakefront, Parks, and Natural Areas Committee on March 16, 2022. The update included a presentation of past Sports Field Master Planning efforts which began in 2018 identifying drainage, amenities, maintenance, complex infrastructure, and field playability as established priorities and a three-scenario approach, maintaining current infrastructure, implementing field-turf, and land acquisition to address those priorities. As a result, the Athletic Booster Club was created to enhance the experience for players and spectators by investing in the growth and development of Park District athletic facilities to better serve our community and attract new families to the area by raising funds to improve fields and ball diamonds. The Athletic Booster Club is working with the Parks Foundation of Highland Park and raise funds for the renovation project at Larry Fink Baseball Field.

Staff solicited Gewalt Hamilton Associates to put together a proposal for engineering and professional services including the installation of a synthetic turf field, improving drainage, laying a warning track and a removable outfield fence, enhancements to the bleachers and dugout, extending the concrete pad,

and developing a gathering space for spectators and media for \$84,900. The proposed schedule: schematic design occurs in May of 2022, geotechnical investigation/topography occurs in July 2022, design engineering in November of 2022, and permitting in December 2022. Bid out the project in April of 2023, award a contract in May of 2023, construction begins in July of 2023, substantial complete in October of 2023, the opening day would be April of 2024. The estimated timeline for planning, design, and permitting would begin in May of 2022, construction in July 2023, with an estimated completion of April 2024.

Commissioner Kaplan would like to know what the Park Board is being asked to approve this evening.

Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that staff are requesting approval from the Park Board permitting authorization for the Executive Director to enter into a professional services agreement with Gewalt Hamilton Associates to begin the planning, design, and permitting process. The schematic design will help fundraising efforts.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if irrigation is included in the plan.

Director Voss reported that irrigation is included in the form of sprinklers.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if the outfield fence could be installed in the flood plain.

Mr. Rychlik, Senior Engineer at Gewalt Hamilton Associates, reported that fixed features can be installed in a flood plain so long as they are outside of the floodway. However, Staff are proposing a free-standing fence, so there is no need for concern.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if the field turf is in the floodway.

Mr. Rychlik reported that none of the proposed fixtures are in the floodway. The difference between a floodway and a flood plain is that; the floodway is the channel in which the river flows when an area is flooded. The flood plain is the projection of crest and surges.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if the rubber materials used for the turf would negatively affect the flood plain.

Mr. Rychlik reported that several turf options can be installed on a flood plain. The rubber materials in the turf will not negatively affect the flood plain or end up in the river after severe storms.

Vice President Grossberg would like to confirm that there are options that do not contain carcinogens.

Mr. Rychlik reported that several turf options do not contain carcinogens.

Vice President Grossberg requested that the Park Board have these studies readily available to provide to sister governments to prove that the turf being installed is safe and will not negatively impact the flood plain, channel, or river.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if water drains through field turf.

Mr. Rychlik reported that much like permeable pavement water drains through field turf.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if this will improve drainage.

Mr. Rychlik reported that it will improve the drainage without affecting the flood plain.

President Ruttenberg would like to know if the scoreboard will be enhanced.

Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that the scoreboard will be replaced if the Athletic Booster Club is able to raise extra funds.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bernstein, seconded by Commissioner Kaplan, to approve authorization for the Executive Director to enter into a professional services agreement with Gewalt Hamilton Associates for renovations to Larry Fink Baseball Field in the amount of \$84,900.

Roll Call:

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

Nay: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

B. Approval of the 2022 Hidden Creek AquaPark Pool Shell Replacement Bid

Executive Director Romes reported that the District did not receive any bids for this project. This project will be re-bid in the Fall. Even though the pool shell has met its useful life, it will be safe for use this summer.

C. Approval of the Executive Director's Compensation

A motion was made by Commissioner Kaplan, seconded by Commissioner Freeman to approve the Executive Director's salary increase of 3% retroactive to January 1, 2022 to \$154,500.

Roll Call:

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

Nay: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

D. Approval of the Highland Park Giants CIA Locker Room License Agreement

Executive Director Romes asked if the Park Board of Commissioners has any questions regarding the license agreement.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if use of the licensed premises is included in the updated agreement.

Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that use of the licensed premise is on page 7 of the agreement.

President Ruttenberg requested that facility rules and regulations be included in the agreement.

Executive Director Romes reported that staff will update the agreement to include rules and regulations.

President Ruttenberg would like an initial down payment from the High School.

Commissioner Bernstein reported that the Highland Park Giants provide half the funds upon commencing construction and half upon substantial completion.

The Park Board of Commissioners supported Commissioner Bernstein's recommendation.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bernstein, seconded by Commissioner Kaplan to approve the Highland Park Giants CIA Locker Room License Agreement contingent upon the recommended changes to include rules and regulations and that the Highland Park Giants provide half the funds upon commencing construction and half upon substantial completion.

Roll Call:

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

Nay: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

NEW BUSINESS

A. Parks Foundation

Director Gogola reported that the Foundation amended its by-laws increasing the maximum number of Foundation members from 8 to 11. Additional members will help Board keep pace with the growth the Foundation has experienced over the past year. 3 new members will be considered for a vote to join the Board at the Annual Meeting in April. They are organizing their fundraising efforts into 2 buckets, separating fundraising campaigns for scholarships and fundraising campaigns to support Park District projects, such as the Park Avenue Breakwater and Boat Launch and the renovation of Larry Fink baseball field. Overall, their goal for 2022 is to raise \$50,000 outside of scholarships and campaigns for PDHP projects. They are working with the Non-Profit Coach to achieve this goal and identify donors.

B. Board Committee Updates

At the March 9 Facility and Recreation Committee Meeting, staff provided a capital planning update for the Recreation Center of Highland Park, reporting that since costs are increasing due to inflation, staff provided a phased recommended approach to address 2022 and 2023 capital projects at the RCHP. In 2022 the carpet and lockers will be replaced since these amenities have met their useful life. In 2023, staff will identify and improve areas to support utility savings and green initiatives while replacing tile and lighting fixtures and repainting. Staff will revisit the reconfiguration of the locker room and family changing area. The Committee supported staff's phased recommended approach.

Woodhouse Tinucci Architects presented two exterior concepts for the entry renovation, addressing function, operations, and long-term maintenance for the Centennial Ice Arena Building and Site Renovation Project. The first concept, new fascia, retains the vestibule with the glass box concept while replacing as much fascia as possible in the first phase and then planning for future work of replacing fascia. This could be completed in phases. The second option, a new fascia with a large canopy, the existing eifs fascia will be replaced with a metal screen. The Committee supports the second option, a new fascia with a large canopy.

At the March 16 Lakefront, Parks, and Natural Areas Committee Meeting staff provided an update on the Sports Field Master which Assistant Director Maliszewski provided follow-up this evening. Additionally, staff provided an update on the Moroney Park Playground Project reporting that the Weil Tot Lot playground at Moroney Park is identified in the Park District's Capital Plan and scheduled for replacement in 2022/2023. Based on 130 survey responses from the community, 70% of respondents support the Park District's consideration to explore relocation of the playground. Four options were presented, which includes an equipment replacement with ADA access, moving the tot lot to the north lot, expanding the existing playground footprint, and lastly, moving both playgrounds (2-5yrs and 5-12yrs) to the north. If approved construction would occur in March of 2023. The Committee supported replacing existing equipment. Anything beyond that, the Parks Foundation will need to raise funds.

At the March 16 Finance Committee Meeting staff provided a review of the Five-Year Capital Plan sharing the current Year-End Projection for all 2022 projects and highlighting how the cost increase in the Centennial Ice Arena Facility Renovation Project impacts the overall plan. The contribution from the Highland Park Giants has reduced the overall cost of the facility renovations at Centennial Ice Arena. Additionally, staff provided a review of the Ten-Year Funding Model and how staff plans to fast-track the completion goal for the athletic field renovation supported by the Athletic Booster Club at Larry Fink, reporting that \$1million would be pulled from 2025 and transferred into 2023 capital projects.

C. Director's Report

Executive Director Romes shared a list of upcoming events including the IJGA Tournament and Mad Hatter Tea Party this Saturday, April 2. The tournament is an 18-hole Individual Stroke Play Event with four divisions within the event: Sr. Boys (16-18), Jr. Boys (14-15), Sr. Girls (16-18), and Jr. Girls (14-15). The field of 72 players are competing for player of the year points. This will be the 3rd year that SVGC is hosting the tournament. The tea party is from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at West Ridge Center, where children will hop through our Spring Garden Storywalk and photo stations as you make your way into the Bunny Hut where you will find a delicious breakfast with Highland Park's favorite fluffy friend. On Saturday, April 9, staff are hosting a Doggie Egg Hunt, from 9:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m. and the wonderland Egg Hunt from 10:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. at West Ridge Center. Your dog will sniff out eggs that are filled with treats special for pups! All dogs must remain on a leash for the entire event, be at least 4 months old, and wear a current rabies tag. After the event make sure to grab a picture with the Easter Bunny! Whereas the Wonderland Egg Hunt features scenes and characters from Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and over 60,000 plastic eggs filled with treats, the Wonderland Egg Hunt is family fun for children and their parents. This event for families is free, however, registration is required.

Summer Pass sales go on sale this week, which include lakefront parking decals for Rosewood and Park Avenue season or annual storage, season launch passes, and parking decals.

D. Board Comments

Commissioner Freeman has assumed the role of liaison to the Parks Foundation. Vice President Grossberg is no longer the liaison.

Commissioner Bernstein reported that he and several other Board Members received emails regarding NSSD112 potential sale of excess surplus property, specifically Olsen Park. He would like to know if the District has anything to add in response to those emails.

Executive Director Romes reported that he has received those same emails. The Park District does not own those properties, but the District does own the adjacent properties. There has not been any business conducted in regards to those properties. He personally has responded to emails from the community regarding their concerns.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Councilwoman Lidawer

1707 St. Johns Avenue, Highland Park

The City of Highland Park does not own the properties which NSSD112 may sell. Likewise, the City Manager has responded to emails from the community regarding their concerns.

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; Section 2(c)5 – the purchase or lease of real estate including discussion on whether a certain parcel of property should be acquired.

Roll Call:

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

Nay: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

Regular Board Meeting Minutes
March 30, 2022

Meeting was adjourned into closed session at 7:14 p.m.

Meeting was reconvened into open session at 7:43 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; Section 2(c)5 – the purchase or lease of real estate including discussion on whether a certain parcel of property should be acquired.

No action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Kaplan and seconded by Commissioner Freeman and approved by a unanimous vote. The Board Meeting adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxanne Hejnowski

Roxanne Hejnowski, Assistant Secretary