



WILMETTE PARK DISTRICT Regular Board Meeting Meeting Minutes

August 9, 2021

7:30 p.m. – Village Hall Council Chambers

PRESENT

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

Secretary/Executive Director: Steve Wilson

Staff: Catherine Serbin

ABSENT

Commissioner: Cecilia Clarke

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

As with prior Board meetings, President Murdock acknowledged the change in the Board's agenda format. He noted the addition of a Consent Agenda that is designed to make Board meetings more effective. He further explained that any Commissioner can pull an item off of the Consent Agenda for additional discussion prior to a vote.

2.0 CONSENT AGENDA

2.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING HELD ON JUNE 14, 2021

2.2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING HELD ON JULY 12, 2021

2.3 APPROVAL OF JULY 2021 VOUCHER LIST

Commissioner Frazier moved and Commissioner Duffy seconded a motion to approve the Consent Agenda of the August 9, 2021 Regular Board Meeting, a copy of which is to be attached to and become a permanent part of the minutes of this meeting.

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

3.0 COMMUNICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

Vice President Goebel acknowledged several different pieces of correspondence in the packet with respect to the Gillson Master Plan and process which the Board will address this evening.

4.0 PUBLIC COMMENT/RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

President Murdock facilitated public comment. He asked that anyone from the public refrain from commenting with respect to the Gillson Comprehensive Plan and Lakeview Center until after the presentations.

Mary Lawler – Advised that she is associated the League of Women’s Voters in Wilmette. One of the Leagues’ focus areas in 2021-22 is community education and engagement in local governance. Part of that focus area is to advocate for open and transparent government bodies. She is the Chair of that focus area and is speaking tonight within that capacity – specifically, with respect to the proposed process for filling the Board vacancy. She asked that as this Board considers whether to adopt the process as recommended or to modify, the League of Women’s Voters believes the public would benefit from hearing the Board’s response to the following questions: How is the recommended process the same or different from the process used in 2015, the last time the Board had to fill a vacancy? What are the reasons behind any similarities or differences in the process? One change the League noticed was to keep the names of the applicants hidden from both the public and initial review by the Commissioners. In 2015, all applicants were made public. The League would like to know why this change to the process has been made and the reasoning behind the change. The League would also like the Board to consider how useful this will be as some Commissioners will be able to figure out the applicant’s identity by the information on the application. Furthermore, when running for Commission in an election, the names are public knowledge. The League would also like to know why the Board has elected to adopt the existing process of closed interviews to the public. The League appreciates the difficulty of this task and thanked the Board for their service to the community.

Beth Beucher – She stated she is concerned with respect to the Board’s compliance of the Open Meetings Act. The meeting agenda indicates that tonight will only be discussion, however, Director Wilson is quoted in a Q&A session stating that money has been approved for what is being discussed but has not yet been decided and construction of what is being discussed at Lakeview will proceed this fall. She read an additional excerpt from Director Wilson’s Q&A that states the 2021 Capital Improvement Plan has money allocated in it to begin work this fall. She believes acts have occurred within the Wilmette Park District which warrant an investigation into violations of the Open Meetings Act. She stated she is concerned for the Commissioners and believes they have not complied with Illinois law. She further added the Park Board attorney does not represent any of the Commissioners individually. If there is an OMA violation, the public trust has been broken and that is hard to repair. She noted that she had previously appeared before the Board to state the planning process behind Gillson and Lakeview does not have to be antagonist and that the residents sit at the top of the Wilmette Park District Organization Chart. She stated that in her conversations with the community, Wilmette residents are not pleased with the Board’s planning process and many are angry. She also conveyed some public comment from an individual

who could not attend the Board meeting – one of these stating that Langdon Beach should be a higher priority than Gillson and Lakeview.

President Murdock stated that he was not clear with Beth Beucher's concern regarding the Open Meetings Act. He asked her if, because the Board has allocated money in the Capital Budget that means the Board has already approved the project outside of a public meeting? Beth stated that what she is hearing from Wilmette residents is that they cannot understand what the Board has done or what the Board has planned to do, which gives rise to the question as to whether there have been violations of the Open Meetings Act. President Murdock stated that no decisions have been made with respect to the Gillson Plan. The Consultants proposed some ideas in the spring which they shared with the public and with the full Board. At this point, the Board is still in the Community Engagement process and the Consultants will speak more to this during their presentation. President Murdock stated he does not believe there are any Open Meetings Act violations. Commissioner Duffy stated that he believes there is a misunderstanding due to infrequent community attendance at Board meetings. He stated he was insulted at the insinuation that there have been any OMA violations as no decisions have been made.

After the Gillson Comprehensive Plan update and Lakeview Center presentation, President Murdock again facilitated public comment.

Ross Green – He stated the most important part of the survey was the open response section at the end. He believes what is most notable from the open responses is that the two major themes that emerged was to maintain the natural setting and/or leave it alone. He stated the entire survey needs to be interpreted with that in mind. He also pointed out that the desire to renovate Lakeview Center was not conveyed in any open responses. He believes the Park District is attempting to expand Lakeview Center into a banquet center.

Alan Golden – He thanked Commissioner Kosloskus for coming down to the Sailing Beach and spending time with the constituents there. He stated he did not understand what the survey meant by “better integrate Sailing Beach” and asked for clarification. He stated he did an informal survey at the Sailing Beach and the overwhelming response he received was leave the Sailing Beach alone – no permanent restrooms and no additional structures.

Mr. Tinucci replied that geographically, the Sailing Beach is off to the north of the park. By better integrate the Sailing Beach, Mr. Tinucci explained this could mean improving accessibility and pathways to the Sailing Beach and through the Sailing Beach. The architecture of the facilities at the Beach House are also very different than at the Sailing Beach. He also asked the Board to contemplate the restroom network at the Sailing Beach as residents have expressed a desire for this. Commissioner Duffy advised that in public stakeholder meetings with the Water Treatment Plant, they are planning on replacing one of the 100-year old intake

lines that runs right through the Sailing Beach. They intend on replacing this within the next three years. Both of the existing structures at the Sailing Beach sit on the easement that the intake lines are on. Therefore, those buildings will eventually be gone because of the intake line replacement. He asked Mr. Golden to consider future planning of Sailing Beach amenities so that the Park District can move forward with a replacement when the time comes.

Bill Jeffers – He expressed concern over the Lakeview Center renovation because he does not see a unified view of what will happen there. He suggested a programming plan for the Lakeview Center and how that will impact the park. With respect to access to the park, he stated people do not come in through the south because it has a drainage problem and stressed the importance of the infrastructure issues.

Piper Rothchild – She is heartened that most of the initial plans presented will not be pursued as they were alarming to her and inconsistent with what residents have said about Gillson. She stated she is concerned about the plans to expand and further develop the Lakeview Center which Mr. Wilson said may start as early as fall. She cautioned the Board to listen to the residents prior to starting construction. She also does not agree with the Lakota Group and believes renovation of Lakeview Center to be an expansion. She stated space for programs not currently held at Lakeview is an expansion. She believes the Board is rushing the process and asked for data to support their decision to renovate Lakeview Center. She expressed concern that no one from the Board was present during conversations with the Village regarding traffic at Gillson. She asked why the Park Board is not working with the Village to address parking.

Mary Shea – She advised that Lakeview Center was built at staff demand in 1989 as a bathroom, office space and community meeting space. The hope for a winter activity space never fully materialized but it has served well for meetings. She believes the bathrooms to be perfectly adequate. She noted they are locked up when the staff leaves at 5 p.m. which argues against more bathrooms in the park because those would presumably also be locked for security reasons. She expressed frustration that the Lakeview Center be viewed as a potential revenue source. She believes the Lakeview Center renovation to be an expansion and referenced the increased deck footprint as proof. She also noted the downstairs program room would be windowless and asked if the upper and lower reception areas are necessary. She reiterated her belief that the Wilmette Park District has turned to a big business.

Lori Farrell – She stated that Gillson Park was a significant factor in her family's decision to move to Wilmette. She is unsure who is being served through the Comprehensive Plan and expressed a strong desire not to do anything to Gillson other than address critical infrastructure.

5.0 GILLSON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Andy Tinucci, Principal at Woodhouse Tinucci Architects, began the presentation by introducing his colleagues at the Lakota Group, Kevin Clark and Deb Samyn. The Consultants were last here on June 14th to discuss the Gillson Comprehensive Plan. At that time, the Consultants clearly heard the need for continued engagement with the public. With staff's assistance, the Consultants created an additional community engagement plan. Prior to that meeting date, the Consultants had been mostly reliant on virtual engagement due to the pandemic. These past couple months, they have finally been afforded the opportunity to meet in-person with Wilmette residents. Consultants also relied on the 2016 aQity survey, online focus group interviews and a virtual Community Open House. Since the June Board meeting, the Consultants have opened up an online survey, held several in-person events and two Community Open Houses with high levels of community engagement. Mr. Tinucci further provided a detailed account of engagement by numbers. During the June Board meeting, the Consultants presented a series of fundamental principles. This was to establish a set of criteria with the Community and the Board that we can all agree on and continually revisit and evaluate as criteria to analyze each idea as developed and measure it against one of these criteria. These are principles that are common amongst planning efforts such as safety and security. He provided the example of Harbor Drive, which is currently unsafe due to the lack of a pedestrian sidewalk. He asked the Board how they can think about the safety in the park and the safety of the community within this plan. Other principles discussed include improving and enhancing the natural environment. Historically, there has not been a good planting plan for the park. Mr. Tinucci urged the Board to think about this moving forward because as trees come to the end of their natural life, there must be a plan in place to maintain them, prune them and replace them. Consultants have heard how important this is to the community. Mr. Tinucci also suggested improving, enhancing and maintaining facilities so that the Park District can continue to deliver quality programming that residents are accustomed to. He also clarified confusion regarding the Lakeview Center and the Wallace Bowl in that they will both be part of the Comprehensive Plan as consideration due to their placement within the park. Any details regarding these facilities interior will not be included in the Comprehensive Plan. He urged the Board to adapt green and sustainable practices to best steward the nature environment. Mr. Tinucci also discussed the importance of access, not just for those with special needs, but a welcoming place for all. Efficient infrastructure is also key as there is evident deterioration. Roadways are in bad shape and the drainage system needs work. The Park District needs efficient infrastructure in place at all facilities. Any of these ideas must be durable. There must be a maintenance plan and these ideas must be able to be maintained by the Park District over time so that the Park District is not spending money now only to be repairing it in short order. The Park District must be fiscally responsible. This is paramount to the Board and all ideas must be measured against this. Mr. Tinucci advised that conversation regarding the park has been split amongst six different "buckets" in an effort to organize thoughts. One is park context – this is the "zones" of the park and their relationship to one another. For example, the Sailing Beach

is very different than the large open fields. The other five “buckets” include infrastructure and utilities, landscape and open space, wayfinding and signage, circulation and access and special conditions. Mr. Tinucci then turned the presentation over to Ms. Samyn and Mr. Clark who provided a detailed overview of the community engagement online survey results. The Consultants had two different ways of interacting with respondents. One was to put forth different strategies and initiatives for each of the six “buckets” as well as reactions to visual preference images that are either in the park or could be in the park. With respect to park context, there was a high rating for selectively removing vegetation in poor condition. The second highest rating was define and enhance special garden spaces and the third highest rating was improve entries into the park. Of little less importance was better integrate Sailing Beach into the rest of the park. Ms. Samyn clarified that initiatives were presented and they were not ranked in any order. If the respondent thought an initiative was important, they would select it. Therefore, the respondent could have selected five initiatives or two initiatives. The percentages were calculated by how many initiatives were chosen overall.

With respect to the landscape and open space engagement results, the top three results are very close to each other. Almost 50% of respondents selected initiate a management plan for special habitat garden and dune landscape areas. 46% of respondents selected retain and expand open lawn landscape and reduce pavement. 43% of respondents selected develop a tree management plan based on 2021 tree inventory and assessment. Of lesser interest to respondents, 29% selected create a “garden walk” throughout the park and 22% of respondents selected develop a cohesive landscape character. President Murdock reminded the public that these survey results are also listed online. Mr. Clark read some open comments from respondents which focused on retaining trees and maintaining open, green space. Respondents were then asked to rank the level to which they like or dislike certain images. The highest rated image was restoring the dune landscape followed by native accent plantings, open tree and lawn landscape and enhanced gardens.

With respect to infrastructure and utilities, 47% of respondents selected address poor drainage conditions. This was also heard loud and clear at open houses and in discussions with the public. 46% of respondents selected repair and replace roadways, curbs and sidewalks. Mr. Clark emphasized that this means repair, not expand or create additional paving. 46% of respondents also selected unify dark sky compliant, LED lighting throughout the park. 31% of respondents selected develop ADA compliant routes connecting all major features. 30% of respondents selected develop a more cohesive landscape character. 25% of respondents selected balance impervious surface impact of site alterations. In regards to the visual preference results, accessible pathways was the highest ranked at 3.8. Native accent plantings were the second highest rated and Mr. Clark suggested solving for drainage problems using a more natural system such as a natural detention basin. LED bollard lights and permeable paving were at 3.5.

With respect to wayfinding and signage, 39% of respondents selected improve entry sequences into the park. Mr. Clark advised that consultants have heard a lot from the public about entry into the park both on the north and south end. 36% of respondents selected none of the above – they have no interest in adding any wayfinding or signage, which is something to note. 30% of respondents selected expand the wayfinding signage program. Mr. Clark clarified that currently, there are signs that were incorporated as a part of the beach house renovation and some respondents have indicated they would like that expanded throughout the park. 20% of respondents selected accent the Washington columns as a gateway feature. In regards to the visual preference results, participants generally responded well to the existing wayfinding signage which is a simple, understated sign that works with the architecture that has been created at the beach house.

With respect to circulation and access, 56% of respondents selected create a comprehensive pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular circulation plan that is more intuitive. 47% of respondents selected provide pedestrian and bicycle boardwalk along Harbor Drive. 46% of respondents selected extend pedestrian connections to important shoreline amenities. 31% of respondents selected enhance the pedestrian entry experience. 30% of respondents selected improve pedestrian roadway crossings. 22% of respondents selected consider removing Middle Drive. 20% of respondents selected address parking in the park and 20% of respondents chose none of the above. In regards to the visual preference results, a brick crosswalk and improved pathways were the highest rated images at 3.5. Enhanced bike and pedestrian entry was the third highest at 3.3.

With respect to special conditions, 46% of respondents selected coordinate park planning initiatives with planned shoreline improvements. 33% of respondents selected better connect the Lakeview Center and Wallace Bowl to paths along the parking lot. 30% of respondents selected provide new restroom facility at the Sailing Beach as well as improve Dog Beach maintenance and facilities. 29% of respondents selected consider additional covered shelters. 22% of respondents selected enhance programming access for the aquatics beach. 20% of respondents selected increase connection of the Sailing Beach to the rest of the park. 12% of respondents selected none of the above. 8% of respondents selected screen the maintenance building. In regards to the visual preference results, the idea of a boardwalk was appealing at 3.9. A restroom facility was also highly liked. Mr. Clark advised rest of the images did not necessarily score very high which must be taken into consideration.

Mr. Tinucci stated that at the end of the survey, was an open ended question: What is your vision for Gillson Park? Of the 1800 responses to the survey, there were over 700 responses to this one question. No two responses were exactly alike, however, the Consultants were able to sort them by theme. The highest response theme was maintain the natural character of Gillson. Let it remain as is an overarching theme as well in feedback. These two responses comprise 55% of all the responses. Provide better circulation and access was also noted at 12.2%

which is clearly speaking to safety within the park. 10% of respondents noted minor improvements. Mr. Tinucci clarified that this might mean opening up some views to the lake, possibly a few more benches or cleaning up the Sailing Beach. These are subtle changes to a park the public loves very much. Improve upon native, natural landscapes was also noted in the open responses. Mr. Tinucci stated that he believes one of the most compelling parts of Gillson Park is the diversity of the landscapes that exist in this park. There are dunescapes followed by mature shade trees with an incredible natural landscape and the community recognizes this and appreciates it and they would like to see that maintained and fulfilled. Repair infrastructure was noted in the open responses – which is one of the more obvious areas in which the park can be improved. Provide additional facilities was noted in the open responses. Mr. Tinucci emphasized that this has not been heard across the Board and that many people do not want more structures in the park. However, 5% of respondents have said another restroom wouldn't hurt or possibly an additional picnic shelter. Add more programming generally speaks for itself. Mr. Tinucci noted that reorganize park fees and make family friendly are linked. Make this a park for everyone was a consistent response throughout the open ended responses. Reorganizing park fees was an operational response received which isn't necessarily helpful in this conversation but that may be. Increased safety, which speaks to the crosswalks, the roadways and the sidewalks, was noted. It is common for this park to be busy in the summer but there are residents who continue to use this park throughout the year. Mr. Tinucci hypothetically asked the Board how we can continue to assist them so that they can have great experiences throughout the year even as the weather suggests otherwise. Lastly, reorganize parking was noted as a top response theme. Mr. Tinucci stated that the park is an incredibly popular place and therefore, there are issues with parking being overrun. Mr. Tinucci hypothetically asked the Board how some of these plans and operations could assist in alleviating this problem. Mr. Tinucci then briefly read some resident responses.

Mr. Tinucci highlighted next steps. He stated that this Saturday is the last planned community engagement session at the French Market. After the last additional feedback is received, the Consultants will start to put together some ideas in comprehensive plan form. The Consultants intend to present these ideas to the Board and community in September. Afterwards, the Consultants would engage in another round of community input based on those ideas presented. This would include another open house, additional French Market engagement and another online survey in October. In November, the Consultants hope to come back to the Board with a preferred Master Plan Concept, cost opinions and priorities. Mr. Tinucci noted that while this is a comprehensive plan, this does not mean one project. The individual pieces of this plan will have their own costs associated with them that the Board can evaluate and use to prioritize. Lastly, the Consultants will come back to the Board in December to finalize the Master Plan, the priorities and the path forward.

6.0 LAKEVIEW CENTER PLAN PRESENTATION

Mr. Tinucci began the presentation by reminding the Board and the public that the interior of the Lakeview Center is not included in the Comprehensive Plan. This facility was built in 1989 adjacent to the Wallace Bowl which was built in 1937. The Lakeview Center was built, in part, to facilitate activities at the Wallace Bowl hence all the restrooms included in it. Its position in the park also sought to provide additional programming space. Community meetings are held there as well as Park District staff offices. There is a concession stand there on the lower level facing towards the beach – however, the beach house now fulfills that need. Mr. Tinucci stated the Lakeview Center is in the middle of the park at a crossroads in the park and a crossroad in time. It is perfectly situated in the park to serve the park but is maybe not serving the park as well as it once did as the changes and usages in the park have changed. Mr. Tinucci hypothetically asked the Board what is the next story Lakeview Center will tell? This could be new programming or how the Park District and staff can better serve the park. There is an enormous amount of potential this building has at this particular location in the park. It has incredible lake views. It has connects to the park both on the upper level and the lower level that it doesn't fulfill right now. It serves the park in several directions. Mr. Tinucci asked how we can acknowledge these connections as we think about improvements at the Lakeview Center. For example, how can we better connect and serve the beach? How can we better connect to the park on all sides? What are the ways that the Lakeview Center should be serving the Wallace Bowl? How can we connect to the residents inside of the Village coming to the park and Lakeview Center?

The rooms inside of Lakeview Center have potential to offer programs. How can we renovate Lakeview to enhance program offerings? Mr. Tinucci then listed some challenges such as an inaccessible lower level. The space that was once a concession stand that is no more closes itself off and turns itself away from the park. Mr. Tinucci advised the lower level should be opened up to the park and welcoming to the park. Overall, the lower level is underutilized. It is a basement. Mr. Tinucci asked how we can turn this basement into a lower level that truly opens up to the park and welcomes people from the park. Mr. Tinucci showed a picture of the dark entry on the upper level. He asked if this is as welcoming as it could be or should be. The entry reception where the staff is not directly adjacent to the front door so people seeking staff have to move through rooms to get to staff. Can we make that staff more forward facing and present to the community.

Mr. Tinucci advised there has been hardly any renovation to this facility since 1989. All that has been added is a deck and a fireplace in the last thirty years. He stated it is time to update the finishes of this facility. While the building has incredible views of the lake, it also has views of the loading dock and the trash enclosure.

Mr. Tinucci and his team presented a recommendation of a phased approach for the Board's consideration. The first phase would include renovations to the existing lower level. Mr. Tinucci presented the existing floorplan of the lower level and

explained how the lower level could be reconfigured to include staff offices, reception and programming. He discussed potentially removing a non-loadbearing wall to create an open programming space for a variety of activity.

The second phase would include renovating the upper level. Mr. Tinucci explained that with the offices moved downstairs, space will be freed up. He again noted this building has considerably more restrooms than required by code because it served the Wallace Bowl. He suggested the main entry be renovated into bright open lobby that would lead into two multipurpose spaces. The multipurpose rooms would have updated finishes, energy efficient lighting and natural light would be brought deeper into the space so the lake can be seen from further inside the building. Dividers would be removable and transparent.

Furthermore, Mr. Tinucci explained there is an opportunity to update the restrooms. He reiterated that the finishes are extremely dated and that there is no family restroom in the building. He provided a cost estimate of a finishes only renovation which would be around \$85,000 per bathroom. He added these costs were vetted by W.B. Olson, the contractor that worked on the beach house. To reconfigure the bathroom to include a family restroom would cost about \$130,000. This would not change the amount of stalls.

Lastly, the final phase would be the exterior renovation of the building. With improved lower level access to the staff space, Mr. Tinucci and his team have contemplated adding a connection to the park in underutilized lawn area. Upstairs, the deck would be pulled back slightly to add more light into the staff spaces but opened up towards the north and the south. This new deck would have the benefit of covering the trash enclosure and improve visitor experience towards the park. Mr. Tinucci suggested painting the facility a different color as parks and natural landscapes are more important than buildings. The building should not be standing out. He suggested painting the building the color of a tree trunk to blend in with the environment.

The plan proposes no growth in footprint to the building itself. It does grow the deck to the north and south slightly. Mr. Tinucci advised that these plans were presented to the Lakefront Committee in early June. He proposed community engagement meetings regarding the Lakeview Center – one later this week on August 12th at the Community Recreation Center and one on August 16th. An online survey has also been launched so that residents may give their feedback on how they use the Lakeview Center. He emphasized transparency with the process and stated that similar to the Comprehensive Plan, he would come back to the full Board with his findings to decide which if any of these phases to move forward with. Project Phase One, the lower level renovation, is budgeted at \$270,000. Project Phase Two, the upper level renovation, is budgeted at \$337,800. Project Phase Three, the exterior renovation, is budgeted at \$220,800.

President Murdock then opened the floor for public comment regarding the Gillson Master Plan Presentation or the Lakeview Center presentation (see above).

After public comment, President Murdock opened the floor for Commissioners to discuss the presentations. Commissioner Frazier suggested the consultants seek out different locations within Wilmette to survey residents with respect to the Comprehensive Plan.

Vice President Goebel thanked the Consultants for their presentations. She stated that what she found interesting about the visual preference survey results, was that only two items rose to a 4.0 out of 5 – these items were restore the dune landscape and native accent planting. One item that did not rise significantly was the infrastructure, the poor drainage and the issue of walkers and bikers coinciding with traffic. She stated while those themes were not as popular, they are vital to address and that the Board will balance those elements the best they can. Lastly, she advised the public that this Board voted to not include renovations of the Wallace Bowl and Lakeview Center in the Comprehensive Plan and that is why they are being treated separately.

President Murdock asked Mr. Tinucci his opinion as to why such a small majority of respondents discussed the need to repair infrastructure. Mr. Tinucci explained that people do not come to the park to look at drainage. They don't necessarily value that in a park or know how to value that in the park. If the roads were to fail, then no one could use the park and then that item would rise – not because people care about drainage or roads but because it prevented them from using the park.

President Murdock stated that with respect to the time table, the Board does not wish to rush the process. However, the Board will review capital spending in mid to late November. He asked Mr. Tinucci if it were possible to have an understanding of what some of these priorities might be so that the Board may consider that as a part of the capital planning process such that the Park District may be able to get some work done next year. Mr. Tinucci stated that while it is important to not rush the process, it is also important to move the process along. It is the Consultants hope that they are able to bring meaningful ideas to the table and rebuild trust in this conversation so that the Board may be moving on these ideas sooner rather than later.

Commissioner Kosloskus noted that she has not seen any structural engineering presentations with respect to the infrastructure. As such, the public perception may be that the Board has prioritized landscape and walkways over the infrastructure. Vice President Goebel responded she had asked Lakota Group why they have focused in on items above ground when she understands there are serious needs below ground. Lakota Group has advised that they need to know what goes above ground in order to build the below ground infrastructure. Vice President Goebel suggested it may be helpful to recirculate the engineering report via the website to further transparency efforts.

Commissioner Kosloskus further noted that the majority of survey results could fall under the general category of landscaping. President Murdock added that there has been additional work in assessing the trees within the park and asked for an update as to how many trees may need to be removed based on their current conditions. Ms. Samyn advised that the original numbers that were put forth were done prior to having an inventory of the trees. With the inventory, the Consultants walked the site and agreed there are 56 trees that need to be removed. President Murdock stated a more accurate description would be that we believe there are 56 trees that are in such poor condition that cannot be maintained. Ms. Samyn agreed and stated many of those 56 trees are dead. President Murdock asked Director Wilson for confirmation as to whether the Park District is looking to implement additional staffing in the Parks and Planning Department so that the Park District can focus on maintaining existing trees with more active pruning. Director Wilson agreed.

There was Board consensus that Commissioners would not want additional pavement or parking in the park.

With respect to the proposed Lakeview Center renovation, Commissioner Duffy noted high demand for all of the Park District facilities and stated that more programming could be done here. He emphasized this does not mean large weddings. Commissioner Kosloskus agreed and suggested winter activities at Lakeview Center for children. She stated she would like priority for residents and Wilmette Park District programming and class offerings more so than special events which would be used to supplement gaps. Director Wilson advised that currently there are no Winter Park District programs at Lakeview Center because the existing space is not well designed for programming. However, this plan would address multiuse within the building on both levels. He stated if the Park District provides the space, the staff will program it. He gave the example of the Recreation Center and stated originally residents felt it was too big in the mid-1990s. It has become wall to wall programming on most days in the week and in the summer. If the Park District provides the space, staff will provide the recreational opportunities and the community will sign up for it.

With respect to the proposed bathroom update, Commissioner Kosloskus stated she would like to consider holding off in favor of renovating the building for the programming space.

Commissioner Frazier stated that the Lakeview Center should be maintained and insinuated that this renovation would be a part of that maintenance. Commissioner Duffy agreed and stated that the Board's responsibilities as stewards of the Park District is to ensure that the Board is making good decisions for future generations.

Vice President Goebel advised that a movie was filmed locally over the summer in some north shore neighborhoods and one of the location scouts considered the restrooms at Lakeview Center for a truck stop scene. With that said, Vice President

Goebel believes the plans for this renovation are thoughtful and restrained. She noted one of the major concerns from residents are potential large events at Lakeview Center and reiterated that the floorplans presented and the capacity calculations would be for a wedding probably no larger than 100 people. Maybe even less when one considers a small dance space and a gift table. Regarding parking, Vice President Goebel suggested that guests be shuttled as a possible solution and noise level restrictions. She would like to be thoughtful in terms of cost and engaging with residents but believes this to be appropriate. President Murdock echoed her comments and stated it is important to recognize this building has not have any meaningful renovation since it was built. As good stewards, he believes it is the Board's responsibility to keep the building in good condition and he does think these proposals are modest. He agreed with Commissioner Kosloskus in that the Board should evaluate when the appropriate timing would be to renovate both bathrooms, however, he would like one of the bathrooms updated to include a family bathroom.

President Murdock stated that he feels this Board is in a position in which they are constantly trying to disprove a negative. He is upset by comments suggesting any Open Meeting Act violations. He emphasized that nothing has been preordained and acknowledged that while there is money in the budget for a project, it may or may not happen. He reminded the public and the Board that last year there was over \$100,000,000 or at least half a million in the budget for the Shoreline Protection project which was never spent because there was no actionable plan. He reiterated that this Board has not held any meetings outside of the public domain and that he is not aware of anything improper, not only specifically with respect to the Comprehensive Plan and the Lakeview Center but in general.

President Murdock then asked Vice President Goebel for an update regarding community engagement. Vice President Goebel reported that the Lakeview Center survey is active online and will remain open for two to four weeks. There is also a webpage on the Park District website as well as open houses for the community to attend and offer input. Much like the Gillson Comprehensive Plan, although on a smaller scale, the Lakefront Committee intends to collect input and feedback and will have discussion at the next Lakefront Committee meeting on August 23rd. She reiterated the sentiment of the Board is to remain thoughtful and restrained with respect to both Lakeview Center and the Gillson Comprehensive Plan.

7.0 STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

7.1 LAKEFRONT COMMITTEE REPORT

Vice President Goebel reported that the Lakefront Committee did not meet due to a lack of a quorum.

7.2 GOLF OPERATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Duffy reported that the Committee discussed a number of possible facility improvement projects. The Committee intends to move

some recommendations forward but is waiting on drawings and cost estimates. Items discussed include a partition in the restaurant area, expansion of the bar area and expansion of the patio deck to the north of where it currently exists. The Committee decided to table extended range netting height as it is a much larger project than initially thought. Currently, the nets stand at 60 feet, however, contractors have advised that to extend the netting an additional 20 feet, they would have to take out the poles and install deeper poles closer together to withstand any additional netting. The cost estimates for that project are over \$100,000,000. The golf cart path project will resume the first week of October.

7.3 PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Duffy reported that the Committee was given an update with respect to garden plots and disc golf. Staff will have an expert who designs disc golf courses come onsite and analyze different parks to see if a disc golf course can be integrated into any of the parks. The Committee also reviewed different parks in which more garden plots can be created. Through those conversations, the Committee expects staff to return with some ideas next month. With respect to new business, Commissioner Duffy explained that at the last Board meeting, Committees were tasked with outlining their responsibilities so that the website could be updated to include this information and the public would have an understanding as well as a point of contact for each Committee. The Parks and Recreation Committee deferred this responsibility to staff. Furthermore, the Committee discussed with Director Wilson feedback they have been received regarding parks maintenance. Commissioner Duffy stated that over the past several years, pruning and weeding has fallen to the wayside. The Committee encouraged staff to hire additional staff to help with maintenance and beautification. Lastly, the Committee discussed the Community Playfields proposed bathroom locations. Commissioner Duffy explained that the Committee has been presented three different design concepts thus far. The Committee requested that the initial design concept presented in June be reduced in size, increase the number of fixtures and take the irrigation pump outside of the building. Staff came back with two different concepts presented in July and August. Commissioner Duffy stated the Committee is leaning towards a smaller structure but would like guidance from the Board regarding the size of the picnic shelter area – should there be four picnic tables or six? Also, does the Board want a permanent shelter over the picnic area? President Murdock stated that his understanding was that the cost for all three proposed structures is virtually identical. Director Wilson stated that staff has updated the third concept cost estimate. Whereas, the first two concepts cost approximately \$800,000 the third concept costs \$720,000. He stated the \$720,000 also includes relocation of the irrigation system. Commissioner Duffy added the cost may decrease further if the Village allows the Park District to tap into the water main adjacent to the building as opposed to tap into the water line along Locust Road. Director

Wilson clarified all cost estimates have a placeholder for sanitary, which is the bulk of the cost. There may be marginal savings with the water line, however, the biggest cost is the sanitary run which cannot be changed. Commissioner Frazier stated that there is also uncertainty with respect to the irrigation system. President Murdock advised that from a programming perspective, it would make more sense to have a larger picnic area for camps in the summer. He is also in favor of the third concept due to the price difference and reminded the Board that there is still has the option of exploring an IGA with School District 39 to fulfill all of the parks bathroom needs. Commissioner Kosloskus added there have also been discussions regarding which way the bathroom structure would face. She expressed concern over the footprint of the proposed structure and would like to keep it as small as possible. Vice President Goebel noted with respect to the layout, that there is one more fixture in the men's restroom than the women's. She stated that normally it is the opposite in routine construction. Vice President Goebel also observed that in the June rendering, staff access to the storage and maintenance room is on one separate end of the building. In the subsequent renderings, the bathrooms are not all on one side of the building and it is not cohesive. She suggested that all of the restrooms be aligned on one wall and all Park District business operations be housed on a separate side. Commissioner Duffy advised that the width of the building would be increased by 3 feet if the ADA bathroom were to be in line with the other restrooms. Commissioner Kosloskus stated the newer plans notably leave the pump outside of the structure because there was Committee consensus around not increasing the side of the building to do so. Commissioner Duffy added that the pump can be moved to this bathroom location. The Committee questions whether it should be moved there or left in its current spot and camouflaged by landscape. President Murdock stated that he believes it was wise to keep the pump outside of the building to reduce the structure size, however, he has a strong preference to relocate the pump to be next to the bathroom and out of the center of the park – even with the additional cost. There was Board consensus around relocating the pump and keeping the proposed pavilion size which includes 6 tables. There was a subsequent discussion over whether more fixtures should be included in the restroom and if an IGA with School District 39 should still be pursued. No Board consensus was reached between the July rendering and the August rendering. It was decided that this would go back to Committee for further discussion.

7.4 CENTENNIAL/FACILITIES COMMITTEE REPORT

President Murdock reported that the Centennial Committee met earlier this evening. The bulk of the Committee's conversation concerned pickleball and paddle tennis. With respect to pickleball, the Committee did recommend to bring forward a plan to the Committee-of-the-Whole regarding capital expenditure later this month. There were a number of discussions about the location of the pickleball court within the West Park

footprint. The consensus being that West Park is the optimal location for pickleball. Staff reviewed the survey result findings with the Committee. President Murdock conveyed those findings to the Board. Overall, there seems to be widespread community support for pickleball. The Committee directed staff to provide several different layouts for a pickleball court at West Park with a reconfiguration of the playground. The Committee also discussed a possible deck expansion between the main facility and courts 5 and 6. There were two proposed options – a smaller deck and a larger deck. The Committee was in favor of the larger deck and is looking at a possible paddle court expansion in the future due to high demand. Currently, there is capacity for 30 men’s paddle teams. Staff expects only 24-27 teams. The Women’s Monday night team is growing – there are currently 7 Monday night women’s teams and 6 weekday teams as well. Joey Sanchez has resigned as the Aquatics and Ice Supervisor in order to move into an expanded position at the Northbrook Park District. The Board thanks him for his service to the District and wishes him the best. The weekday public swim will end on the 20th and the weekend public swim will go through Tuesday September 7th due to the extended holiday weekend. Staff will offer free lap swimming in September for residents from 7 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. with no reservations. For nonresidents, there will be a nominal fee.

7.5 FINANCIAL PLANNING & POLICY REPORT

In Commissioner Clarke’s absence, President Murdock reported that the Financial Planning and Policy Committee met on July 28th. The majority of the discussion involved potential solar panels at the Community Recreation Center. The Board considered several different financing models. The Committee was in favor of the notion of solar panels and directed staff to seek outside expertise to help evaluate the proper way to proceed with financing. The Committee also spent some time discussing the communications policy in terms of how the Park District engages the residents. Lastly, there was an update on financials. The Park District is ahead in terms of a budgetary standpoint, however, revenues are not quite as high as they were in 2019. The District’s operating surplus is well in excess. There will be a Committee-of-the-Whole meeting to discuss capital expenditure on August 23rd.

7.6 REAL ESTATE COMMITTEE REPORT

Commissioner Kosloskus reported the Committee met in closed session.

7.7 INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION COMMITTEE REPORT

No report.

8.0 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Director Wilson reported that in the packet behind his report, there is a memo regarding the Board Vacancy procedure. The Park District received a resignation

letter from Todd Shissler resigning his spot on the Board effective August 1st due to relocation. The Board intends to use the 2015 process as a guidepost and is attempting to keep nearly all that process the same.

Director Wilson briefly advised the remainder of the agenda is routine business.

9.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

10.0 NEW BUSINESS

10.1 SURPLUS ORDINANCE

Commissioner Duffy moved and Commissioner Kosloskus seconded a motion to approve Ordinance 2021-O-3, An Ordinance Authorizing The Sale Or Disposal Of Certain Surplus Property Owned By The Wilmette Park District, Cook County, IL.

Director Wilson clarified this is concerning two gators the Park District owns which have been replaced by newer gators. The Park District would now like the opportunity to sell this surplus equipment.

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

10.2 BID APPROVAL FOR MAPLE PARK

Vice President Goebel moved and Commissioner Frazier seconded a motion to approve the bid from *Hacienda Landscaping* in the amount of \$183,180.00 for the Maple Park Playground Renovation.

President Murdock noted that staff underwent a lengthy process with respect to Maple Park. There were two onsite engagements with the public. Staff also received a tremendous amount of feedback from the community.

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

10.3 BID APPROVAL FOR TENNIS COURTS AT GILLSON PARK

Commissioner Kosloskus moved and Commissioner Duffy seconded a motion to approve the bid from *Evans and Son Blacktop, Inc.* in the amount of \$106,702.10 for Tennis Court Improvements at Gillson Park.

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

10.4 COMMISSIONER VACANCY

Vice President Murdock initiated the discussion by advising that historically, the Board has filled two vacancies: One in 2011 and one in 2015. In both cases,

the Park District publicized the vacancy to the community and implemented a questionnaire for applicants. In the 2011 process, there was a subcommittee to evaluate potential candidates, reduce it to a smaller group and conduct in-person interviews. Those candidates were then discussed as an entire Board in closed session. In 2015, the questions were slightly different and all of the Commissioners were involved through a telephone interview process with the candidates. After the first round of telephone interviews, the Commissioners held in-person interviews with the reduced number of candidates. The entire Board was present for these interviews at which time, only the President and Vice President asked questions. Afterwards, the Board discussed in closed session and made a decision. The decision was voted upon in public but the deliberations were in private.

There will be one significant change to this process as the Board is proposing to redact the names of the candidates while reviewing and ranking their questionnaire answers prior to any potential phone interview process. President Murdock advised this is to ensure there is no bias from a socioeconomic or racial standpoint. Director Wilson added that often in a HR process, names are masked to deter any implicit bias. He also stated this may mitigate preconceptions about a person based on some isolated interaction or some level of knowing them. Not every applicant may remain anonymous through that the review process, because Commissioners may be able to logically deduce a person's identity through their responses. There is no intent to keep the names anonymous from the public once the ranking process is over. Those names would be made available once the ranking process is complete.

Commissioner Kosloskus stated she would be comfortable releasing applicant's names to the public as they come in. However, names would still be redacted during the ranking process to help Commissioners remain objective as they are assigning scores. Commissioner Frazier agreed and suggested that each response be shown to the Board instead of the entire application in a further effort to mask the identity and remain objective towards the applicant. Vice President Goebel stated she was unaware the Board intended to redact names and differ from the 2015 process. She added that however well intentioned, redacting the names feels unnecessary. President Murdock stated he does not have a strong feeling either way and asked Director Wilson how this idea came to materialize. Director Wilson clarified that this idea was born out of conversations with a Commissioner. He stated he had mentioned it to other Commissioners who agreed with the concept of trying to transfer the best practice in an employment hire situation to this situation. He agreed with President Murdock in that he does not have strong feelings either way as well.

Vice President Goebel stated she does like the addition of stack ranking. She explained that stack ranking is a process by which a candidate is ranked 1-5 on a certain topic such as public or professional experience, interest in the Park

District or understanding of the Park District history.

There was subsequent debate regarding whether the applicant names should be redacted, stacking, score card criteria, and the questionnaire.

It was agreed by a Board majority that the question regarding the lakefront would be removed as the Gillson Comprehension Plan is a heated topic of discussion and the applicant's answer could lead to a perception of bias by the Board. Vice President Goebel dissented from the majority opinion.

It was further agreed that the ranking process would involve a two-step ranking process. The candidate would receive a 1-5 rating on each question response. The Board would then also rank each candidate an overall score of 1-5. It was noted this is a departure from previous processes.

On the topic of redaction, it was agreed by Board majority that the Board would conduct a "blind read" of the initial applicant responses. The names would be made public, however, the Board would not see names in their first review stage.

President Murdock then discussed the subsequent steps in the process, as outlined by Director Wilson's memo. He noted there may or may not be telephone interviews depending on the amount of candidates. Lastly, there will be a group of finalists brought in for an in-person interview with the full Board with the notion that the President and Vice President ask questions. Questions from other Commissioners must be submitted to either the President or Vice President prior to the interview. President Murdock advised this is to protect the candidate from feeling overwhelmed during the interview. It was agreed that any deliberations amongst Commissioners would be held in closed session. Vice President Goebel suggested an independent observer in the closed session in the spirit of transparency. Subsequent discussion followed whether an observer would be necessary and who that independent observer would be. It was decided that staff would reach out to The League of Women's Voters for a potential independent observer.

Commissioner Duffy questioned the fact that only the President and Vice President would be allowed to ask questions of the interviews. A brief discussion followed regarding this topic. It was agreed that the process be modified to allow for

Lastly, President Murdock asked that the Board declare an official vacancy. Commissioner Duffy moved and Commissioner Frazier seconded a motion to declare an official vacancy on the Board of the Park Commissioners.

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

Director Wilson advised that a press release announcing a vacancy would be distributed tomorrow and staff would start accepting applications in a window from August 10th through August 29th. The goal being a September appointment. It was clarified that additional deadlines are contingent upon the number of applicants and that the proposed deadlines in Director Wilson's memorandum are subject to change.

11.0 ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to conduct, President Murdock adjourned the Regular meeting at 8:09 p.m.

Minutes Approved on: September 13, 2021

Respectfully Submitted,

Catherine Serbin

Catherine Serbin
Executive Administrative Assistant