

**CHAMPAIGN PARK DISTRICT
MINUTES OF STUDY SESSION
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
May 24, 2017**

The Champaign Park District Board of Commissioners held a Study Session on Wednesday, May 24, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. at the Bresnan Meeting Center, 706 Kenwood Road, Champaign, Illinois, pursuant to published notice duly given. President Craig W. Hays presided over the meeting.

Present: President Craig W. Hays, Vice President Timothy P. McMahon, Commissioners Jane L. Solon and Kevin Miller, Treasurer Gary Wackerlin and Attorney Guy Hall.

Absent: Commissioner Barbara J. Kuhl.

Staff Present: Joe DeLuce, Executive Director, Cindy Harvey, Assistant to the Executive Director/Board Secretary, Bret Johnson, Interim Director of Operations, Jameel Jones, Director of Recreation, Tammy Hoggatt, Director of Human Resources, Andrew Weiss, Director of Planning, and Steven Bentz, Director of the Virginia Theatre.

Robin Hall, Office of Recreation and Park Resources, University of Illinois, Lacey Rains Lowe, Senior Planner with City of Champaign, Steve Carter, Champaign Rotary Club, Scott Burge, Farnsworth Group were present as well as members of the public.

Call to Order

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

Comments from the Public

There were no comments from the public.

Presentations

Community Attitude & Interest Survey

Mr. Robin Hall presented the preliminary survey report of the 2017 Attitude and Interest Survey to the Board. The University of Illinois Office of Recreation and Park Resources conducted the community-wide survey. The survey process was addressed. The information gathered and trends revealed were reviewed. Discussion ensued.

In response to a question posed by Commissioner Solon, Mr. Robin Hall reported that he was uncertain why this question, "If residents did not use our parks or facilities, why did they not use them" was left off the survey, He stated that he would look into the matter and report back. He also reported that there will be a more detailed report. The preliminary report does not include open ended comments. President Hays inquired about respondents ethnicity makeup compared to the makeup of the community. Commissioner Solon inquired how respondent ethnicity compared with last survey.

President Hays thanked Mr. Hall and stated that the Board will look forward to the full report. Mr. Hall stated that after the Board members receive the full report to let him know if they would like the breakdown of additional information.

City Plaza Project

Mr. DeLuce introduced Lacey Rains Lowe, Senior Planner with City of Champaign, and Steven Carter, Champaign Rotary Club.

Ms. Lowe presented the plan to create a downtown plaza. The case for the downtown plaza includes a designated space for special events, a space to appeal for all ages and lifestyles, and to expand the appeal of downtown. Ms. Lowe reported that current logistical challenges include street and parking closures, traffic rerouting, power connections, water connections, and stage and/or tent set ups. She reviewed the process for issuing a request for qualifications and the selection process for consulting firms to create a placemaking plan and preliminary design for the future plaza. Twenty (20) responses were received from firms throughout the country. Ms. Lowe reported that a selection committee of six (6) local residents assisted with making the final selection. She stated that the committee interviewed three consulting firms. After the interviews, the committee selected MKSK of West Lafayette, IN, as the preferred firm. MKSK proposes a three phase process: existing conditions and information gathering; placemaking planning; and plaza design. Ms. Lowe presented examples of MKSK's projects. She discussed overlap of projects in downtown Champaign. She highlighted the expected outcomes. Ms. Lowe reported that both public and private funds will be needed to complete the project.

Mr. Carter reported that the Champaign Rotary Club recently celebrated its 100th anniversary. The Rotary was seeking a significant project in which it could be involved. The suggested commitment is to find a project and invest a \$100,000.00 in celebration of the 100th anniversary. Mr. Carter reported that a committee was formed to identify a significant project that is centrally located and accessible to people throughout the community. He stated that the committee has focused on the plaza. The Rotary raised \$25,000.00. Mr. Carter stated that he hoped the Board would allow the Champaign Parks Foundation to raise funds for the project or be involved in the process.

Ms. Lowe asked if there were questions. Discussion ensued about the possible role of the Park District, and estimated cost of the plaza, and parking issues. Ms. Lowe stated that would envision the Park District as a placemaker and that the cost could range from \$2.5 to \$8 million.

Public Comments

None.

Discussion

Trails Action Plan

Mr. DeLuce presented the report. He reported that a staff committee was created. The committee reviewed the Park District Trails Master Plan and developed a five (5) year action plan from the recommendations within the master plan. He reported that the high priority recommendations include the connection between Kaufman Park and Heritage Park, flashing lights at the trail crossing at the Greenbelt Bikeway in Kaufman Park, Spalding Park shared-use trails, and support amenities for trails including benches, lighting, mile markers, trail signs, waste receptacles, and water fountains. Mr. DeLuce stated that the committee is seeking Board comments and feedback. The committee would like to present the Trails Action Plan to the Board for approval in June or July.

Discussion ensued. Vice President McMahon stated he would like to take time to review the plan. Commissioner Solon stated that the citizens in the Noel Park area are interested in having a perimeter trail around Noel Park and will probably address the Board about it. President Hays requested that the amenities be detailed in the plan. Commissioner Solon inquired about lighting.

Mr. DeLuce stated that staff will work on ideas and present it to the Board.

Board Priorities for FY17-18

Mr. DeLuce updated the priorities from last year. He stated that staff is presenting ideas and looking for input and feedback from the Board. Mr. DeLuce stated that staff would like to make a presentation for Board approval at the June 14, 2017 Regular Board meeting. Discussion ensued. President Hays suggested the Board review the goals.

Annual Operating Budget FY17-18

Mr. DeLuce presented the budget book to the Board. He also distributed an addition and asked the Board to add it to their books. Mr. DeLuce reported that Andrea Wallace was attending the GOFA Conference. He stated that he has asked the Department Heads to provide an update on their areas.

Mr. Johnson reported that Operations Department spending has remained fairly consistent over the past two (2) years. He stated that salaries and wages have increased in horticulture to add long term seasonal employees to assist with perennial beds and maintenance/facilities to add more long term employees to become trained for permanent employment when current employees retire.

Mr. DeLuce reported that Ms. Wallace's plan was to depict what was actually spent versus what is budgeted. The budget is created based upon actual expenditures. Discussion ensued. Mr. Johnson reported that special projects division includes ballfields, playgrounds, and special amenities.

Mr. Bentz provided a brief review of the "season" concept. He stated that it has been in place for three (3) years. Mr. Bentz reported that this year staff is working on increasing the number of subscribers. Mr. Bentz stated that a significant focus has been made to line up with shows confirmed for next season. He stated that the Park District house budget made money with the self-presented events.

Mr. Weiss reported that there are few changes in the Planning Department. He stated that the most significant cost items are architect, engineering and professional fees. Mr. Weiss reported that professional fees were increased due to the Park District's work load. Discussion ensued about types of surveys, the Zahnd path and Heritage Park core sampling. Mr. Weiss stated that topographical surveys will be completed and the Zahnd path will be funded with ADA funds.

Mr. Jones reported about the increase in conference and travel funds. He stated that additional staff from the Operations, Marketing, Planning, and Recreation divisions will be attending conferences in FY17-18. He also stated that Champaign-Urbana Special Recreation (CUSR) staff will attend additional conferences.

Mr. Jones updated the Board on the planning for 2017 Taste of Champaign-Urbana. He reported that staff has secured all performers for the event using local acts. Mr. Jones stated that vendor application fees were increased. Tickets will remain at \$1 and there is a reduced percentage of donations for not-for-profits organizations for working the entrances. Sponsorships have been secured from Illinois American Water and Central Illinois Bank. Mr. Jones discussed the measurers that staff are working on to reduce expenses. The event will be held August 18-19, 2017. Discussion ensued about the contractual entertainment budget.

Ms. Hoggatt reported that the staff classification page was inadvertently left out of the budget book. She reported that the Board approved the seasonal wages and that caps were increased, but the starting rates remain the same. She reported that technology is covered under capital and that the budget did not increase. Discussion ensued about the purchase of cameras, budgeted funds, and records retention of videos.

Mr. DeLuce asked the Commissioners to let him know if they would like to meet with Ms. Wallace or staff to discuss the proposed budget. President Hays suggested that any questions be addressed to department heads with a copy to the Executive Director.

Comments from Commissioners

None.

Executive Session

Commissioner Solon moved as set forth below to convene into Executive Session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Miller. The motion passed 4-0. Upon roll call vote, the vote was as follows: Commissioner Solon – yes; Commissioner Miller – yes; Vice President McMahon – yes; and President Hays – 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; (c)(5) for the purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body including meetings held for the purpose of discussing whether a particular parcel should be acquired; and (c)(11) to address litigation that is probable and imminent.

Return to Regular Meeting

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

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Hays noted the tax levy status and suggested that it may be useful to provide further information to the public.

Adjourn

There being no further items to come before the Board, Commissioner Solon made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Vice President McMahon. The motion passed 4-0 and the meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Craig W. Hays, President

Cindy Harvey, Secretary