

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

**May 27, 2009**

The Champaign Park District Board of Commissioners held a Study Session on Wednesday, May 27, 2009 at 5:00 p.m. at the Bresnan Meeting Center, 706 Kenwood Road, Champaign, Illinois, pursuant to notice duly given. President Jane Solon presided over the meeting.

Present: President Jane Solon, Vice President Alvin Griggs, Commissioners Newton Dodds, Barbara Kuhl, and Joseph Petry (*arrived at 5:05 p.m.*), and Treasurer Gary Wackerlin and Attorney Guy Hall

Staff: Bobbie Herakovich, Executive Director/Secretary, Joe DeLuce, Director of Recreation, Jan Plotner, Director of Finance, Jim Spencer, Director of Operations, Laura Auteberry, Marketing and Development Director, Terri Gibble, Planner, and Cindy Harvey, Administrative Assistant

Nancy Creason with the League of Women Voters was present as well as other staff.

**Call to Order**

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

**Discussion Items**

Park/School Cooperation

Sue Grey, Vice President of Unit 4 School Board, reported that the School District was fortunate enough to pass the one percent (1%) sales tax referendum this past spring. She stated that this will allow the School District to complete upgrades and maintenance at its very old and rapidly deteriorating buildings. Ms. Grey reported that two schools in particular bring them before the Park Board; Booker T. Washington and Garden Hills Elementary. As part of the consent decree the School District needs to add to strands north of University Avenue. Ms. Grey stated that the sales tax will enable the School District to add the strands. She stated that secondly the School District questioned what really needs to be done so that the two schools can become more like community centers and enhance what already exists. Ms. Grey stated that the School District's first option is to work with the existing locations at the school sites, or second, pursue the potential of a collaborative effort with the Park District. She stated that the School District would like to get the Park District's permission to begin a process to gather input on how both entities can create a combined park district/school district effort to enhance the neighborhood.

Ms. Grey stated that the School District would like to know the Park District's needs as the schools are rebuilt and if they are things that both entities could do together to enhance the neighborhood to serve all the people. She noted that both entities serve the same group of people. Ms. Grey stated that the School District has time constraints and hopes to have the schools refurbished by 2011.

Mark Ritz, BLDD, reviewed the proposed project schedule scenarios for completion of Booker T. Washington and Garden Hills Elementary Schools. The schedule includes timeframes for design, bidding and construction. He stated that the schedule is meant to be very schematic and that it will possibly be adjusted as time goes on.

Stuart Brodsky, OWP/P-BED, reviewed the proposed Site Concept Process outline for construction of a new Booker T. Washington School and renovations and additions to Garden Hills Elementary School. He reported that that some dates have already occurred. Mr. Brodsky

stated that next date of June 2<sup>nd</sup> is for the Site Committee to meet and share information about each other's existing programs and future needs. Afterwards, the goal is to hold two Community Site Charrettes for the community and Site Committee to meet to get thoughts and ideas and experiment with possible locations. He stated that once this process has been completed, the Site Committee would meet to finalize recommendations to present to the Boards for possible approval. Mr. Brodsky stated that the hope is to come to a consensus by late June on an approach.

Gene Logas, Finance Director of Unite 4 School, stated that the School District is asking the Park Board's permission to meet with its staff and in a broader way to meet with the community to talk about how the School District could improve the site at B.T. Washington and Gardens Hill Elementary schools, especially B.T. Washington School. He stated that the School District would like know how it could provide a better Douglass Center and what improvements it could do to make it more attractive to both entities' constituents. Mr. Logas reported that the School District is very interest in working with the Park District by creating better facilities in Douglass Park as well as adjacent to Garden Hills Elementary School.

Commissioner Kuhl stated she thinks that the scheduled dates for the charrettes might be a bit aggressive. She stated that she would like to see the dates for the charrettes pushed back until the Park District has worked out some legal matters. Commissioner Kuhl expressed concern with going to the public prematurely.

Ms. Grey stated that she thinks that the Park Board needs to discuss this matter among themselves to determine what outcome they would like to see.

Commissioner Kuhl asked the School District representatives if land was no object for them would it be beneficial for the Park District to know what you would like. She stated that the School District has money and the Park District does not. She noted that these were not items the Park District was considering prior to the request from the School District.

Ms. Grey commented that the School District is trying to create equity in its school buildings and provide the basic space needed in all of its buildings for the children.

In response to a question by President Solon, Art Culver, Unit 4 Superintendent, stated that rebuilding or renovating on the existing sites would not be ideal for the School District but that they would make it work and would continue the shared arrangement with the Douglass Center for use of the gym.

Mr. Culver agreed that both entities need to review the legal ramifications before going to the public.

President Kuhl suggested that the charrettes be canceled and moved back to later dates. She stated that she thinks it is important to be prepared before going to the community.

Mr. Culver stated that the School District purpose at this meeting was to seek permission to have dialogue with Park District staff and get both entities attorneys involved to review deeds.

Ms. Herakovich commented that the Park District's attorney has already been directed, on behalf of the Park Board, to research the deeds for both sites. She stated that once this has been

completed, the attorney will report back to the Board and the Board will direct staff on how to proceed.

In response to a comment by Mr. Culver, President Solon stated that the Park District's attorney has to research the deeds and restrictions prior to communicating with the School District's attorney.

Ms. Grey questioned the next step in the process. Ms. Herakovich stated that once the attorney renders an opinion to the Park Board, the Board will direct staff on how to proceed.

Commissioner Dodds stated that he understands that the School District is trying to build and remodel some additional schools and upgrade some schools. He stated that he thinks that the School District ought to be doing this within the bounds that was sold to the voters, which was not to add buildings because of so much additional money but rather to fulfill the School District's needs at the schools. Commissioner Dodds encouraged the School District to remodel or rebuild any way it wants, but encouraged it to build what they want within the confines of its property or buy additional property. He stated that the Park District can not just up and give and sell property or anything of that nature just on a whim because somebody wants it. Commissioner Dodds stated that because of restrictions when the park land was given to the Park District, it does not have any land to give. He stated that he thinks that the School District needs have a complete project prior to having any dialogue with the Park District. He stated that park land at Garden Hills is not an option due to restrictions when the land was given to the Park District. Commissioner stated that he thinks that the School District should proceed on this basis before putting the Park District in a difficult position because it could not give its property. He noted that the he was elected to represent the people in the interests of the Champaign Park District.

Mr. Culver commented that the School District is not trying to get the Park District to give it anything. He stated that the reality is that there is no space at B.T. Washington other than park space. Mr. Culver stated that the School District will not use eminent domain to acquire property for either school. He reiterated that the School District would like to explore and see if both entities can work together to enhance the facilities on the B.T. Washington's site as well as see whether it is possible to work with the City of Champaign on drainage and everything associated with Garden Hills Elementary school. He stated that if in the end there is no interest, or due to legal issues, the School District would move forward using existing footprints.

Commissioner Dodds commented that he fully understands and that the Park District will continue to work with the School District. He noted that the School District uses the park daily and that he is aware that both entities deal with the same tax dollars. He stated that there has been great cooperation between School District and the Park District, as was taught by Dr. Mellon, and he would like to see this pattern continue. He stated that the Park District is not going to be able to sell or give the School District any property at Garden Hills nor give up a park at Douglass. He stated that he was elected to oversee parks.

Commissioner Kuhl stated that because the Champaign Park District already has to representatives on the Site Concept Committee, there has already been a statement made that we are willing to discuss the options. She stated that obviously this could be an opportunity for the School District and the Park District. Commissioner Kuhl stated that as a Board she thinks that it would want to pursue those opportunities until it find out that they will not work. The Park District has already committed the time of two Commissioners to work with the School District. She stated that the Board needs Park District's attorney to look the deeds and see what they say.

Commissioner Kuhl stated that she would like to see the door kept open until it is closed. She stated that both entities are working for the same people and if we can have a win win situation, everybody wins. Commissioner Kuhl stated that she would like to restrict the public charettes until more information is available which goes along with comments made by Commissioner Dodds. She stated that if the process engages the public prematurely there might be an inappropriate misperception among citizens.

Vice President Griggs stated that he agreed with Commissioner Kuhl. Commissioner Petry stated that he agrees and believes that are some opportunities worth exploring. He stated that the Park District has restrictions but welcome the opportunity to try and work together.

Ms. Grey thanked the Board for allowing the School District to come before them. She stated that the ideas of collaboration have been successful. Ms. Grey stated that the School District is looking at the big picture and has to work within its parameters. She stated that they have to look at what is in the best interests of the people they serve and the community, and if that is refurbishing schools, that is great, they have done their job. Ms. Grey stated that if there is an opportunity to enhance or partner with the Park District this would be great as well.

Ms. Herakovich asked the School District is they would be willing to postpone the public charrettes. Mr. Culver responded that they would change the dates of the charrettes until legal issues have been concluded.

#### FY 09-10 Proposed Budget

Ms. Plotner reported that the additions and changes to the FY 09-10 Tentative Working Budget includes mostly carryover items from the FY 08-09 projects including tuckpointing at the Virginia Theatre, the lighting retrofit project, and Porter Park construction, as well as adding funds for emerald ash borer tree stump removal. She stated that funds have been received from the Community Matters Grant. Ms. Plotner stated that funds have also been included for the repair of potholes on Parkland Way.

Ms. Herakovich recommended that the Board review the proposed budget and let Ms. Plotner or her know if they have questions. She reminded the Board that public hearing on the proposed budget has been set for June 10<sup>th</sup>.

#### FY 09-10 Goals Discussion

Ms. Herakovich presented the list of proposed goals and objectives compiled by staff for FY 09-10. She stated that the Board may want to add, change or simplify them into more general categories. Ms. Herakovich reported that the goals follow the capital improvements plans. She stated that staff is continuing with initiatives considered most important to the residents including a trails systems, creating an environmental habitat for education, passive park use and maintaining existing parks and facilities. Ms. Herakovich stated that staff attempts to balance park improvements in different neighborhoods throughout the community to maintain what the Park District already has. She reported that in addition to maintaining existing parks and facilities, goals include working to ensure the future financial viability of the Park District; doing its share to conserve the natural and historic environment; supplementing funding with gifts, donation and grants and reducing expenditures to reflect economy; and celebrating our successes. She asked the Board for any changes or comments to the proposed goals and objectives.

In response to a question by Commissioner Kuhl, Ms. Herakovich stated that Land Design Collaborative prepared the conceptual plan for Porter Park. She reported that the Company no

longer exists and there is a need for detailed design, construction and bidding documents for the next phase of Porter Park.

In response to a question by Commissioner Kuhl, Ms. Herakovich stated that goals correspond to items that have already been approved in the capital improvements budget.

Ms. Herakovich noted that items missing from the goals include Sholem and Heritage Park path.

In response to a question by Commissioner Kuhl, Ms. Herakovich stated that some of the goals are funded through donations.

Commissioner Petry stated that he would like to see Heritage Park trail added back in even though there is no funding for this project. He stated that he is in favor of getting the easements and having a basic design should funds become available. Commissioner Petry commented that he would like to see the FY 08-09 and FY 09-10 goals identified as being removed, postponed or ready for action. He noted that last year a brainstorming session between staff and the Board was held to set the goals. Commissioner Petry stated that the process was different this year.

Ms. Herakovich stated that the capital improvement budget was completed earlier this year. She stated that due to lack of funds, staff did not come back with a wish list. Ms. Herakovich stated that she will make sure all goals from FY 08-09 and FY 09-10 goals are included. She noted that several of the goals will take several years to complete.

Commissioner Petry commented that he is not asking that the process be done differently. He stated that the Park District is at a point where it takes a few years to complete a project. Commissioner Petry stated that the Park District does not have a lot of funds. He suggested the process may develop such that the goals are set for two to three years and revisited when situations change.

Ms. Herakovich stated that she would recommend setting goals for two to three years and revisiting when needed. Commissioner Dodds noted that he likes the new Dog Park sign and discussion ensued regarding signage.

This item will be placed on the June 10<sup>th</sup> Board agenda for consideration.

#### Kaufman Lake Pier/Master Plan

Ms. Gible reported that the challenge in order to locate the pier at the correct height above the water (3 ft. vs. 7 ft.), the pier project is only a portion of a much bigger project requiring construction adjacent to the pier location. She stated that additional funding will need to be allocated from this year's capital project budget to make it work. Ms. Gible reported that the pier construction completion deadline was extended to March 2010. She stated that the deadline will be extended for one additional month which will still allow for the project to be completed by the grant deadline.

Ms. Gible presented three alternatives to the Board for their consideration. Alternative 1 is to locate the accessible pier as indicated in the master plan using funds from the grant and additional funding from the capital project budget. She stated that in this alternative the facility is considered handicapped accessible as it is located close to parking, restrooms and deep water. The cost for the pier is estimated to be \$193,500 and cost for the overlook area is estimated to be \$256,900. These cost estimates include a 35% construction and design contingency because it is

still in conceptual form. Alternate 2 is to position the accessible pier in a temporary location using only the funds from the grant. In this alternative, the pier will not be considered handicapped accessible as it would not be located near parking, restrooms or deep water. The cost for the pier is estimated to be \$193,500. The cost estimate includes a 35% construction and design contingency because it is still in conceptual form. Alternate 3 is to decline the grant and do not move forward with this project. This alternative may affect future funding opportunities from the Community Foundation and would not be a good thing to do.

Ms. Gibble reported that staff is recommending Alternate 1, locating the accessible pier as indicated in the master plan using funds from the grant and additional funding from the capital projects budget.

In response to questions by Commissioner Dodds about addressing the issue of children hooking someone when they are fishing and the grades and possible loss of footing on the overlook area, Ms. Gibble stated she has directed the architect to address these concerns in the more detailed design.

Ms. Herakovich stated that staff is looking for Board authorization to move forward with allocating funding for this project.

In response to a question by Attorney Hall, Ms. Herakovich stated that the only source of grant fund is the \$120,000 from the Kellogg Foundation. She commented on conversation she had with Attorney Hall regarding possible additional grant funding.

Commissioner Dodds questioned whether if the difference in the height of the water would lower the cost of the project.

Ms. Herakovich commented that staff worked with an accessibility committee which made recommendations for the design of the pier.

In response to a question by President Solon, Ms. Plotner stated that possible funding would be allocated as follows: \$240,000 from Special Recreation funds; \$120,000 from the Kellogg grant; and \$224,000 from Kaufman Lake Project budget line. She stated that a question has been asked if part of the funds could be taken from ADA money.

Ms. Gibble stated that she will take the comments received back to the architects to see if difference in height has an impact on cost.

This item will be placed on the June 10<sup>th</sup> Board agenda for consideration.

### Greenway and Trails Guidelines

Ms. Gibble reported that the Design Guidelines were created by the Champaign County Greenways & Trails Technical Committee to facilitate the development of non-motorized trails throughout Champaign County. She stated that some items do not apply to the Park District and that those that do are considered best practices. Ms. Gibble reported that the Design Guidelines will be used for sidewalks, bike lanes, share-use trails and nature trails.

Discussion ensued. Commissioner Kuhl commented that it appears that a lot of time and effort went into the Guidelines and thanked staff members for their efforts. In response to a question by Commissioner Kuhl, Ms. Gibble stated that it has not been decided how the designs will work and will

let the cities of Champaign and Urbana take the lead since they have several trails. She stated that the Park District is not ready to implement the Guidelines yet.

Ms. Herakovich thanked Ms. Gible for her hard work on this project.

This item will be placed on the June 10<sup>th</sup> Board agenda for consideration.

## **Bids/RFPs**

### Consideration of Bids for Janitorial Services at the Tennis Center

Mr. DeLuce reported that due to the increase in the use of the Tennis Center, staff increased the number of cleaning days from five to six. He stated that staff would now like to increase the number of days to seven. Mr. DeLuce reported that last year there were approximately 58,000 users at the Tennis Center. He stated that there were issues regarding the cleaning in the past. However, since the Park District has been using Environmental Solutions and Services (ESS), it has not experienced any issues. Mr. DeLuce stated that staff recommends entering into a contract with ESS in the amount of \$21, 228 for cleaning service seven nights per week and washing the courts twice per year.

This item will be moved forward to the June 10<sup>th</sup> Board agenda for consideration.

## **Action Items**

### Consideration of Resolutions Giving the Authority to Participate in the Illinois Metropolitan Investment Fund

Treasurer Wackerlin reported that based on additional research he learned that funds are invested in U. S. Treasury Securities for one to three years. He stated that you would be buying shares of mutual funds which can fluctuate slightly in value. Treasurer Wackerlin stated that the investments are as safe as you can get at this point. He stated that his concern was for the Board to realize that it would be buying shares in mutual funds rather than a dollar in dollar out saving account.

Ms. Plotner stated that this would be one of the Park District's ten types of investments. She reported that a several of the groups in Chicago invest in IMET of anywhere from \$0.5 to \$1.5 million invested. Ms. Plotner stated that the Park District may want to invest some funds because the return is 4 to 5 percent.

Discussion ensued. Commissioner Kuhl suggested that a minimum and maximum amount be set. She stated it should be revisited annually.

Staff will bring this item back with a minimum and maximum amount for Board consideration at the June 10<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.

### Consideration of an Agreement between the Village of Savoy and the Park District to offer Group Fitness Classes

Mr. DeLuce reported on the first year of the agreement between the Village of Savoy and the Park District to offer fitness classes. He stated that the agreement calls for the Park District to provide group fitness programs at the Savoy Recreation Center with the Village paying 25% of the costs associated with providing the fitness programs, including part of the Park District's Fitness and Wellness Coordinator's salary, external training opportunities for fitness instructors; and promotional materials for the programs as well as reimbursement for payroll costs for instructors. Mr. DeLuce stated that changes to the agreement include, allowing the Village to

keep the revenue it receives for group classes and allowing the Park District's Fitness and Wellness Coordinator to spend 15 hour per month at the Savoy Recreation Center to assist with recruitments and other matters. He stated that the agreement has been a win-win for both park entities. Mr. DeLuce stated that staff recommends approval of the agreement between the Village and the Park District.

This item will be placed on the June 10<sup>th</sup> Board agenda for consideration.

#### Consideration of Approval of West Side Police Memorial Design

Ms. Gibble reported that the Fire and Police Memorial Committee came to the Park District and expressed its desire to update the current Fire and Police Memorial. She stated that their fundraising has gone well and the bronze figures and the slab of granite have been ordered. Ms. Gibble reported that the Committee is aware that additional site work is needed. To raise money, the committee would like to sell bricks that will have inscriptions on them. She presented the drawing of where the bricks would be installed in the concrete base of the memorial. Ms. Gibble reported that staff is recommending that the Committee be allowed to move forward with selling bricks as a fundraising idea.

Discussion ensued about the location of the Memorial. After discussion, it was the consensus of the Board that this item be placed on the June 10<sup>th</sup> Board agenda for consideration as recommended by staff.

#### Consideration of a Request from Daughters of the American Revolution to Place a Historical Marker in West Side Park

Ms. Gibble reported that the Daughters of the American Revolution suggested that a memorial be placed in a location in West Side Park. She stated that staff is recommending that the memorial be placed on the north side of the park between where the main north-south path and the shaded sculpture are located. She showed the Board the proposed location on a site plan. Ms. Gibble stated that staff recommends locating the marker within West Side Park in the location suggested by staff.

This item will be placed on the June 10<sup>th</sup> Board agenda for consideration.

#### **Closed Session**

Commissioner Petry made a motion, seconded by Vice President Griggs to convene into Executive Session under the Illinois Open Meetings Act, specifically 5 ILCS, Par. 120/2(c)(5) the purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body and Par. 120/2(c) (6) the setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the public body. Upon roll call vote, the vote was as follows: Commissioner Petry – yes; Vice President Griggs – yes; President Solon – yes; Commissioner Dodds – yes; and Commissioner President Kuhl – yes. The motion passed 5-0.

#### **Adjourn**

After adjournment of the Close Session, and there being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Dodds made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Petry seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0 and the meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Approved:

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Jane L. Solon, President

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Joseph DeLuce, Secretary *pro tem*