

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

**October 28, 2015**

The Champaign Park District Board of Commissioners held a Study Session Meeting on Wednesday, October 28, 2015 at 5:30 p.m. at the Bresnan Meeting Center, 706 Kenwood Road, Champaign, Illinois, pursuant to notice duly given. President McMahon presided over the meeting.

Present: President Timothy P. McMahon, Vice President Craig Hays, Commissioners Alvin S. Griggs, and Jane L. Solon.

Absent: Commissioner Barb Kuhl, 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 Operations and Planning, Jameel Jones, Director of Recreation, Tammy Hoggatt, Director of Human Resources, Information Technology and Steven Bentz, Director of the Virginia Theatre.

Other staff and members of the public were in attendance.

**Call to Order**

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

**Comments from the Public**

Theresa Truelove, 508 S. McKinley, Champaign, reminded the Board that there still is a great need in this area of the city for indoor swimming.

President McMahon thanked Ms. Truelove for her comments.

**Presentations**

C-U Superstars Program

Patricia Avery, Executive Director of C-U Superstars Program, provided an overview of the program to the Board. A program booklet of the 2015 events was distributed for the Board's review. Ms. Avery reported that the program is in its 9<sup>th</sup> year and has served approximately 200 students. She stated that it has been great to partner with the Park District. Ms. Avery thanked Mr. DeLuce, who has supported the program since its beginning, and Jameel Jones and Tiffany White for their efforts and support. Without the Park District support, the program would not have happened this year. She stated that she would like to see the partnership with the Park District continue. She noted that the program began at the Virginia Theatre and that it is her desire for the 10<sup>th</sup> year anniversary program to be held there. Ms. Avery introduced Lamar Browning, vocal coach.

Mr. Browning reported that he was a winner in 2009. He stated that he currently has the honor of being the voice coach for the program. Mr. Browning discussed the opportunities afforded the students who participate in the program. He also discussed prior winners who have gone on to become great vocal coaches. Mr. Browning thanked the Park District for its support and encouraged the Park District to continue supporting the program.

Mr. DeLuce reported that the students performed at the block parties. Commissioner Solon commented that the performances she has attended were amazing.

### Trails Master Plan Update

Gabe Lewis, Champaign County Regional Planning Commission (RPC), updated the Board on the progress of the Trails Master Plan. He distributed a copy of the summary of comments from the first public meeting. RPC spent last summer collecting data in the parks and along the trails that relate to walking and biking amenities, such as benches, water fountains, bike racks, and the like. There are almost 20 miles of shared use trails in the Champaign parks that the Park District maintains. There are also another 20 miles of on street bikeway lanes and trails in Champaign maintained by the City.

Mr. Lewis reviewed the comments received at the September 24<sup>th</sup> meeting held to gather public input about trails and types of potential park amenities. He highlighted the comments and data. Mr. Lewis also reviewed maps of land acquisition areas and the various areas in Champaign where trails and bikeways are located.

Mr. Lewis reported that RPC will use the information received from the public to develop maps and recommendations. Once the draft is prepared, RPC will make a public presentation with draft recommendations and ask for a vote on priorities. He stated that RPC is looking to have a meeting in the late fall. Mr. Lewis reported that after the meeting, RPC will present a plan to the Board. From there it will make the plan available to the public for a 30 day review.

President McMahon asked when the Board could expect to receive the final plan. Mr. Lewis responded that it will probably be early next year.

The Board thanked Mr. Lewis for the presentation.

### **Discussion Items**

#### Program Reports

##### *Virginia Theatre Annual Report*

Mr. DeLuce noted that the report was included in the Board packet and that staff was available to answer questions. Discussion ensued. Mr. DeLuce and Mr. Bentz responded to questions by the Board about benchmarking the Virginia Theatre against theatres in surrounding areas, regarding movies shown, digital versus print, actual expenses, ticket sales, concessions, rentals, and budget.

Commissioner Solon commented that it was good to see the Virginia Theatre making positive improvements. President McMahon thanked Mr. Bentz for the report.

##### *2015 Summer Day Camp Report*

The report was included in the Board packet and staff was available to answer questions.

President McMahon noted that the day camp numbers increased. Mr. Jones reported that staff reduced the numbers at Leonhard Recreation Center due to overcrowding. He highlighted the Girls Explorer series and Creative Kids camp.

Discussion ensued about the decrease in the number of participants in the Teen Camp. Mr. Jones noted that teen participation fluctuates for various reasons, including price, family issues, and involvement in other programs. Tiffany White reported that out of town trips were made to Indianapolis, St. Louis, Chicago, Springfield, and Decatur. She reported that staff continues to work on trips closer to home and places where discounts will be available in order to increase number of participants and reduce the cost of the program. Mr. DeLuce stated that the Park District plans to continue its obesity program with the Champaign County Public Health District.

Discussion ensued about funding for scholarships.

President McMahon thanked staff for the report.

#### *Aquatics Report 2015*

The report was included in the Board packet and staff was available to answer questions.

President McMahon questioned why the gas, electricity and water were less than previous season. Ms. Wallace stated that she would have to research to assess the lower costs. Mr. Crump responded that the purchase of a safer chemical system may have contributed to the decrease in the use of water. He reported that staff is working with a contractor to rectify the floor problem in the locker room.

Ms. Wallace noted that the gas and electricity cost for 2015 was for only five months. Commissioner Solon questioned why the decline in lap swimming and the impact of nonresident rates. Mr. Jones responded that staff was evaluating this program and will look at offering different times for lap swimming. He stated that the rates have an impact on the attendance of nonresidents.

President McMahon thanked staff for the comprehensive report.

#### *Taste of Champaign-Urbana Final Report 2015*

The report was included in the Board packet and staff was available to answer questions.

Commissioner Solon expressed concern about the cost of the tickets. Discussion ensued. Mr. DeLuce stated that staff will research options for ticket sales and pursue additional corporate sponsorships. Vice President Hays stated that he favors advertising and promoting the event for youth scholarships. He suggested increasing sponsorships or possibly looking at hosting another signature event. Mr. Jones reported that staff is researching different options for this event.

Commissioner Solon commented that the event turned out extremely well this year. She suggested that the identification checking not be in the ticket tent. Mr. Jones responded that staff had already decided to remove checking identification from the ticket tent.

President McMahon thanked staff for the report.

#### Alcoholic Beverages at Park District Events

Mr. DeLuce reported that Ms. Harvey and he worked on ideas for a policy. However, it was determined that additional feedback was needed from the Board before moving forward.

Discussion ensued. Mr. DeLuce highlighted the proposed changes to serve alcoholic beverages at events next year. He noted that currently staff only intends to offer alcoholic beverages at the Virginia Theatre, Taste of Champaign-Urbana and the artist events at Springer Cultural Center. Commissioner Solon favored moving forward in this direction. Mr. DeLuce noted that staff would like to continue with the contract for the Virginia Theatre. He stated that if the staff desires to sell alcohol at additional events, it will seek Board approval before moving forward.

Commissioner Solon stated that she would be interested in the cost to contract out identification checking. Zoe Stinson, Special Events & Volunteer Manager, reported that it would be approximately \$15/hour and that the Park District would still be responsible whether it uses an outside contractor or staff.

Vice President Hays summarized that the City of Champaign favors a list of events or single type license to eliminate paperwork and simplify the process. That would facilitate the Board knowing exactly which events will be held where alcohol is to be served. The Park District would be required to identify those events prior to receiving a permit which will enable better Board oversight.

It was the consensus of the Board to bring a policy back to the Board for approval. Mr. DeLuce reported that staff will prepare a policy for consideration.

#### Comments from Commissioners

Commissioner Solon indicated it was nice to see the flower beds cleaned up.

Commissioner Griggs complimented staff on the reports. President McMahon commented that the reports were very detailed and that he appreciated all the work that went into them. Mr. DeLuce reported that staff is compiling the summer program reports to present to the Board.

Commissioner Solon encouraged staff to address the trees planted in the past two years that still have the wire ties around them. Mr. Crump responded that staff is in the process of removing the wires from the trees. He thanked Commissioner Solon for her comments.

Vice President Hays reported on his park visits. He stated that they were in excellent condition and he appreciated staff's efforts. Mr. Crump reported that the contract mowers will mulch as they mow and Park District staff will clean up major parks.

President McMahon thanked Vice President Hays, Mr. DeLuce, and staff that will be attending the Legal Symposium. He thanked Mr. DeLuce for the response to the Eisner Park letter.

Commissioner Solon encouraged proceeding cautiously when responding to residents about paths in neighborhood parks. Mr. Crump stated that a plan for areas where paths could be installed at Eisner Park exists. Mr. DeLuce reported that staff will bring it back to the Board for discussion.

#### **Adjourn**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Vice President Hays made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Griggs. The motion passed 4-0, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

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Timothy P. McMahon, President

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Cindy Harvey, Secretary