

**CHAMPAIGN PARK DISTRICT/URBANA PARK DISTRICT
JOINT SPECIAL RECREATION MEETING
CHAMPAIGN AND URBANA PARK COMMISSIONERS**

June 25, 2008

President Kuhl called to order the Joint Board Meeting of the Champaign and Urbana Park Districts Board of Commissioners on Wednesday, June 25, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. pursuant to notice duly given to all parties entitled thereto. President Kuhl presided over the meeting and Bobbie Herakovich, Executive Director, kept minutes thereof. Upon roll call, the following Commissioners, Officers and staff were present:

CHAMPAIGN PARK DISTRICT

Park Board Commissioners Present: Barbara Kuhl, Jane Solon and Joseph A. Petry

Absent: Newton Dodds and Alvin Griggs

Officers Present: Guy C. Hall, Attorney

Staff Present: Bobbie Herakovich, Executive Director/Secretary, Jan Plotner, Director of Finance, and Joe DeLuce, Director of Recreation

URBANA PARK DISTRICT

Park Board Commissioners/Officers Present: Michael Walker, Nancy Delcomyn, Deborah Rugg, Bruce Larson, and Bob Stewart

Staff Present: Vicki Mayes, Executive Director, Dan Gible, Superintendent of Recreation, Dottie Lierman, Business Manager

CHAMPAIGN-URBANA SPECIAL RECREATION

Staff Present: Tony Oligney-Estill, CUSR Director

CALL TO ORDER

President Kuhl called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. She stated that the purpose of the meeting was for a presentation on special recreation programs. President Kuhl welcomed everyone in the audience to the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

COMMENTS FROM CHAMPAIGN AND URBANA PARK BOARD PRESIDENT

President Walker thanked the Champaign Park District for hosting the meeting and indicated what a pleasure it is to have been doing this for over 20 years. He stated his belief that special recreation is one of the most successful intergovernmental relationships in the community. He further stated that the program has grown and improved to the point where it is something that both communities can be proud of and that it is always a pleasure to get together with colleagues. President Kuhl stated that Champaign Park Commissioners echo his comments.

CHAMPAIGN-URBANA SPECIAL RECREATION (CUSR) MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Oligney-Estill made a presentation on the CUSR strategic plan process and programs for Fiscal Years 2006-07 and 2007-08. A copy of the presentation is attached to the minutes. He reported that the Administrative Board and CUSR staff have worked very hard the last six months to develop a strategic plan for CUSR. He stated that CUSR is currently in the

implementation stage of the strategic plan. Mr. Oligney-Estill reported that a new vision was created as well as a five-year mission. He also reported that core values and beliefs were created during the process. Mr. Oligney-Estill stated that seven critical goal objectives were developed during the planning process. From the goal categories, 29 objectives were identified to implement over the next five years.

Mr. Oligney-Estill reported that Jeff Kurtz, a U of I faculty member in Marketing, along with the student group he advises will work with CUSR staff to develop a marketing plan. He reported that during the first semester the fall class will conduct research analysis for the marketing plan, and during the second semester the class will develop and implement an advertising plan to put in place. Mr. Oligney-Estill stated that this is a great way to connect with the U of I and also to save taxpayers' money.

Mr. Oligney-Estill reported that the reasons a marketing plan would be valuable include: to create community awareness for CUSR, try to develop additional partnerships, and prevent duplication of services, as well as make sure tax dollars are not overspent.

Mr. Oligney-Estill made a presentation on the CUSR programs. He reported that CUSR received \$1,034 in grant funds from the City of Urbana and Community Foundation in FY 07-08 while receiving only \$893 in grant funds in FY 06-07. He stated that CUSR distributed \$5,600 in scholarships this year with most of it being spent on summer camps. Mr. Oligney-Estill reported that \$2,700 was received in donations for FY 07-08 and that amount does not reflect in-kind services.

Mr. Oligney-Estill reported that inclusion requests increased for FY 07-08 to 22. He stated that an inclusion request is when a participant needs additional services or Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations. Mr. Oligney-Estill reported that CUSR staff determine the type of assistance needed which could range from making the staff aware of a participant's situation, creating a behavior management plan to help the participant be successful in the program, providing an interpreter, or providing an inclusion aide.

Mr. Gibble stated that sometimes children are not self-identified and Park District staff will call CUSR staff to ask for assistance to observe a participant and make recommendations about modifying programs to involve participants in a better way.

Mr. Oligney-Estill reported that there was a wider range of utilization of inclusion services in FY 2007-08.

Mr. Oligney-Estill reported that participation numbers of individual users increased to 438 in 2007-08 from 362 in 2006-07. He stated that the percentage breakdown was as follows: 48% from Champaign; 23% from Urbana; 3% from Rantoul; 4% from Mahomet; 0.07% from Savoy; and 19.6% from other of which 4.6% was from Tolono. Mr. Oligney-Estill reported that this year of 154 programs offered, transportation was provided for 124. He stated that youth and teen program numbers increased from 22 offered last year to 37 offered this year. Mr. Oligney-Estill reported that the number of community programs decreased this year to 109 from 119 offered last year. He reported that this was due to staff shortage and that the numbers should increase next year. Mr. Oligney-Estill stated that dance classes decreased from 11 offered last year to 9 being offered this year. He reported that the sports and fitness programs, which do not include Special Olympics, decreased from 23 offered last year to 9 being offered this year. He stated that several of the classes had to be cancelled because participants do not like these type of classes. Mr. Oligney-Estill stated that these classes are important because they help participants get the physical exercise they need. He reported that two additional Special Olympics programs were offered this year: soccer and golf. Mr. Oligney-Estill stated that Special

Olympic programs continue to be popular and that registration increased this year to 347 from 269 last year. Special Olympic programs include the most popular bowling, track and field, and other competitive sports such as basketball, softball, snow shoeing, speed skating and volleyball. He reported that the number of trips offered decreased from 27 to 23.

Mr. Oligney-Estill reported that program participation totals decreased from 218 offered last year to 199 offered this year. He reported that these numbers should increase next year because he will be at full staff. Mr. Oligney-Estill stated that the number of volunteers decreased from 177 last year to 126 this year.

NEW BUSINESS

Consideration of Approval of CUSR FY 08-09 Budget

Mr. Oligney-Estill presented the proposed FY08-09 CUSR Budget for approval. General discussion ensued regarding a number of budget items. In addition, there was discussion about growing the programs through greater involvement with nearby communities.

President Kuhl called for a vote by the Champaign Park District Commissioners. Commissioner Petry made a motion, seconded by Vice President Solon to approve the proposed FY08-09 Budget. The motion passed unanimously by the three Commissioners present.

President Walker called for a vote by the Urbana Park District Commissioners. Vice President Delcomyn made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Stewart to approve the budget. The motion passed unanimously by the five Board members present.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Larkin's Place Presentation

Kelly Loschen, member of the Larkin's Place Advisory Group (Group), reported that the Larkin's Place presentation had been made to both the Champaign and Urbana Park Districts' Boards of Commissioners. She stated that tonight she would address questions and concerns that have been raised and provide more refined budget information about Larkin's Place. Ms. Loschen stated that the Group is hoping that CUSR will make a recommendation to move forward.

Ms. Loschen stated that there was a misconception that Larkin's Place would only exist to serve disabled children. She reported that this is not true. Larkin's Place would be a center that would market to those 0 to 5 years old and anyone with a disability. However, the vision is that the facility would be for the entire community from teens to senior citizens.

Ms. Loschen reported that she, Bobbie Herakovich, Tony Oligney-Estill and Jan Plotner met and refined the proposed budget for Larkin's Place. A copy of the proposed budget is attached to the minutes. She stated that the budget was revised to show Larkin's Place breaking even after two years and being a self-sustaining facility thereafter.

Ms. Loschen reported that two major changes include removing the Drop Off/Respite Program from the operating budget and showing the café being operated by a third party. She stated that the decisions about programs can be made at a later time and jointly with CUSR. She also stated that if the café is outsourced, Larkin's Place would receive a flat percent of gross revenues which is shown in the attached budget at a conservative six percent. Ms. Loschen reported that the original budget included an expense line item representing 10% of revenues for services such as human resources, accounts payable, payroll, risk management, technology support and maintenance which has been eliminated from the proposed budget. She stated that it has been suggested that this administrative fee be paid jointly by Larkin's Place and CUSR.

The structure or amount of the fee and how it would be allocated is unknown at this time and for this reason this line item has been eliminated from the budget. Ms. Loschen reported that the profit shown in the operating budget is sufficient to cover an administrative fee as originally proposed. She stated that the liability insurance expense line item has been eliminated. Ms. Loschen reported that it is the Group's understanding that Larkin's Place liability insurance would be covered out of the Champaign Park District Tort Fund through PDRMA and any increase in the insurance premium would be reimbursed by the administrative fee. She stated that during the construction of the facility, the liability issue would need to be addressed in applicable agreements.

Ms. Loschen stated that the \$250,000 that was being asked for by the Group from the Champaign Park District has been removed from the budget. Ms. Loschen reported that the money to build the project can be raised without funds from the Champaign Park District. She commented about the need in the community for a facility like Larkin's Place which can provide a home for CUSR. Ms. Loschen stated that the Advisory Group is looking forward to raising the capital and building the building.

In response to a question by UPD Commissioner Rugg, Ms. Loschen responded that the Group plans to raise all funds and gift the facility back to the operator. Hopefully, Larkin's Place could be a home for CUSR which would then not have to rent space. She stated that the Group is looking for an operator.

In response to a question by Mr. Gible, Ms. Loschen responded that the Group has not approached others about becoming partners, but that others have contacted the Group.

In response to questions by Commissioners Dodds and Rugg, Ms. Loschen responded that the Group is looking for land for Larkin's Place and has asked Petry-Kuhne for assistance. She stated that it would be a benefit for the location to be accessible by public transportation.

In response to a question by Mr. DeLuce, Ms. Loschen responded that compliance with universal design goes beyond ADA compliance. She stated that Larkin's Place will be modeled after Creative Play (in Pittsburgh, PA).

Ms. Mara Tepper stated that Creative Play existed for 12 or 13 years and went from 20,000 to 45,000 visitors a year. She stated that Creative Play had a large mortgage and that the plan here is to raise all the capital for Larkin's Place so there will be no rent or mortgage. Ms. Tepper also stated that as Creative Play grew more and more funds were needed for overhead which led to the demise of the program. She stated that with Larkin's case, the money is being raised in advance, and the key is to find an operator.

Discussion ensued about the proposed budget and fundraising for Larkin's Place. The fundraising committee can raise funds without asking the Champaign Park District for \$250,000 and it is not asking the Park Districts' for tax benefits. Currently, funds raised are in the low seven digits with several major pledges in place. There is a plan in place to move forward.

In response to a question by Commissioner Petry, Ms. Loschen responded that the capital fund would be part of budget endowment with sufficient funds to serve as a reserve. Ms. Tepper stated that the committee will guarantee that it will raise all the money to build the building and from there go forward to raise additional funds.

Vice President Solon asked what would happen if someone hired to operate the facility decided to run the center differently. Ms. Loschen responded that there are a lot of details that need to be worked out which would be included in the contract to operate the facility.

In response to a question by Commissioner Larson about the private sector, Ms. Tepper responded that this is a recreation facility and that whether you choose to raise all donations in advance or down the line, it is not a facility that can sustain itself without dollars which a non profit agency would not be able to raise. This facility would be mission based similar to the Champaign Park District, Urbana Park District and CUSR. Ms. Loschen stated that this facility would compliment another facility.

In response to a question by Attorney Hall about exploring tax revenue in Champaign County, Amy Armstrong stated that the Developmental Services Center (DSC) Board approached her about requesting funding but that more information was needed. She stated that she has been encouraged by DSC to request funding and that it sees the need for the type of services that would be provided by Larkin's Place.

Mr. Tony Oligney-Estill presented a letter from the CUSR Advisory Board expressing its opinion regarding Larkin's Place. A copy is attached to the minutes.

President Kuhl stated that this is a very exciting project that is unique and large. She stated that both Park Districts are willing to take it under consideration, and given more time and examination. President Kuhl stated that Larkin's Place is looking for a partner, a building and someone to take over. She stated that it would probably be on the Champaign Park District's agenda in the near future for further discussion.

President Walker stated that it is an interesting possibility and that more information is needed.

Discussion ensued on putting together a task force to examine the details of the proposal.

Commissioner Larson stated that this is not a great time to ask the Urbana Park District for assistance. He stated Urbana Park District can not support what it has and is under financial constraints. Commissioner Larson stated that he would like to see \$5 million cash on the table before proceeding. He expressed his concern about getting the park district involved and then the fundraising stopped. Commissioner Larson commented that a premature commitment to the project has the potential to get the park district in financial trouble. He stated that the whole Board has to have concerns.

President Kuhl suggested that details need be discussed. She stated that it would take the entire vote of both Boards to pass this partnership with CUSR, Champaign Park District and Urbana Park District. President Kuhl stated that there are many issues that need to be addressed from both the Group and the Park Districts.

Ms. Herakovich stated that numbers drive the need for a new facility. She stated that there is precedence for cooperative efforts as shown from other examples. Ms. Herakovich commented that she is co-guardian of a person with a disability. She stated that she does not think that Larkin's Place would be a stand alone facility but rather part of a larger recreation center.

Mr. Gible commented on the type of operation needed for Larkin's Place. He stated that there are other reasons for Urbana Park District not being in a position to partner on the project. He also expressed concern that the project would not be self-supporting.

President Kuhl asked if the Champaign Park District Commissioners were in favor of putting together a task force to discuss Larkin's Place.

Commissioner Petry made a motion on behalf of the Champaign Park District, seconded by Vice President Solon to put together a task force to study Larkin's Place. The motion passed 3-0.

Commissioner Larson stated that more study needs to take place. Discussion ensued on the task force.

Commissioner Rugg agreed that Urbana Park District should be involved with discussions and include task force members. She stated that it is worthy of consideration and that there appears to be a need.

Vice President Delcomyn stated she personally feels that everyone in Urbana thinks Larkin's Place is a good idea but that money is tight. She stated that everyone is naturally inclined to go slow, but noted the success with CUSR.

Commissioner Rugg made a motion that Urbana Park District participate in the task force to study the Larkin's Place proposal. The motion was seconded by Vice President Delcomyn and passed unanimously by the five Commissioners.

Ms. Herakovich asked Commissioners to email Mr. Oligney-Estill with what they feel is needed at a facility such as Larkin's Place. Commissioner Rugg stated that the Board should decide what these items are.

President Kuhl stated that the Champaign Park District would put this item on its next agenda and ask for volunteers to serve on the task force, as well as put together a list of questions. Ms. Herakovich suggested that the questions be put together by both Park Districts since CUSR is a joint program.

President Kuhl suggested scheduling a joint task force meeting at the end of July. Ms. Mayes stated that August would be better since she would not have a full Board until the August meeting.

COMMENTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

None

ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the Boards, Urbana Park District Commissioner Stewart made a motion to adjourn which was seconded by Commissioner Petry. The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Approved

Barbara J. Kuhl, President
Champaign Park District

Bobbie Herakovich, Secretary
Champaign Park District

Michael Walker, President
Urbana Park District