

**MINUTES OF THE  
REGULAR MEETING  
OF THE  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
SKOKIE PARK DISTRICT  
FEBRUARY 27, 2017  
7:00 P.M.**

**ATTENDANCE AT MEETING**

Board Members Present:

President Jerry B. Clarito  
Commissioner Susan Aberman  
Vice President Michael W. Alter  
Commissioner Michael Reid  
Commissioner Maureen Yanes

Others Present:

Executive Director/Secretary John V. Ohrlund  
Superintendent of Business Services William G. Schmidt  
Superintendent of Parks Michael Rea  
Assistant Superintendent of Recreation Jon Marquardt  
Executive Administrative Assistant Ann Perez  
Khemarey Khoeun, Skokie Resident  
Wendy Aeschlimann, Talking Farm  
Matt Ryan, Talking Farm  
Mike Isaacs, Skokie Review  
Kristin Winter, Skokie Resident  
Mark Winter, Skokie Resident

Absent:

Superintendent of Recreation and Facilities Michelle Tuft

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Clarito called the regular meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners to order at 7:00 p.m., followed by the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

**COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS**

There were no citizen comments.

**CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL**

Vice President Alter moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Reid seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried. The Consent Agenda consisted of Minutes of the Regular Meeting of January 17, 2017; Minutes of the Special Board Meeting of February 8, 2017; Bills payable for the month of January/ February 2017; Treasurer's Report; and Staff Reports.

**ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE #17-002 AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF  
APPROXIMATELY \$2,500,000 GENERAL OBLIGATION LIMITED TAX REFUNDING  
BONDS, SERIES 2017B OF THE SKOKIE PARK DISTRICT**

Treasurer Schmidt requested the adoption of Ordinance #17-002 authorizing the issuance of approximately \$2,500,000 General Obligation Limited Tax Refunding Bonds, Series 2017B of

the Skokie Park District for the purpose of financing capital improvements for park purposes. The new money issue will be used to help finance various capital park improvements, building improvements, and vehicle and equipment replacements. Treasurer Schmidt said authorizing the issuance of the General Obligation Limited Tax Refunding Bonds is the first step in the process. A public hearing will be held at the March Board meeting.

Commissioner Aberman moved to approve Ordinance #17-002 authorizing the issuance of approximately \$2,500,000 of General Obligation Alternate Park Bonds of the Skokie Park District Series 2017B for the purpose of financing capital improvements for park purposes. Commissioner Yanes seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

#### **NINE MONTH OPERATING FUND SUMMARY ANALYSIS AS OF 1/31/17**

Treasurer Schmidt reviewed the summary and analysis of the District's operation funds for the last nine months. The funds discussed were Corporate, Recreation, Facilities and Museum. Treasurer Schmidt said the highlights were the skating and swim programs. Commissioner Yanes inquired about the cultural arts programs. Assistant Superintendent Marquardt responded that cultural arts programs are down partly due to local school and private music and arts programs. Treasurer Schmidt said overall the District is having a good fiscal year. President Clarito asked if the District will meet budget for this fiscal year. Treasurer Schmidt responded yes. No motion necessary, for informational purposes only.

#### **UPDATE ON TALKING FARM OPERATIONS BY FARM MANAGER MATT RYAN**

Superintendent Rea introduced Talking Farm Manager Matt Ryan and Talking Farm Board President Wendy Aeschlimann. Ms. Aeschlimann said the Talking Farm is a non-profit organization with the mission to make nutritious food more available to the community, provide a sustainable environment, and provide hands-on learning experiences. Ms. Aeschlimann said all of Phase I and most of Phase II of the Talking Farm development have been completed since February 2014.

Mr. Ryan gave an overview of the progress of the Talking Farm since 2010. The Talking Farm is a 2 ½ acre site with 40% of the land developed to date. Current development includes organic crop production, a demonstration garden, a farm stand, educational tent, tool sheds, compost bins and two hoop houses. In 2015 a wash shed was built as a processing center. In 2016 a water main was constructed for all water needs for the future use of the farm, and a gravel road to the processing shed was constructed. Future projects include electrical service to the property, water pump, welcome center, greenhouse, lights in the processing shed and development of two western fields.

Mr. Ryan mentioned some local partnerships with Niles North High School, Orchard Village and the Skokie Community Foundation. A grant from the Skokie Community Foundation was received to hire five students for internships this summer.

Last year the Talking Farm had over 4000 volunteer hours including school groups, church groups and corporate groups. The past three years the Talking Farm has offered an internship program with DePaul University, Northwestern University, Oakton Community College, and Loyola University.

Commissioner Reid said he remembered when the Talking Farm first approached the Board. He has been to the Hullabalooos and the Talking Farm has been very successful.

Commissioner Aberman congratulated the Talking Farm. She said the partnership with the District has really blossomed.

Executive Director Ohrlund asked Mr. Ryan to comment on the involvement of the Tot Learning Center children at the Talking Farm. Mr. Ryan said the Tot Learning Center children have a garden plot, they take tours and an educational curriculum has been developed to be administered by a Talking Farm intern.

Commissioner Yanes asked if there were any programming with Emily Oaks Nature Center. Mr. Ryan responded that seedlings are sold at the Emily Oaks plant sale. Ms. Lee Hansen has taught classes at the Talking Farm site and Mr. Ryan has taught classes at Emily Oaks Nature Center. The Board thanked Mr. Ryan and Ms. Aeschlimann for their presentation. No motion necessary, for informational purposes only.

**REJECT BID FOR TENTS, TABLES, CHAIRS AND EQUIPMENT FOR SPECIAL EVENTS**

Assistant Superintendent Marquardt requested rejection of the bids for the tents, tables, chairs and equipment. Two bids were received, but neither bidder met the bid specifications. This equipment will be re-bid with a mandatory pre-bid meeting to clarify specifications of tents.

Commissioner Reid moved to reject the bids for tents, tables, chairs and equipment and rebid the project. Vice President Alter seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF BID FOR WINNEBAGO PARK PLAYGROUND**

Superintendent Rea requested approval of the bid for the Winnebago Park Playground installation. Three bids were received. Hacienda Landscaping was the low bidder. Mr. Rea said Hacienda Landscaping constructed the McNally Park playground and he was not satisfied with their performance. Staff is recommending awarding the bid to Elanar Construction the next low bidder, in the amount of \$91,008. Elanar Construction worked on the Timber Ridge playground project and staff was extremely satisfied. The project is budgeted at \$250,000.

President Clarito asked if Hacienda Landscaping could appeal the decision. Superintendent Rea responded yes, but the District can award to the second low bidder if not satisfied with previous work performed by a contractor. If this bid is accepted the total construction cost, including play equipment and safety surfacing will be \$213,607.

Commissioner Yanes moved to approve the bid of Elanar Construction for \$91,008 for the installation of the Winnebago Park Playground. Commissioner Aberman seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

**CHANGE ORDER #2 FOR EMILY OAKS NATURE CENTER**

Superintendent Rea requested approval of Change Order #2 for Emily Oaks Nature Center. Additional work was added to the project consisting of a redirect of water flow to a new gutter and installation of primed siding.

Commissioner Aberman moved to approve Change Order #2 for Emily Oaks Nature Center for a cost of \$1,190.00. Vice President Alter seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

**RESOLUTION #17-002, A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE TERMS AND AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A REAL ESTATE PURCHASE AND SALES CONTRACT FOR A 7701 SKOKIE BLVD.**

Executive Director Ohrlund requested approval of Resolution #17-002 approving the terms and authorizing the execution of a real estate purchase and sales contract for 7701 Skokie Blvd. Director Ohrlund said it is part of the process of the sale of the existing Park Services facility. A formal contract has been received. An escrow of \$200,000 will be received shortly with the remainder of \$2.8 million paid when the park operations moves to the new facility at 7500 Frontage Road in about a year.

Commissioner Aberman moved to approve Resolution #17-002, approving the terms and authorizing the execution of a real estate purchase and sale contract for 7701 Skokie Blvd. Commissioner Yanes seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF FEASIBILITY STUDY PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT FOR PARK SERVICES FACILITY**

Superintendent Rea requested approval of the Feasibility Study Professional Services Agreement with Williams Architects for the Park Services Facility. Mr. Rea said meetings are being held with the architects to narrow the scope of the project. Williams Architects is recommending a consultant from Texas who specializes in the construction of public works/maintenance facilities.

Commissioner Yanes asked why costs of the feasibility study were higher than the feasibility study for the Weber/Fitness First project. Executive Director Ohrlund said these are two dissimilar projects and the Park Services Facility project requires significant design development, analysis of existing conditions and mechanical systems, and more permits are required.

Vice President Alter moved to approve the Feasibility Study Professional Services Agreement with Williams Architects for the new Park Services Facility at a cost of \$46,000. Commissioner Yanes seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF CIVIL ENGINEERING PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT FOR PARK SERVICES FACILITY**

Superintendent Rea requested approval of the professional civil engineering agreement with Gewalt Hamilton for the new Park Services Facility.

Gewalt Hamilton will work with the architect, Village of Skokie and Metropolitan Water Reclamation District for permitting, designing, civil engineering, construction observation and attending meetings as needed.

Vice President Alter moved to approve the professional civil engineering agreement with Gewalt Hamilton for the new Park Services Facility at a cost not to exceed \$72,600.

Commissioner Yanes seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

**NOTICE OF GRANT AWARD THROUGH THE GREAT LAKES RESTORATION FUNDING FOR EMERALD ASH BORER TREE REPLACEMENTS**

Superintendent Rea reported in 2008-2009 the District was hit hard by the Emerald Ash Borer. About 240 trees were removed. Approximately 140 trees are being treated in an attempt to save them. Horticulturalist Jay Randolph applied for a Great Lakes Restoration grant from the Morton Arboretum to help fund tree replacements throughout the District. The District is being awarded \$7,777.00 to help fund tree replacements throughout the District. No motion necessary, for informational purposes only.

**IPRA CONFERENCE SESSION REVIEW**

Executive Director Ohrlund asked Assistant Superintendent Marquardt and Parks Superintendent Rea to discuss some of the sessions from the IPRA Conference. Some of the sessions were:

- Aligning Strategic Plans with Employee Performance
- Manage Your Facility for Success
- Modernizing Your Senior Center and Bringing it Into the Future
- Throw Out the Brochure
- Wellness Committee Gone Rogue
- Capital Projects: Approaches for Improving Delivery and Efficiency.

Commissioner Reid discussed the 606 Trail. Commissioners Aberman and Reid would like to have a destination park created that would be for special needs adults and children, and inclusive for all people. Executive Director Ohrlund has met with the Village to discuss possible sites.

No motion necessary, for informational purposes only.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

The date of the regular March Board meeting is Tuesday, March 14, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. The Finance Committee Meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 8, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. The April Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 18, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.

**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Aberman has noticed a lot of plaques and memorials in other parks and asked if the District has plaques and memorials. Executive Director Ohrlund responded yes. There are about 30 plaques as well as memorial benches in the parks throughout the District. The District also has a tree donation "wall" at the Weber Leisure Center which acknowledges tree donations.

Commissioner Aberman asked about the Veteran Park memorial bricks and ceremony. Executive Director Ohrlund said staff is developing the program and will report at a later date.

**DISCUSSION OF BOARD SELF-EVALUATION**

Commissioner Yanes said the benefit of the Board Self-Evaluation is getting ideas on the table to discuss. She gave Board members a report about what other districts are doing.

Commissioner Yanes suggested changing the existing Board committees, combining Board committees and adding new Board committees. The Board discussed having a workshop and scheduled it for Tuesday, March 21, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. Commissioner Yanes will create an agenda for publication and public notice. President Clarito thanked Commissioner Yanes for organizing the workshop.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Reid moved to adjourn the regular meeting. Vice President Alter seconded the motion. All Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried. The regular meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

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Jerry B. Clarito  
President

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John V. Ohrlund  
Secretary