

**MINUTES OF THE STUDY SESSION MEETING
CHAMPAIGN PARK DISTRICT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

May 23, 2007

The Champaign Park District Board of Commissioners held a Study Session on Wednesday, May 23, 2007 at the Bresnan Meeting Center, 706 Kenwood Road, Champaign, Illinois, pursuant to notice duly given. President Kuhl presided over the meeting.

Present: President Barb Kuhl, Vice President Jane Solon, Commissioners Newt Dodds and Joseph Petry, and Treasurer Gary Wackerlin

Absent: Commissioner Alvin Griggs

Staff present: Bobbie Herakovich, Executive Director/Secretary, Mike Seibold, Director of Finance, Joe DeLuce, Director of Recreation, Jim Spencer, Director of Operations, Terri Gibble, Park Planner, Laura Auteberry, Marketing Manager, and Mary McGrew, Human Resources Manager

Call to Order

President Kuhl called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Presentations

Big.small.all

Frank DiNovo, Champaign County Regional Planning Commission, presented the Big.small.all. results. He reported that the project was a community initiative. A copy of the final report was distributed to the Board. Mr. DiNovo stated that county representation was good except for a deficiency in participation from low income households and young adults ages 25-34 were under represented. He reported that participation tended to be from older, more educated and wealthy individuals. Mr. DiNovo stated that the construction of the vision included 11 committees, 12 goals and 68 objectives with specific actions. He reported that the final version includes 35 specific objectives with 135 actions which constitute the future vision. Mr. DiNovo stated that steering committee hope to make the vision happen by recruiting, promoting, coordinating and reporting on the goals. He stressed that this was a community agenda and not a government agenda.

Executive Director's Report

Intern

Ms. Herakovich introduced Karly Crapse, Illinois State University student, who is interning in the Park District's Marketing Division.

Champaign Parks Foundation Event

Ms. Herakovich reminded the Board of the Champaign Parks Foundation donor recognition event that will be held on May 24, 2007 at the Virginia Theatre.

NRPA Congress

Ms. Herakovich reported that the NRPA Congress will be held September 25-29, 2007 in Indianapolis. She asked the Board if they planned to attend the Congress to let her know so staff could finalize the reservations.

Virginia Theatre Restoration

Mr. Spencer reported that the window issue has been resolved with the State of Illinois Historic Preservation representative and that work will proceed on the east lobby project.

Sholem Aquatic Center Update

Mr. Spencer reported that Sholem Aquatic Center will open on time but the baby pool will not due a leak. He stated that staff has brought in the general contractor and subcontractor. Mr. Spencer stated that the leaks are isolated to two areas; the baby pool and the activity pool. He reported that staff will open the activity pool without all floor inlets operating, but within Public Health guidelines. Mr. Spencer reported that the general contractor and subcontractor are taking responsibility for the problems. He stated that the Park District wants to end up with the product that it paid for and that staff does not anticipate having to close the pool. Mr. Spencer stated that the main pool will be fixed in the fall.

Ms. Herakovich stated that staff will address the issue with the media up front.

Scott Park

Ms. Herakovich reported that she received comments from President Kuhl and Commissioner Petry on the proposed design for Scott Park. She stated that staff would like to submit a grant application for development of Scott Park.

Commissioner Petry reiterated that he does not want a parking lot in the turn around area. Vice President Solon stated that she thinks that a combination of a couple of the designs would work best.

ACTION ITEMS

Consideration of a Request to Use Dodds Park for 4th of July Freedom Celebration

Mr. DeLuce reported that due to construction at Memorial Stadium, the Freedom Celebration committee does not feel safe having the fireworks in the same location as last year. He stated that the committee has looked at other areas and feels that Dodds Park is the best place for the fireworks. Mr. DeLuce reported that no spectators will be allowed on any of the sports fields. He stated that Mr. Spencer and he have met with the committee to address Park District concerns. A map outlining the launch site was presented to the Board. Mr. DeLuce stated staff was recommending Board approval to host the fireworks within Dodds Park with the understanding that all the necessary permits, safety guidelines, and conditions be met by the Committee to ensure a successful community event.

Commissioner Dodds expressed his concerns regarding the deadline for security, fencing, reimbursables, and damage to the street into Dodds Park. President Kuhl expressed her concern with the committee being a volunteer organization.

Mr. Spencer stated that all of the concerns will be addressed in an agreement and that a certificate of insurance naming the Park District as an additional insured will be required, and that the City of Champaign will make the entrance and exit one way.

This item will be forwarded to the June 13th Regular meeting for Board consideration.

Consideration of an Agreement between the Park District and WDWS/WHMS

Ms. Auteberry presented the staff report on the proposed Park Partner agreement WDWS/WHMS and the Park District. She stated that the Park District has partnered with WDWS/WHMS for several years and that they have been a tremendous support to the Park District. Ms. Auteberry reported that the majority of the agreement remains unchanged from previous years. She stated that the proposed agreement calls for a minimum of 1,000 promotional spots to be used to promote various special events and provides WDW/WHMS the first right to submit a proposal to sponsor and support any new event with the Park District having final say based on its needs. Ms. Auteberry stated that staff recommends that the agreement be forwarded to the Board for approval.

This item will be forwarded to the June 13th Regular meeting for Board consideration.

Consideration of Moving Forward with the Sholem Aquatic Master Plan with Williams Architects

Mr. DeLuce reported that the Park District has approximately \$575,000 to begin the process of completing the master plan for the Sholem Aquatic Center. He reported that as part of the Aquatic Center master plan, a deep well with a drop slide and one meter diving board, an additional waterslide and tumble buckets for the lazy river were included but that the bids for these alternates surpassed the construction budget. Mr. DeLuce stated that since money was available, staff would like to work with Williams Architect to complete the deep well. He stated that based on input from the public and an Aquatic Center survey, the deep well was the most requested feature. Mr. DeLuce presented the pros and cons of adding a deep well to the Aquatic Center. He stated that staff was requesting Board authorization to contract with Williams Architects to complete the necessary bid documents to construct a deep well and bid out the construction for this fall.

Commissioner Petry stated that he was supportive of proceeding with the deep well. He stated that the Aquatic Center is a big success and based on user input and the availability of funds, he feels that the Park District should proceed.

Commissioner Dodds stated that adding features to the pool is not tops on his priority list. He stated that he thinks that the Park District should resolve the current problem before proceeding. Commissioner Dodds commented that he is not against hiring Williams Architects but would expect a reduced price.

Commissioner Dodds questioned whether a diving well is insurable and whether it would be feasible to purchase insurance to insure it. He suggested that staff follow up with PDRMA and request that a letter be sent to the Park District stating that a deep well is insurable.

President Kuhl commented on the overall plan for Centennial Park. She stated that she was concerned about using all of the money for a deep well and attracting a different clientele. President Kuhl also commented on the parking problem. President Kuhl stated that she was looking for a full plan for the park and questioned whether the Park District could handle additional traffic if it commits to a deep well.

Commissioner Dodds mentioned the possibility of adding parking on the east side of Crescent and adding speed bumps.

President Kuhl commented that the issues on parking and insurance need to be addressed. She suggested that the Sholem Aquatic Center master plan be kept on agendas for updates.

Consideration of an Increase in Car Allowance Amounts

Ms. Herakovich reported that increase in car allowance amounts was to be reviewed every two years. She stated that staff is requesting approval of an increase in car allowance amounts of \$4,500.00 for the Executive Director and \$4,200.00 for the Director of Recreation and Director of Operations.

Commissioner Dodds suggested that staff use credit cards to pay for gas. Vice President Solon commented that she favors car allowances and that more accounting work would be involved with using credit cards. Commissioner Petry stated that he supports staff recommendation.

This item will be forwarded to the June 13th Regular meeting for Board consideration.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Ms. Herakovich reported that Mr. Seibold has agreed to continue to work for the Park District on a part-time basis. She stated that Mr. Seibold's last day would be June 5, 2007 and that he had been with the Park District for 9 years. Ms. Herakovich stated that it has been a pleasure to work with Mr. Seibold.

Review of Prior Year Financial Activity

Mr. Seibold presented an overview of the Park District's prior year financial activity. He reported that financially the Park District finished ahead due to a variety of reasons including the Virginia Theatre, Tennis Center and Aquatic Center. Mr. Seibold stated that there were no anticipated expenses. He reported that money for trails and the soccer parking lot was carried over. Mr. Seibold reported that the main operating accounts totaled approximately \$1.5 million.

Ms. Herakovich reported that staff has become much more conscious and that she credits the staff.

Commissioner Dodds thanked Mr. Seibold for a lot of years. He stated that he hated to see Mr. Seibold leave and that he hopes that he will be available during next year's budget to consult with the Park District as needed. Commissioner Dodds stated that the Park District would compensate Mr. Seibold appropriately. He commented that it will be a huge challenge to find someone to fill Mr. Seibold's shoes. Commissioner Dodds stated that he appreciated Mr. Seibold's time and service to the Park District.

In response to a question by Commissioner Petry, Mr. Seibold responded that work has not started on Toalson Park of which a \$175,000 grant was received. Ms. Herakovich reported that there have been issues with dirt and the legal description which are being corrected.

Virginia Theatre Year in Review

Mr. DeLuce presented statistical information on attendance at the Virginia Theatre. He stated that of all Park District facilities, the Virginia Theatre stood out. Mr. DeLuce reported that 89 events were held at the Virginia in FY 06-07 and that currently 59 have been planned for FY 07-08. Mr. DeLuce reported that the Virginia budget in FY05-06 had a deficit of \$97,000 while in FY 06-07 it was \$12,000. He stated that staff was working on a \$0 deficit for FY 07-08. He reported that staff focused on family oriented and senior programs while allowing more rentals where promoters take risks. Mr. DeLuce stated that staff is doing a fantastic job.

Review of FY07-08 Operating Budget

Mr. Seibold presented the preliminary FY07-08 budget. He reported that the total budget totaled over \$16 million. Mr. Seibold stated that the total operating budget was \$10 million, up \$1 million over last year due to the increase in property taxes. The actual tax rate decreased. He reported that the capital budget was approximately \$4.5 million and that during a normal year it is usually \$2 million.

President Kuhl commented that \$4.7 million was a lot for capital projects for FY 07-08. She suggested that staff take a hard look at the capital projects budgeted and the cost to maintain including people and commodities.

Commissioner Dodds stated that his concern was being able to pay for operations and that the Aquatic Center was the most expensive. Mr. Seibold commented on the \$525,000 operating budget. Commissioner Dodds stated that the Aquatic Center is labor intensive and that he would like to see what the operational cost will be.

Commissioner Petry stated that the most important part of budget is to fulfill the desire of the community. He stated that this is a unique opportunity and a rarity. Commissioner Petry stated that being conservative is good and that he also understands the trends in future. He stated commented on additional cost to add in a deep well as well as the significant resources that can be directed.

Commissioner Petry stated that we need to make sure we are taking advantage of the opportunity. He stated that he is pleased to see the Pipeline Trail, Morrissey, Johnston, Douglass and Mattis Park paths reflected in the budget. He expressed his concerns about making decisions without the trails plan and about budgeting \$600,000 for parking lots and paving. He stated that he would like to prioritize according to the public's list including the Virginia Theatre.

Vice President Solon stated that she was excited about additional parking due to safety concerns. She stated that all are capital projects and the money is well spent. Vice President Solon stated that the Aquatic Center will pay for additional expenses and that parking lots are well justified.

Treasurer Wackerlin left the meeting at 6:29 p.m.

President Kuhl suggested that staff take another look at budget based on comments from the Board and bring the list back to the Board for consideration. She suggested putting operational items at the bottom and bigger items lumped together. President Kuhl encouraged Ms. Herakovich to follow up with Commissioner Griggs for any comments.

Ms. Herakovich asked for suggestions from the Board on how to have better conversations before staff nears the end of putting together the capital budget.

Discussion ensued on parking lots. Mr. Spencer commented that the expansion of existing parking lots were designed to be finished this way. Commissioner Dodds stated that the design and master plan were approved and that the project was not completed due to lack of funds.

President Kuhl suggested that staff review the dollar amount invested in Dodds Park and determine what is left to be completed.

Discussion ensued on the use of the Parkland College truck training area as a parking lot.

Vice President Solon stated that Dodds Park Complex is a very successful facility. She stated grass parking is a safety issue that staff is trying to address. Vice President Solon commented that staff was selecting projects that have not been completed due to lack of funds.

Ms. Herakovich stated that staff tries to take into account the needs of residents when putting the capital budget together. She stated that operating cost, replacement cost, and cost efficient use as well as alternate use of fields will be addressed in the long range plan being compiled by PROS Consulting.

Ms. Herakovich commented that President Kuhl and Commissioner Petry will not be available to attend the June 13th Board meeting.

Vice President Solon left the meeting at 6:42 p.m.

Ms. Herakovich stated that a special meeting may need to be held to discuss the dog park.

Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Dodds made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Petry to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 6:44 p.m.

Approved:

Barbara J. Kuhl, President

Bobbie Herakovich, Secretary