

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

January 24, 2011

CALL TO ORDER

President Jablonski called the meeting to order at 7:19 p.m. at the Darien Park District Community Center, 7301 Fairview Avenue, Darien, Illinois.

ROLL CALL OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Upon roll call the following Commissioners and staff were present:

PRESENT: Ray Jablonski, Frank Noverini, James Tikalsky,
Rob Sarocco, Neil Christensen

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Stephanie Gurgone; Executive Director, Chris Katsougris; Assistant Director, Della Deldin; Superintendent of Finance, Robert Strickler; Superintendent of Parks, Matt Henderson; Sportsplex General Manager

PUBLIC COMMENT AND GUESTS

There was no one in the audience wishing to present public comment. Executive Director Gurgone noted that Jamie Kuhlman, President of DYC, was in attendance, but that she would speak under "Recreational Athletic Programs" on the agenda.

COMMUNICATIONS

None.

COMMITTEE TOPICS

A. Operational Issues

1. Sportsplex

a. December Financials

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the Board received a copy of the December financials for Sportsplex. She reported that the Little Huskies program is doing very well this year, much better than was budgeted. She explained that this was a good sign for the future of the Hawks Hockey Club.

b. Refinancing Sportsplex 2003C bond

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the Board received information regarding possible refinancing of the 2003C Sportsplex Debt. She reported that currently the payments are scheduled until 2025. She further reported that Dave Phillips from Speer Financial has run some models that show that the District could refinance this bond (keeping the payment dates the same) and take all of the savings up front or take an annual savings.

Executive Director Gurgone reported that if the Board decides to proceed with refinancing, it needs to be done within 90 days of the November 1, 2011 call date. She stated that staff recommends doing this, as long as interest rates still show a savings. She stated that this will be discussed more later in the year.

2. Parks & Recreation

a. Recreational Athletic Programs (This item was discussed first, due to the presence of Jamie Kuhlman in the audience)

Executive Director Gurgone reported that the District has been discussing offering additional Recreation Athletic Programs for the past several months. She reported that before the meeting she met with NYC President Jaime Kuhlman and clarified that the District's position was not a malicious intent.

Executive Director Gurgone stated that most surrounding Park Districts offer more recreational instructional sports than Darien currently offers. The Board has determined that the Darien Park District should offer them as well, and has met multiple times with NYC representatives to see if there was interest in the Park District running some or all of NYC's current programs.

Gurgone stated that the Park District currently offers many instructional sports programs for 2-5 year olds. She stated that it would be a natural progression for us to offer programs for them to continue with the sports. She stated that we currently get many questions from parents in these programs as to why we don't offer additional programs.

She stated that Ms. Kuhlman shared concerns that their participants think that the Park District wants to take over running NYC's programs to make a lot of money. Executive Director Gurgone stated that it is not the intent of the District to offer recreational instructional sports to make a profit, but they are doing it to meet the needs of Darien residents. She stated that these residents have approached board members regarding why the District isn't offering these types of programs.

Gurgone stated that the District would not completely change the way the NYC runs the programs, but would look to improve upon them and potentially run the programs at a reduced fee. She further stated that the revenue from these programs would go back into the programs or used for renovating the fields.

Gurgone stated that Ms. Kuhlman asked if the District could put together a letter that she could share with all of NYC's voting members addressing some of their concerns. Gurgone stated that she could put this letter together and would send to each Park District board member for approval. This letter could then be distributed to the NYC members before their February 8th meeting.

President Jablonski stated that the discussions with NYC started a few years ago because the previous NYC board approached the Park District about taking over programs. He stated that representatives from both organizations have met multiple times over the last few years to continue discussing this possibility. Jablonski stated that he started with the NYC 19 years ago and that the NYC does not do anything exactly the way they did 19 years ago. He stated that any changes that the Park District would make would be improvements.

He stated that the reason the District is looking for an answer is because the District would prefer to plan for the future by taking over programs on a timeline, so the District can plan appropriately. He said that at the last meeting with NYC representatives, he stated that the Park District would proceed with starting their own recreational programs if NYC was not interested in continuing discussions.

President Jablonski stated that the District is not pushing to take over all the programs at once but the District has a timeline and would offer programs beyond the parent/tot classes that the District is currently offering.

Ms. Kuhlman stated that the NYC is suffering with getting volunteers to run the programs and that there has been drop off in enrollment. She stated that the NYC Board has not voted on turning the programs over to the Park District. She wanted to know what will happen if the NYC votes no. She inquired if the District would proceed with running recreational programs.

Commissioner Sarocco asked what age group the Park District would target with our own programs.

President Jablonski suggested 5-6 year olds for fall soccer.

Executive Director Gurgone asked the Board if they wanted to continue with plans to offer fall soccer leagues if the NYC voted no.

Commissioner Sarocco asked if the District could put together a hypothetical program.

Executive Director Gurgone stated that staff could, but if the District is going to start their own programs, the work would be different than if they were going to run NYC's program. She stated that she didn't want to waste the time of staff, depending on the outcome.

Executive Director Gurgone stated that she needed a decision by the end of February to make the summer brochure. Executive Director Gurgone asked the Board for an informal poll of how they would like to proceed. Commissioners Noverini, Tikalsky, Christensen and President Jablonski all agreed to proceed to offer fall soccer. Commissioner Sarocco stated that he did not want to proceed.

Commissioner Christensen stated that at a minimum we could offer fall soccer and if the DYC then decided to hand over the soccer program, then we can add it onto our program.

Ms. Kuhlman asked that after the first year if the District offered these programs, would they expand to more age groups or refer those kids to the DYC program?

President Jablonski stated that that answer hadn't been determined yet.

Commissioner Sarocco asked what would happen if the District runs a 5 and 6 year old program, will it reduce time available for DYC on our fields?

Executive Director Gurgone stated that Park District programs have first priority and that the DYC has second priority. She stated that the DYC may not get the days and times they had last year but they would get time. She further stated that groups further down the priority ladder may not get times.

Executive Director Gurgone stated that she would put the letter together as soon as possible. She stated that the staff would then wait for the outcome of DYC's February 8th meeting before continuing further on planning Park District recreational soccer leagues for the fall.

Ms. Kuhlman stated that if someone from the Board would attend the next DYC meeting to answer questions, this would help. Commissioner Sarocco thought that he could attend, and Commissioner Christensen and President Jablonski both thought they could be alternates.

3. Admin

a. Capital Projects for 2011-12 budget

Executive Director Gurgone reported that funds for Capital Projects for the next few years are extremely limited, due to the payments that are still being made for the purchase of Fairview School. She stated that staff is proposing renovating the Darien Community Park playground which will take up a significant amount of funds next year. She further stated that staff is recommending to combine both playgrounds into one. The Board agreed that it made sense to look at renovating this playground, and directed staff to continue to look into pricing.

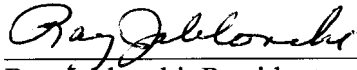
PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no one in the audience wishing to present public comment.

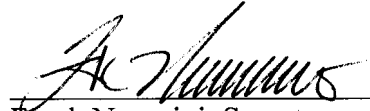
ADJOURNMENT

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.



Ray Jablonski, President
Darien Park District



Frank Noverini, Secretary
Darien Park District