



**MINUTES OF THE
DIVERSITY ADVISORY COUNCIL
OF THE
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS**
Oakton Community Center
4701 Oakton Street, Skokie, IL 60076
TUESDAY, AUGUST 8, 2017 – 7:00 P.M.

ATTENDANCE AT MEETING

Board Members Present: Commissioner/Chair Maureen Yanes

Staff Present: Executive Director John Ohrlund
Assistant Superintendent of Recreation Jon Marquardt

Public Present: Jin Lee
Jelly Carandang
Brian Williams
Joseph Tamraz
Wendy Kaplan
Pramod Shah
Dr. Catherine Counard
Jerry Clarito

CALL TO ORDER

Advisory Council Committee Chairman Maureen Yanes called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

**CHAIRMAN YANES INTRODUCTORY REMARKS, NAMING COUNCIL AND
ANTICIPATED FUTURE FOCUS**

Commissioner Yanes welcomed and thanked everyone for attending. Commissioner Yanes introduced Wendy Kaplan and Dr. Catherine Counard and asked Ms. Kaplan to tell the group how the Skokie Theater addresses diversity. Ms. Kaplan said the Skokie Theatre has opened their doors to various diverse cultural opportunities including the Buddhist drum corps, a Korean dance group, Greek film festival, Jewish programming, sponsoring the Maxwell Klezmer Band and Skokie Idol, and a Serbian theater company. Dr. Counard said the Village of Skokie provides health and human services for everyone regardless of their background or ethnicity. The Village of Skokie has two clinics serving more than 3000 residents. The Health Department works closely with the Department of Human Services. The Village of Skokie Health Department has partnered with the Northwestern University and has received a NIH grant to introduce

the South Asian healthy lifestyle initiative to other groups. Village Clerk Mr. Pramod Shah said the Village of Skokie tries to connect people with different agencies to provide services to all residents. Dr. Counard Director of the Skokie Health Department said the Skokie Health Department provides their informational materials in many different languages. Mr. Marquardt said the Park District facilities will have a welcome greeting in different languages and staff translators when needed.

DISCUSSION OF “MISSION STATEMENT” TO BE DEVELOPED

Commissioner Yanes said there was a lot of brainstorming at the last meeting. Commissioner Yanes suggested developing a Mission Statement. Commissioner Yanes asked attendees to email their thoughts on the Mission Statement for the Diversity Council to her.

Mr. Brian Williams suggested a few “key words” to be discussed for the Mission Statement. The key words suggested were equitable, inclusive and diversity. Mr. Jerry Clarito said in terms of framing a statement he would like to see that the entire community is reflected in the statement.

Mr. Williams suggested that the Park District review and revise the District’s Mission Statement and Core Values. He said the mission of the Diversity Advisory Council should be to maintain and uphold the Park District for being equitable and inclusive. Ms.Kaplan asked about the purpose of the council. Director Ohrlund said it is the responsibility of the council to establish that purpose and its reason to exist. Mr. Clarito asked to share the history of the staff Diversity Committee and Diversity Advisory Council. He said the staff Diversity Committee was established to address issues within the Park District and to be reflective of changing community demographics. The Diversity Advisory Council was suggested by the Park Board in an advisory capacity to discuss diversity in the community and how the District could better respond to community needs. Mr. Jin Lee said there was a meeting held a few years ago in the community to discuss diversity. He said it is great that the Park District is taking the initiative to work on this project.

Commissioner Yanes said the Diversity Advisory Council is newly formed and should have a positive impact on the Park District. Mr. Clarito said the purpose of the council is to advise and recommend input to the Board into the needs of this diverse community for recreational activities and health and wellness.

COMMENTS AND INPUT

Mr. Shah asked what the council was expected to do. Commissioner Yanes said marketing the District programs to their communities and focusing on celebrating different cultures. Mr. Williams said he would like the District to focus on recreational activities that are diverse. Mr. Williams suggested some cultural activities he would like to see at the Park District.

Mr. Marquardt said the intent of the staff Diversity Committee is to bring people of all diverse backgrounds into our facilities. As a staff committee, the District is trying to

make all people feel welcome. Mr. Marquardt said if suggestions are made for programming or events, the staff at the Park District is willing to try to make them happen. Mr. Lee said he could be of assistance with his community members in some programming and events.

Ms. Jelly Carandang said the Festival of Cultures is an opportunity to market the Park District programming and events. She said a lot of residents are not aware of the programs and events.

Dr. Counard asked how to reach out the African-American community in Skokie.

Commissioner Yanes thanked the group for the comments and she said a lot of progress was made. Commissioner Yanes suggested the Park District Mission Statement and Core Values should be reviewed and updated. Mr. Clarito asked to improve the next meeting with a more structured agenda. Mr. Clarito said the minutes should be reviewed at the next meeting with a memo sent prior to the meeting.

SCHEDULE FOR FUTURE COUNCIL MEETINGS

Dr. Counard asked how often the council would be meeting. It was suggested to meet every other month. Commissioner Yanes set a tentative date of October 3, 2017 for the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Maureen Yanes adjourned the meeting at 8:48 pm.

Maureen Yanes, Commissioner

John Ohrlund, Executive Director

Vision Statement

The Skokie Park District envisions a community where all of its residents enjoy a high quality of life through leisure time pursuits, beautiful open spaces, and first rate facilities.

Mission Statement

The Skokie Park District will realize its vision through teamwork, community partnerships, sound fiscal management, and creativity in every area of its operation.

Core Values

The Skokie Park District will fulfill its mission through:

●Commitment● Integrity● Innovation● Service ●Openness ●Environmental Stewardship