

WESTERN SPRINGS PARK BOARD MEETING MINUTES
April 13, 2010 (BOARD APPROVED 5/11/10)

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Jim Havlat
Janet Gassmann
Wendy Bastyr
Bob Daman
Jennifer Cromheecke
Kristin Keese

OTHERS PRESENT

Robert Ekroth, Park District Attorney
Craig Himmelmann, Director of Parks
Maribeth Newell, Park Board Secretary
Tracy Alden, Rec. Dept. Director
Deb Lyons, Village Trustee
Ray Keenan, Lyons Township Little League

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

Damian Marshall

OTHERS PRESENT

Mike Bruck, Friends of the Park

President Jim Havlat called the April, 2010 Western Springs Park District Board Meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Commissioner Daman moved with a second by Commissioner Keese to approve the March 9, 2010 meeting minutes, as written, which motion was carried by all on voice vote.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS AND PERSONS TO BE HEARD FROM

THE FLOOR: Mr. Ray Keenan, representative for Lyons Township Little League asked the Board if the league could run a small concession with snacks and drinks in coolers. The concession would be available to the teams playing and the spectators. It will be open approximately 20 minutes before game time and throughout the game. The Board had a general discussion and agreed to allow the league to run the concession as outlined.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED

Director Himmelmann reported that Western Springs resident, Curtis Philipiack contacted him and asked if he could paint the park benches at North East Park. The Park District had supplies in stock which were given to Mr. Filipiak. He donated his time and painted the benches. Director Himmelmann will be sending him a letter of thanks. The benches look great. We have also received an e-mail from a Junior at Lyons Township High School who would like to offer soccer clinics. Director Himmelmann suggested that he contact Director Alden at the Recreation Department. A general discussion ensued regarding the age of the student. The Park District would be reluctant to allow anyone under the age of 18 to run any type of program within the district. Director Himmelmann will contact the student.

Commissioner Daman asked about Operation Neat organized by Carol Yee each year to

bring volunteers into the parks throughout the district for Spring cleaning. Director Himmelmann stated that they have been in the parks, and he will report at the next meeting with final numbers of volunteers participating and total tons of refuse removed. A general discussion ensued regarding how to thank the organization. Last year we posted the information on the Park District website. A letter of thanks could also be sent to Ms. Yee and she could forward it on to her volunteers.

TRUSTEE REPORT

Trustee Lyons reported that Jim Maragos and Bill Nelson from the Village of Western Springs would like to come and update the Park Board on the proposed underpass. The Village would like to have input from the Park District regarding impact of the outlet. There are four proposed sites; 1) Hampton through to west of Waldo Erickson curve, 2) between Hampton Avenue and Prospect, 3) Prospect and Central, 4) right at Prospect on north side of marked crosswalk. Feasibility studies have been completed on the soil. The soil conditions of sites 2, 3, and 4 are most favorable. From an engineering standpoint, site 4 is preferable because it is at grade and the outlet would be approximately at the playground. We need to see if it can come out at the bathrooms and hook into the playground. Public Health & Safety likes site 1, but it might be the most costly and not the best for commuters. Jeff Zeigler is going to punch the numbers for site 1 and compare them to the others.

The Committee assigned to the project is Public Health and Safety. Feasibility studies have been completed on the soil. President Havlat inquired about plans for parking and sidewalks. He noted that the photos were dated and a little misleading. Trustee Lyons stated that there are no plans for parking and any sidewalks would depend upon the final site, space available and slope of the area. She will distribute complete packages to the Park Board Commissioners for their review.

RECREATION DEPARTMENT REPORT

Director Alden reported that the March, 2010 Recreation Department Meeting minutes and the April 7, 2010 agenda were included in the Park Board packets.

The Lacrosse league has begun its season. Director Alden met with Director Himmelmann and Amy from the Safety Village project. The parking lot will be patched, recoated and lined.

Director Alden also suggested that the Park Board contact the Community Memorial Foundation to supplement the remaining funds needed to complete the artificial turf project. It is his understanding that they tend to fund short term projects. President Havlat noted that they tend to be more health directed initiatives, but might be worth a revisit.

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Director Alden passed along Phil Clark's request for clarification regarding field use scheduling. Rugby is beating up the east field. This will cause a conflict because Lacrosse will be needing it. A general discussion ensued and President Havlat will

follow up with Mr. Clark's request.

Vice President Gassmann asked for clarification on why Blue Moose has two \$10.00 fees. The brochure made it look as though both fees were earmarked for the Park District. Director Alden clarified that one fee is for the Recreation Department and the other is a user fee. He further explained that Blue Moose is an independent contractor rather than part of the Recreation Department. They prefer to be independent. There are 7 independent contractors that run programs in the Park District through the Recreation Department. Each has their own specific contracts that they abide by.

OLD BUSINESS

PEDESTRIAN CROSSING SIGNS

Director Himmelman reported that the original pricing he received for the pedestrian crossing signs was misquoted by the company he had contacted. The Board approved \$99.50 per sign at last month's meeting. The signs are actually over \$400.00 each. He contacted Road Tech, which is the sign company used by the Village of Western Springs. They have quoted a price of \$220.00 per sign plus shipping and handling. Director Himmelmann estimates the shipping and handling costs to be approximately \$75.00. President Havlat stated that if the signs can be purchased for less than the \$1,000.00 budgeted, we should go ahead and get them in place as soon as possible.

LYONS TOWNSHIP BOND MONEY

President Havlat announced that the Township has awarded \$511,000.00 to the Western Springs Park District for the purchase and installation of an artificial turf field in Spring Rock Park. He also noted that we have not received a letter of commitment from the Township and he has left messages for their attorney to determine distribution and any parameters regarding spending the bond money. We need approximately \$1.6 million to complete the project.

A general discussion ensued including fundraising by the Friends of the Park, possible financing of the field through the vendor, a tax levy for a specific number of years rather than a permanent increase, and formal agreements with all user groups to help fund and maintain the field. Attorney Ekroth explained that if a referendum were to pass, the Park District would then be allowed to borrow against the levy because it would be a few years before the money was collected. Mr. Bruck of the Friends of The Park noted that as a 501C3 organization, they can raise funds which would allow donors to have a tax write off.

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In conclusion, it was decided that Treasurer Bastyr will contact Matt Gresge, former Treasurer of the Board and Grace Turi, Village of Western Springs for their input. She will also contact the Bond Council. President Havlat will contact the Township and their attorney. Commissioner Daman will contact Field Turf to get more details regarding possible financing of the field through them. All will report at the May, 2010 Board

meeting.

It was decided that the May, 2010 meeting should begin at 6:30 p.m. instead of the regular start time of 7:00 p.m. Secretary Newell will contact the newspaper to post the change in the local paper.

ORGANIC GARDEN

Commissioner Gassmann reported that a formal Intergovernmental Agreement between the Western Springs Park District and the school district has been written. Dr. Barnhart would like to have the school district pay for soil tests before they proceed. A general discussion ensued and it was decided that the Board would grant permission for the soil testing with the caveat that if any clean-up is required on the site, it will be the sole financial responsibility of the school district.

SAFETY

Director Himmelmann reported that there were no accidents or injuries for the month of March, 2010.

NEW BUSINESS

FERTILIZER BID RESULTS

Director Himmelmann reported that although he sent out 8 or 9 bid packets, only 2 companies submitted bids. They were Natural Lawns of America, and Tru-Green. As a point of reference, organic based fertilizer is 51% organic and 49% minerals. Organic is 100% organic with no animal by-products. Standard fertilizer is 100% minerals, no chemicals. There is no organic product that will eradicate weeds. Any of these methods will require spot treatments of the weeds. The wide gap in pricing may be due to the fact that the Tru-Green bid was reviewed and "crunched" by the Vice President of the company. They submitted an aggressive bid because the Park District is one of their long term customers.

Natural Lawns of America bid their organic based with 3 applications at \$52,159.00 and their total organic with 3 applications at \$78,259.00.

Tru-Green bid their standard fertilization with 4 applications at \$21,700.00. Their organic based with 3 applications was bid at \$26,364.00 and their organic at \$38,250.00.

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A general discussion ensued and the Commissioners agreed that the long term goal of the Park District is to move toward a 100% organic fertilization program. However, we need to be fiscally responsible in accomplishing this goal.

MOTION

Vice President Gassmann motioned with a second by Commissioner Cromheecke to accept the Tru-Green organic based fertilization bid at \$26,364.00 with 3 applications,

which motion was carried by all on voice vote.

BOARD DISCUSSION OF IMRF BENEFIT PLAN

Vice President Gassmann and Commissioner Daman met with Paul Parish of the IMRF (Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund). The cost to fund accrued sick days for our employees would be negligible. Commissioner Daman explained that accrual of sick days can be applied toward earlier retirement. Based on accrual of sick days, we would pay extra year of retirement. We can customize and set limitations any way we see fit. Vice President Gassmann will meet with Director Himmelmann to put together a hypothetical scenario to see if they can get a more definitive outline of the financial impact if sick days are allowed to be accrued over the term of employment. Mr. Parish has offered to attend a Board meeting in the future to discuss the benefit plan in more detail.

TREASURERS REPORT

Treasurer Bastyr submitted the February 28, 2010 Financial Report as written. Income for March was all tax revenue. We currently have \$400,000.00 in the Illinois Fund. She will be looking for a more stable place to deposit the money.

MOTION

Treasurer Bastyr motioned with a second by Commissioner Daman to approve the March 31, 2010 Financial Report, with an ending balance of \$1,377,084.00, which motion was carried by all on voice vote.

AMENDMENT TO ORDINANCE WHICH ADOPTED A BUDGET FOR THE YEAR 2009

Treasurer Bastyr explained the amendment to reconcile what was budgeted and what was spent and explained the adjustments. The final 2010 budget has the 2009 numbers in it. This is actual. These are unaudited so the numbers may change.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Himmelmann submitted his report as written. The majority of his report is the 2010 Special Projects status report.

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A general discussion ensued regarding playground equipment replacement regarding which park, if any, will be updated this year. Vice President Gassmann and Commissioner Cromheecke will work together on pricing and design. They will report at the May, 2010 meeting. Vice President Gassmann will get the 2010 equipment catalogs from Director Himmelmann.

Director Himmelmann reported that the Forest Hills tennis court will be painted. The fence and backboard standards will be replaced and the cracks will be patched. The washroom rehab at Spring Rock Park will include new partitions which will be the same

as the partitions installed at Timber Trails. Electric hand dryers with an auto sensor will be installed. The exhaust fan will be triggered by users and run for 20 minutes. We can over ride the sensor when the facilities are hosed down. They will run for 2 hours after that to help remove the moisture. He is also trying to work the budget to include porcelain fixtures. We will also try to have auto flush toilets and sensed water faucets. The complete project list is brither lights, exhaust fans, partitions, toilets and sinks.

The mowing cycle has begun this week. Once everything is groomed, weekly mowing will take place on Thursdays.

The new benches are assembled and will be installed soon. The Dave Evans bench has been installed and looks great. The new tennis backboard is in and solid at Spring Rock Park.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORTS

DAMAN: nothing further to report

BASTYR: inquired about the Wood Pile Road clean-up. Director Himmelmann explained that they showed up today for about an hour and had to leave. He is hopeful that they will be back soon and complete this as an ongoing project. She also asked Director Himmelmann to contact Don Robertson regarding a check that has not been cashed.

KEESE: nothing further to report.

GASSMANN: asked Treasurer Bastyr to give her a copy of the budget each month or electronically forward it directly to Pat Schramm to be published on the website.

HAVLAT: asked Vice President Gassmann to talk to Pat Schramm regarding continued problems with the email system on Park District website.

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MARSHALL: absent.

CROMHEECKE: nothing further to report.

HIMMELMANN: nothing further to report.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Vice President Gassmann motioned with a second by Treasurer Bastyr to adjourn the April 13, 2010 Western Springs Park Board meeting at 9:15 p.m., which motion was carried by all on voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Maribeth Newell
Park Board Secretary

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