

**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
SKOKIE PARK DISTRICT
OCTOBER 21, 2014
7:00 P.M.**

ATTENDANCE AT MEETING

Board Members Present:

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

Others Present:

Director/Secretary John V. Ohrlund
Business Superintendent/Treasurer William G. Schmidt
Superintendent of Parks Michael Rea
Superintendent of Recreation and Facilities Michelle Tuft
Assistant Superintendent of Recreation Jon Marquardt
Executive Administrative Assistant Ann Perez

Bill Inman, Hitchcock Design Group
Bob Ijams, Hitchcock Design Group
Cassandra Rice, Hitchcock Design Group
Barbara Heller, Heller and Heller Consulting
Andy Dogan, Williams Architects
Tom Poulos, Williams Architects

Mike Isaacs, Skokie Review

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Reid 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

Joel Farber, 4317 Enfield, Skokie, Illinois, addressed the Board regarding the Sunday Sundown Concerts. Mr. Farber stated that this was his 20th year of acting as Master of Ceremonies at the Devonshire Park Sunday Sundown Concerts. Mr. Farber said he has attended 100 Sunday concerts. This year there were four concerts instead of five with emphasis on "quality not quantity." All the concerts were wonderful and included rock and roll, 50's through 80's music, a Beatles cover band and funk and soul music. Mr. Farber said total attendance was about 2500. Mr. Farber thanked the Board for the concerts and said he will see everyone next year.

CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL

With no items removed from the Consent Agenda, Commissioner Aberman moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Yanes seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried. The Consent Agenda consisted of: Minutes of the Regular Board Meeting of September 16, 2014; Bills Payable for the months of September 2014/October 2014; Treasurer's Report; and Staff Reports.

2014 TAX LEVY (TRUTH IN TAXATION) RESOLUTION #14-100

Treasurer Schmidt highlighted the 2014 tax levy process for the Board. He said the CPI increase for the 2014 levy is 1.5% which equates to a \$108,714 increase in the aggregate funds minus debt service. The tax levy is based on an overall decrease of 17.76% without loss and cost. Treasurer Schmidt said there were two reasons for the large decrease in the tax levy. The IMRF pension funding rate beginning in 2015 decreased from 14.5% to 10.5% due to some early retirement incentives that were met. The second reason for the decrease is that the 1994 Capital Appreciation Bonds are now paid which reduces the levy by approximately \$2,000,000.

At the November Board Meeting the Tax Levy Ordinance will be formally adopted. Once it is adopted it will be filed with the Cook County Tax Extension Office.

Commissioner Yanes moved to approve Resolution #14-100, the Truth in Taxation Law Resolution, as part of the legal process to approve the 2014 tax levy. Legal adoption of the Levy Ordinance will be held at the November 2014 Meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners. Commissioner Clarito seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

COMMONWEALTH EDISON PARKING AND STORAGE LEASE

Superintendent Rea requested approval of the Commonwealth Edison Parking and Storage Lease. Superintendent Rea stated that the District has leased the property at Park Services from Commonwealth Edison since 1992. A new lease agreement has been under negotiation for the past three years. PDRMA and the Park District attorneys have reviewed the agreement. The lease allows Park Services to continue to use the fenced area for equipment lockup and storage and smaller composting site in the non-fenced area as well as part of the parking lot of Emily Oaks Nature Center. Commonwealth Edison will not modify the terms of the lease and the options available to the Park District are as follows:

1. Attempt to purchase the property from Commonwealth Edison
2. Purchase commercial liability insurance coverage for the term of the 5 year lease or
3. Walk away for the lease entirely.

Staff believes the best recommendation is the approval of the Commonwealth Edison Parking and Storage Lease for a five year period and the purchase of liability insurance.

Discussion ensued as to the need and cost of insurance. Superintendent Rea said staff is awaiting the response on the cost of the insurance. Commissioner Clarito inquired how the cost of the insurance would affect the Emily Oaks Nature Center budget. Executive Director Ohrlund responded that it would not affect the Emily Oaks Nature Center budget.

Commissioner Yanes moved to approve the Commonwealth Edison Parking and Storage Lease for Park Services and Emily Oaks Nature Center for a period of five years. Commissioner Clarito seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF LONG TERM AGREEMENT WITH THE TALKING FARM
FOR THE USE OF TOT LEARNING CENTER PROPERTY**

Superintendent Rea requested approval of the long term agreement with the Talking Farm for the use of the Tot Learning Center property. Superintendent Rea reminded the Board that at the September Board Meeting Commissioners requested the agreement be revised to a shorter term of twenty (20) years with an option for an additional ten (10) years. This change has been made.

Commissioner Aberman inquired how the agreement affects the Comprehensive Plan in respect to the potential expansion of the Tot Learning Center. There was some discussion. Executive Director Ohrlund responded that this agreement does not significantly affect an expansion at the Tot Learning Center.

Commissioner Alter moved to approve the Long Term Agreement with the Talking Farm for the use of Tot Learning Center property. Commissioner Clarito seconded the motion. On a roll call, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

PRESENTATION AND REVIEW OF DRAFT ACTION PLAN FOR THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN – HITCHCOCK DESIGN GROUP

Executive Director Ohrlund prefaced the presentation by saying there are some recurring themes in the draft action plan such as loop paths throughout the parks, ornamental fencing, landscape buffers, spray pads, replacement of playgrounds and playground surfaces and pickle ball.

Mr. Bill Inman of Hitchcock Design Group began the presentation. Last month the Board was presented some alternative strategies to review for the Comprehensive Plan. The consultants reviewed staff and Board comments on the alternative strategies and a draft of the action plan was compiled.

Mr. Inman stressed that the draft action plan is a guideline for the Board and staff to review and determine which strategies will be finalized in the Comprehensive Plan.

Alternative strategies were divided into four categories; demographics, parks and open spaces, facilities and programs.

Mr. Inman said the action plan is a summary of the preferred strategies that were determined from public, staff and Board input and the planning team. The draft action plan is comprised of seven sections consisting of policy, plan, design, construct, funding strategies, acquisition and programs. Mr. Inman discussed the draft action plan year by year highlighting the suggested strategies.

Treasurer Schmidt inquired about assistance with grant funding. Mr. Inman stated that the planning team assists with grant applications.

After the presentation, Mr. Inman said the Board and staff need to finalize the draft action plan prior to the next Board Meeting. The planning team will meet with staff to discuss comments and changes to the action plan. Mr. Inman reminded the Board and staff that the policy document is not a design document.

Executive Director Ohrlund asked the Board and staff to review the draft action plan materials and forward their comments to him as soon as possible. The projects should be prioritized and a determination made if the initiative should be included in the plan or not.

Commissioner Aberman inquired about tennis courts in the action plan. Mr. Inman said they are discussed in Chapter 5. She inquired about the idea of changing park policy relating to dogs in parks. Mr. Inman and Ms. Heller said comments were made in focus groups about the policy on dogs in the parks.

Commissioner Yanes inquired how health and wellness is incorporated into the draft action plan. Mr. Inman responded that the facility design renovations to Oakton Center and Weber Center include elements of health and wellness components.

Mr. Inman concluded the presentation and question period and asked that the Board and staff review the information in a timely manner to allow the planning team to make any changes to the draft action plan prior to the next Board meeting.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Reid discussed the date for the November Board Meeting. The date for the next Regular Meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners was set for Thursday, November 20, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

A special meeting date for December was discussed for the planning team to present the final comprehensive plan document. A tentative date of December 2 was selected. Executive Director Ohrlund will verify with the consultants on their availability for the meeting.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Commissioners Aberman and Yanes spoke about sessions they attended at the recent NRPA conference. Some of the topics discussed were:

- Remote helicopters and planes
- Health and wellness sessions including hospital partnerships
- Cross functional innovation teams
- SNAG Golf Program
- Infant playground components
- Activities for the age group of 13-15
- Mileage markers for parks
- Programs for individuals with Arthritis and Parkinson's disease
- Splash pads
- Reinvigorating parks
- Comprehensive planning
- Changing existing events and programs
- Signs in neighborhoods to promote awareness of parks and facilities

Executive Director Ohrlund said staff is meeting with NorthShore Hospital related to a health initiative "Rethink your Drink" collaborative with the Village of Skokie Health Department.

Commissioner Aberman plans to meet with Dr. Catherine Counard to promote a health and wellness week in the community.

Commissioner Yanes inquired about the sales in the healthy option vending machine. Treasurer Schmidt said he will check on sales.

Executive Director Ohrlund said the Fourth of July Parade Committee is forming. Superintendent Rea is on the committee.

Executive Director Ohrlund asked Commissioners to consider the delegates for the IAPD meeting in January.

Executive Director Ohrlund reminded the Commissioners of the Chamber Legislative Forum on Friday, October 24 at the Evanston Country Club at 7:30 a.m.

Executive Director Ohrlund mentioned the Village of Skokie Community Forum on November 2nd at 6 p.m. at Oakton Community College.

President Reid mentioned the Halloween events in downtown Skokie on Saturday, October 25th from Noon – 4 p.m.

Executive Director Ohrlund reminded the Board that while staff and Commissioners are reviewing the draft comprehensive action plan cost estimates have yet to be developed and will need to be considered.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Clarito moved to adjourn the regular meeting. Commissioner Alter seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried. The regular meeting adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

Michael Reid
President

John V. Ohrlund
Secretary