

**PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 29, 2022**

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. Vice President Freeman.

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: President Grossberg

Staff Present: Executive Director Romes; Director Smith; Director Voss; Director Peters;
Director Carr; Director Kopka; Assistant Director Maliszewski; Manager Nichols;
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 Bernstein, seconded by Commissioner Ruttenberg to approve the Minutes from the May 18, 2022 Workshop Meeting, the Minutes from the May 25, 2022 Annual Meeting, the Minutes from the May 25, 2022 Regular Board Meeting, the Park Avenue Beach and Boating Facility Site Master Plan Report, the Interstate Gas Supply, Inc. Natural Gas Service Agreement bid via Alternative Utility Services, Inc. (AUS Energy), the Direct Energy Business Marketing, LLC Natural Gas Service Agreement bid via Alternative Utility Services, Inc. (AUS Energy), Authorization for the Park District of Highland Park to Enroll in and Purchase from the Joint Purchasing Program NCPA (National Cooperative Purchasing Alliance), and Bills and Payroll in the amount of \$2,483,672.86

Roll Call:

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

Nay: None

Absent: President Grossberg

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

FINANCIAL FORECASTS AND TREASURER'S REPORT

Operations (General and Recreation Funds) Budget vs. Actual

Director Peters reported that as of May 31, 2022, actual revenues are exceeding budgeted revenue by \$678,000 and actual expenses are \$1.1 million less than budgeted for a year-to-date net difference of \$1.8 million. When compared to the pre-COVID years (2017-2019), the District has a \$262,595.94 surplus.

Conclusion

In May of 2022, Park District programs and facilities are performing better than budgeted, \$500,000 of the operating surplus is due to timing differences, and the Park District has a \$1.3 million surplus thanks to \$59,000 from West Ridge Center which is primarily due to early childhood programming revenues, \$89,000 from Centennial Ice Arena since both gymnastics and ice programming surpassed budgeted enrollment figures by 100 participants each, \$249,000 from Tennis which is due to the 400 additional participants, \$24,000 from Aquatics, \$49,000 from Athletics, and \$69,000 from Sunset Valley Golf Club Recreation. Lastly, there is a \$628,000 savings in salaries and wages due to open positions, as well as correlating insurance and retirement. Overall, the Park District is in a very favorable position at the end of May.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Centennial Ice Arena Update

As staff reported at the Finance Committee Meeting last week, the ice rink at Centennial Ice Arena has been experiencing some issues for the past 9 months or so. Over the span of that time, we have been working with the Mechanical Engineer (IB Story) who designed the new compressor system that was installed in 2020. IB Story has been on site several times over the past 9 months, including this past May, after we removed the ice from the rink. Generally speaking, IB Story provided an opinion that the issue we were experiencing would in a sense “self-correct” itself.

After the ice was removed from the rink, we also removed portions of the flooring and visually noticed cracks in the concrete foundation. We then had the General Contractor who installed the compressor in 2020 out for a site visit. It was the opinion of our General Contractor that the floor had heaved.

At this time Staff believes is essential to investigate the issues at the Centennial Ice Rink, including the cause, risks, and potential solutions. As a matter of safety, this investigation must occur before the ice rink reopens for use.

As such, we met with Wiss, Janney, Elstner and Associates Engineering (WJE), whom we have worked with in the past, and is a highly recommended firm to conduct an investigation as to what damage has occurred, why it occurred, and potential solutions exist to repair the issues.

To note, WJE has been asked to provide an opinion on a short-term repair that will allow the park district to safely operate the ice rink this August. The Park Board was sent a copy of this proposal this afternoon, and a hard copy of the proposal is before you now.

The proposal cost is \$38,700, this permits WJE Engineering to review existing construction documents, conduct a field investigation and exploratory openings, test soil samples, conduct an elevation survey and structural analysis, to submit a report to the Park District summarizing their findings of cause,

propose options for repairs (Short term and Long Term) with consideration given to having ice in August 2022.

If the proposal is approved, the anticipated schedule is to disconnect and drain the current ice mat on July 5. Staff is meeting with a contractor tomorrow morning to discuss having this completed so that field testing and the investigation can commence on July 6. The initial assessment and potential repair options (short term vs. long term) will be submitted to staff on July 14.

The next steps would be to determine if the short-term repair is possible to open in August 2022. If so, staff and the Park Board will determine the scope and the contractor to perform the work, complete the final report and consider long-term repair options, and finally, select, and complete construction documents for a long-term repair option.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to push back the Workshop Meeting or hold an Emergency Meeting so that the assessment from WJE Engineering can be presented during that meeting.

Commissioner Ruttenberg would like WJE Engineering to assess the entire building, not just the ice rink.

Vice President Freeman would like to know the extent of the soil treatment WJE Engineering will conduct.

Executive Director Romes reported that this assessment includes three soil borings.

Commissioner Ruttenberg is not in favor of fixing the ice rink if the building is no longer viable.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kaplan and seconded by Commissioner Bernstein to authorize the Executive Director to enter into an agreement with WJE Engineering in the amount of \$38,700 to complete the investigation of the heaved ice-skating rink slab at Centennial Ice Arena.

Roll Call:

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

Nay: None

Absent: President Grossberg

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

NEW BUSINESS

A. Parks Foundation

Executive Director Romes provided an update on Fourth Fest, noting that the Foundation will have a beverage tent at Fourth Fest. They will be selling water, pop, and sports drinks at prices of \$2 and \$3. Net proceeds will go to the general fund of the Foundation. The Foundation will hold a pickleball tournament on Saturday, August 6 as a fundraiser for the Foundation. Net proceeds will go to the Foundation's general fund. The Champion's banquet is scheduled for some time in October, depending upon the availability of the guest speaker. This is a Foundation fundraiser for its SMILE fund. The Foundation also says it has found a venue but is presently unnamed. A VIP beach party at Park Avenue will be held from 4 – 7 pm. Guest includes elected officials, Foundation staff, Park Ave donors, etc. There will be tours (by land and water), food, and beverages with guest speakers. The Foundation unanimously approved donating \$400,000 to PDHP for the Park Ave breakwater and boat launch ramp. Additional funds are being held as donations are still being collected. A final donation will be made in December to help pay for ancillary items at the site. Lastly, the Foundation is taking advantage of a complimentary table at the Farmers Market in Highland Park a few times over the summer to disseminate information about the Foundation and collect donations.

B. Adopting a Proclamation for the Designation of July as Parks and Recreation Month

Executive Romes reported that this July, the National Recreation and Parks Association and its Agency Members, including the Park District of Highland Park, are bringing attention to how important it is to rise up and support parks and recreation, because every day, park and recreation professions rise up for our communities in service of equity, climate-readiness, and overall health and well-being.

During Parks and Recreation Month, the Park District will be showcasing the ways in which we faithfully serve our community all year long, as well as how community members can work to support our Mission.

A few examples will include a special email blast on Thursday, June 30 introducing July as Parks & Rec month, a PDHP float with a Parks and Recreation month banner in the Fourth of July parade, and during the month we are compiling and promoting "Park Stories" - impactful stories from residents, staff, Commissioners, Foundation members on how the PDHP has positively impacted their lives, and lastly, a promotion will be on our ParkLine e-newsletter and social media outlets such as Facebook and Instagram.

Vice President Freeman read aloud the Proclamation.

A motion was made by Commissioner Kaplan and seconded by Commissioner Ruttenberg to adopt a Proclamation for the Designation of July as Parks and Recreation Month.

Roll Call:

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

Nay: None

Absent: President Grossberg

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

C. Board Committee Updates

Executive Director Romes reported that at the June 15 Facility and Recreation Committee Meeting Holabird and Root provided a progress update, discussed the next steps, and reviewed the anticipated timeline for the West Ridge Park and Site Project. At the June 22 Lakefront, Parks, and Natural Areas Committee Meeting staff reviewed the proposed improvements from Gewalt Hamilton Associates, the project timeline, and fundraising efforts between the Parks Foundation and the Athletic Boosters to support the renovation of the Fink Park Athletic Field Development and an Engineer from AECOM presented two repair concepts to address the damages along the southeast corner of the South Storage lot at Park Avenue Boating Facility. Lastly, at the June 22 Finance Committee Meeting staff provided an update on the 2022 Capital Plan including a review of year-end projections. Staff also reviewed the 10-Year Funding Model and staff provided a brief update regarding the condition of the ice rink.

D. Summer Camp Updates

Manager Nichols reported that 95 summer camp staff (directors, assistant directors, and counselors) underwent 19 hours of training before the first day of camp. The trainings reviewed safety procedures and first aid, Park District policies and behavior, camp activities, staff expectations, and field trips. Camps are housed at 5 Park District facilities and 4 Highland Park Schools. Of the 35 field trips planned this summer some of the extraordinary visits include a Chicago Dogs and Schaumburg Boomers baseball game, a Chicago Sky Women's basketball game, Whirley Ball, Bowlero, Nickle City, Action Territory, Dave and Busters, Wagner Farm, Lincoln Park Zoo, Six Flags, Sky Zone, Medieval Times, and Santa's Village. She is pleased to report that Directors will be utilizing the SeeSaw platform for camper and parent engagement. Directors will post pictures and send out weekly newsletters and field trip reminders to parents to have immediate access to information.

E. Fourth Fest Update

Manager Nichols shared a map of Sunset Woods Park providing a layout of the activities occurring in the park along with images of the carnival games and a timeline of scheduled events throughout the day and into the evening before the fireworks display. She is pleased to report that the theme this year is "We are all Superheroes" which will be displayed across the parade floats.

Commissioner Ruttenberg would like to know what the maximum capacity is for camps.

Manager Nichols reported that camps are at capacity this year based on staffing, and we have hit our historical averages when comparing enrollment numbers. Due to the different options and offerings, the Park District is always trying to accommodate families.

Vice President Freeman commended Manager Nichols and her staff, her children are in camp, and they love it.

Commissioner Bernstein asked Assistant Director Maliszewski to provide an update of the Firecracker Baseball Tournament.

Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that the tournament was canceled due to low enrollment.

Executive Director Romes reported that unfortunately, the Sunset Woods Playground will not be completed for opening to the public by July 4th. While the pour in place surface is underway, it will not be fully complete and inspected by Monday. While we are all disappointed that the new playgrounds are not yet open. Our crews have been working hard to keep the project moving, but unforeseen challenges and setbacks including weather and equipment delays, unforeseen site conditions, quality control issues with equipment, and a trucker's strike have impacted the overall schedule.

F. Director's Report

Executive Director Romes reported that several other events are occurring this Summer including Unplug Illinois: Nature Playday on Saturday, July 9 from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at the Preserve of Highland Park. This free event encourages participants to unplug and spend the morning playing in nature by catching critters in the pond, hunting for insects, and frolicking. On Sunday, July 17 Hidden Creek AquaPark is hosting a Party on the Lawn from 12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. This is a free event for season pass holders. Regular daily rates apply for non-members. The Family Hoe Down, is Friday, July 22 from 5:30 – 7:30 pm at the Preserve. Families will enjoy games, music, food, and plenty of do si doing for all ages. Lastly, the North Shore Amateur Golf Tournament is on July 27 and 28 at Sunset Valley Club.

Commissioner Bernstein requested a presentation regarding the ability to expand our offering for pickleball at the July 20 Facility and Recreation Committee Meeting. Additionally, he would like the presentation to include revenue.

G. Board Comments

None.

Regular Board Meeting Minutes
June 29, 2022

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

None.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Bernstein and seconded by Vice President freeman and approved by a unanimous vote. The Board Meeting adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxanne Hejnowski

Roxanne Hejnowski, Assistant Secretary