

MINUTES OF A THE FACILITY & RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK HELD ON JANUARY 20, 2022 5:00 PM. 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/PARK-BOARD/MEETINGS/](https://www.pdhp.org/park-board/meetings/)

Present: Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Freeman, President Ruttenberg

Absent: None

Also, Present: Executive Director Romes; Director Smith; Director Voss; Director Peters; Director Carr; Director Gogola; Assistant Director Maliszewski; Assistant Director Murrin; Manager Schwartz; Manager Sassorossi; Manager Ochs; Manager Johnson; Coordinator Hejnowski

Guest Speakers: Mei Zhu, Gewalt Hamilton Associates and Andy Tinucci, Woodhouse Tinucci Architects

Additions to the Agenda

None

Public Comment for Items on the Agenda

David Sogin

1092 Wade Street, Highland Park

He spoke on the repair of the temporary boat ramp at Park Avenue, reporting that over 180 people have contributed towards fundraising efforts for this facility, so the community has surpassed the \$300,000 goal set by the Park District. He asked that the Park Board of Commissioners support and approve the costs for the temporary repair of the boat ramp, as it will help to increase membership sales for the loyalty program. He reminded the Committee of the safety concerns if powerboats cannot launch from the site. Lastly, he reported that the Park District has over a \$5.7 million surplus, and the cost for the repairs are insignificant when compared, so he asked that they support and approve the temporary and permanent repairs needed at the site.

Approval of the Facility Committee Meeting Minutes from December 2, 2021

The minutes from the December 2, 2021 Facility Committee Meeting Minutes were approved.

Approval of the Facility Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes from December 7, 2021

The minutes from the December 7, 2021 Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes were approved.

Centennial Ice Arena Project Update

Manager Schwartz reported that tonight's presentation includes updates pertaining to the exterior site improvements and interior renovations.

Exterior Renovations

Mei Zhu from Gewalt Hamilton Associates reported that there are three major components for exterior site improvements which include the drainage improvements along the backside of the facility and the north parking lot, reconfiguring the drop-off location with a rain garden, and the parking lot improvements to address pedestrian access and lighting concerns. Of the three components, the drainage improvements are the most costly since it is recommended to install additional stormwater piping along the backside of the facility and the north parking lot.

President Ruttenberg would like to know if a retention pond could be constructed along the west side of the facility instead of installing additional piping.

Mrs. Zhu reported that the natural areas along the backside of the facility have been identified as an environmentally sensitive area, so construction cannot occur in that area, which eliminates the possibility for a retention pond. Due to the significant amount of water flow, the retention pond would need to be of significant size so trees in that area would have to be removed if a retention pond were constructed.

President Ruttenberg would like to know if there is an added cost for permeable pavers.

Mrs. Zhu reported that there is an additional cost.

Executive Director Romes reported that staff could get a cost estimate based on the City's required standards for permeable pavers.

President Ruttenberg is concerned that children of all ages are traveling throughout the parking lot, so he wants to make sure there is sufficient lighting to address those safety concerns.

Mrs. Zhu reported there are currently 2 lighting poles in the north lot, and they are recommending that number increase to 7 lighting poles, which meets the standards provided by the City of Highland Park.

Manager Schwartz asked Mrs. Zhu to relay the safety concerns from the Committee to their Lighting Designer and requested that a follow-up analysis be shared with staff so it can be presented to the Committee.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if other water mitigation efforts were explored.

Mrs. Zhu reported that the natural areas behind the facility and the generator are preventing other mitigation efforts.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if the generator could be relocated. If so, he would like to know if that permits other water mitigation efforts aside from installing additional piping.

Mrs. Zhu reported that some trees in that natural area would have to be removed and the ground would have to be excavated, so the cost may be comparable to the recommendation for additional stormwater piping.

Commissioner Bernstein would like a copy of the tree survey conducted along the backside of the facility, along with a list of alternative water mitigation efforts for this area. He is not opposed to additional stormwater piping in the north parking lot, but he would like to discuss alternative mitigation efforts for the backside of the facility.

President Ruttenberg would like to know if the doors along the backside of the facility could be relocated.

Manager Schwartz reported that staff can explore relocation options for the generator and the doors which are near the flood zone.

President Ruttenberg requested that staff think outside of the box and think of all possible alternatives to reduce the costs for the exterior site improvements.

Commissioner Bernstein would like a more robust presentation including exhibits of pedestrian and vehicular traffic flow from the parking lot to the facility at the next meeting.

Interior Renovations

Andy Tinucci of Woodhouse Tinucci Architects shared an image of the existing floor plan and compared it to the new layout. He reported that several iterations for the interior renovations were reviewed with staff, before developing the layout being shared this evening. The new layout includes a shared shower space and single-user restrooms to allow for more cubby space in the four public locker rooms, a new entry experience, an open office space to improve efficiency, a dedicated space for the Highland Park Giants locker room, removal of the concession area to increase viewing into the gymnastics studio, removal of the drop ceiling to brighten the lobby, improvements to the multi-purpose room, and restroom renovations that include a new gender-neutral stall. As a reminder, the ice arena, gymnastics studio, and the mechanical room are excluded from the renovations.

President Ruttenberg would like to know if the offices should be reconfigured so that the managers can oversee all facility operations.

Manager Schwartz reported that the proposed layout was the choice of managers, however, the project team can meet with managers to discuss the proposed concerns.

Mr. Tinucci shared renderings of the proposed entry and vestibule, the lobby, and the front desk area. Additionally, costs have been presented to staff for a mezzanine option, which allows for additional viewing into the gymnastics studio and the ice area, and he shared a rendering of the lobby with a mezzanine.

President Ruttenberg commended Mr. Tinucci, reporting that he is very impressed with the renderings shared this evening.

Commissioner Bernstein appreciates all the efforts that have gone into the interior plans and designs, reporting that the renderings shared this evening are a huge improvement for the facility's interior. He requested that the lobby be filled with TVs and would like to know the purpose of the coach's room.

Manager Sassorossi reported that the coach's room is a dedicated space for figure skaters.

As for the vestibule Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Freeman, and President Ruttenberg are in favor of the extended overhang option.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if the previous maintenance issues have been addressed.

Assistant Director Maliszewski reported that staff has adjusted their maintenance schedule to align with the new mechanicals, so the ice has been shaved and leveled and there have been no further complaints from users.

Project Scope

Manager Schwartz reported that staff received a \$2.2 million estimate in September of 2021. Staff budgeted \$2.1 million for the project, however, the updated estimate received in January of 2022 is \$2.9 million, so the project is \$735,886 over budget. The interior renovations align with the budget; however, the exterior site improvements are coming in over budget, specifically, the drainage improvements are the main component and inflation.

Manager Schwartz shared four project options: All-In, The Base, North Lot As is, or Adjust. The All-In option is \$1.2 million over budget. The Base option is \$740,000 over budget and does not include a mezzanine or a sound system. The North Lot as Is option is \$430,000 over budget and does not include the mezzanine, sound system, repairs to the north parking, and additional light poles. If the Committee would prefer to adjust, staff will work with Gewalt Hamilton Associates and Woodhouse Tinucci Architects to determine where cuts can be made to the scope so that the project stays within budget.

Timeline

Manager Schwartz reported that staff will finalize the scope and any reductions for budget purposes by February 10. Construction documents, value engineering, and the Entitlement Process with the City of Highland Park will be completed in February so that permitting can begin. The bid will be released in April and awarded in May so that construction can begin in June.

President Ruttenberg is opposed to cutting and reducing the scope.

Commissioner Bernstein feels it is impossible to select an option at this point in time. In order to consider going over budget for this project, he requested that the Park Board of Commissioners and staff reexamine the 5-Year Capital Plan to understand the impacts of this project.

Commissioner Freeman, Commissioner Bernstein, and President Ruttenberg are not in favor of the mezzanine option and asked that those costs be removed from the project.

The Committee requested that this project be shared at the next Finance Committee Meeting.

Commissioner Bernstein would like to know if grants have been explored to offset the costs from the drainage improvements.

Mrs. Zhu reported that a grant application was submitted, however, grant dollars were not awarded.

Open to the Public to Address the Board

Councilwoman Lidawer

1707 St. Johns Avenue, Highland Park

She asked that staff follow up with City Manager Neukirch regarding permeable pavers and exterior lighting for the parking lot.

Other Business

Executive Director Romes requested that West Ridge Park Site and Building Update be added as an additional item to the January 20, 2022 Finance Committee Meeting.

The Committee approved moving West Ridge Park Site and Building Update to the January 20, 2022 Finance Committee Meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Roxanne Hejnowski

Roxanne Hejnowski, Assistant Secretary