

MINUTES
DeKalb Park District
Public Meeting of the Board of Commissioners
November 18, 2021
Hopkins Community Center, DeKalb, IL

Public Meeting
6:00 p.m.

I. Meeting Call to Order:

President Patrick Fagan called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

Roll Call

Board members present: President Patrick Fagan, Vice President Dag Grada, Secretary Gail A. Krmeneč, Treasurer Joel French, and Commissioner Phil Young.

Staff Members Present: Executive Director John Shea, Superintendent of Parks & Development Mat Emken, Superintendent of Finance Mike Rock, Superintendent of Recreation Andrea Juricic, Accounting & Administrative Assistant Jennifer Anderson, Wendy Hayes, Cindy Slinkard, and Mike Siefken.

II. Action on the Agenda

Commissioner Young made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Grada. Motion carried by roll call vote. Aye: Grada, Krmeneč, Fagan, French, Young. Nay: None. Absent: None. (5-0-0)

III. Consent Agenda

All items appearing below are considered routine by the Board and shall be enacted by one motion. If discussion is desired, that item shall be removed and discussed separately.

- a. Minutes of the Public Meeting of October 21, 2021
- b. Executive Session Minutes of October 21, 2021

Commissioner Young made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Grada. Motion carried by roll call vote. Aye: Grada, Krmeneč, Fagan, French, Young. Nay: None. Absent: None. (5-0-0)

IV. Public Comments

Ronnie the River Otter, the Park District's new mascot, made an appearance to meet the Board Commissioners.

V. Old Business

None.

VI. New Business

a. Discussion on IPRA Conference

In response to President Fagan's question about how much money was originally budgeted for the conference, Director Shea indicated \$13,930, including enough for two board members to attend. He anticipated spending approximately 60% of the budgeted amount. Commissioner French indicated he would like to attend.

b. Discussion of Health Insurance Renewal

Executive Director Shea summarized the District's group health, dental, vision, life, and Accidental Death & Dismemberment insurance premiums presented in the board packet. There is an overall reduction in premium costs expected for 2022. Commissioner Young asked whether the deductible would increase because of the rate decrease, to which Director Shea responded that the plan will remain the same as last year's.

c. Discussion on Truth in Taxation Resolution 21-05: Resolution Establishing Estimate of Funds to be Raised by Taxation for the 2021 Levy Year

Superintendent of Finance and Administration Mike Rock presented two alternatives to the Board for the 2021 Tax Levy request, both of which included the expiring DeKalb TIF District. One alternative was to increase the levy request rate from last year, while the other was to retain last year's levy request rate.

President Fagan stated that of the two options presented, the difference in money is not that great, but he isn't in favor raising rates. We have the EAV (Equalized Assessed Value), so as a home increases in value we will be able to capture the increase from the EAV, but the tax rate remains the same. We also have new construction, including the Ferrara Candy Company, and the return on money from the TIF, which is \$570,266. We should also have revenue generated from Facebook in the future. We have been living within our means. Commissioner Young said he would go along with not increasing the rate. Commissioners Krmenech, Grada and French all concurred.

d. Discussion of Tax Levy Ordinance

Director Shea stated that the Tax Levy Ordinance will be for \$4,919,992, the amount agreed upon by the Board during discussion of Item VI. c. The tax rate will remain the same as last year: .07096%. The Ordinance will be presented for approval at the Dec 9th meeting.

e. Discussion of Seasonal Staff Rates for FY 2023

Director Shea expressed that competitive pay rates are important to ensure there are sufficient staff and that the District does not lose existing staff to other job opportunities. Minimum wage will be \$12.00/hour starting on January 1 of next year. He pointed out the minimum and maximum wage ranges, depending on

positions. President Fagan asked, because the District is in budget preparation, what the estimated cost increase will be to the District. Director Shea said it is difficult to calculate specific numbers, but staff are analyzing the budget impact of various starting pay rates over \$12 an hour. They are also analyzing the rates being charged for programs. He also highlighted that there seasonal positions that the District was unable to fill this year due to the labor shortage and competition among employers, which affected this year's budget. In response to President Fagan's question regarding why there are minimum and maximum wage rates, Director Shea indicated that having a maximum rate provides flexibility to attract former, experienced, seasonal employees to return to the Park District by offering a wage that is greater than the wage they earned the previous year, and also to be more competitive with other employers if needed. Commissioner French asked what the budget impact would be if the District just jumped to the proposed FY23 wages now instead of waiting. Commissioner Young pointed out that employees do get perks, such as free access to the pools.

f. Action on Nature Trail Phase 3

Commissioner Grada made a motion to approve the base bid of \$28,285 and 3-year maintenance contract in the amount of \$20,550 from Encap Inc., seconded by Commissioner French.

In response to Commissioner Krmeneč's question regarding whether the flood plain area was included in the plan, Mat Emken indicated it was not. Commissioner Krmeneč asked about the removal of the invasive species, to which Mr. Emken stated there will be no burning and that all materials would be removed or chipped and spread on site. President Fagan passed on concerns that have been relayed to him regarding how the Nature Trail is maintained. Trail users want to keep the trail as natural as possible and preserve it. There are concerns about how users are notified regarding the use of herbicides along the trail, especially users with dogs. When an area is being worked, a sign that says "Poison" is put up. Perhaps there is a better way. Commissioner Grada stated it is similar to when you have a lawn treatment, where they put up a little sign. The time of toxins accessible is very limited. He does not see any significant difference. President Fagan also indicated that he has received a complaint about woody vines growing in trees. Perhaps we should take a step back from the project. Mr. Emken indicated that the grape vines should have been removed, along with the other species as specified in the plan. Director Shea indicated that if there are areas with invasive species still present, we have the maintenance contract that can be utilized to address issues. Commissioner Krmeneč addressed the signage issue, stating that signage must be timely. In the past, large banners had been used along the trail to announce the restoration. However, she felt they should be removed when work was completed so that the public continues to pay attention. Commissioner French asked how long the signs would be left up, to

which Mr. Emken replied 24 hours. Mr. Emken also indicated that the sections that remain for restoration are so steep, that any herbicide exposure is fairly small. Commissioner Grada highlighted that the District has already completed two-thirds of the overall Nature Trail project and he saw no benefit in delaying the last third. Commissioner Krmeneč stated she feels more comfortable with the project after discussion and clarification on potential issues.

Motion carried by roll call vote. Aye: Grada, Krmeneč, French, Young. Nay: Fagan. Absent: None. (4-1-0)

g. Action on Portable Toilet Services

Commissioner Young made a motion to approve the proposal from Floods Royal Flush for portable toilet services for a one-year period beginning February 1, 2022, with the option to renew for two additional years, seconded by Commissioner Grada.

Commissioner Grada inquired why the portable toilet at Prairie Park was padlocked. Mr. Emken stated that the toilets are closed on November 1st. The only year-round portable toilets are located at Hopkins playground and the dog park.

Motion carried by roll call vote. Aye: Grada, Krmeneč, Fagan, French, Young. Nay: None. Absent: None. (5-0-0)

h. Action on Remainder of FY 2022 Board Meeting Schedule

Commissioner Krmeneč made a motion to approve the amended Board Meeting Schedule for Fiscal Year 2022, seconded by Commissioner French.

Motion carried by roll call vote. Aye: Grada, Krmeneč, Fagan, French. Nay: Young. Absent: None. (4-1-0)

i. Action on Merit Pool for FY 2022

Commissioner Grada made a motion to approve pay increases for Non-Union Staff for Fiscal Year 2022, seconded by Commissioner Krmeneč.

Motion carried by roll call vote. Aye: Grada, Krmeneč, Fagan, French, Young. Nay: None. Absent: None. (5-0-0)

j. Action on Truth in Taxation Resolution 21-05: Resolution Establishing Estimate of Funds to be Raised by Taxation for the 2021 Levy Year

Commissioner Krmeneč made a motion to approve Resolution 21-05: Establishing Estimate of Funds to be Raised by Taxation for the 2021 Levy Year in the amount of \$3,559,642, seconded by Commissioner Grada.

Commissioner Krmeneč then made a motion to amend the Truth in Taxation Resolution 21-05: Resolution Establishing Estimate of Funds to be Raised by Taxation for the 2021 Levy Year, by revising the estimate of funds to be raised from \$3,559,642 to \$3,544,992 as discussed and agreed upon in Item VI. c., seconded by Commissioner Grada. Motion carried by roll call vote. Aye: Grada, Krmeneč, Fagan, French, Young. Nay: None. Absent: None. (5-0-0)

Commissioner Young made a motion to approve the amended resolution, seconded by Commissioner French. Motion carried by roll call vote. Aye: Grada, Krmeneč, Fagan, French, Young. Nay: None. Absent: None. (5-0-0)

k. Action to appoint Delegate to IAPD Annual Business Meeting in January 2022

There was a discussion of the potential IAPD Annual Business Meeting delegates before a motion for approval was initiated. Director Shea indicated that in the past the Executive Director was named as the primary delegate and the Superintendent of Parks as the alternate.

Commissioner Grada made a motion to appoint John Shea as the DeKalb Park District delegate and Mat Emken as alternate delegate to the Illinois Association of Park Districts Annual Meeting on January 29, 2022, seconded by Commissioner Krmeneč.

Motion carried by roll call vote. Aye: Grada, Krmeneč, Fagan, French, Young. Nay: None. Absent: None. (5-0-0)

l. Items over \$10,000

i. Haish Snow Rails

Commissioner Grada made a motion to approve the quote from Pinkston-Tadd Inc. to install snow rails on the south gym at Haish gym in the amount of \$11,985, seconded by Commissioner French.

Motion carried by roll call vote. Aye: Grada, Krmeneč, Fagan, French, Young. Nay: None. Absent: None. (5-0-0)

VII. Financial Reports

Commissioner Young made a motion to accept the monthly financial reports presented in November 2021, seconded by Commissioner French.

Motion carried by roll call vote. Aye: Grada, Krmeneč, Fagan, French, Young. Nay: None. Absent: None. (5-0-0)

a. Monthly Paid Bills Listing

- b. Monthly Financial Summary**
- c. IT Summary**
- d. Board & Staff Travel Expense Summary**
- e. FOIA Report**

VIII. Open Comments from Commissioners and Director

Commissioner Grada mentioned that 7 years ago in 2014, the District started its first restoration efforts, in Prairie Park. Very little work was required this past weekend when work occurred at Prairie Park to re-cut one of the areas that was starting to grow back in. He thanked the park staff. Commissioner Krmeneč said the new awnings on the administration building look fantastic, and hopefully will contribute to facility rentals. Commissioner French said thanks for all the hard work. Director Shea wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving. He thanked staff for all their time in the last 6 months, indicating that the District has made a lot of progress and he looks forward to the future. He also thanked the board members. President Fagan reminded everyone the next meeting is December 9th.

IX. Closed Session

Real Estate Acquisition- 5 ILCS 120/2(c)5

Commissioner Krmeneč made a motion to go into closed session under Section 2(c)(5) of the Open Meetings Act, seconded by Commissioner Grada.

Motion carried by roll call vote. Aye: Krmeneč, Young, French, Grada, and Fagan. Nay: None. Absent: None. (5-0-0)

X. Reconvene Open Meeting

Commissioner Young made a motion to return to open session at 7:23 p.m. Commissioner Grada seconded the motion.

Motion carried by roll call vote. Aye: French, Grada, Krmeneč, Young and Fagan. Nay: None. Absent: None. (5-0-0)

XI. Adjourn Public Meeting

Commissioner Krmeneč made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Young.

Motion carried by roll call vote. Aye: French, Grada, Krmeneč, Young and Fagan. Nay: None. Absent: None. (5-0-0)

Meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.