

**STATE OF ILLINOIS
COUNTY OF DUPAGE
DARIEN PARK DISTRICT
REGULAR MEETING**

December 12, 2005

CALL TO ORDER

President Campagnolo called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the City of Darien Council Chambers, 1702 Plainfield Road, Darien, Illinois.

ROLL CALL OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Upon roll call the following Commissioners were present:

PRESENT: Nancy Campagnolo, Frank Noverini, Neil Christensen, Richard Simester

ABSENT: Shari Gillespie

Staff: Stephanie Gurgone; Executive Director, Chris Katsougris; Assistant Director, Bob Strickler; Superintendent of Parks; John Murphey; Attorney

Guests: Gloria Andersen, Darien
Debbie Heniff, Darien
Lane Kelly, *Suburban Life*

PUBLIC QUESTIONS, COMMENTS OR ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM GUESTS

A. Public Hearing for Tax Levy Ordinance #2004-06-04

At 7:01 p.m. Commissioner Christensen moved, duly seconded by Commissioner Noverini to open the public hearing for Tax Levy Ordinance #2004-06-04.

Upon roll call the following Commissioners voted:

AYES: Noverini, Christensen, Simester, Campagnolo

NAYS: None

President Campagnolo declared the motion carried.

Executive Director Gurgone summarized the Tax Levy Ordinance. She reported that at the November 14th Committee Meeting the Board agreed to levy at the 20% new growth rate which is equivalent to a 21% increase in operating funds and a 26% decrease in debt

service or a combined total decrease in property taxes of 2%. Executive Director Gurgone

stated that the required Notice of Public Hearing and the Truth in Taxation were published in the Suburban Life on November 30th and that once passed the Tax Levy would be filed as required at the Dupage County Clerk's Office before December 27th.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that there was a mistake in the Truth in Taxation notice that was published, and the total amount of property taxes to be levied for 2005 should be \$2,410,629 and not \$2,415,046.

President Campagnolo stated that the balloon tax levy was something that was not uncommon and was done each year.

President Campagnolo stated that Ms. Gloria Andersen asked to be recognized.

Ms. Gloria Andersen, stated that one thing that was not mentioned at the Committee Meeting of the Whole was a balloon levy and that in the year 2000 there was a balloon bond taken out for Marion Hills and South Grove Park and until recently it had not come to the attention of the District that the payment of the bond was going to be due shortly after 2006. She stated that payment of over \$550,000 is due and money that the District does not have. She further stated that the District has to take another bond temporarily to pay the amount until the taxes come in 2006.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that there are two separate issues - the balloon levy and the bond payments. She stated that the District can balloon levy, which means that the District is asking for all new growth that is coming to the community, but the District is still held by the tax cap. Executive Director Gurgone reported that a balloon levy is asking the county for all the new growth in the community. If the District does not ask for the new growth, the District will not get it.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the debt service is a completely separate issue. She stated that the District was unaware of how they would receive the money for the \$2.5 million bond payment. She further stated that the District assumed that it was a General Obligation Bond and assumed that it had been filed with the County and would automatically receive tax dollars to pay for it. She stated that the assumptions were wrong, it was instead issued as an Alternate Revenue Bond which means that a General Obligation Bond has to be issued in order to get the dollars from the County. She stated that it is just a different way of looking at it. She further stated that the Board was well aware that the payments were due in 2006 when the bond was signed and the board knew that the money for the payments would always come from the taxpayers. Executive Director Gurgone stated that it was just a matter of if the general obligation ordinance was filed in 2000 or in 2006.

Ms. Andersen questioned once the tax money comes to the District and the balloon bond is taken out for the payment what will the money be used for.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the money will go straight to make the payment on the bond. She stated that only one bond is being assessed to the taxpayers. She stated that in 2006 the District will issue a bond that will be filed with the County and the County will assess the

taxpayers for the \$550,000 payment. This money will come to the District and the District will use it to make the payment.

Commissioner Christensen stated that the General Obligation Bond will be issued in the first quarter and retired within 6 months and the money will be used to make the bond payment and repaid with the actual taxes.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that this will happen every year until the bond is paid off in 2012.

Ms. Andersen questioned if every year the District will have money from the tax revenue to pay off the temporary bond that is being taken out.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that every year, the District will receive enough money from taxes to make the payments.

Commissioner Christensen reported that he received correspondence from Mr. Stan Nemiec. He read aloud Mr. Nemiec's correspondence regarding his concern for the \$550,000 bond payment. Commissioner Christensen reported that he responded to Mr. Nemiec stating that the Board and staff were aware of the annual payments of approximately \$558,000 starting in 2006 and continuing to 2012 and aware that the payments would come out of the tax levy but not aware of that it was not a General Obligation Bond and that it would not have to be included in the District's General Obligation Bond. He stated that instead of only issuing a bond for the capital improvement needs of approximately \$334,000, the District had to add \$558,000 for these payments.

Ms. Andersen questioned if anything will suffer until the tax money is received.

Commissioner Christensen stated that accrued interest will have to be paid for a couple of months on the General Obligation Bond as well as bond counsel fees. He reported that it would be approximately \$15,000 additional interest expense.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the interest and issuance expenses will reduce the amount that is available for capital projects.

Commissioner Christensen stated that it will not come out of the taxpayers additionally but rather the tax dollars that are received will be diverted for the additional accrued interest.

Ms. Andersen questioned if there would be fees every year from now until 2012.

Commissioner Christensen reported that there would be fees until 2012.

Ms. Andersen stated that it was a lot of money.

President Campagnolo reported that this was decision made by the Board in 2000 and that the current Board has to live with the consequences. She stated that unfortunately the Board's hands are tied and that the previous legal counsel set it up.

Ms. Andersen asked why when legal counsel was turned over why staff did not take a look at what was outstanding.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that a financial advisor was hired for this reason and that the former legal counsel was also the bond counsel.

Ms. Andersen questioned why during the gap of hiring that this was not found out.

President Campagnolo stated that whenever it was found out it would not have made any difference.

Ms. Andersen stated that the public found out about this at the last minute.

Commissioner Noverini stated that under the previous administration the public probably would have not found it out.

Commissioner Christensen stated that the only other thing that could have been done would have been back in 2000 and rather than having the payments in May, the payments could have been deferred until November and the District would not have to pay the additional interest. Commissioner Simester reported that the District had no money at that time and that a grant was used to buy South Grove Park and also Marion Hills.

Ms. Debbie Heniff, Darien, questioned if Attorney Kreger recommend to the Board in the most expensive way or was there a cheaper alternative.

Commissioner Christensen stated that it was difficult to answer because the directives are unknown.

Ms. Heniff stated that Attorney Kreger took advantage of the 2000 Board and that he made the most money, cost the Board the most money, and did what the Board asked him to do all at the same time. She stated that she was glad there was new legal counsel.

Commissioner Simester stated the minutes would have to be reviewed to determine what was decided.

Commissioner Christensen reported that the debt payments have been factored into the budget and that there will be no surprises.

At 7:15 p.m. Commissioner Noverini moved, duly seconded by Commissioner Christensen to close the public hearing for Tax Levy Ordinance #2004-06-04.

Upon roll call the following Commissioners voted:

AYES: Noverini, Christensen, Simester, Campagnolo

NAYS: None

President Campagnolo declared the motion carried.

COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Christensen reported as mentioned that he received correspondence from Mr. Stan Nemiec and had a conversation with Ms. Debbie Heniff and issues related to the meeting.

OFFICER REPORTS

- A. **President** – President Campagnolo reported that it has been an honor and privilege to serve the Darien residents and that she looks forward to another year. She thanked staff for their hard work and mentioned that Holly Park is a true asset to the Park District. President Campagnolo reported that the December Committee Meeting of the Whole was cancelled and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.
- B. **Vice President** – No report.
- C. **Secretary** – No report.
- D. **Treasurer** – Commissioner Christensen presented the Treasurer’s report for November 30, 2005. He reported that each month he has been providing an update on the progress at Sportsplex. Commissioner Christensen reported that from May through October the Sportsplex numbers show an increase of approximately \$145,500 from last year and \$171,000 factoring in decreased debt payments. He thanked Executive Director Gurgone and staff for a job well done.

Commissioner Simester moved, duly seconded by Commissioner Noverini to approve the Treasurer’s Monthly Report for the month ending November 30, 2005.

Upon roll call the following Commissioners voted:

AYES: Noverini, Christensen, Simester, Campagnolo

NAYS: None

President Campagnolo declared the motion carried.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE REPORT

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the Board discussed the vandalism that occurred at the shelter at Darien Community Park. She reported that the juveniles involved appeared at the meeting to discuss the amount billed to them for the vandalism. Executive Director Gurgone reported that the Board decided to reduce the amount due, and charge each family involved \$300 and each juvenile involved to write an essay for the Board. She reported that the money was received but that there were no essays received.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the Board discussed the Sportsplex financials through October 31st. She reported that the revenues for October were higher than in both 2004 and 2003.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that Superintendent Strickler updated the Board on current park projects and that Assistant Director Katsougris reported that the preschool is going through DCFS certification and has to install new smoke detectors, per the recommendation of the State Fire Marshall.

Executive Director Gurgone reported on the new health insurance rates through PDRMA for the District and that the cost increased 10% for 2006.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the Board discussed the DYC's outstanding payments and that the State's Attorney agreement was signed and is now on the Park District website. Executive Director Gurgone reported on what items would be placed on the consent agenda.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Attorney Murphey stated that he had no report.

STAFF REPORTS

A. Executive Director

Executive Director Gurgone reported that she met with DYC President, Bill Carpenter. She reported that the District has received \$360 for the rent through December 31st as well as a check for late registration. Executive Director Gurgone reported that the DYC cleaned out the room and that this will resolve all outstanding payments from the DYC.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that she met prior to the Board meeting with Jim Nolan and Joe Pedota from the Huskies and that they had no answers. She stated that they requested time in the spring and summer and that she informed them to put it in writing for consideration. Executive Director Gurgone stated that the District is in limbo with the Huskies and that a decision needs to be made on how to move forward.

Commissioner Simester suggested looking for a new club. President Campagnolo agreed. She questioned the lease date.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the Huskies lease expires on February 28, 2006. She reported that she has received some initial calls from other clubs but until the Huskies put something in writing no one is going to make a deal. She further reported that until the District releases the Huskies in writing another club cannot be pursued.

Commissioner Christensen suggested that staff look at the pricing and compare it to other areas. Executive Director Gurgone reported that the Huskies received a discount and that this is something to discuss for the future.

President Campagnolo stated that she would consider discounting the rate if a club was interested in doing something in the summer. She stated that she would like to provide staff some direction at the January Board meeting.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that she did not believe that the Huskies needed to be given a 30 day notice. She stated that she would have Attorney Murphey review the documents. Executive Director Gurgone reported that new Sportsplex General Manager will begin on December 19th. She reported that the Darien Chamber of Commerce response has not been received regarding Darien Fest but that after the first of the year she would be meeting with the new President Tom Sailer.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that there was no SEASPAR report.

B. Assistant Director

Assistant Director Katsougris reported that 125 participants attended the Polar Express on December 4th. She thanked staff who gave up their Sunday afternoon to help out.

Assistant Director Katsougris reported on the following upcoming trips: Harlem Globetrotter's at the United Center on Saturday, January 21st – deadline, January 6th, Resorts Casino in East Chicago, Wednesday, January 25th – deadline, December 30th, Bulls vs. Sacramento tickets for February 14th – price: \$12 per ticket – deadline, December 28th.

Assistant Director Katsougris reported that SEASPAR is selling Entertainment Books that can be purchased from Marion Hills. She stated that the books are \$25 with locations for the west and north. She also reported that there are various programs scheduled over Christmas break and can be found on the Darien Park District website.

C. Superintendent of Finance

Executive Director Gurgone stated that she had no separate report but that the Sportsplex financials would be part of the weekly report.

D. Superintendent of Parks

Superintendent Strickler reported that staff is continuing to work on the Meyer Barn weather permitting. He reported that he has been working with RoofTech Systems regarding the roof at Darien Community Park. He stated that weather permitting they are going to try to do it over the winter.

Superintendent Strickler reported that South Grove Park would be discussed under new business.

D. Sportsplex General Manager

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the new General Manager would be present at the January 9th Board Meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Executive Director Gurgone reported that there was some discussion at the Committee Meeting on what to do with the rates for the DYC since they are no longer leasing. She stated that Board received a current list of rental fees for Marion Hills for discussion.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that staff recommends that the DYC pay \$10 per hour night or weekend. She reported that an attendant has to be in the building and that if the DYC is renting multiple rooms a decision can be made on providing a discount. She stated that this would also be offered to any other community group.

President Campagnolo suggested some type of discount for any organization using more than one room because it would be very costly.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that staff recommends \$10 per hour and \$5 for any additional room. The Board unanimously agreed.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that she would discuss the rates with the DYC and monitor how it is working.

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS FROM GUESTS

Ms. Gloria Andersen questioned why the Public Comment section was before the Consent Agenda.

The Board agreed to add the Public Comment section after the Consent Agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Christensen noted the following changes to the minutes:

September 26, 2005 Committee Meeting Minutes – Page 4 regarding cash flow should be “projection” not “production”.

November 14, 2005 Board Meeting – Page 6 regarding speaking to Joe Pedota from the Huskies. Change should be that Commissioner Christensen reported that Executive Director Gurgone spoke to Joe Pedota from the Huskies.

November 28, 2005 Committee Meeting Minutes – Change that Commissioner Christensen was not present.

Commissioner Noverini moved, duly seconded by Commissioner Christensen to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

Warrants, September 26, 2005 Special Meeting Minutes, September 26, 2005 Committee Meeting Minutes as corrected, November 14, 2005 Board Meeting Minutes as corrected, November 28, 2005 Committee Meeting Minutes as corrected, Tax Levy Ordinance, PDRMA Health Insurance Renewal.

Upon roll call the following Commissioners voted:

AYES: Noverini, Simester, Christensen, Campagnolo

NAYS: None

President Campagnolo declared the motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

A. South Grove Park Tree Removal

Superintendent Strickler reported that he informed the Board at the Committee Meeting regarding the tree removal at South Grove Park. He reported that the Board received a copy of the letter from PDRMA giving approval to use the Risk Management funds. Superintendent Strickler reported that he contacted three companies to have the trees removed and recommended Bergquist Tree Experts who were the cheapest and who have done work for the District in the past.

Commissioner Christensen moved, duly seconded by Commissioner Noverini to approve Bergquist Tree Experts in an amount of \$3,935.00 for the removal of three trees at South Grove Park.

Upon roll call the following Commissioners voted:

AYES: Noverini, Simester, Christensen, Campagnolo

NAYS: None

President Campagnolo declared the motion carried.

B. Renaming of South Grove Park

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the Board received an email from Commissioner Christensen regarding renaming of South Grove Park.

Commissioner Christensen proposed to rename South Grove Park to former Mayor Carmen Soldato for his 18 plus years as a public official as well as his dedication to the City of Darien. President Campagnolo stated that Commissioner Christensen highlighted some of Mayor Soldato's accomplishments. She stated that he had done a great deal for the City of Darien.

President Campagnolo stated that because this has never been done before she suggested giving it some time to discuss at the Committee level and when Commissioner Gillespie was present. Commissioner Simester reported that when the Park District was formed in 1974 the original group of Commissioners made a recommendation to stay out of politics and not name an individual. He stated that the parks were named after a tree and that he recommends keeping the same program. He further stated that if the Board was considering naming parks after individuals that some of the people who formed the City should be recognized such as the Baker family who donated the property at 802 Plainfield to the Park District. Commissioner Simester stated that the naming of trees keeps it out of politics and represents the Park District. He stated that maybe the City could recognize the Mayor with a street. Commissioner Christensen stated that he was willing to table this for future discussion and appreciated any comments.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that she would place this on the agenda for discussion at the January Committee Meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Gloria Andersen stated that she agreed with Commissioner Simester and that she cannot believe that the Board would even consider naming a park after an ex Mayor who tried to dissolve the Park District.

Ms. Debbie Heniff agreed with Commissioner Christensen and stated that whatever the Board decides that Mayor Carmen Soldato single handedly turned over a very wrong Park District Board and practices and is commended for what he has done.

CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Simester moved, duly seconded by Commissioner Noverini to table items a. Approval of November 14, 2005 Closed Session Minutes and b. Review and Release of Closed Session Minutes.

Upon roll call the following Commissioners voted:

AYES: Christensen, Noverini, Simester, Campagnolo

NAYS: None

President Campagnolo declared the motion carried.

ADJOURN REGULAR MEETING

There being no further discussion, Commissioner Simester moved, duly seconded by Commissioner Noverini that the meeting be adjourned. Upon voice vote the Motion was thereby carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Nancy Campagnolo, President
Darien Park District

Richard Simester, Secretary
Darien Park District