

**VILLAGE OF HINSDALE
MEETING OF THE
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

Tuesday, September 9, 2014
Memorial Hall – Memorial Building

Chairman Banke called the meeting of the Park and Recreation Commission to order at 7:02 p.m. at the Memorial Hall board room. Chairman Banke welcomed new Commissioner Patrick Conboy.

Members Present: Chairman Banke, Commissioners Baker, Conboy, George, Keane, Mulligan and Owens

Staff Present: Gina Hassett, Director of Parks and Recreation
Linda Copp, Secretary
Jennifer Braun, KLM Lodge Manager

Others Present: Lisa Brennan, 30 W Birchwood Avenue
Alyssa Chadorow, 423 Glendale Ave
Marius Kriauciunas, 411 S Elm St
Dave Knight, McKinley Lane

Commissioner Mulligan moved approval of the July 29, 2014 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting minutes. Commissioner Owens seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Banke welcomed Dave Knight speaking regarding the renaming of an existing park. Mr. Knight is representing Al Koplín regarding Joyce Skoog, former village president. They are requesting to rename Highland Park after her. Commissioner Mulligan asked if that park was special to her. Mr. Knight stated that it wasn't, but it is in her neighborhood and is the only one that is not named after someone. Chairman Banke stated that Ms. Skoog was involved in so much with the village and most of the other parks are named after other individuals. Ms. Hassett stated that the next step would be to go to the Administration and Community Affairs Committee (ACA).

The Commission unanimously agreed to bring this to ACA. Commissioner Owens asked if there was a biography of Ms. Skoog and that perhaps that would help ACA to come to a decision. Ms. Hassett stated that she will look for a bio for Ms. Skoog. Mr. Knight or Mr. Koplín will attend the next ACA Committee with the recommendation.

New Business

Discussion Regarding Park Request North of Ogden Avenue

Lisa Brennan, 30 W Birchwood Avenue and Alyssa Chadorow, 423 Glendale Ave approached the Commission about putting in a park on the north side of Ogden in the Fullersburg woods area. Ms. Hassett explained the small parcel that could be used at the intersection of Washington and Ogden, but there would be some safety concerns in that area. Graue Mill has some property that could be available as well, but it is a little farther from the residential area. Chairman Banke stated that the first concern is safety, but we do want to expand services whenever possible.

Ms. Hassett stated that the only enclosed playground is the one at Robbins Park by the Community House and that playgrounds are typically not enclosed. Ms. Hassett showed the Commissioners where the current open space is. That is the only open parcel that we own at this point.

Ms. Brennan stated that there is a little plot of land on Madison near Glendale, but doesn't know if that is privately owned. Ms. Hassett believes that it is owned by the Institute for Basic Life. Ms. Hassett will do some more research. Ms. Hassett stated that any new park would need to be put into the budget.

Liaison Reports

Ms. Hassett commented on the Administration and Community Affairs (ACA) minutes from May 5, 2014 that were included for information. ACA will meet tomorrow and the only agenda item is Peirce Park playground.

Gateway Special Recreation Association

Ms. Hassett stated that the report was not available prior to this meeting, but there is a surplus of revenue because of Countryside rejoining. The packet will be provided next month.

Revenue Expense Report

Ms. Hassett commented on the report. Ms. Hassett stated that there is approximately \$32,700 increase in program revenue primarily due to the tennis program being offered in-house. There will be a full report and staff believes that the program did improve. Most of the summer programs will be paid out by October. Ms. Hassett reported that KLM Lodge revenue declined \$18,158 over the previous year.

Pool revenue decreased by \$37,000 through July, but daily revenue exceeded last year. There was a decrease in family memberships, primarily due to the decrease of super passes. Pool expenses have increased and the highest part of that were increased personnel costs. Commissioner Owens asked about the survey responses. Ms. Hassett stated that the common theme was not being open during the week with the back to school hours.

Chairman Banke asked about the tennis program and if it goes back into the general fund. Ms. Hassett stated that is correct. Chairman Banke asked about improvements at Burns and if those revenues could be used for improvement to the courts. Ms. Hassett stated that those are things that will be included in the capital plan.

Recreation Program Report

Ms. Hassett commented on the report and that most of it was the same since we didn't meet last month. A recap of July 4th was included; there was a decrease in expenditures and a decrease in craft revenue because of a reduction in the number of craft vendors.

Ms. Hassett stated that field updates are a challenge since football, soccer, lacrosse, ultimate frisbee and AYSO all use the fields. Ms. Hassett stated that staff usually begin preparing the fields 40 days before the season start and that was difficult this fall. Grass mowing has been twice per week because of rain and use of bio solids. Wet conditions have brought lots of weeds, and it is not in the contract to do the weeds in the playground areas. Staff has asked for them to include that in the weekly maintenance.

Ms. Hassett stated that the Veeck Park multi path needs to be refigured to meet the \$16,000 budgeted amount. Engineering is looking at ways it could be on budget.

Staff is working with an agency for the arts center building because there may be a long term tenant. The pool attendance did increase but not at the levels from two years ago. The report will be provided next month. There will be recommendations given for improvements next month. Commissioner Owens stated that an age/height restriction is important for the diving boards.

Ms. Hassett reported that membership revenue was down \$16,000 which is about \$8000 over the prior year not including the loss of super pass revenue. Resident pass sales have decreased and staff will be looking at the 10-visit pass. Commissioner Keane asked if the pool loses money. Ms. Hassett stated that there is a loss in capital, but operating costs are covered. Commissioner Baker asked about the super pass and the control that Clarendon Hills has over that. Ms. Hassett stated that Clarendon Hills determines how many we can have depending of their attendance levels. There is no formal agreement with them. Chairman Banke stated that Clarendon Hills did not have a sense of sharing services and they were just pleased that they were doing well. Chairman Banke stated that we need to do what we can to increase the numbers, but the Village board has no desire to give money for improvements. Ms. Hassett believes that the pool recap should provide a level of concern to the Village Board.

Ms. Hassett commented about a resident of LaGrange that wanted to discontinue their usage at Five Seasons. They thought the non-resident rate was reasonable and are looking to bring some Five Seasons clientele to Hinsdale pool.

Commissioner Mulligan stated that anything that can be done to the diving well would pay for itself, like adding a climbing wall. Ms. Hassett is also looking at a safety surface below the diving boards.

Old Business

Peirce Park Playground Discussion

Ms. Hassett commented on the residents in the area that wanted the restrooms torn down. By removing it, the site plan can shift a little. The sidewalk was also removed and the play surface below the climber. The bid came back over budget by \$19,000. Ms. Hassett explained some of the options that could be done to bring the price down. Ms. Hassett believes the drinking fountain in the plan was too expensive and could be done by public services, and put closer to the Pitchen' Kitchen.

Ms. Hassett stated that the feedback from the residents was neutral about the shelter. Option B would bring the project about \$17,000 over budget. Option A would be under budget. Commissioner Keane agreed that the primary focus was to remove the bathroom and he didn't believe the shelter and drinking fountain were necessary.

Ms. Hassett pointed out that there is a lot of shade already provided in the proposed shelter area. Commissioner Baker asked about the picnic tables and if that was in the structure. Perhaps some benches could be added close to the playground instead of having a shelter. Ms. Hassett stated that benches could be added to the plan and she pointed out where the benches could be. Chairman Banke asked if there would still be a concrete pad. Ms. Hassett stated that there would not be, but picnic tables could be mounted in the ground if we want them. Neighborhood parks don't have a lot of picnic tables unless they are anchored to the ground. Ms. Hassett will check to see if the tables could still be part of the bid.

Chairman Banke stated that there are two choices and any changes would delay the project. Ms. Hassett believes adding benches would be easy and reasonable. Commissioner Conboy stated the addition of benches would be great and doesn't believe the cost is worth it for the shelter. Commissioners George and Owens agreed that Option A is fine and the shelter is not a necessity. Commission Mulligan thought the shelter was nice and would be an asset but agrees it is not a must have.

Chairman Banke agreed with Commissioner Mulligan because the residents expressed their desire to have the shelter. The Commission voted 4 to 3 to approve Option A. Commissioner Owens

asked about if money can be allocated to something else from the operating budget if a project is under budget. Ms. Hassett stated how the capital projects budget work.

Ms. Hassett pointed out the changes to the revised plan. It will be posted on the Village website once it is approved by ACA.

KLM Lodge Update and Fee Review

Ms. Braun stated that the lodge is operating at a profit for the first time since 2009. Staff is continuing to bring in contracts and building a relationship with businesses. Ms. Braun stated that social functions are still the bread and butter. Staff is trying to get the PTO business, is looking at continued revenues like tent revenue, and continues to advertise with Wedding Guide and the Chamber of Commerce.

There is a wedding arbor in the back that has been received very well. Money has been allocated for plantings. There are challenges since it is a public park and there isn't money to upkeep the whole park. Staff is requesting an increase in rates since they have not been increased since 2012. Ms. Braun stated staff looked at the competition and we are still below the competitors.

Commissioner Mulligan asked about the corporate rates and what kind of events are they. Ms. Braun stated that corporate clients are a challenge and they are usually a company that is looking for something different and does not need modern technology. The business meetings are more retreats when they are more casual events like team building.

Commissioner Mulligan asked if we need to invest more into technology. Ms. Braun believes that would not be an advantage and it would be better upgrading things inside. Commissioner Keane asked about the Zook House. Ms. Hassett explained that it is not finished and there are no bathrooms so it will be limited on the use. When the house is finished the first floor will be available for rentals. It is a historical property but will not be finished until there is more funding.

Ms. Hassett is concerned that it could conflict with lodge operations. Chairman Banke asked if the village would have any authority over the facility. The park is not just the Lodge venue, so all users of the park have to work together. The challenge is most events are on the weekends when there is no staff there.

Ms. Braun commented that the landscaping has improved but it needs to continue and it needs to be done a couple of times per year. The facility is always on display so that is a challenge. Ms. Hassett commented that the challenge is that the lodge is two floors and it is not ADA accessible. Ms. Braun explained that the tents are used to mirror the inside so clients don't have to use the second floor.

Commissioner Conboy asked if there was a 3-5 year plan and what the next step would be that Ms. Braun would like. Ms. Braun stated that there is no 5 year plan that she knows of. Ms. Hassett stated that the pool and lodge are under scrutiny from the board that they should be able to sustain themselves. The village has no interest in expanding the lodge and it is landmarked. Ms. Braun stated that there are things that could be done that don't involve a lot of money.

Chairman Banke stated that there needs to be a place where people can go to take pictures. Ms. Braun stated that sales are increasing. Commissioner Mulligan asked if the increase in rates could be reinvested into the Lodge. Ms. Braun stated that the increase in rates could cover someone taking care of the landscaping on the weekends. Commissioner Mulligan asked Ms. Braun to make a wish list for the lodge.

Chairman Banke asked Ms. Hassett where the dollars go. Ms. Hassett stated that they go to the general fund. The Commission thanked Ms. Braun for coming. The Commission unanimously approved the proposed rates.

Ice Rink Discussion

Ms. Hassett explained the request. Burns Field is used because of the lights and is put in south of the platform tennis courts in the bowl of the park. The last couple of year's liners have been used. It takes a long time to freeze because the water is 12" – 24" deep. One of the suggestions would be a 30 x 80 rink at Burlington Park. It could be put on the west end of the park near Washington Street where the stage was for the concerts. The rink at Melin is 40 x 80 and that would accommodate about 24 skaters. The EDC funded the cookie decorating and the Chamber manages the Santa house. Ms. Hassett commented that tent costs would add too much to the cost of that rink. The rink would be constructed in time for the tree lighting ceremony, weather permitting. Most towns don't have warming houses. The package would have plastic boards and look more finished.

The ice rink at Burns Field takes a long time to freeze but if there is snow, the village crews don't have time to clear the snow. The rink could be installed on the tennis courts, but then there would not be lights. The lights by the platform tennis courts would have to be turned to shine on the courts. That rink would be about 45 x 90 if it was on the tennis courts. Commissioner Keane mentioned the fact that the rink is so big is what makes the rink unique. He also asked if the field could be regraded to make the rink more level. Ms. Hassett stated that it would be very costly to re-grade the field and there would be drainage issues.

Commissioner Owens commented on only holding 24 skaters at Burlington Park and the cost. Commissioner Mulligan feels it is okay if there are no hockey players on it. Commissioner Mulligan commented on the challenge of different sizes on each side and the more level the better. The Commissioners stated that there has to be a place for the hockey players. Chairman Banke stated that it would be removing part of the village if the ice rink at Burns was removed.

Ms. Hassett explained that a rink on the tennis courts would provide a better depth. Chairman Banke stated that he believes moving it to the tennis courts would diminish the level of service.

The Commission agreed that the ice rink at Burns should remain as it is and not be put on the tennis courts. Commissioner Mulligan suggested that rinks could be moved to a different area at Burns and possibly regrade the property. Ms. Hassett stated that there have been two separate rinks in the past.

The Commission was okay with looking at a rink at Burlington as long as there is still one at Burns Field. The warming house at Burns is staffed but that could be changed to only have staff on the weekends. Burlington Park rink would not be staffed. Ms. Hassett explained how we have to pay staff to sit and watch the ice while it is freezing. Chairman Banke stated that we have to build for the future and looking at regrading could allow the situation to be more usable.

Capital Improvement Plan

Ms. Hassett commented on the projects. The October report will have a detailed report of the capital plan.

Adjournment

The next meeting will be October 14, 2014. Since there was no further business to come before the Commission, Commissioner Owens moved to adjourn. Commissioner Baker seconded and the

motion passed unanimously. The meeting of the Park and Recreation Commission was declared adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Copp, Secretary