

**MINUTES OF THE  
SPECIAL VISIONING MEETING  
OF THE  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
SKOKIE PARK DISTRICT  
SEPTEMBER 27, 2012  
6:00 P.M.**

**ATTENDANCE AT MEETING**

Board Members Present:     President Mike Reid  
                                  Vice President Maureen Yanes  
                                  Commissioner Susan Aberman  
                                  Commissioner Michael W. Alter

Others Present:             Director/Secretary John Ohrlund  
                                  Tod Stanton of Public Research Group  
                                  Pat O'Toole of Public Research Group  
                                  Patty O'Malley, 5244 Mulford Ave., Skokie  
                                  Lisa Kaihara, 5238 Monroe, Skokie  
                                  Roberta Dubrow, 5236 Monroe, Skokie

Absent:                     Commissioner Jerry B. Clarito

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Reid called the regular meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners to order at 6:10 p.m.

**PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF BOARD VISIONING LED BY PUBLIC RESEARCH  
GROUP**

Executive Director Ohrlund introduced Tod Stanton and Pat O'Toole of Public Research Group, who will facilitate the visioning meeting of the Board. Mr. Stanton reported that almost all of the data gathering for the public survey has been completed and the information is being compiled. PRG has met with recreation staff, parks staff and several individual staff members as well as President Reid over the past few weeks. The results of the public surveys will be available at the October Park Board meeting.

The Board visioning began with a review of the existing District Vision, Mission and Core Values. Executive Director Ohrlund read these statements aloud. Commissioner Aberman said a lot of work went into the effort of developing these statements and they were reviewed just a few years ago. She believes the statements do represent the mission and values of the Skokie Park District. "This is us; this is what we stand for and how we live every day." The entire Board concurred that the vision statement, mission and core values of the District should remain as is.

Mr. O'Toole then asked for input on additional programs or activities that the Board feels should be offered. Vice President Yanes recommended options for a fitness/nutrition program partnering with the hospital. President Reid would like an effort to get the various ethnic groups more involved in our programs. While the health club and certain programs are very diverse, others do not draw those communities. There was discussion of whether senior and other programs are too expensive. Commissioner Aberman pointed out the many free programs that also exist.

Mr. O'Toole then asked for input on new amenities or facilities that the Board feels should be considered. Commissioners pointed out a dedicated indoor pool is frequently mentioned by the public, however these are very expensive to build and operate, usually at a loss. Both high schools in town have pools which run Park District programs and lessons, so this need is at least partially being met. District needs are mainly recreational and instructional and the high schools have a greater interest in

competitive swimming.

A skate park is a frequently mentioned need in the community. The District is currently attempting to locate and build a skate park on Lincoln Junior High property utilizing Village approved TIF funds.

The possible future development of the property east of Sports Park was discussed. Assuming remediation of the property the Board would consider lighted ball fields, baseball, soccer, a walking path and other features. With the site far away from residential areas this would make a great spot for competitions and tournaments; which could generate tourism revenues and jobs for the community. A possible synthetic surface was discussed so that spring and fall seasons could be extended. Director Ohrlund indicated that additional parking is planned for the expansion, and he believes that storm water detention for the site is already included in the current Sports Park.

Commissioners indicated a desire to continue to be fiscally responsible, have balanced annual budgets, and continue with high quality parks, facilities and recreation programs. An upcoming goal will be to develop Sports Park East utilizing community input and support, and if necessary, consider a referendum to finance the development. An attempt should be made to acquire grants for the development of Sports Park East. A desire was also expressed to keep an open dialogue with the community.

Mr. Stanton then informed the Board that the survey results to date have included 126 phone surveys, 54 emailed surveys and about 200 mail surveys returned. The focus group meeting convenes at 7:30 this evening and he expects some good input.

#### **COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS**

President Reid then asked if there were any comments from citizens related to the visioning session. Patty O'Malley asked about the proposed skate park and whether the community had expressed a desire for a skate park in previous surveys. Discussion ensued about the need and the citizens were reminded of the upcoming public hearing on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. Roberta Dubrow said that 4 out of the 5 problem parks in Skokie are in School District 69, so she doesn't know why the skate park should go there. Ms. O'Malley said there is a need for a skate park in Skokie, but that it should not go at Lincoln Jr. High. President Reid thanked the citizens for their comments.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Commissioner Alter to adjourn the special visioning meeting. Vice President Yanes seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Commissioner Clarito was absent. Motion carried. The special visioning meeting ended at 6:59 p.m.

---

Michael Reid  
President

---

John Ohrlund  
Secretary