

**CHAMPAIGN PARK DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS**

July 23, 2014

The Champaign Park District Board of Commissioners held a Special Board Meeting on Wednesday, July 23, 2014 at 5:30 p.m. at the Bresnan Meeting Center, 706 Kenwood Road, Champaign, Illinois, pursuant to notice duly given. President Petry presided over the meeting.

Present: President Joseph Petry, Vice President Alvin S. Griggs, Commissioners Barbara J. Kuhl, Timothy McMahon, and Jane L. Solon, Treasurer Gary Wackerlin and Attorney Guy Hall.

Staff present: Joseph DeLuce, Executive Director, Cindy Harvey, Assistant to the Executive Director/Board Secretary, Andrea Wallace, Director of Finance, Kevin Crump, Director of Planning, Design and Construction, Megan Kuhlenschmidt, Director of Recreation, Tammy Hoggatt, Director of Human Resources, Tony Oligney-Estill, Programs Manager, Joe Kearfott, Adult Sports and Fitness Coordinator, and Stacey Cornell, Administrative Specialist.

Members of the public were also present.

Call to Order

President Petry called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

CPD Highlights

Commissioner Kuhl commented that Porter Park looks very nice. She applauded all the work that has been done there. Commissioner Kuhl also stated she had been by the dog park and it was very busy in the early morning.

Commissioner McMahon reported that he saw the lights on at Dodds Park from the air Monday night as he returned from a trip. He commented that it is a beautiful facility and is one of the things you see coming into Champaign in the evening. Commissioner McMahon stated it is a nice reflection on the parks as a whole.

President Petry commented he liked the cover of the fall program guide. He stated it was the best one he had seen. President Petry also thanked the Board in his absence at the last meeting for its willingness to add lights to the Douglass Park project.

Commissioner Solon arrived at 5:35 p.m.

Comments from the Public

Patrick Harrington, 1201 West Charles, Champaign, a local attorney, spoke on behalf of a group of local citizens concerned about the interest of Champaign School District Unit 4 in obtaining Park District property for the new Champaign Central High School site, in particular Dodds Park. Mr. Harrington expressed the group's concern about the potential loss of a premier park in the community. He offered the opinion that Dodds Park is the largest recreational park in the community and is irreplaceable. Therefore, the group does not believe the Board should consider it as a site for the new high school. Mr. Harrington noted that the park serves and benefits many citizens, and much money has been invested in its improvements, including soccer fields, baseball and softball diamonds, concessions, restrooms and gardens with mature trees. Replicating it would be expensive and time consuming. In his opinion, while it is understood that cooperation among local governmental units is encouraged, it should not be at the expense of the Park District's stated mission. He stated that if the Board ultimately decides to consider selling or trading Dodds Park to the school district then he

suggested that the Board limit the method by which it does so in order for there to be a public referendum on the issue.

Newton Dodds, 19 Greencroft, Champaign, a former Board member, commented that he was displeased that the Commissioners were considering trading or leasing any piece of park property. Mr. Dodds suggested that the Board focus more distinctly on park issues.

Action Items

Mr. Crump presented the staff report and responded to questions from the Board about Kaufman Lake Roadway. He reported that while preparing to make scheduled improvements to the Kaufman Lake roadway on Monday, July 14, 2014, it was discovered that two large portions along the eastern edge had been "washed away" by the torrential rains from the previous weekend. A repair quote was requested from the already contracted paving contractor, Open Road Paving, LLC. Mr. Crump stated that additional work would not be covered under the Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA) insurance policy. This is not a budgeted item because it was unexpected. Mr. Crump stated that this has created an emergency condition at Kaufman Lake Road that requires prompt repairs.

He noted that paving work that was to have commenced July 21, 2014 has been postponed so that remedial work can be performed on any emergency basis as soon as practicable. The estimated cost of the remediation is approximately \$78,936.50. The engineer for the Park District has suggested a ten percent (10%) contingency to remediate unexpected conditions.

Mr. Crump noted that under Section 8-1 for the Park District Code such emergency work can be done without bidding if approved by three-fourths (3/4 ths) of the Board members.

A map showing the location of the damaged areas was presented to the Board.

Commissioner Solon made a motion to approve a resolution to authorize the Executive Director to enter into an agreement with Open Road Paving, LLC, for repairs of Kaufman Lake Road in the approximate amount of \$78,936.50 together with a ten percent (10%) contingency as recommended by MSA Professional Services, Inc. The motion was seconded by Vice President Griggs. The motion passed 5-0.

Discussion Items

Ball Field Rental Rates

Ms. Kuhlenschmidt presented the staff report. Information was provided for current ball field rental rates, as well as comparisons made with other park districts. Ms. Kuhlenschmidt explained that ball field rental rates vary widely depending on who owns and operates the fields, the quality and composition of the fields, whether there are two or more fields in one location and available amenities. Staff's goal is provide baseball and softball facilities for a cross section of the community from families wanting to throw a ball around in the park to competitive travel teams and large-scale tournaments. Traditionally, staff has budgeted so that selective services that provide for a small number of people in the community (i.e. Virginia Theatre, Sholem Aquatic Center and developed ball field rentals) make a financial contribution to the Park District's finances. In conclusion, Ms. Kuhlenschmidt outlined two alternative pricing options: (1) a lower cost practice rental option at Spalding Park and (2) a shared use/shared cost agreement. She and Mr. Kearfott responded to questions from the Board. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Kearfott reported that the overall feedback on end of year evaluations is that Park District fields are some of the nicest in the area. Some people were troubled by the small fee increase at the

beginning of the season. However, he stated renters keep returning, and the fields are at maximum capacity throughout the summer.

Commissioner McMahon stated this is an area he believes the Board should focus on and is a subject that he has a passion about. In his opinion, the Park District needs to provide more opportunities for youth to play. He also addressed the “subsidy amount.” He believes there is a notable discrepancy in what the Park District charges and what other communities charge. He has heard from Champaign coaches that Park District rates are unreasonably high. He also pointed out that the Urbana Park District sets its rates low to encourage rentals.

Commissioner Solon commented about taxpayers paying taxes and then being charged usage fees. She noted that people are not charged for basketball courts, pickleball or tennis courts, but are charged for the ball fields. She inquired about the discrepancy.

Mr. DeLuce reported there are more travel programs with fewer Park District teams. With this shift it is hard to justify adding more money to baseball when there are not as many teams. However, he added there are travel teams with residents wanting to practice.

Commissioner McMahon noted that he has seen fields not in use. He suggested offering different rates for different times of the day with the time slots not previously rented having a lower rate. Commissioner McMahon also addressed the trend he sees regarding purchasing and suggested a more conservative approach.

President Petry commented that the Park District should encourage sports and provide a consistent message. He expressed concern with changing the current pricing plan at this point in time. President Petry suggested staff take Commissioner’s comments into consideration and explore possible opportunities.

Commissioner Kuhl suggested looking at the rates at the end of the season. If Spalding is underutilized, then perhaps an adjustment to try and increase use would be appropriate. She also commented that fees could be reduced there and amenities added. However, Commissioner Kuhl cautioned baseball is only one sport and many residents do not participate in it.

Commissioner Solon suggested that parents and coaches may want to help with field maintenance in exchange for lower rates.

Commissioner McMahon stated that the Park District is a service provider. He suggested examining all fees to determine whether facility usage is exclusive or inclusive.

Vice President Griggs commented that staff has done a great job of managing the funds, and thus there is a reserve fund. He stated the Park District should maintain high standards.

President Petry summarized the direction for staff would be to look at possibly adjusting the Spalding rates and all other rates at the end of the season. He suggested obtaining data about the impact of fee changes. He also noted it is difficult to balance how much of expenses should be covered by user fees and how much should be covered by taxpayers.

Recognition Board Meeting

Mr. DeLuce presented the staff report. He reported that community attendance at the Holiday Board Meeting has steadily declined. Thus, management staff put together three different ideas to create a more community-wide recognition event that would attract a large number of people and highlight

accomplishments. The three options are: (1) Champaign Park District Awards Luncheon; (2) Central Illinois Parks & Recreation Awards Luncheon or Banquet; and (3) Central Illinois Parks & Recreation Awards Picnic. Discussion ensued.

Vice President Griggs commented that he did not want to eliminate the holiday festivities at the December Board Meeting.

Staff received direction to proceed with separating the recognition event from the December Board Meeting. A luncheon with the Park District, Parks Foundation and Champaign-Urbana Special Recreation staff on the weekend or an evening banquet was preferred.

The Mission Statement

Mr. DeLuce presented the staff report. The Board previously requested the current mission statement be revised to include cultural arts. Mr. DeLuce proposed the following mission statement: "The mission of the Champaign Park District is to enhance our community's quality of life through positive experiences in parks, recreation, and cultural arts." Commissioner Kuhl commented favorably about the change.

It was the consensus of the Board that the proposed mission statement be placed on the August 13 Regular Board Meeting agenda for consideration of approval.

Comments from Commissioners

None.

Closed Session

Vice President Griggs moved as set forth below to convene in Closed Session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kuhl. The motion passed 5-0. Upon roll call vote, the vote was as follows: Commissioner Solon – yes; Commissioner McMahon – yes; Vice President Griggs – yes; President Petry – yes; and Commissioner Kuhl – yes. The Board convened into Executive Session under the Illinois Open Meetings Act, specifically 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) for the discussion of the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the public body, or legal counsel for the public body; 120/2(c)(5) for the purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body; 120/2(c)(6) for the setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the public body.

Return to Open Meeting

Following the adjournment of the Closed Session, the Board reconvened in open meeting.

Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Kuhl made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Vice President Griggs. The motion passed 5-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Approved:

Joseph A. Petry, President

Cindy Harvey, Secretary