

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

**May 26, 2010**

The Champaign Park District Board of Commissioners held a Study Session on Wednesday, May 26, 2010 immediately following a Special Board Meeting at the Bresnan Meeting Center, 706 Kenwood Road, Champaign, Illinois, pursuant to notice duly given. President Solon presided over the meeting.

Present: President Jane Solon, Vice President Griggs, Commissioners Newton Dodds and Joseph Petry, Attorney Elizabeth Megli

Absent: Commissioner Barbara Kuhl

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 Gible, Park Planner, Amy Doll, Aquatics/Tennis/Fitness Manager, and Cindy Harvey, Administrative Assistant

Other staff were present as well as members of the public.

**Call to Order**

President Solon called the meeting to order immediately following the Special Board Meeting.

**Discussion Items**

FY 10-11 Proposed Budget

Ms. Herakovich reported that Ms. Plotner will highlight the proposed budget for FY 2010-11.

Ms. Herakovich informed the audience that the decision on the Virginia Theatre marquee had been postponed until five Board Members are present.

Ms. Plotner explained a PowerPoint presentation of the preliminary budget. She reported that goals are to maintain fiscal control with the uncertain economy; conserve revenue and expenses which are budgeted with decreases; continue looking toward the future; apply for energy grants; master plan parks; develop parks; apply for park grants; renovate the Virginia Theatre; and continue to provide quality services that meet the needs of the community without compromising standards. At the June Regular Board meeting, the proposed Budget and Appropriation Ordinance will be presented and at the July Regular Board meeting a public hearing on the ordinance will be held and the final budget presented for consideration and approval.

Ms. Plotner presented a breakdown of the revenue categories and the total operating expenses. She reported that the proposed budget includes a tax revenue increase of 2½%. Ms. Plotner reported that initially the Park District was looking at less than a 1% increase. The projected increase is due to recovered enterprise zone funds and new construction. She stated that the Park District received an increase of of tax revenue of \$244,000. Ms. Plotner reported that the fee revenue is budgeted downward, partially due the temporary closure of the Virginia Theatre and budgeting conservatively. She stated that the total operating revenue reflects a decrease of \$17,000. Ms. Plotner further reported that interest income continues to decline. For example,

two years ago the Park District interest was \$300,000 and that next year it is projected to be \$62,000. She reported that the total budgeted operating expenses reflects a decrease of \$83,000 from the FY 09-10 budget for several reasons including not filling vacant positions.

Ms. Plotner reviewed the breakdown of revenue sources. She reported that the property tax is the Park District's main revenue source. Ms. Plotner stated that staff would like to see the fee revenue and the interest revenue higher. She reported that the grant revenue is projected at 4% of which \$400,000 is projected to be received from the State of Illinois for the Virginia Theatre; \$154,000 for connection to Pipeline Trail (if completed); \$11,000 Illinois Arts Council Grant; and a small grant for energy conservation.

Ms. Plotner reported that budgeted expenditures from FY 09-10 to the proposed FY 10-11 budget show a decrease. The proposed budget shows a small increase (less than 1%) in personnel cost due to the increases in benefit costs. The proposed budget reflects a decrease in payroll, small increase in contractual services and a decrease in debt payments. As with many park districts, personnel costs are the greatest expenditure followed by capital and contractual services. Park District payroll and benefits total \$6.3 million.

Ms. Plotner reported that staff believes that it has been fiscally responsible with the past budget and in the proposed budget. She stated that two full time positions and one regular part time position have been eliminated. Automatic pay increases were not given to returning seasonal staff except for minimum wage increases that will occur in July. The Park District also reviewed and capped wage ranges for seasonal staff; delayed hiring of vacant full time positions; and is reviewing positions to determine which vacant positions should be filled. Other savings may occur through the energy cooperative; printing costs; enhanced use of technology by making paychecks and W2's available on line; and posting and accepting applications online. Ms. Plotner reported that this is staff's first attempt at including program budgets in the budget document.

In the General Fund, staff is projecting an increase of \$531,000 to the reserves and in the Recreation Fund a decrease of \$170,000. The decrease in the Recreation Fund is due to budgeting approximately \$400,000 for capital expenses of which \$325,000 would be for possible renovations at the Sholem Aquatic Center, with the remainder for repair work at Sholem and Spalding. She reported that a reserve increase is projected in the Museum Fund. Insurance, IMRF and Social Security reserve funds are intentionally being spent down because the reserve amount is over 90 days.

Ms. Plotner reviewed a chart outlining all of the various funds. The chart included estimates of reserves at the end of FY 09-10 as well as the estimated amount of reserves for the various funds at the end of the year for 2010-11. She stated that there may be a need to set aside specific funds for future capital needs, possibly in next year's budget.

Ms. Plotner reported that the \$2.7 million capital budget was approved earlier in the year. There is approximately \$500,000 carryover in capital to complete Porter Family Park project, Kaufman Lake project and other on-going projects. Ms. Plotner reported that a 5-year projection of capital projects is included in the budget document as well as a proposed salary classification schedule. She stated that the salary classification schedule represents an increase to the bottom of the wage scale according to the CPI increase. Ms. Herakovich stated that the Park District is playing catch up and aging the categories. Ms. Plotner stated that this also adds a cap to the wages. Ms. Herakovich stated that this means that if a person reaches the top of their

classification, they would not be eligible for a salary increase to their base salary. She reported that if they receive a merit increase it would be given as a bonus and not added to the base salary. Ms. Plotner reported that if the bottom of the wage scale moves up, there are four employees who would be affected at a total cost of \$3,700.

Ms. Herakovich asked the Board to let staff know if they had any questions. She stated that staff's goal is to show Board and staff what total costs are for various programs. Ms. Herakovich stated that this is based on staff's best educated guess and that staff will continue to refine the budgets and move forward.

Commissioner Petry stated that he believes that we are making good progress and that he appreciates that. He complimented Ms. Plotner on the summary presentation. Commissioner Petry stated that he would like to see some metrics to make sure we are watching our expenditures to hold ourselves accountable. He asked when the next meeting would be to discuss capital projects. Ms. Herakovich responded that the capital budget is usually approved in January. She stated that a determination on whether a needs assessment is needed should be made. Ms. Herakovich talked about the projects that have been completed and are ongoing in response to the residents' top priorities from the last needs assessment. She stated that the Board could wait on survey results or set priorities sooner.

Vice President Griggs asked when Phase II of the Facility Study would be completed. Ms. Herakovich responded that it will be presented to the Board in June. Vice President Griggs suggested waiting on the study before setting priorities. Ms. Herakovich stated that should the Board decide to go forward and use any of the recommendations from the study, design and construction would be included in a future capital improvements budget.

Commissioner Petry expressed his concern about the number of ongoing, unfinished projects. He noted that he was especially concerned about Sholem Aquatic Center, Porter Family Park and the Virginia Theatre. Commissioner Petry stated that his personal preference would be to finish these projects before starting another project. He expressed a desire to finish projects possibly utilizing reserves.

Ms. Herakovich commented that staff works at the pleasure of the Board and would be happy to finish projects. She commented on the Virginia Theatre project and stated that she would like to see the renovations completed.

President Solon stated that she personally would like to see the parks completed before the Virginia Theatre. She stated that the Virginia Theatre serves certain segment of the community while parks are for everyone in general. President Solon commented that the Virginia Theatre needs a great deal of money to complete. She stated that she feels the Park District would be better off completing Porter Family Park followed by improvements to Boulder Ridge Park and then Virginia Theatre which will be a project that will be ongoing.

Commissioner Dodds stated that he agreed with Commissioner Petry's concerns. He stated that the Park District has too many current projects to ask for another survey and another set of priorities. Commissioner Dodds expressed his desire to see small projects that range in cost from \$1,000 to \$10,000 completed. He stated that he does not have a problem if the Park District applies for a grant. He reported that he favored completing the improvements to the upper and lower lobbies of the Virginia Theatre and the auditorium at a later date. If the

Champaign Parks Foundation continues to be successful at raising funds and there is potential to secure additional funds for seating and other improvements to the Virginia Theatre.

Ms. Herakovich reported that staff is working on the list of remaining improvements that need to be completed at the Virginia Theatre and obtaining architectural costs for each of the projects to present to the Board. There is approximately \$140,000 in the Virginia Theatre renovation fund in ~~\$140,000~~ unrestricted funds. Additionally, there are restricted funds: \$100,000 for seats, \$45,000 for dressing rooms, and \$23,000 for the proscenium. Ms. Herakovich reported that once total cost are assigned for each item it will be easier to seek public support for additional funds.

Ms. Herakovich stated that she believes that staff and the Board did a great job last year by completing Scott Park, Toalson Park, Kaufman Lake pier, Dog Park, and Phase 1 of Porter Family Park. She reported that staff would be thrilled to be able to complete Porter Family Park and Boulder Ridge Park.

Commissioner Dodds commented that finalizing Porter Family Park and Boulder Ridge Park would be significant accomplishments for the Board and staff. He commented on the ongoing issue at Scott Park and encouraged staff to get the matter resolved. Mr. Spencer reported that he is meeting with City staff on May 27, 2010 about it.

In response to a question by Vice President Griggs, Ms. Plotner responded that with the new pay scale, if an employee has reached the top of the pay scale, the employee will receive a separate payment amount with no pay added to the base salary. Ms. Herakovich stated that the categories will continue to age with the consumer price index. Ms. Plotner noted that there are a few employees whose salaries are at the top of the pay scale.

Ms. Herakovich complimented Ms. Plotner on all her efforts to get the preliminary budget completed. She reported that the budget will be available for public review. Ms. Herakovich stated that the Budget and Appropriation ordinance will be presented to the Board at the June 9, 2010 Regular Board meeting with a Public Hearing and adoption of the ordinance at the July 14, 2010 Regular Board meeting.

Commissioner Dodds commented on the funds approved for removal of Ash trees due to the Emerald Ash Borer infestation. He stated that there has not been evidence of the Emerald Ash Borer in Paxton, Illinois. He does not think that removal of the trees should continue unless there is a need to do so. Ms. Herakovich noted that staff has removed 12-14 damaged trees. She reported that staff has been busy planting the 175 donated trees received by the Park District. Ms. Herakovich stated that any remaining funds may be used for contractual services. Commissioner Petry stated that it was nice to see the trees planted at the Dog Park. The trees were donated by the Robeson Family.

Vice President Griggs complimented Ms. Plotner on her presentation of the preliminary budget. He stated that he liked the way it was summarized and presented which made it much simpler for the Board to follow.

#### Sholem Aquatic Center Plan

Ms. Herakovich reported that the next item is the Sholem Aquatic Center plan. She stated that staff is not looking for additional projects, but rather to be able to close a pool if it continues to

fail. The Park District wants to be able to maintain the same level of service for the people who are now taking advantage of Sholem and Spalding pools.

Mr. DeLuce reported that staff has been working this past year to find solutions to add amenities and complete the master plan of Sholem Aquatic Center. He stated that staff has been working with Williams Architects to come up with options. Mr. DeLuce reported that it would be great to finalize a plan for Sholem Aquatic Center to be able to move forward as funds become available. He presented a conceptual site plan of proposed amenities along with costs and pros and cons for each.

One option includes adding a second slide. He stated that the current slide is closed and the proposed new slide would be an open slide the same length of the current slide. The estimated cost would be \$260,000. It would add an amenity for all ages and not require additional staffing to operate. Mr. DeLuce reported that some of the infrastructure already exists and that it would be fairly simple to add a second slide. Another option includes adding a bridge across the lazy river with a sun area and a shade area. This would be a good use for day campers and for others as a common use facility. The estimated cost is \$150,000. A further option includes a 40' x 50' swim lesson pool between 3 ft. to 8 ft. deep with lily pads and water cannons. The estimated cost is \$450,000. Mr. DeLuce reported that at some point Spalding Pool is going to be beyond repair. This option would allow the Park District to meet the swim lessons demands and allow for the closure of Spalding while continuing to meet the needs of residents. Mrs. DeLuce stated that options are being considered in Phase 2 of the Facility Study if Spalding Pool has to be closed. He reported that a possibility would be to add a spray park. The last option for Sholem Aquatic Center includes adding a spray area and features to address the need of more space for younger children and families. The estimated cost is \$400,000.

Mr. DeLuce indicated that staff would like to get direction from the Board on how to proceed with the Sholem Aquatic Center. He reported that the estimated total cost to add all of the options would be between \$1.1 and \$1.2 million. The architect informed staff that planning with the Health Department in the State of Illinois is behind schedule and it will take approximately 6 months to 1 year to get permits approved. He stated that anything approved this year would probably take until 2012 to be constructed. Mr. DeLuce reported that Amy Doll, Aquatics/Tennis/Fitness Manager, is available to answer any questions.

Mr. DeLuce reported that there is approximately \$675,000 that could be earmarked for improvements to Sholem Aquatic Center of which \$50,000 is from an anonymous donor designated specifically for the Aquatic Center.

Commissioner Petry stated that in his opinion the least useful of the amenities is the bridge. He asked the proposed cost for this item. Mr. DeLuce responded that the estimated cost for the bridge and the sun deck area is \$150,000.

Commissioner Dodds stated that he thinks that Spalding Pool will become inoperable in the near future. He stated that there is a parking lot, a bathhouse that will need to be replaced or removed, and a facility that serves a portion of the community that pay the same taxes as everyone else. If the current pool is removed, the Park District could possibly replace it with the lap pool (teaching pool) and add a spray area which could be used by camps as well as residents. He suggested that Spalding Park may be suitable for all swim lessons. Commissioner Dodds stated that he has yet to see a better option for use of the area and that it would serve another part of the community without duplicating service. He stated that if added to Sholem, the increased filter use could become an issue.

Ms. Herakovich stated that a cost analysis for Spalding could be provided as well. Mr. DeLuce noted that ideas for Spalding will be included in the Phase 2 of the Facility Study and presented to the Board for consideration. He noted that Spalding allows day camps and patrons to visit at a reasonable price. Mr. DeLuce reported that Spalding attracts approximately 13,000 users per year for the 10 weeks it is open requiring \$100,000 tax support each year.

Discussion about options in Spalding Park continued. Commissioner Dodds suggested that staff use creativity and put together proposed options for the park.

President Solon commented that we want people in every part of town to feel like they have suitable park facilities.

Vice President Griggs commented that he favored some of the ideas presented, especially adding the second slide at Sholem Aquatic Center. He stated that he liked the idea of using Spalding for camps and believes that it would be tough to sell the idea of a pool similar to Sholem. He believes that the Spalding area would have to be specialized and believes the Park District should move in that direction.

Commissioner Petry stated that he liked the proposed plan for Sholem Aquatic Center. He stated that he would be interested to see what happens at Spalding and that he liked the idea of adding a spray area. Commissioner Petry commented that he was in favor of adding a couple of amenities to Sholem but would not support adding a bridge. He stated that he would seriously consider moving forward with the plan. He commented that the lap pool would be attractive and would allow for the closure of Spalding Pool.

#### In-House Playground Construction Report

Mr. Spencer reported that although the timing was difficult, it was a favorable experience for staff. He stated that staff spent 22 days installing the playground at Toalson Park. He stated that the total cost to install in-house was less the \$18,000. Mr. Spencer reported that typical contractual installation cost of a playground is usually 70-75% of the purchase price. In this case, it would have cost \$34,000-\$36,000 to install the playground. He stated that ~~there it~~ building the playground was a positive experience. However, he is not sure that installing playground will become a normal mode of operations. Commissioner Dodds stated that he agreed with Mr. Spencer and commented on the 18 month time period it took to get the project completed. Mr. Spencer noted that the project began in March 2009 and the playground installation began in late fall of 2009. He talked about the issues that occurred during the installation of the playground. Ms. Herakovich stated that future installation of playgrounds in-house be considered on a case by case basis

#### **Bid/RFPs**

##### Consideration of Bids for Lindsay Tennis Court Improvements

Mr. Spencer reported that this item is part of the annual general concrete work. He reported that the bid is to replace the asphalt alley-way between the north and south courts, remove the existing gazebo structure, add a drinking fountain, and improve drainage issues as well as an alternate bid for shade structures. Mr. Spencer reported that that staff recommends approval of the base bid, not the alternate bid, and authorize the Executive Director to execute a contract in the amount of \$62,863.30 with low bidder, Stark Excavation.

Commissioner Dodds noted that several trees have been removed and additional plantings installed using donated funds.

This item will be placed on the June 9, 2010 Board agenda for consideration.

### **Action Items**

#### Consideration of Renewal of Agreement with ESS Clean, Inc. for Cleaning Services at the Tennis Center

Mr. DeLuce reported that over a 9 month period, the Tennis Center's attendance was over 55,000 people. He stated that the biggest complaint is that people are having a hard time getting a court. Mr. DeLuce complimented Yuri Sohn, Tennis Pro, and Amy Doll, Aquatics/Tennis/Fitness Manager, for their efforts at the Tennis Center. He stated that there is an option to continue the contract with ESS Clean, Inc. for cleaning service for an additional year. Mr. DeLuce reported that staff recommends Board approval to authorize the Executive Director to execute an agreement with ESS Clean, Inc. for one year for cleaning services at the Tennis Center. Commissioner Petry stated that he would agree to the renewal of the agreement but without an increase in cost.

This item will be placed on the June 9, 2010 Board agenda for consideration.

#### Consideration of an Agreement between the Village of Savoy and the Park District

Mr. DeLuce reported that staff would like to continue the agreement with the Village of Savoy to jointly offer group fitness classes for a one year period. He reported that the partnership has been successful. Mr. DeLuce stated that the only change is to the "Fit Coupon" percentage which will be a slight increase for the Village of Savoy. Ms. Doll reported that the Village of Savoy covers all direct costs for any classes planned and held at the facility. She stated that the agreement allows Park District residents another option for fitness classes.

This item will be placed on the June 9, 2010 Board agenda for consideration.

### **Adjourn**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Dodds made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Petry. The motion passed 4-0 and the meeting adjourned at 6:47 p.m.

Approved:

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Jane L. Solon, President

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Bobbie Herakovich, Secretary