

**STATE OF ILLINOIS
COUNTY OF DUPAGE
DARIEN PARK DISTRICT
COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE WHOLE**

January 30, 2006

CALL TO ORDER

President Campagnolo called the meeting to order at 7:55 p.m. in Room 5 of the Marion Hills Community Center, 133 Plainfield Road, Darien, Illinois.

ROLL CALL OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Upon roll call the following Commissioners and staff were present:

PRESENT: Nancy Campagnolo, Frank Noverini, Neil Christensen, Dick Simester,
Shari Gillespie

ABSENT: None.

STAFF: Stephanie Gurgone; Executive Director, Chris Katsougris; Assistant Director,
Matt Hendersen; Sportsplex General Manager

GUESTS: John Poteraske
Sharon Poteraske
Joe Cielinski
Dave Hagen
Gloria Andersen
Warren Andersen
David Phillips

PUBLIC COMMENT AND GUESTS

President Campagnolo welcomed the guests to the meeting.

Mr. John Cielinski, Darien stated that he would like the District to follow up on the issues at Skate Park. He stated that his son was involved in the creation of Skate Park and that he believed that new equipment would be beneficial. Mr. Cielinski stated that he would like to see the area worked on

and that the grounds need to be better maintained. He stated that Sportsplex is a well attended facility and that the surrounding area is a big reflection of Darien. Mr. Cielinski stated that he appreciated the safety light at the Skate Park. He further stated that the parking lot medians need attention and that the valley looks “second class”.

President Campagnolo questioned what the average age was of those utilizing the Park. Mr. Cielinski stated that the average users ranged from 10 – 16 year olds but that there were 5 and 6 year olds accompanied by an adult.

Commissioner Christensen stated that the medians were going to be replaced with sod but that they were not because of the draught last summer.

General Manager Hendersen reported that the Sportsplex exterior needs a facelift.

President Campagnolo stated that she appreciated Mr. Cielinski’s comments and thoughts.

Ms. Mary Keyes, Historical Society/Communicator-Save the Barn provided the Board with recent photos of the barn. Ms. Keyes stated that the Committee was in favor of Plexiglas and that they would like to have the District look into fixing the cracks and taking a look at the foundation.

Ms. Keyes reported that the Committee has spent approximately \$4,000 to stripe the barn and that the community has been great about contributions.

Commissioner Christensen reported that Superintendent Strickler and staff have been cleaning up the interior of the barn and providing the Board with updates.

President Campagnolo thanked Ms. Keyes and the Save the Barn Committee for the contribution.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that staff will consider the maintenance request under Capital Projects.

Ms. Gloria Andersen referenced Renaming of South Grove Park on the agenda. She stated that as previously stated in an earlier meeting that she was opposed to naming South Grove Park after Carmen Soldato. She reported that Mr. Soldato distributed a petition to try to dissolve the Park District. Ms. Andersen stated that she agreed with Commissioner Simester that there were other deserving citizens and that she proposed Pat Kampwirth be nominated for her 20 years on the Board.

Commissioner Simester stated that he suggested that the naming of parks should be after trees as recommended by the first Board and to stay out of politics.

Mr. Dave Hagen stated that he was the liaison between the Park District and the City of Darien approximately 15 years ago and that the District and the City wrestled a lot with the idea of naming parks. Mr. Hagen stated that he too agreed that it would be best to maintain the position that the Board decided on many years ago. He further stated that he did not believe that it would be appropriate.

COMMITTEE TOPICS

A. Long Range Goals

1. Community Center Update

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the Board received a summary regarding the possibility of purchasing Fairview School. She reported that she met with the Superintendent Chip Johnson last week and that he is in the process of acquiring appraisals for all the properties. Executive Director Gurgone reported that the school timeframe is sooner than 2012 but that 2007-2008 was the most ideal for the school district..

Executive Director Gurgone reported that she explained the District's bonding ability to Chip and that the school was informed that the purchase of the school would depend on the price and the timing. She reported that she will schedule a meeting with Speer to discuss the future financial position of the District and what is affordable.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that staff has been discussing the District's options for the future. She stated that before a decision is made on what option is best for the District that there needs to be accurate plans and costs for upgrading Marion Hills.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that Superintendent Strickler is contacting building architects to get quotes on their services and so that the firms can provide the District with a comprehensive overview of the improvements that need to be made and cost estimates associated with the services. She further stated that Fairview School will also need to be looked at for what the building will need.

Commissioner Christensen recommended another potential Community Center. He distributed a drawing of his idea to the Board and staff. Commissioner Christensen suggested using half of the Sportsplex Field House and to build a two story structure within a structure. He stated that the preschool could use the north entrance and that it would be ideal for drop off. He further stated that there would be parking issues but that the District could approach the City to build a multi level garage.

Commissioner Christensen stated that although there would be some programming issues, the District would not have to use vacant land or purchase any land and that all staff would be under one roof except for the maintenance staff.

Executive Director Gurgone stated that she believed more space would be needed because Marion Hills had a lot of rooms and a gym.

Commissioner Christensen stated that a two story structure would be close to the square footage needed.

General Manager Hendersen stated that it was feasible but that we would be taking revenue away and replacing it with something else.

Executive Director Gurgone stated that there would be a problem with the DYC and that the District could no longer offer the DYC soccer leagues.

Commissioner Gillespie stated that she remembers that the original plans for Sportsplex possibly included an indoor track. She stated that the idea did not seem to fit the needs of what the residents want for a community center.

President Campagnolo stated that the Field House idea could be a worse case scenario if needed and if the District cannot afford anything else. She stated that she liked the idea of utilizing the wasted space in the Field House but that she questioned if everything we offered could fit into one structure.

B. Short Range Goals

1. Remaining Capital Projects in 05-06: Skate Park

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the Board received a copy of the projects allocated for the 05-06 year and what has been actually spent. She reported that the capital money is not from a bond, and does not have to be spent within a certain time frame. Executive Director Gurgone stated that if the Board chooses to not do anything it can be kept as reserves for an emergency.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that Commissioner Gillespie wanted to discuss completing the Skate Park. She reported that staff looked at the resident surveys and that one of the suggestions was to put a playground at Sportsplex. Executive Director Gurgone stated that Superintendent Strickler reported that the only feasible space would be on Plainfield before the side parking lot but that ballards would have to be installed so a car would not drive in. She stated that this was far from the perfect location.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the park would be a tot lot and could be utilized for parents and children who attend classes at Sportsplex. She stated that including sidewalks the project would cost approximately \$50,000.

Commissioner Christensen stated that the slope there is too steep into a retention area. He stated that Sportsplex staff would not be able to monitor the area.

President Campagnolo stated that she was concerned with the proximity to Plainfield Road and the need for a park when the average age at Skate Park is 10 – 16 year olds.

Commissioner Gillespie stated that she would like to fulfill the flow and complete the Skate Park.

Commissioner Simester questioned how many pieces were still needed.

Commissioner Gillespie stated that two pieces are needed. She stated that TruRide can remove the old pieces and resell them or they can be used somewhere else.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that \$180,000 has already been spent on Skate Park and that the District still has not received any state funding.

Commissioner Christensen stated that he was concerned with the life expectancy of the equipment. He also stated that he was concerned that the users were already tired of the equipment.

Commissioner Gillespie reported that two rails were installed to get the kids off the street. She stated that it needs to be upgraded in order to be finished and fulfill some long term goals.

Executive Director Gurgone stated that the District spent \$180,000 for a small group of individuals and that staff is looking for an alternative to accommodate another group of people.

Commissioner Gillespie stated that although there was a lot of money spent the kids have a place to go.

President Campagnolo stated that it is cost prohibitive and that the District already spent \$180,000 which is well over double of the cost of a playground and enough money spent for some time.

President Campagnolo stated that the District needs the money for future planning.

Commissioner Noverini stated that he preferred to see the equipment and the costs before making a decision.

President Campagnolo stated that timing is an issue and that it will not be feasible until next year.

Commissioner Christensen suggested that Superintendent Strickler contact TruRide. He stated that something needs to be done about the wetlands.

President Campagnolo stated that she would prefer to improve the aesthetics and not add in any equipment.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that she would direct Superintendent Strickler to acquire more information on the equipment and aesthetics.

2. Capital Projects for 06-07 Budget.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the Board received an updated Capital Asset Replacement Plan. She stated that staff reviewed the projects and made some changes to the plan since last discussed with the Board in September.

Executive Director Gurgone stated that the projects in 2006 total approximately \$300,000 to maintain what is currently in place. She reported that staff looked at what projects were needed and the bond money available.

Executive Director Gurgone highlighted some of the changes to the plan. She also discussed spending bond money on the outside of Sportsplex, including on asphalt work.

Commissioner Christensen asked what was accomplished under the 2000 bond issue.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that a small amount of money was done to do patchwork. She stated that there have been drainage issues from day one.

Commissioner Simester questioned if anything has been done to fix the drainage issues.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that patchwork was done and that she will have to get concrete numbers and research where the money will come from to fix the drainage.

Commissioner Christensen reported that the Sportsplex spending has to be tracked the way it was presented to the taxpayers when it was built. He stated that landscaping in the parking lot is an issue. The Board agreed to spend money at Sportsplex, if necessary, as long as it was tracked for future repayment.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that South Grove pond has an algae issue and that Superintendent Strickler is working with the City because there have been numerous complaints from the residents. She stated that money will probably have to be allocated each year for maintenance.

Commissioner Christensen stated that the plan was a great working document.

President Campagnolo stated that she would like to see the Board consider Meyer Woods Barn. She stated that the windows are non-existent and that the plywood and chicken wire is an eyesore. She recommended that the Board consider installing Plexiglas in the remaining windows. President Campagnolo also stated that she would like to see the foundation checked to see if there is anything seriously wrong.

Commissioner Christensen suggested that staff meet with the Historical Society.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that she would direct Superintendent Strickler to seek quotes and meet with the Save the Barn Committee and ask if they would be open to splitting the costs.

C. Operational Issues

1. Sportsplex

a. Sportsplex Financials

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the Board received the financials through December 31, 2005. She stated that Commissioner Christensen raised some questions.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the District received \$1,500 from September 15th – September 30, and \$3,000 in October from the Mexican Food Company. She stated that they provide \$3,000 monthly or 20% of gross revenue. She further stated that \$3,038 was received in November and \$3,063 in December. Executive Director Gurgone stated that typically the biggest months are in January and February.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the District has not received the \$10,000 from Coke. She stated that the total will be split between the District and Sportsplex when it is received. She further reported that General Manager Hendersen is working on contracting with someone to do Sportsplex marketing.

b. Capital Projects

General Manager Hendersen reported that he is working on capital ideas and that he would like to get things in line to plan out the budget. He also reported that he is working with the Hawks Hockey Club to get suggestions for projects. General Manager Hendersen stated that for advertising, the rights to almost anything in the building could be sold.

General Manager Hendersen reported that the Sportsplex building is ten years old but that the flooring is still in good shape. He stated that there are a lot of things that need to be done to keep things from breaking down. He further stated that his plan is to have the building looking better by the fall.

2. Parks and Recreation

a. Renaming of South Grove Park

Executive Director Gurgone reported that after discussing the renaming of South Grove Park she provided the Board with a copy of the Bylaws on naming parks.

Commissioner Christensen stated that he raised the issue at the December meeting and after speaking with some people he agreed that politics should be kept out of the Park District. He suggested tabling the topic for an indefinite time.

Executive Director Gurgone asked if the Board agreed with the Bylaws.

President Campagnolo read the Bylaws regarding naming a park for the audience members.

Commissioner Simester suggested removing “facility” from the language.

President Campagnolo stated that she would be hesitant to remove it because it eliminates anyone who wishes to purchase a facility, building, park, etc.

3. Administration

a. Darien Fest

Executive Director Gurgone reported that she met with the new President of the Chamber of Commerce on January 18th. She reported that she received the profit/loss statement and a list of the organizations that received a donation. Executive Director Gurgone reported that the Chamber each year makes money to add to a reserve in the event that there is bad weather in the future. She reported that the Chamber would like to see the \$5,000 park fee reduced and that the fee for

maintenance was too high. Executive Director Gurgone explained the maintenance costs and the overtime dollars.

There was much discussion regarding the \$5,000 park fee and what costs and labor the District incurs.

President Campagnolo stated that the District incurred \$4,000 last year in labor costs alone.

Commissioner Christensen stated that the Board is micromanaging and that Executive Director Gurgone should work with the Chamber. He recommended that we provide the Chamber with a list of services.

General Manager Hendersen stated that there could be more participation from Sportsplex staff.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that she would contact the Chamber and discuss the fees for next year and the \$2,500 fee for maintenance plus cost of living.

b. Commissioner Term Length

President Campagnolo stated that Alderman Poteraske suggested that the Board review the Commissioner Term Length and that similar Park District terms range from 4-6 years.

Commissioner Christensen stated that the State Election Board has criteria based on the size of the Board. He reported that a Board of 5 Commissioners is 6 years, 7 Commissioners 6 years by resolution or referenda, 5-7 Commissioners 4 years if resolution or referenda.

President Campagnolo stated that it would be too big of a change over and 4 Commissioners would be up at one time.

The Board tabled the discussion.

c. Bid Limit Increase

Executive Director Gurgone reported that effective January 1, 2005 the bid limit for Park Districts was increased from \$10,000 to \$20,000. She stated that in order to be effective, the purchasing policy needs to be amended and if the Board agrees the policy will be changed and placed on the consent agenda for the February 13th Board Meeting.

The Board agreed to place it on the Consent Agenda.

d. Argonne Request

Executive Director Gurgone reported that Argonne National Laboratory would like to use the Darien Sportsplex as an emergency temporary relocation site for their Child Care Center. The Board agreed to have Argonne prepare the necessary documents.

e. Statement of Economic Interest List

Executive Director Gurgone reported that as required by the Dupage County Clerk, the District must submit a list of elected officials and employees who need to file a Statement of Economic Interest. She asked that the Commissioners verify their information.

f. Establish consent agenda for 2/13 meeting

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the Bid Limit Increase would be added to the Consent Agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ADJOURNMENT

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 10:04 p.m.

Nancy Campagnolo, President
Darien Park District

Richard Simester, Secretary
Darien Park District