

**PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 20, 2024**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. President Bernstein.

ROLL CALL

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

Absent: None

Staff Present: Executive Director Romes; Deputy Director Carr; Director Peters; Director Smith, Director Peters, Director Gogola, Director Voss, Manager Pierce, Manager Hartnett, Supervisor Yakimisky, Coordinator Hejnowski

Guest Speakers: None

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS ON AGENDA

None.

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Vice President Freeman, seconded by Commissioner Ruttenberg to approve the Minutes October 16, 2024 Workshop Meeting, Minutes October 22, 2024 Finance Committee Meeting, Minutes October 23, 2024 Policy Committee Meeting, Minutes October 23, 2024 Facility and Recreation Committee Meeting, Minutes October 30, 2024 Regular Meeting, 2025 Board Meeting Calendar, 2025 IAPD/IPRA Credentials Certificate, the 2024 Track Aerial Lift Purchase Bid, Ordinance 2024-11 Authorizing and Providing for the Conveyance or Sale of Surplus Personal Property, and Bills and Payroll in the amount of \$2,169,798.11

Roll Call:

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

Nay: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

FINANCIAL FORECASTS AND TREASURER'S REPORT

Operations (General and Recreation Funds) Budget vs. Actual

Director Peters shared the end-of-year projections and actual figures as of October 31, 2024. Staff budgeted to have a \$1.9 million deficit; however, staff are projecting a \$2 million surplus.

Conclusion

The following Park District programs and facilities are performing better than budget: property taxes have a \$150,000 surplus, recreation center exceeded the budget by \$200,000, golf exceeded budget by \$600,000, tennis exceeded the budget by \$200,000, and interest income exceeded budget by \$700,000. Payroll expenses are \$400,000 less than budgeted.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Approval of the Truth in Taxation Resolution #2024-02

Director Peters reported that under Illinois law, if a District is considering extending an aggregate property tax levy of more than 5% greater than the preceding year's levy, it must publicly disclose its intention and hold a public hearing. Aggregate levy is defined as real estate taxes, exclusive of the election costs and debt service. Also, the District must determine the amount to be levied at least 20 days prior to adopting the levy ordinance.

The Resolution was presented at the October 22 Finance Committee meeting of the Park District Board of Commissioners. The resolution estimates a 5.15% increase over the prior year's extension. This represents an increase of \$708,104. This is essentially a cost-of-living increase based upon the lesser of CPI or 5% while trying to capture new growth. Additionally, it includes a full levy in the Special Recreation Fund of .04% for programs, services, and projects that support people with disabilities. As such, a public hearing will be required at the December 18 Regular Meeting.

Adoption of the levy ordinance is scheduled for the December 18 Regular Meeting. The Levy Request does not guarantee that these funds will be received. In the Spring, when property values and tax cap limits are finalized, the Park District tax extension number is calculated. This is the total property tax amount that is billed to residents.

She reviewed the tax levy consideration which includes increasing the levy by the CPI and New Growth to avoid a negative impact on future levies and long-term funding for capital repair, replacement, improvements, and operational maintenance.

Additionally, the Tax Levy will match the 3.4% CPI, plus new growth which will provide the Park District with the revenue to sustain its operations and address increases in:

- Part-time & Seasonal Wages (minimum wage increase)
- Construction and Repair/Replacement
- Health Insurance
- ADA Transition Plan costs over the next 5 years
- Programs and Facilities and associated Materials and Supplies
- Employer of Choice/Competitive Salaries and Benefits

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She reviewed tax levy calculations. Noting the general fund and the recreation fund, which are tax-capped, both would see a 4.57% change and the special recreation fund would see a 12.29% change, for an overall increase of 5.15%.

She reviewed the historical rates that the district levied.

For comparison, she reviewed Truth in Taxation rates for other Highland Park government bodies.

A Motion was made by Commissioner Ruttenberg, seconded by Vice President Freeman to approve the Truth in Taxation Resolution #2024-02, where the estimated percentage increase in the proposed 2025 aggregate levy over the amount of real estate taxes extended upon the final 2024 aggregate levy based on CPI of 3.4% tax cap and anticipated growth is 5.15%. Additionally, a public hearing shall be scheduled at the December 18 Regular Meeting, with an anticipated passing of the Tax Levy Ordinance.

Roll Call:

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

Nay: Commissioner Grossberg

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

NEW BUSINESS

B. Parks Foundation

Vice President Freeman reported that the Parks Foundation is busy planning for the 2025 Champions Gala, which is being renamed Champions Celebration. The Gala will be held on March 14, 2025.

C. Board Committee Updates

At the November 13 Policy Committee Meeting, staff reviewed proposed revisions to policies impacting work conditions (safety and security), employee benefits programs, and time off benefits.

At the November 14 Finance Committee Meeting, staff provided a brief overview of the participant survey results for the ceramics program, the bid results for the 2024 Track Aerial Lift and provided a contract recommendation. Staff provided construction cost updates for the Club Pickle and Padel project. Staff also reviewed the proposed 2025 Budget.

D. End of Season Lakefront Report

Manager Harnett reviewed the 2024 Hours of Operation for Rosewood Beach (May 25, 2024 – Labor Day) and 2024 attendance (total of 11,280 visitors).

He provided a comparison of 2022 – 2024 parking decal and parking meter sales and year-to-date actual revenues from daily admissions and open camp swim vs. budgeted.

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Manager Pierce provided a comparison of 2022 – 2024 rental revenues from the Rosewood Interpretive Center. She is pleased to report that actual revenues surpassed budgeted by a little over \$7,000.

Manager Pierce provided a season summary for Park Avenue Beach and Boating Facility, highlights include that 2024 was the first full season with the new launch, the north lot construction project is currently in progress and the south lot construction project will commence in 2025.

She reviewed actual vs. budgeted revenues for loyalty members, boat, cable and tier, and stand-up paddle storage, daily launches, and parking decals. She also reviewed actual vs. budgeted expenses.

E. Directors Report

Executive Director Romes reported that the Highland Park Golf Learning Center closed for the 2024 season on November 11, Sunset Valley Golf Club will be closed as of Monday, November 25.

He also highlighted recent and upcoming events.

The Great Ornament Hunt Sunday, December 1 from 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. at Heller Nature Center. Hunt for ornaments hidden in the trees, some have clues leading prize dazzling on the trails! Finish with hot cocoa and make some of your own ornaments.

Winter Wonderland Friday, December 6 from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. at West Ridge Center. Ice cookies with Mrs. Claus, take photos with Santa, participate in Elf Training, make reindeer food, ride the mini Polar Express, and enjoy several other activities with the Grinch, and Anna and Elsa of Frozen! Come create unforgettable memories at Winter Wonderland!

Shine Bright: A Hanukkah Event Wednesday, December 11 from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. at West Ridge Center. Enjoy a Hanukkah themed story, read by the published author herself, along with some fun crafting, music, and tasty treats!

Holiday Break Camps December 23 – 27 and December 30 – January 3:

- *Winter Break Mini Camp (k – 5th)* 9:00 – 3:00 p.m. at CIA.
- *Junior Tennis (ages 7 – 14)* 9:00 – 12:00 p.m. at DCRC.
- *STREAM Explorers Winter Break Camp (Ages 5-10)* 9:00 – 3:00 p.m. at WRC.

F. Board Comments

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

None.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Grossberg and seconded by Commissioner Ruttenberg and approved by a unanimous vote. The Board Meeting adjourned at 7:11 p.m.

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Respectfully submitted,

Roxanne Hejnowski

Roxanne Hejnowski, Assistant Secretary