



WILMETTE PARK DISTRICT

Regular Board Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Monday, September 12, 2022
7:30 p.m. – Village Hall Council Chambers

PRESENT

Commissioners: President Michael Murdock, Vice President Kara Kosloskus, Cecilia Clarke, Julia Goebel, Lindsay Anderson, Patrick Duffy and Allison Frazier

Staff: Executive Director Steve Wilson

ABSENT

None

1.0 REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS CALLED TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

A. Roll Call Taken

2.0 CONSENT AGENDA

2.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING HELD ON AUGUST 8, 2022

2.2 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE SPECIAL BOARD MEETING ON AUGUST 22, 2022

2.3 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING ON AUGUST 22, 2022

2.4 APPROVAL OF AUGUST 2022 VOUCHER LIST

Prior to a motion for the Consent Agenda, Commissioner Goebel informed the community that earlier in the evening the beach house at Gillson, and Woodhouse Tinucci Architects were recognized by the AIA for outstanding design. She noted that it is always nice to see the broader design community appreciate a space that we in Wilmette all love in Gillson Park.

Commissioner Frazier moved and Commissioner Clarke seconded a motion to approve the Consent Agenda of the September 12, 2022 Regular Board Meeting, a copy of which is to be attached to and become a permanent part of the minutes of this meeting. President Murdock removed items 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 as some additional information is needed to complete the minutes for approval, leaving only item 2.4, Voucher List for approval.

By a roll call vote, voting Yes, Commissioners: Duffy, Anderson, Frazier, Clarke, Goebel, Kosloskus and Murdock. Voting *No*, none. *Absent*, none;
Motion Carried.

3.0 COMMUNICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

President Murdock acknowledged the Board received a number of correspondence with respect to various topics. He noted emails that came in after the packet was published, one about extending the pool season past the start of October, and another about the materials for the path in Keay Nature Center.

4.0 PUBLIC COMMENT/RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

President Murdock facilitated public comment. The Attendance Sheet will become part of the permanent record.

President Murdock began public comment by directing the audience's attention to the Public Comment Policy in the packet and specifically highlighted certain sections of the policy. He mentioned an incident at a prior meeting and how he has communicated with the individual involved in the incident since that meeting and prior to the current meeting, and hopes that there will be no further incidents tonight or at future meetings.

Karl Leinberger – President of the board at Canal Shores Golf Course. He stated the course has received a letter of support from both the MWRD and the City of Evanston which helps the course in their effort to fundraise to redevelop the course. The letters are needed to give donors confidence that the course will remain in operation beyond the current terms of the current leases. He stated he is hoping the Wilmette Park District would consider writing a similar letter of support.

Patrick O'Gara – He stated that he believed he received the communication from President Murdock he referred to earlier and has followed up with Director Wilson requesting police presence at the meeting and stated he was glad they were in the room. He then stated he was glad to see the minutes from the prior meeting had been removed from the consent agenda as he was going to make comment in regard to their content as he feels they have been manipulated for strategic and legal reasons, a concern he has had in regard to prior meeting minutes. He then spoke in regard to an email from the Friends of West Park and highlighted the concern regarding what he referred to as scope creep. He stated that the neighbors are concerned that the Park District has the intent to move forward with the original master plan without further neighbor input as the master plan has never been revised by the park district officially. The only revision was in their application to the Village of Wilmette. He specifically spoke about comments in a Committee of the Whole meeting about the decking to connect the northern courts over the Glenview water main being included in the second phase of construction in conjunction with the expansion of the warming hut. He stated that this decking was a part of the revisions made in the application to the Village and he hoped that the Park District had no plan to try and implement parts of the plan that were not a part of the application to the Village. He then invited the members of the Board of Park Commissioners to repudiate all aspects of the West Park Master Plan that were not included in the application to the Village to give the neighbors some assurance.

He then said he had confirmed with Director Wilson that input on the landscape plans for West Park can still be received this week and stated the intent to submit that feedback later this week.

Tanja Chevalier – She spoke about the Gillson Park Comprehensive Plan that is on the agenda tonight and asked to know who the survey was sent to and how.

At the conclusion of public comment, President Murdock asked the board if there were any comments anyone would like to make in conjunction with what was said during Public Comment. Hearing none, he asked Director Wilson to answer the question from Tanja Chevalier in regard to how the Gillson Comprehensive Plan Survey was distributed.

Director Wilson stated that the link to the survey was sent to all the email addresses in the Park District's database which at that time numbered around 22,000 email addresses. He said that this database is populated by anyone who has setup an account with the District, whether they have done any business with us or not, as well as anyone who opted into the distribution list via a button on the District's homepage. He said that overtime, people have opted out of the distribution list which is their right. He stated that it was also shared via the District's social media accounts, via the monthly newsletter of the district, through the Village of Wilmette's Friday email distribution list, and sits available to anyone on multiple pages on the District's website. Commissioner Duffy pointed out that at a prior meeting when this was discussed, it was stated that we can't send the survey to every person in Wilmette for two reasons. One being not everyone necessarily has an email address, and secondly because we can only send it to individuals who want to receive Park District emails.

President Murdock then spoke about the comments regarding the decking at the platform tennis facility during Public Comment. He said he has had discussions with the District's legal counsel and has asked him to look at the circumstances regarding zoning and special use permits and to come back and give us his legal opinion. He used playgrounds as an example of something we would undertake in a park that would not require a zoning or special use process with the Village, and stated he would guess that decking would be similar, but that he would want to confirm that with our legal counsel.

6.0 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Wilson reported that the memo in the packet contained the same information sent to the Village as an update on the compliance with the conditions contained in the Ordinance expanding the Special Use at West Park in conjunction with the addition of two platform tennis courts and an expansion of the warming hut. He called out the portion regarding landscaping work and a question about why there were no plantings on the northern side of the northern courts. He explained that this is related to a contemplated east/west sidewalk connecting the neighborhood through West Park to a north/south bike path along the abandoned

railroad tracks abutting the homes in Glenview. He went on to explain that the Village of Wilmette had requested that no plantings be considered at this time until their plans are finalized as to not create any conflicts between landscaping and path designs.

He then reported that the packet for the meeting contains the results of the most recent survey regarding Gillson Park vehicular circulation. He reported the most selected option was to convert middle drive into a non-vehicular path without removing any other roadways. He stated that the survey results are on the agenda for the board's discussion later in the meeting. Commissioner Clarke stated that if you look at all responses and compare the first three options, all of which contemplate a change of some sort to Middle Drive, to the responses for "None of the Above," that nearly double the responses contemplate a change as compared to leaving Middle Drive as is.

Director Wilson next reported that internal meetings have taken place to get started on the comprehensive and strategic plan development process and that the public engagement strategy is in development and an official public kickoff will take place in the coming weeks.

He then reported that two bids were opened for the site work at West Park and one bid was marked as incomplete and the other bid was high compared to the engineering cost estimates. Staff is working to value engineer or better understand the bid and once comfortable with the results will bring it to the board, which may require a special meeting.

The report was concluded with informing the board of a new state law that requires any unit of government who could issue a tax levy to undergo an efficiency study once every 10 years with the first study to take place in the next 2 years.

7.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

7.1 *Gillson Park Comprehensive Plan Survey Results*

Commissioner Murdock introduced the topic of the survey results and Director Wilson outlined the high level results in regard to the roadway feedback. Commissioner Clarke reiterated the point about the number of responses who want change to Middle Drive as compared to no change at all. Commissioner Duffy said that based on the responses, the discussion tonight should be focused on whether Middle Drive is converted to a non-vehicular path or removed entirely. He went on to say he feels that he would supporting making a non-vehicular path. Commissioner Clarke mentioned that the design initially said the path would be twelve feet wide and she would want any path to be less wide. President Murdock said he wanted to understand timeline and asked Director Wilson what the timeline would look like. Director Wilson said that to get detailed drawings and cost estimates, there is not enough time prior to setting the 2023 budget and therefore a budget item would have to be included more as a placeholder than based

on detailed estimates. He went onto say that there is enough time to do the drawings and bid process to begin construction after Labor Day in 2023 and finish prior to Memorial Day 2024. Commissioner Anderson asked if the conversation tonight is intended to be strictly about roadway configuration or should it include other items that have been contemplated such as boardwalks to preserve dune grasses. President Murdock said he felt the conversation tonight should be focused on roadways and other items can be discussed at a later meeting so members of the community have the opportunity to provide their input on those items. Commissioner Frazier stated that she agrees with the most selected option and she supports converting Middle Drive to a non-vehicular path as it still provides pedestrian access to the playground while removing cars from being next to the park and reduces the amount of pavement in the area. Commissioner Clarke said she would convert Middle Drive to a non-vehicular path. Commissioner Goebel agreed and added that she feels that this is in line with the desire to have a light touch in the park while addressing infrastructure issues while reducing pavement. Commissioner Anderson said that she agrees with what has been said by other commissioners and that she likes that it is not changing the character of the park while reducing potential vehicular activity in the area of the playground. Vice President Kosloskus stated she appreciates that the start of the thinking process was to start big, but clearly the public has spoken that keeping the park largely as it is, and to that end she agrees to convert Middle Drive to a non-vehicular path. President Murdock stated that he likes how the direction we are taking is reducing traffic and increasing green space. He said while he would have entertained the idea to remove more roadways to make more green space, he feels that this is probably the right solution for the park.

The board concluded the discussion by confirming with staff that they have the direction they need to move forward with the planning process. Staff concurred.

8.0 NEW BUSINESS

There was a brief conversation regarding the Park District's compliance with the Village Ordinance.

8.1 *Consideration of Bid Recommendation for Renovation at Keay Nature Center Path Project*

Director Wilson outlined that there were multiple bidders and that the recommended bid is a little high compared to expectations. Commissioner Anderson made a motion to approve the bid recommendation for renovation at the Keay Nature Center in the amount of \$210,820. Commissioner Duffy seconded the motion. Vice President Kosloskus reminded the board that the bidder, Hacienda Construction, was the contractor that sparked the protest in front of the Community Recreation Center including an inflatable rat. After discussion, the board agreed to modify the motion to be contingent

on staff confirming there are no outstanding issues between the contractor and the local unions that would cause further protests.

By a roll call vote, voting Yes, Commissioners: Duffy, Anderson, Frazier, Clarke, Goebel, Kosloskus and Murdock. Voting *No*, none. *Absent*, none;
Motion Carried.

9.0 ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, Commissioner Kosloskus moved and Commissioner Goebel seconded a motion to adjourn the Regular Board meeting at 8:34 p.m.

By a unanimous voice vote; **Motion Carried.**

Minutes Approved on October 17, 2022.