

**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
SKOKIE PARK DISTRICT
APRIL 21, 2020
7:00 P.M.**

ATTENDANCE AT MEETING

Board Members Present:

President Michael Reid
Vice President Khemarey Khoeun
Commissioner Susan Aberman
Commissioner Michael W. Alter
Commissioner Minal Desai

Others Present:

Executive Director/Secretary Michelle J. Tuft
Superintendent of Business Services William G. Schmidt
Superintendent of Facilities Jon Marquardt
Superintendent of Parks Corrie Guynn
Superintendent of Recreation Breanne Labus
Executive Administrative Assistant Ann Perez

CALL TO ORDER

President 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

There were no citizen comments.

PUBLIC HEARING

President Reid called the Public Hearing for the FY 2020-2021 Tentative Budget and Appropriation Ordinance #20-003 to order at 7:02 p.m. He asked for comments or questions. There were no comments or questions. President Reid closed the Public Hearing at 7:03 p.m.

CONSENT AGENDA APPROVAL

Commissioner Alter moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Vice President Khoeun seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried. The Consent Agenda consisted of the minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting of March 12, 2020, Regular Meeting of March 17, 2020, bills payable for the month of March/April 2020, Treasurer's Report, and Staff Reports.

**APPROVAL OF FINAL BUDGET & APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE #20-005
FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021**

Treasurer Schmidt requested the approval of the Final Budget & Appropriation Ordinance #20-005 for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 including the Five-Year Capital Development Plan. Treasurer Schmidt said this is the same budget that was presented and discussed at the March 12, 2020 Finance Committee Meeting.

Vice President Khoeun moved to approve the Final Budget and Appropriation Ordinance #20-005 for fiscal year 2020-2021 in the total amount of \$30,057,431 and including the Five-Year Capital Development Plan totaling \$3,316,950. Commissioner Aberman seconded the motion. On a roll call vote all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF HEALTH INSURANCE RENEWAL

Treasurer Schmidt requested approval of the Health Insurance Renewal and Life Insurance with Blue Cross/Blue Shield as of May 1, 2020. Treasurer Schmidt, Human Resource Manager Lynn Seebacher, and the District's insurance broker, Patti Walsh Hub International have been working together to keep rates as low as possible. This year was a challenge. Treasurer Schmidt is suggesting renewing the insurance with Blue Cross/Blue Shield for a two-year period at a rate of 11.57%. Blue Cross/Blue Shield offered a one-time \$25,000 credit and a 1% rate decrease if the District changed the Life and AD&D insurance carrier from AXA to Blue Cross/Blue Shield. The rate increase for the first year will be 9.3% with no increase in year two of the renewal.

Commissioner Aberman commented that this was a good move to lock in the rate for two years. Vice President Khoeun asked if the insurance coverage was the same. Treasurer Schmidt responded nothing would change in coverage.

Vice President Khoeun moved to approve the renewal of the District's health benefits to Blue Cross/Blue Shield for a period of two years beginning May 1, 2020 through April 30, 2022 at a net increase of 11.57%. Commissioner Alter seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

Commissioner Desai moved to approve the change of life insurance carriers from AXA to Blue Cross Blue Shield. Commissioner Aberman seconded the motion. On roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF DENTAL INSURANCE RENEWAL

Treasurer Schmidt requested approval of the dental insurance renewal with Delta Dental of Illinois effective May 1, 2020. Delta Dental is the District's current dental insurance carrier offering a DMO and PPO option to employees. The rate for both the DMO and PPO options reflect no increase for a twelve-month period.

Vice President Khoeun moved to approve the renewal of dental insurance for the District with Delta Dental of Illinois for a period of 12 months reflecting no increase in premium costs. Commissioner Alter seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

APPROVAL OF VISION INSURANCE RENEWAL

Treasurer Schmidt requested approval of the vision insurance renewal with Delta Dental Vision effective May 1, 2020. Delta Dental Vision is the District's current carrier and has offered a 0% increase.

Commissioner Desai moved to approve the District's vision insurance with Delta Dental Vision for a period of 12 months beginning May 1, 2020 at no additional cost. Commissioner Alter seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

PART-TIME STAFF FURLOUGH

Executive Director Tuft said the District is at a point where some difficult decisions need to be made regarding to continue to pay part-time staff during the stay at home order due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Ms. Tuft has discussed furloughing staff with the District attorney. Ms. Tuft said the Board is generally not involved in personnel matters but due to these circumstances the District attorney recommends Board approval of any action taken where large numbers of staff are furloughed or laid off.

At the March 17, 2020 Board meeting the Board approved continuing paying part-time staff through April 30, 2020. As the District does not have work for part-time staff while facilities are closed and programs not operating the District can no longer continue to pay part-time staff.

Human Resources Manager Lynn Seebacher emailed letters to part-time staff last Friday explaining that they were being furloughed effective April 30, 2020 pending board approval. Because part-time staff are paid two weeks in arrears their last paycheck would have been May 15, 2020. Instead employees will be paid for the additional two weeks on the April 30, 2020 paycheck. Part-time staff are eligible for unemployment compensation benefits and can apply after April 30, 2020. Ms. Tuft said there will be approximately eight part-time staff deemed essential and will not be furloughed. Once Superintendent Guynn's crews begin to mow the parks some additional part-time staff will be returning.

Vice President Khoeun said Senator Ram Villivalam's Advisory Committee had a virtual meeting and discussed the difficulty people are experiencing when applying for unemployment compensation due to the volume of people applying at this time. Vice President Khoeun said the committee is compiling a list of individuals experiencing issues. Any staff having difficulty should reach out to Senator Villivalam's office. Executive Director Tuft said if Human Resources Manager Lynn Seebacher get calls regarding this issue, she will forward this information to them.

Vice President Khoeun moved to furlough part-time staff, with a few exceptions for part-time staff deemed essential, effective April 30, 2020. Commissioner Aberman seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

FULL-TIME STAFF FURLOUGH

Executive Director Tuft said when speaking with the District attorney full-time staff furloughing was discussed. The District attorney recommended the Board designate the authority to Ms. Tuft if it became necessary to furlough full-time staff. Ms. Tuft said she would not take any action without informing the Board. Currently most full-time staff are working from home or on sight in some capacity.

Commissioner Desai moved to designate the authority to furlough full-time staff to the Executive Director, at her discretion. Commissioner Alter seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

IMRF BENEFIT PROTECTION LEAVE

Treasurer Schmidt requested Board approval of the IMRF Benefit Protection Leave Resolution #20-001. This resolution protects IMRF benefits for staff if they are furloughed due to COVID-19. The resolution allows employees to receive credit hours and protects their disability and

death benefits for a period of up to twelve months. The employee is required to pay their 4 ½% contribution.

Vice President Khoeun moved to approve Resolution #20-001 approving IMRF Benefit Protection Leave. Commissioner Alter seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS

Commissioner Aberman asked if there had been any requests to the District to provide childcare services during this time. Executive Director Tuft said there had not been any requests.

NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Aberman asked about the ability to use the garden plots with social distancing. Executive Director Tuft said guidelines were emailed to garden plot customers. Commission Aberman asked for a copy of the guidelines. Ms. Tuft will have a copy sent to her.

Vice President Khoeun asked about any restrictions on the usage of the Skokie trails. Executive Director Tuft said the Village of Skokie has mandated wearing masks in public places. However, there are no restrictions on the trails while exercising other than maintaining social distancing and avoiding the area if overcrowded. When the mowing crews begin, and if they are working alone, they will not be required to wear a mask.

President Reid was walking the Skokie Sculpture Park path and said everyone was courteous and conscientious of keeping social distancing. Treasurer Schmidt said the bike trail is the same way.

Commissioner Desai received a complaint from a resident regarding the bike trail by Oakton Street having a lot of random garbage strewn around. Executive Director Tuft will mention this to the Village of Skokie.

Commissioner Aberman asked if the exercise equipment on the walking trail was closed off. Superintendent Guynn said signs have been posted. Commissioner Aberman said they should be wrapped because COVID-19 remains on metal for a longer period. Executive Director Tuft said staff will continue to monitor.

Commissioner Aberman asked if walking is allowed at Emily Oaks Nature Center. Executive Director Tuft responded that Emily Oaks Nature Center is open and when they do close for repairs they post on Facebook and the website. Corrie said there is signage at the gate for social distancing.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The regular and annual meetings of the Board of Park Commissioners will be held on Tuesday, May 19, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. President Reid does not know if a virtual Board meeting will be held. It will depend on the stay at home order.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Vice President Khoeun asked at what point will decisions be made regarding cancelling events like the Fourth of July parade and fireworks. Will the events be severely scaled back? Executive Director Tuft said she is meeting with the school districts this week to discuss usage

of the schools for camps and discuss the Fourth of July event. Staff has been discussing a lot of different options like cancelling the event or holding it on Labor Day.

President Reid saw Allen Gerstner who is the head of the Fourth of July Parade Committee while he was walking at Old Orchard. Mr. Gerstner said he has about 50 groups booked for the parade and was not booking any more at this time. Executive Director Tuft said we may start to see some performers dropping out of the event. We will have to wait and see. The supplies and equipment for the 4th of July event is secured but on hold due to the Park District's contract with the tent vendor and Melrose Pyrotechnics for the fireworks. Superintendent Marquardt and Ms. Tuft will contact the vendors to find out the deadlines needed to cancel if necessary. Commissioner Aberman said she feels we will have to decide before the Governor decides on possibly extending the stay at home order. Ms. Tuft said there are different phases of opening that we will follow once the order is lifted. Ms. Tuft is not ready to decide on cancelling the Fourth of July events in April.

Commissioner Aberman has been taking walks around Devonshire Park and has seen the tennis courts occupied and no one playing basketball. People are being very respectful of the social distancing guidelines.

President Reid received a complimentary phone call regarding the summer brochure. President Reid said staff is doing a magnificent job and asked to relay this to the Marketing Staff. Executive Director Tuft reminded the Board that there is an online version of the summer brochure that can staff update as needed.

Commissioner Aberman said the kids are having a blast skateboarding in the empty parking lots at facilities.

Vice President Khoeun noticed that some events on Facebook need to be removed from Facebook. Executive Director Tuft will relay this to the Marketing Director Jim Bottorff.

Staff had a discussion regarding the possibility of not printing the fall brochure, instead posting it online only. If done digitally only, changes can be made as needed. Mr. Bottorff is contemplating sending out a postcard to residents to notify them that the brochure will not be mailed and directing them to the website for fall events and programming.

Vice President Khoeun said the online bingo event was a success last week. Ms. Labus said there will be another bingo event this coming week. Commissioner Desai asked if there were prizes. Ms. Labus said the prizes are passes to District facilities like the Exploritorium or a daily fitness pass. The winners contact interim Weber Center Manager Mary Amato to arrange for their prizes.

Vice President Khoeun likes the Skokie Heritage Museum's historical and educational information on the stay at home programs page. President Reid said the online games are good for families. Executive Director Tuft said staff are very creative. Commissioner Desai complimented Lee Hansen's online singing. Ms. Labus and her staff are thinking of different and unique ways to engage people online.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Alter moved to adjourn the regular meeting. Vice President Khoeun seconded the motion. On a roll call vote, all Commissioners voted aye. Motion carried. The regular meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.

Mike Reid
President

Michelle J. Tuft
Secretary