

**PARK DISTRICT OF HIGHLAND PARK  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
MINUTES OF WORKSHOP MEETING  
MAY 08, 2024**

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

A motion was made by Commissioner Ruttenberg, seconded by Commissioner Bernstein to allow Commissioner Kaplan to participate in tonight's meeting by electronic means.

**Roll Call:**

**Aye:** Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Ruttenberg, President Grossberg

**Nay:** None

**Absent:** Commissioner Kaplan, Vice President Freeman

**Abstain:** None

**Motion Carried**

**ROLL CALL**

**Present:** Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Ruttenberg, President Grossberg

**Absent:** Commissioner Kaplan, Vice President Freeman

**Staff Present:** Executive Director Romes; Deputy Director Carr; Director Smith; Director Peters; Director Voss; Director Gogola; Director Hall; Assistant Director Acevedo; Assistant Director Reyes; Manager Kutscheid; Coordinator Hejnowski

**Guest Speakers:** None

**ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

None.

**PUBLIC COMMENT FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

None.

**ADOPTION OF THE BEACH AND BOATING SAFETY WEEK PROCLAMATION**

President Grossberg reported that the Park District of Highland Park manages four (4) lakefront properties including Rosewood Beach as our dedicated swimming beach, and Park Avenue Boating Facility, as our dedicated recreational boating facility. With the summer swimming and boating season beginning Memorial Day Weekend, the Park District, along with the City of Highland Park, wishes to approve the following Beach and Boating Safety Week Proclamation drawing attention to beach safety practices all summer.

President Grossberg read aloud the Beach and Boating Safety Week Proclamation.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bernstein, seconded by Commissioner Ruttenberg to adopt the Beach and Boating Safety Week Proclamation declaring May 18 - 24 as Highland Park Beach and Boating Safety Week.

**Roll Call:**

**Aye:** Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Ruttenberg, President Grossberg

**Nay:** None

**Absent:** Commissioner Kaplan, Vice President Freeman

**Abstain:** None

**Motion Carried**

**APPROVAL OF WJE EVALUATIONS OF FOOTINGS AT THE GOLF DOME CHANGE ORDER #1**

Director Smith reported that Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates (WJE) was hired to evaluate the footings at the Dome at 2205 Skokie Valley Road (Lot 3) as part of the planning for the construction of a new air-supported dome for the anticipated paddle sports facility. The initial contract totaled \$24,900. After work began, it was determined that additional equipment would be required and that the work crew would need to conduct site work into the evening to accommodate scheduled programming in the dome. This resulted in a change order in the amount of \$7,577. Board approval is being requested as this change order results in a contract amount exceeding \$30,000.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bernstein, seconded by Commissioner Ruttenberg to approve the WJE Evaluation of Footings Change Order #1 and authorize the Executive Director to increase the professional services contract from \$24,900 to \$32,477.

**Roll Call:**

**Aye:** Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Ruttenberg, President Grossberg

**Nay:** None

**Absent:** Commissioner Kaplan, Vice President Freeman

**Abstain:** None

**Motion Carried**

Vice President Freeman joined the meeting at 6:07 p.m.

**CONSTRUCTION PROJECT UPDATES**

***A. Lot 3 Paddle Facility Project***

The Park District has accepted a professional services agreement from Sports Facilities Companies for the development of a business plan and proforma for the District's new racquet sports facility. Additionally, staff are close to finalizing the interior design of the dome structure. Executive Director Romes reviewed the draft interior design plan.

***B. Recreation Center of Highland Park Construction updates***

Deputy Director Carr reported that there is \$250,000 budgeted in the capital plan to renovate the locker rooms at the Recreation Center of Highland Park. Staff are trying to align the locker room renovations with the construction occurring at the adjacent facility, the Highland Park Senior Center, to address shared improvements, such as plumbing and ventilation. Staff are expecting to receive general pricing estimates for tile/flooring, lighting fixtures, shower, toilet, and vanity renovations.

***C. Deer Creek Racquet Club Locker Room Improvements project***

Manager Kutscheid shared images of the existing conditions of the men's and women's locker rooms. He shared images of the proposed improvements for the men's and women's locker rooms including the scope of work for the shower, sink, and toilet area improvements. There is \$200,000 budgeted in the capital plan for these improvements. Staff plan to hold a bid opening on June 13, 2024 and provide a recommendation to the Park Board of Commissioners in late June. Construction is anticipated to start in July and be completed in August.

***D. Jeff Fox Baseball Field Improvements project***

Manager Kutscheid shared images of the current construction. He is pleased to report the project is still on schedule with estimated completion in late June. The field is planned to be open for play in August.

***E. Lincoln Park Improvements project***

Manager Kutscheid reported that the Park District was awarded close to \$550,000 for an OSLAD grant from IDNR to support the planned construction improvements including installation of a full basketball court, ball field improvements, walking path reconfigurations, site furniture replacements, landscaping, and the play features in the 2-5y year old and new 5-12 year old playgrounds. Community engagement began this month and will continue through August. Construction document development is scheduled to begin in September with bidding in December. Construction is scheduled to begin in July 2025 and anticipated completion is September 2025.

***F. Upper Rosewood Playground Renovation project***

Manager Kutscheid reported that the planned renovations include the removal and replacement of play equipment, ADA access improvements, improved drainage, and accessible seating. Community engagement is scheduled to begin in June. Construction document development is scheduled to begin in October. The project is planned to be bid in January 2025 with a recommendation for approval from the Park Board of Commissioners in February 2025. Construction is scheduled to begin in April 2025 with anticipated completion is July 2025.

***G. Larry Fink 2–5-Year-Old Playground Renovation project***

Manager Kutscheid reported that the renovation includes the removal and replacement of play equipment, ADA access, and accessible seating. Community engagement is scheduled to begin in June. Construction document development is scheduled to begin in October. The project is planned to be bid in January 2025. Staff plan to provide a recommendation for approval from the Park Board of Commissioners in February 2025. Construction is scheduled to begin in April 2025 with anticipated completion in July 2025.

***H. Sunset Woods Park Improvements Project***

Director Smith reported that the project scope includes converting the current basketball courts into a multi-use court, developing a game area, improving the skate park and adding a wheel friendly plaza and native plantings. Enhancements to the current tennis courts and surrounding lighting fixtures are also included in the planning scope.

At the April 24, 2024 Lakefront, Parks, and Natural Areas Committee Meeting Lamar Johnson Collaborative reviewed the community feedback from the recent meeting and proposed concepts for the skate park, wheel friendly plaza, game area and multi-use court. Director Smith reviewed the revised concept schemes.

The project is planned to be bid in July with a recommendation for approval from the Park Board of Commissioners in August. Construction is scheduled to begin in September.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

**REVIEW OF VOUCHERS**

The Park Board of Commissioners reviewed the vouchers and there were no questions.

**OPEN TO THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD**

***Rick Heinemann***

***1449 Glencoe Ave, Highland Park***

Regarding the Lincoln Park improvements project, he likes the general plan, but his concern is the playground. He thinks of the 2-5years playground and 5-12years playgrounds as one entity. He would like to see the whole concept replaced and replicated. The way that the space has been used is a little different than a typical toddler to 12-year-old play area. We have adults that use the swings they're used by all ages including grandparents. He would like that to continue. I also see adults frequently using the gym equipment, even though theoretically the playground is recommended for children up to 12 years. I want an all-ages play area to continue. Teens coming back from college frequently use the park as a meeting place with friends, so it's very much a community space. He would also like to see that replicated. I would love to see two 14ft light poles installed in the area where the facilities are (parking lot and High School) so the park can be used at dusk and into the night, because even though we say it closes at dusk, the park is

used often until midnight, especially in the summer. What hours it might be is certainly something to discuss, regardless, I'm trying to paint a picture of how the space has been used. The other issue that I brought up is we have a young man in our area who's about 26 years old and has some deficiencies, but he wants to play. He likes to play on the equipment, but he feels uncomfortable using the play equipment since the signage states the recommended age use, being 2-5-year-olds or 5-12year old. I would dearly love to have the recommended age-use signage removed. I've heard that this is not possible. The only reason I can imagine it might not be possible is to limit the liability of the manufacturer and we know that any good lawyer could go in and say how is this stuff actually used, and since there are always adults using the playground it's not reasonable to say that they are not responsible for anybody over 12years using the playground; it doesn't make any sense legally, there's no way that they would not be liable if there was a problem or there is negligence. With this being said, I see no reason why that signage has to stay. He would like someone to explain why the signage can't be removed and he would like to see a legal opinion on it if his request is denied. We want that young man to be welcomed in our community, it's important for our community. Again, as a recap, we want to see all the current uses in the new playgrounds and recommended age-use signage removed so it's a play space for all ages.

Vice President Freeman reported that she too as an adult has used all the playground equipment at Lincoln Park.

Commissioner Ruttenberg has used the playground as well as an adult with his grandchildren.

**CLOSED SESSION**

A motion was made by Commissioner Ruttenberg, seconded by Vice President Freeman to adjourn into Closed Session for discussion of Section 2(c)5: the purchase or lease of real estate including discussion on whether a certain parcel of property should be acquired; Section 2(c)11: litigation against or on behalf of the District or where the District finds that an action is probable or imminent; Section 2(c)12: the establishment of reserves or settlement of claims as provided in the Local Governmental and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act, if otherwise the disposition of a claim or potential claim might be prejudiced, or the review or discussion of claims, loss or risk management information, records, data, advice or communications from or with respect to any insurer of the public body or any intergovernmental risk management association or self insurance pool of which the public body is a member;

**Roll Call:**

**Aye:** Commissioner Bernstein, Commissioner Ruttenberg, Vice President, President Grossberg

**Nay:** None

**Absent:** Commissioner Kaplan

**Abstain:** None

**Motion Carried**

The meeting adjourned into Closed Session at 7:17 p.m.

The meeting reconvened into Open Session at 8:30 p.m.

Commissioner Kaplan joined Open Session at 8:30 p.m. A motion was made at the beginning of the meeting to allow Commissioner Kaplan to attend this meeting by electronic means.

Commissioner Bernstein did not return for Open Session. Commissioner Bernstein left the meeting at 8:30 p.m.

**ACTION FROM CLOSED SESSION IF ANY**

**a. Consideration to approve a settlement agreement with former employee**

A motion was made by Commissioner Kaplan and seconded by Commissioner Ruttenberg to approve a settlement agreement with a former employee.

**Roll Call:**

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

**Nay:** None

**Absent:** Commissioner Bernstein

**Abstain:** None

**Motion Carried**

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Commissioner Ruttenberg and seconded by Vice President Freeman and approved by a unanimous vote. The Board Meeting adjourned at 8:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Roxanne Hejnowski*

Roxanne Hejnowski, Assistant Secretary