



ST. CHARLES PARK DISTRICT BOARD MEETING

Norris Recreation Center

July 13, 2021 – 6:30 P.M.

MINUTES

Call to Order

The St. Charles Park District Board met for a Regular Meeting at Norris Recreation Center on July 13, 2021. At 6:32 p.m., President Jim Cooke called the meeting to order.

Roll Call

Administrative Assistant Jenny Santos called the roll.

Commissioners present: Bob Carne, Jim Cooke, Peggy McCarthy, Bob Thomson and Steve Ward

Commissioners absent: Brian Charles and Karrsten Goettel

Administrative staff present: Director of Parks & Recreation Holly Cabel, Superintendent of Parks & Planning, Deputy Director Laura Rudow, Superintendent of Recreation Mike Kies, Superintendent of Finance & Administration Cathy Camm, Golf Course Manager & PGA Golf Pro Ron Skubisz, IT Manager Jeff Essig and Administrative Assistant Jenny Santos

Other Staff Present: Assistant Superintendent of Norris Recreation Center Ande Masoncup, Membership Services Coordinator Dan Charak and Tennis Pro Bill Dahm

Guests:

Consent Agenda

Mr. Carne moved and Ms. McCarthy seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board approve the following Consent Agenda items, including the following:

- Approval of Minutes from Regular Meeting on June 22, 2021

A roll call vote was taken. Aye: Carne, McCarthy, Thomson, Ward and Cooke. Nay: none. The motion carried.

Public Appearances

None

Administration and Finance

Comprehensive Master Plan & Capital Update

Ms. Rudow shared the 2021 Capital Schedule with the Board, detailing the projects for the year by quarter. She highlighted the projects that were completed in the first quarter of 2021. For quarter 2, Ms. Rudow explained that the Bike Share Program, a cooperative effort between many Fox River communities, has not come to fruition due to circumstances beyond the Park District's control. Therefore, the budgeted \$10,000 is not being spent on the project. The paddlesport dock abutment at Ferson Creek Park was able to be completed in-house, so the budgeted \$10,000 was not spent. Lastly, the original grant applied for the Ag Lab at Primrose Farm we were not awarded therefore project will be deferred. Staff is in the process of completing the application for an Illinois Museum Grant for \$750,000 for the Ag Lab. Mr. Carne asked if the improvements to parks, like those recently completed at Artesian Springs, come out of the capital budget. Ms. Rudow said projects like those are budgeted and expensed through the parks operational budget.

Ms. Rudow then reviewed the Five-Year Action Plan from the Comprehensive Master Plan. She referenced the second page of the plan on which Year 3: 2021 is detailed.

Prairie Centre

Ms. Rudow shared a concept plan for a one acre park at Prairie Centre, the new Shodeen housing development Between Prairie Street and Rt. 38 near Randall Road. Ms. Rudow explained that because the development already has a pool, playground and dog park, other amenities that appeal to active older adults are part of the proposed plan. These amenities include bocce ball, baggo, game boards, outdoor exercise stations and shade structures. Although the parcel has been identified, it hasn't been dedicated, but the land transfer is expected to happen soon. Ms. Rudow is pursuing an OSLAD grant that requires construction be completed next year, so she will bring back a resolution to the Board to approve at an upcoming meeting that allows the District to submit the grant application. Mr. Cooke asked if there are sufficient residents in Prairie Centre to engage in a community feedback process. Ms. Rudow said there are and she will also seek input from surrounding neighborhoods. The District will seek feedback on the concept plan within the next month.. Mr. Cooke asked if there is room for a Pickleball court; Ms. Rudow responded no. Mr. Carne asked if there is money allocated to connectivity to the proposed trails along Rte 38. Ms. Cabel responded that could occur in a later phase of development.

Recreation

Otter Cove Aquatic Park Pavilion Rental Fee Proposal

Mr. Kies presented a proposal to update the Otter Cove Aquatic Park pavilion rental options and pricing from hourly to half day. Staff believes this new rental fee structure better reflects how patrons are typically using the pavilions and will increase rentals and revenue. The table below reflects the proposed changes:

	Current Weekday Rate	Recommended Weekday Rate	Current Weekend Rate	Recommended Weekend Rate
Large Pavilion	\$50/hr	\$125/half day	\$60/hr	\$200/half day
Small Pavilion	\$40/hr	\$75/half day	\$50/hr	\$100/half day

Mr. Carne moved and Mr. Thomson seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners approve the changes to the Otter Cove Aquatic Park Pavilion rental fee schedule as presented. A voice vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Parks, Planning, and Facilities

Pond Study Update

Ms. Rudow presented the comprehensive survey of the Thornwood Ponds conducted by Deuchler Engineering Corporation. The purpose of the study was to provide current water quality, sediment depth and quality, aquatic plant composition, and biological data of fish composition of Thornwood Ponds. The shoreline and open water of the three Thornwood Ponds was electrofished in March 2021. Additionally, the sediment deposition was evaluated, samples collected and water

quality monitoring was conducted on all three ponds. A second round of water quality samples was collected from each pond in June, as well as a survey of the aquatic vegetation in each pond. From these studies, Deuchler engineers found that all the ponds have excessive sediment levels, two ponds are sparsely vegetated with a large Common Carp population, and one pond is shallow with overgrown invasive White-Water Lily that is not conducive to healthy fish habitats.

In order to restore and sustain healthy aquatic environments in the Thornwood Ponds, Deuchler recommends: dredging all three ponds; removing Common Carp by culling; developing a pond management plan; instituting a fish stocking program; and instituting a habitat enhancement program including vegetation and fisheries management.

Mr. Thomson asked for clarification as to why the District paid for the pond study if acquiring the ponds is not part of the proposed Agreement with the Village of South Elgin. Ms. Rudow said that the pond health affects the health of the land around the ponds, which is what the District will acquire with the proposed land transfer. The Village had a different opinion of the health of the ponds so the District paid for the study to determine the condition of the ponds. Mr. Cooke expressed concern that the residents of South Elgin living in Thornwood, who have been unhappy with the management of the ponds, will expect improvements to be made once the Agreement with South Elgin is made. It will be very important to conduct community outreach to educate residents about the terms of the Agreement, specifically outlining responsibilities of both parties.

The other part of the Agreement that has caused some concern is in regard to the Village's access to the McDonald Bridge. As part of the proposed Agreement, the District will acquire the trail that runs under McDonald road, but the Village needs access to the bridge via the trail for repairs. The District would like to define the exact area of the trail that the Village will retain and maintain and therefore the District is going to have a legal description drawn up to be included in the Agreement.

Ms. Cabel asked about the due diligence period. The latest due diligence extension expires in mid-August. Commissioners agreed the next step is to have a committee meeting soon to move forward with the final steps of the Agreement. Ms. Rudow reminded the Board that she will be bringing the playground purchase for Arbor Park for their approval at the next meeting.

Request for Use

Ms. Rudow asked the Board to consider the following requests for use of parks:

1. Thomas J. Masterson Memorial Scholarship requests the use of Mt. St. Mary Park for the purpose of hosting a memorial and fundraiser event on August 29, 2021.
2. St. Patrick Catholic Church requests the use of Lincoln Park for the purpose of hosting a concert/picnic event on September 18, 2021.

Mr. Thomson moved and Ms. McCarthy seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners approve the requests for use as presented. A voice vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Correspondence

None

Director's Report

Ms. Cabel asked the Board if anyone is interested in attending a focus meeting regarding the the Indoor Space Study. Commissioners Carne and McCarthy agreed to attend the meeting to provide feedback.

Ms. Cabel congratulated the staff for an outstanding job with the July 4th celebration and fireworks. This was the first big event since before the pandemic and it was really great to see so many people enjoying the festivities.

Ms. Cabel addressed the appearance of an inflatable rat and signage on the corner of 2nd Street and Walnut. A local union is in a labor dispute with a landscaper that the Park District is using for one of its park developments. The St. Charles Park District is complying with all Illinois labor laws.

Ms. Cabel reminded the Commissioners that the library's grand opening celebration is this Saturday, July 17th! Ms. Cabel also reminded the Board that the next meeting on July 27 will be held at Sportsplex.

Commissioner Comments

Peggy McCarthy: Ms. McCarthy shared a very positive experience a neighbor of hers had when trying to find a space for a last minute rental at Mt. St. Mary Park. The Parks Department was very helpful and her event was a success. Ms. McCarthy said she has heard great feedback about the new wheelchair swing in Pottawatomie Park Inclusive Playground. She also mentioned that the Teen Center is starting a new fundraiser where residents can rent a flamboyance of plastic flamingos to put in their yard for a special occasion. She reminded the Commissioners that the first responders appreciation event is happening Thursday, July 29 at Otter Cove Aquatic Park.

Bob Thomson: Mr. Thomson saw bike racks that he thought was part of a bike share program in Batavia. Mr. Kies said that although many cities have opted out of the program, Batavia has stayed in. He thanked staff for a fun July 4th event and enjoyed seeing other Commissioners' guests having fun viewing the fireworks. He inquired about the Covid restrictions for the kids 12 and under given the uptick in Covid cases. Mr. Kies reiterated that all programs with kids require social distancing outside and mask-wearing inside, per the CDC guidelines. Parents are asked to do self-checks at home before dropping kids off at camp programs.

Bob Carne: Mr. Carne gave kudos to the parks staff for the inclusive playground and the interest generated by a recent social media post from a patron using the wheelchair swing. He said staff should feel great for their hard work and Ms. Rudow acknowledged the St. Charles Kiwanis for their donation to purchase the swing. Mr. Carne challenged the Green Team to use the \$1400 rebate coming from the City to create an initiative that would reduce the District's carbon footprint. Mr. Carne congratulated TC Hull and the recreation team for the recent Spikeball tournament at ESSC. He also mentioned that his son recently played softball at ESSC as part of a league and he was so impressed with the cleanliness of the park and the great conditions of the fields. Mr. Carne suggested that staff keep an eye on what is transpiring with the Chamber of Commerce building.. He ended his comments that he feels like things are getting back to normal and praised District staff for their work this summer.

Steve Ward: Mr. Ward thanked the staff for a fun fireworks display and that his group of spectators really enjoyed their vantage point. They particularly liked all the "boomer" fireworks.

Mr. Ward shared that he likes the rotating meeting location idea because it is nice to see facilities in action. He inquired about a recent email he saw from NRPA about a youth sports grant for \$40,000 and whether the District would apply for it. Ms. Cabel said this type of grant is not one that the District gets because of it usually has criteria as related to demographics that our community does not meet, but that the District is looking into it.

Jim Cooke: Mr. Cooke agreed that the rotating meetings are a great idea. He asked the Norris staff if they had anything they'd like to say. Mr. Charak spoke about the 5 year anniversary celebration happening this Saturday from 10-2. He is working hard to retain members and keep them happy and coming back. He's been pleased with the steady stream of patrons during the summer months, which is usually is a less busy time. Mr. Kies complimented the Norris Recreation Center staff for making a difference for members and staff by providing quality leadership and programs. Mr. Cooke asserted that the operation and function of the facility is very important to the community and thanked the NRC staff. He concluded with positive comments about the compelling video posted to social media of the little girl in the wheelchair swing.

Karrsten Goettel: absent

Brian Charles: absent

Executive Session

Ms. McCarthy moved and Mr. Ward seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners adjourn to a closed session for the purpose of considering the following subjects, per the Open Meetings Act, 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1): (1) 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 (2) litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular public body has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the public body finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the minutes of the closed meeting.

A voice vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously. The Board moved into a closed session at 7:29 p.m.

Mr. Charak, Mr. Dahm and Ms. Masoncup left the meeting at 7:29 p.m.

The Board of Commissioners returned to open session at 8:11 p.m.

Other Business

Mr. Ward moved and Ms. McCarthy seconded that the St. Charles Park District Board of Commissioners approve the release of a letter of response from Attorney W. McGrath to Attorney G. Marchese regarding the copyright violation claim. A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment of Meeting

There being no further business, Mr. Carne moved and Mr. Thomson seconded to adjourn the meeting. A voice vote was taken and unanimous aye votes were cast. The motion carried and Mr. Cooke adjourned the meeting at 8:12 p.m.


Secretary

Date Approved: July 27, 2021