

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

September 24, 2014

The Champaign Park District Board of Commissioners held a Study Session Meeting on Wednesday, September 24, 2014 immediately following a joint meeting with the Champaign Parks Foundation 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, and Treasurer Gary Wackerlin.

Absent: 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, and Stacey Cornell, Administrative Specialist.

Steve Konters from Hitchcock Design Group and Gabe Lewis, Champaign County Regional Planning Commission Transportation Planner, were also in attendance.

Call to Order

President Petry called the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m.

CPD Highlights

Commissioner Solon commented the Virginia Theatre has been doing great programming and the performances have been enjoyable. Mr. DeLuce reported BritBeat, America's Premiere Tribute to the Beatles, was at the Virginia Saturday night and people enjoyed the performance.

President Petry commented that the Illinois Association of Park District's (IAPD) annual retreat was in Champaign the previous weekend. The Virginia Theatre was showcased on Saturday night and it was a nice culmination to the event.

Commissioner Solon reported those who saw the movie 4-4-43 thought it was fabulous. Mr. DeLuce stated there were over 1,000 in attendance for the showing.

Vice President Griggs encouraged everyone to read the article written by President Petry on leadership that was published in the September/October issue of Illinois Parks and Recreation magazine.

Comments from the Public

None.

Presentations

Master Plan Update for Centennial Park, Hitchcock Design Group

Mr. DeLuce stated an element of the Centennial Park master plan is to have connecting pathways throughout the park. Mr. Konters presented an update to the master plan for Centennial Park and responded to questions from the Board. Among the proposed changes for the northern portion of the park would be relocating the south flexible area to the Seaman ball field so that it would be suitable for T-ball, soccer and lacrosse; future operations facility and

parking lot expansion; installation of a street style linear skate path with component nodes; removing the basketball goals from the parking lot along Kenwood and adding a full-court basketball area; widening the existing perimeter walk to 8-10 feet to accommodate bikes; and a new, more accessible entrance with a garden at the Bresnan Meeting Center. The southern part of the park would contain secondary trails; a fenced in outdoor patio adjacent to the Leonhard Recreation Center; additional picnic shelters; an enclosed volleyball court; native plantings; a plaza for ball field concessions; and expansion of the parking lots along Kirby. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Konters stated the plaza outside the Leonhard Recreation Center would be large enough for summer day camp. He also stated the northern parking lot expansion would provide an adequate amount of spaces for users of the flexible field at Seaman.

Commissioner Solon inquired about the status of discussions with the City of Champaign regarding the storm water utility fee for trails. Mr. DeLuce reported that discussion is ongoing. Commissioner Solon expressed concern over the annual costs of storm water fees, the maintenance of clearing paths in the wintertime and fence upkeep. She noted the close proximity of the proposed natural plantings to the pool and the possible increase in bees. Mr. Konters stated the main nuisance of bee attraction is trash and trash receptacles. He stated native plantings are not a significant attractor of nuisance bees.

Mr. Crump stated the native plantings are to be located near the detention basin which will increase the storm water abatement. Mr. Konters stated he did not believe that there would be an issue with wildlife in the aquatic center because of the native plantings. However, he will research the matter.

President Petry commented he liked the trails and natural component. He expressed reservations about the combination in the northern area and getting the usage people want from those fields. Mr. DeLuce reported District staff has been in discussions with high school coaches and athletic directors regarding the need for baseball fields. Commissioner Solon commented favorably about having the soccer and T-ball on the south end of the park with the nearby hill and playground. She stated there is not much for young children to do on the north end.

Mr. DeLuce reported the feedback about the skate path has been very positive. Mr. Konters stated the skate path could be utilized by everybody, but its primary use would be for skaters. Commissioner Kuhl stated Centennial Park is known as a walking and biking area. It is not known as a skating area. Mr. Konters stated the walkers could use the north route with the skaters using the south path. Commissioner McMahon stated that walkers could not do a loop under the plan. Commissioner Kuhl and Commissioner McMahon questioned the popularity of skateboarding.

President Petry commented there are several skaters at Sunset Ridge Park. Commissioner Kuhl stated she had reservations about mixing walkers and skaters. Commissioner Solon stated another user group at Sunset Ridge Park is basketball players. Commissioner Kuhl suggested adding another court at Centennial. Commissioner Solon stated that this illustrates the debate of providing some park amenities at no charge and then charging to use the baseball fields. She stated there needs to be a balance. Commissioner Kuhl stated her desire to have the Board address whether Centennial Park should be the next important project on the list. Mr. DeLuce stated it is a master plan, and it could be done within the next year or two as priorities are addressed. Commissioner Solon would like to see flexibility in the plan. Commissioner Kuhl believes Centennial is overused. Vice President Griggs commented that Centennial is a regional park. Commissioner Kuhl commented that it has no restrooms. She believes restrooms

would be a valuable amenity that a park of Centennial's size should have. Commissioner Kuhl suggested having a discussion with the school district before moving forward since it is a significant adjacent landowner. Discussion ensued about the cost to revise the plan.

Commissioner McMahon stated he would like more time to digest the plan and discuss it before any revisions are made. Commissioner Solon requested to see the staff costs related to maintaining the park with the proposed changes.

It was the consensus of the Board to place the proposed Centennial Park master plan on the agenda for discussion at a future Board meeting.

Discussion Items

Illinois Metropolitan Investment Fund Update

Ms. Wallace presented the staff report and responded to questions from the Board. She reported the District has a total of \$500,000 invested in the 1-3 Year Fund that is through Illinois Metropolitan Investment Fund (IMET). The 1-3 Year Fund carries a risk of losing principal and is more volatile than other investments. This fund has held steady with a net return on investment of 2.801% or \$14,003.31 since inception in 2009. The balance of the 1-3 Year Fund at the end of August was \$514,003.31. Ms. Wallace reported the District has a total of \$5,750,000 invested in the Convenience Fund that is also through IMET. In the Convenience Fund there is no risk of losing principal. The Convenience Fund rate of return from prior year, net of fees, is .362% with a rate of return from inception in 2010 of 1.6%. These rates are higher than current five year certificate of deposit (CD) rates. Treasurer Wackerlin reported the Convenience Fund invests in an array of CDs. He stated the 1-3 Year Fund invests in government treasury bills and short-term securities. Treasurer Wackerlin commented that there is a risk investing in the 1-3 Year Fund, but not a substantial one. Ms. Wallace reported that staff, in consultation with the financial advisory committee, is looking to ladder CDs to mature annually. Commissioner Kuhl relayed her thoughts that we need to keep in mind the banks in the community who are supportive of our bond issues. She also suggested not securing CDs for terms longer than five years because of the low return. Mr. DeLuce commented that District needs to have a balance regarding how much of its funds are invested locally and with whom.

Champaign Park District Master Trails Plan

Mr. DeLuce presented the staff report and responded to questions from the Board. He stated that one of the District's priorities has always been trails. Mr. DeLuce reported the City of Champaign and Champaign Park District partnered in 2011 to create a "Champaign Trails Plan." Additionally, the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) developed a greenways and trails plan. Both of these plans were larger in scope and did not focus on trails that would connect District parks. He stated the CCRPC recently completed a trails master plan for the Urbana Park District. Champaign Park District staff was impressed with the specific goals the plan had of connecting parks and the details on how to do so. Staff recommended partnering with CCRPC to develop a Champaign Park District Master Trails Plan. Mr. DeLuce stated the plan would guide District decisions on trails within its jurisdiction, and help coordinate its efforts with those of surrounding park districts and municipalities to obtain a more integrated, better connected trail system on a regional scale. The plan will establish policies, programs, and projects that will further enhance the connectivity of area trails. He stated the proposed plan would take one year to complete and cost \$22,199.62. An intergovernmental agreement between the CCRPC and the District would be implemented. Mr. DeLuce stated staff from the City of Champaign and Champaign-Urbana Mass Transit District (C-U MTD) have agreed to participate on the steering committee. He stated if a Board representative would like to be on the committee that can be arranged.

Commissioner Kuhl suggested contacting Edwardsville, Illinois regarding its significant trail system.

It was the consensus of the Board to move forward and work with the CCRPC in developing a Champaign Park District Trails Master Plan. It was also a directive of the Board to be updated on the project, at least quarterly.

Mr. DeLuce encouraged Board members to contact him if any are interested in serving on the steering committee.

Comments from Commissioners

Commissioner Solon inquired why Executive Session is always on the agenda, but the Board never knows if there is going to be one. She commented it is difficult to budget one's time and asked if the Executive Session could only be listed if there are items to discuss. President Petry has asked for Executive Sessions to be included on every agenda to allow the flexibility to enter into one if needed. Commissioner Kuhl commented it is always challenging to know how long a Board meeting will take. She suggested that perhaps 24 hours before meetings Mr. DeLuce or Ms. Harvey could send an email indicating whether there are any Executive Session items.

Commissioner McMahon commented that Spalding Park has a well maintained appearance. Mr. DeLuce reported that the District is waiting to receive notification regarding its grant applications for that park.

Commissioner Solon appreciated the update on Douglass Park and where the District stands with regard to the project architect and engineer. She stated the architect did admit there was redundancy and inquired if it had determined the dollar amount of it. Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Solon was not interested in spending legal fees to recoup \$1,000. Mr. DeLuce said the issue would be documented. President Petry commented that the District should appeal to the company's goodwill and a desire to have future contracts with the District to see if it would offer a credit allowance in recognition of the issue.

Mr. DeLuce inquired if a press release should be issued regarding the upcoming vacancies on the Board. Discussion ensued. It was the consensus of the Board to issue a press release publicizing the two future openings on the Board of Park Commissioners.

Mr. DeLuce inquired if the Board would like to receive training from Beth Michaels. Commissioner Kuhl commented that she attended a session presented by Ms. Michaels at the Illinois Park and Recreation Association (IPRA) conference last January. She thought Ms. Michaels did an excellent job, and it was a good general training. Discussion ensued. It was the consensus of the Board to wait until after the new Board is seated in May to schedule training.

Mr. DeLuce asked for Board members to contact Ms. Harvey if they were interested in attending the upcoming IAPD Legal Symposium on November 6 or the IAPD/IPRA conference in January 2015.

Mr. DeLuce stated he attended a meeting with representatives from C-U MTD, Champaign Unit #4 School District and the City of Champaign. He also reported he received an email from a school official seeking a statement of support in their opposition to the impact study done by University of Illinois Professor Brian Deal. Discussion ensued. It was the consensus of the Board that it was not appropriate for the Park District to be involved in this issue.

Mr. DeLuce sought input from the Board regarding having individual monitors or flat screen

televisions on which to view presentations. It was the consensus of the Board that flat screen televisions were the preferred choice.

Executive Session

Vice President Griggs moved as set forth below to convene in Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Solon. 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.

Discussion ensued about a complaint received from a participant about open gym closing time. Mr. DeLuce reported that staff is working to resolve the matter. The Board asked if there were any issues with closing the Leonhard Recreation to host the One Week Boutique event. Mr. DeLuce stated that he was not aware of any, but he would follow up and report back to the Board.

Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the Board, Vice President Griggs made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Solon. The motion passed 5-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Approved:

Joseph A. Petry, President

Cindy Harvey, Secretary