



Skokie Park District



FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday March 12, 2020

The Finance Committee Meeting of Thursday, March 12, 2020, was called to order by President Reid at 6:00 p.m. In attendance were Commissioners' Aberman and Alter. Staff in attendance included Director Michelle Tuft, Superintendent of Facilities Jon Marquardt, Marketing Manager Jim Bottorff, Superintendent of Business William Schmidt, Superintendent of Parks Corrie Guynn, Park Services Office Manager Dima Kirland, Devonshire facility manager Robin Horwitz and her staff Caryn Watson, Rick Flintz, Alvin Sampath and Evans Poulos.

Budget Presentation by Fund

Director Tuft opened the meeting with an introduction of the budget explaining the highlights and some of the challenges in preparing this year's budget. Aging infrastructure will be an ongoing challenge in upcoming years. Director Tuft explained that a comprehensive detailed analysis of the Devonshire Cultural Center was the focus of this year's presentation by Mr. Marquardt and the Devonshire staff. Ms. Tuft then reviewed the Vision Statement, Mission Statement and the Core Values of the District. Ms. Tuft introduced Superintendent of Business Bill Schmidt who took the Committee through the budget.

Mr. Schmidt started with a summary of the funds, operating, auxiliary and capital, showing the addition or deletion to fund balances, and the use of these fund balances to finance capital projects. Mr. Schmidt highlighted the assumptions in the budget book. Assumptions include the use of Recreation Fund balances to pay for some major capital items and the use of the Corporate Fund to pay the interest expense for the Alternate Revenue Source (ARS) Bonds. Other assumptions include utilities and health insurance increases. A 3% salary pool increase is budgeted along with the continued increase in the minimum wage which has a District wide affect throughout all programs. Two additional full-time employees were proposed in FY 2020-2021 budgets, one additional IT person and one SPACE/Oakton programmer. Mr. Schmidt described the Corporate Fund (#10), administration area only, explaining the highlights of the center.

After answering all questions, Mr. Schmidt introduced Jim Bottorff, Marketing Manager who made a detailed explanation of the Marketing and Sponsorship activities. Mr. Bottorff highlighted some areas of increased marketing for next year including aquatics and golf. Mr. Bottorff went through the fundraising process and how those dollars get transferred out to various events and festivals. Commissioner Aberman asked about the brochure allocation which Mr. Bottorff answered by showing what print materials were being planned for 2020-2021.

When all questions were answered, Mr. Bottorff introduced Corrie Guynn, Superintendent of Parks who took the Committee through revenues and expenses at Park Services. The highlights of the Park Services budget included increases in

minimum wage for part-time salaries, increase in fencing supplies, and hiring of an intern to help with GIS initiatives.

After answering questions, Mr. Guynn introduced Dima Kirland who did a quick overview of the Pooch Park budget. Pooch Park operates as a break-even cooperative venture with the City of Evanston.

Ms. Kirland introduced Mr. Marquardt who presented the Recreation Fund, Fund 20. Administration, Camps, Devonshire Cultural Center, Oakton Community Center, Childcare, Teens, Special Events and Festivals are all a part of the Recreation Fund. Administration is where property taxes are collected and expenses include the cost of the administrative staff and allocations. These property taxes help fund other areas within the Recreation Fund. Camps were next and are showing a nice return. President Reid asked Mr. Marquardt how hiring was going and the response was, going well.

Mr. Marquardt then went into an in-depth analysis of Devonshire Cultural Center including Administration, Preschool Programs, Cultural Arts, Children's Programs and the Devonshire Playhouse. Mr. Marquardt explained that Cultural Arts (mainly dance and music) are making a comeback after a few years of being down, mainly due to the great work of Rick Flintz and Caryn Watson. It was noted by facility manager Robin Horwitz that the preschool program won an award for being Most Beloved preschool program. The Devonshire Playhouse is increasing the number of performances due to the cancellation of Still Acting Up. Social media has helped with the advertisement of performances. Evans Poulos made the comment that the cultural arts classes are being recommended by patrons. Alvin Sampath, head custodian has done a great job of installing money saving fixtures throughout the building.

Mr. Marquardt continued with an analysis of the Oakton Community Center including Administration, Senior Programs, Adult Programs, Still Acting Up and the Exploritorium. Highlights were the Exploritorium's new water exhibit and the cancellation of Still Acting Up due to lack of participation.

Mr. Marquardt moved on to childcare which includes Tot Learning Center and SPACE where revenues have been increasing. Tot Learning Center continues to be at capacity and is one of the top day care facilities in the area. The SPACE program is being effected hard by the increase in salaries due to more staff being hired and the minimum wage increase. Mr. Marquardt reported on the teen budget stating that the District is continually looking to find ways to get more teens involved. Mr. Marquardt next discussed special events and festivals listing all of the events the Park District offers. The Village of Skokie continues to contribute funds to the major special events. Mr. Marquardt discussed Athletics as a whole. Athletics, pickleball and CSL basketball are showing more interest. An increase in field permits is expected at Sports Park East for soccer and cricket with the addition of second cricket field at Sports Park East.

After answering all questions from the Committee, Mr. Marquardt continued on with the Facilities Fund, Fund 40. Mr. Marquardt started with the summary of Fund 40 showing a positive return of \$31,250. This year's budget reflects a transfer of property tax funds of \$200,000 from Fund 20 into Fund 40. An in- depth analysis of the entire fund will be completed by staff. Mr. Marquardt continued with the Dammrich Rowing Center which now shows a slight profit. Mr. Marquardt next discussed Skokie Sports Park and Weber Park Golf Course. Mr. Marquardt moved on to the Skatium which is showing great attendance in both hockey and figure skating programs. The Skatium project will

affect two months of the 2020-2021 budget. Next Mr. Marquardt addressed aquatics as a whole which in fiscal 2020 is based on a “normal” summer. Outdoor aquatics are very weather related. Indoor swim lessons are showing a better return this year and next because it is now a strictly park district program. Athletic camps continue to meet profit goals and are now under the leadership of Breanne Labus. With all questions being answered, Mr. Marquardt reintroduced Mr. Schmidt.

Mr. Schmidt covered the auxiliary funds; Special Recreation, IMRF, Liability, Social Security, Audit and Debt Service. The major highlights were the employer rate in IMRF and that after a 2019 investment return of 19% IMRF is now 91% funded.

Mr. Schmidt then introduced Mr. Guynn who gave an analysis of the Capital Funds and explained what projects were included. The main projects were completion of the Laramie Park project and four playground renovations.

Ms. Tuft thanked the staff and Board for their time and described the procedural next steps for approval.

It was the consensus of the Finance Committee to prepare a Tentative Budget and Appropriation Ordinance for approval at the March 17, 2020 meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners so it can be put on public display for the thirty-day period required to meet the legal requirements.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned by President Reid at 7:45 p.m.

Mike Reid
President, Board of Park Commissioners

Michelle Tuft
Executive Director, Secretary