PARK DISTRICT OF OAK PARK
Committee of the Whole

Oak Park Conservatory
615 Garfield St., Oak Park
Thursday, February 9, 2006, 7:30pm

Minutes

I. Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. by President Kindler.
Commissioners Present: President Kindler, Commissioners Bracco, Graves and Philion. Commissioner Gartland arrived at 7:45 p.m.
Staff Present: Gary Balling, Executive Director; Mike Grandy, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds; Kent Newton, Superintendent of Business Operations; Matt Ellmann, Superintendent of Recreation; John Seaton, Manager of Conservatory Operations and Lisa Lightcap, Business Operations/HR Assistant.

II. <u>Recreation and Facility Program Committee</u>

A. Festival Theater Agreement

Galen Gockel, Managing Director of the Festival Theater, discussed the agreement for the 2006 season. The Festival Theater submitted their annual request to the Park District of Oak Park for a grant and use of Austin Gardens for summer 2006. Festival Theater is requesting to use Austin Gardens for the following shows: Julius Caesar (and picnic) will have a public run Monday through Fridays (June 16 – August 19) with shows beginning at 8:00 p.m. Storytelling and family matinees shows will begin at 4:00 p.m. on Sundays (June 18 – August 13) and rehearsals will be held Wednesdays-Sundays (May 31-July 2) from 10:00-3:00 p.m. Festival Theater requested a grant in the amount of $6,000. In previous years, the Board has authorized $5,000 in funding from the Austin Trust. The agreement, requires that the Festival Theater provide notice of the scheduled times and dates to neighbors of the park and will distribute tokens of appreciation such as coupons to the neighbors of the park. Also requested is that a registration report is submitted to Director Balling at the end of the season. It is recommended that the Board approve the 2006 Affiliation Agreement with the Oak Park Festival Theater for the use of Austin Gardens. It is also recommended that the Board approve funding to the Festival Theater in the amount of $5,000 from the Austin Trust and $1,000 from the Park District Corporate Fund for a total grant of $6,000. Mr. Gokel would like the continuation of the positive relationship the theater has had with the Park District of Oak Park. It was discussed that *Tartuffe* would be held at the Pleasant Home in the spring. Ideas that the Park District of Oak Park could advertise by web, e-newsletter and brochure and there could be outings to the Festival were discussed. Director Balling also suggested a future partnership or grant funding for a theater camp.

B. Status on Sports Affiliate Agreements

Matt Ellmann, Superintendent of Recreation reported that the Oak Park Youth Baseball/Softball and Windmills Affiliate Agreements have been received. The AYSO Affiliate Agreement is still outstanding and should be received in March. There will be some changes that will be made regarding the Oak Park Youth Baseball/Softball agreement including that The Park District of Oak Park: will make a water source

available to the group, will provide 501C3 status which will be required of the Baseball Association and will need to clarify ball field maintenance. President Kindler mentioned the use of fields at Lindberg Park by Fenwick High School, Oak Park-River Forest High School and partner organizations and discussed potential scheduling conflicts and felt there should be improved communication among coaches.

III. Building and Grounds/Facility Maintenance

A. Conservatory Five Year Review - John Seaton, Manager of Conservatory Operations reviewed the Oak Park Conservatory's Five Year Report. He made note that volunteers are used heavily and mentioned the decline in school tours and that this is because tours rely on the ability to get docents. The Board questioned if rentals translate into increased attendance. It was noted that the warm weather means a drop in attendance at the Conservatory. 2005 highlights included installation of filtration system, Herb Sale, Hidden Gem Diamond Celebration, new and upgraded sound system, remote controlled audio tour and a Channel 2 news feature. This year, the lead abatement cactus room project will take place September and October along with a generator replacement project.

B. RFP Landscape Architect Services – Site Master Plans for Longfellow & Fox Parks A preliminary draft of the Request for Proposals for site master plan development at Longfellow and Fox Parks will be complete by February 20 with these RFP's being due by March 22. *(Now revised to a fall starting date.)* It is planned for a recommendation to be brought to the Park Board in April. If all goes well, Longfellow planning could begin in May and Fox planning could begin in September 2006.

1. **Senior Center Focus at Longfellow Park** – David Boulanger, Township Supervisor, was in attendance to discuss the possible development of a Senior Center at Longfellow Park and a committee to research this. Officials of the Park District of Oak Park, Oak Park Township and the Village of Oak Park have held informal conversations over the past two years about the possibility of creating a Senior Center in Oak Park. Given the current initiative for program and facility upgrade in the Park District and the perceived need for more centralized and improved senior facilities, a study of the issue is timely. The Study Purpose is to consider the expansion of a Park District recreation center, to incorporate an emphasis on senior citizen (60 and over) education, recreation and social services and to promote senior long-term health and independent living. Park Ridge, North Shore, Niles, Park Ridge, Evanston, Westmont, Hanover Park and Stickney all have combined Senior Centers. David Boulanger stated this is preliminary, but would like to keep broad participation. Commissioner Philion questioned whether there was any interest in the Center being intergenerational through a partnership with the Early Childhood Collaboration. Parking issues were also discussed. It was determined that the Township will be the lead on this process. Commissioner Gartland said the Youth Intervention program and Bert Patania and John Williams are doing a great job.

C. Community Center Historical Preservation Review Committee – Commissioner Philion discussed the development of a Community Center Historic Stewardship Committee. Andersen, Carroll and Field Recreation Centers have undergone substantial review in recent years through the Infrastructure Committee Study, an independent engineering study conducted by the Village of Oak Park. One of the collective findings of these studies is that these centers do not have the types of multiple programming spaces

necessary to meet the recreation needs of the community, even if improvements to these facilities and the elimination of deferred maintenance occur. Given the historical nature of these facilities, the Park Board has expressed a desire to create a task force to identify key questions related to the historical preservation of these buildings. At the current time, we anticipate the task force addressing key questions such as these: Do Andersen, Carroll and Field Center have the remaining architectural integrity and significance to consider their preservation and possible restoration? What are the varying levels of historic significance of each of these three buildings? Can these buildings be relocated? What would be the potential financial cost to restore these facilities? What are the opportunity costs if these facilities are restored and operated as stand along single space recreation programming centers? The Recreation Center Stewardship Committee will be chaired by Park Board commissioner Tom Philion and some of the members may be selected from the group of candidates who applied in fall 2005 for consideration on the Park District Citizen Committee. President Kindler thanked Commissioner Philion for his leadership on this project and feels the Park District Citizen Committee applicants are a strong group. Meetings will be open to the public and there could be public comment.

D. Field Park Master Plan Update – Director Balling provided an update on the Field Park master planning effort. Focus Group Meetings will be held on Monday, February 13. March 1 is the first Community Meeting to collect input at Field Center. April 5 is the second community meeting to present 3 concepts at Field Center. On April 24, Altamanu will present informally to Park Board and Park District Citizens Committee at Field Center. A final recommendation is planned to be brought before the Park Board in April.

E. Dogs in the Parks Update – Director Balling discussed first public meeting for the Dogs in Oak Park Plan where 23 people were in attendance as well as next steps for the project including working to determine approximately four location where a permanent dog park could be located.

F. St. Edmunds Use of Scoville and Mills Parks in 2007 – Director Balling stated St. Edmund Catholic Parish would like to use Scoville Park for an 11:30 a.m. outdoor Mass on June 17, 2007 followed by a picnic at the Pleasant Home/Mills Park Estate at 1:00 p.m. to commemorate their 100th anniversary. St. Edmunds would pay out of pocket expenses. The Board's consensus was to permit this request.

G. Andersen Park Timeline – Director Balling updated the Board on the timeline for construction at Andersen Park. The bid opening would take place on March 22 and a recommendation for a contractor would be brought before the Board in April. Service would begin in May.

H. Update on Infant Welfare Society Designer Showcase at Cheney Mansion – Director Balling stated that meetings have begun to plan for the Infant Welfare Society Designer Showcase which will take place at Cheney Mansion in 2007. Design guidelines currently are being developed by Lesley Gilmore and Carol Yetken.

IV. Administrative and Finance Committee

A. Community Service Awards - The 2005 Community Service Awards will be presented to Spannuth Boiler Company, Patrick Botticelli, William Casey and Judy Shepelak at the February 16 Board Meeting.

B. Board Self-Evaluation – The Board discussed their self evaluation.

V. New Business - There was no new business.

VI. Adjournment

A motion was made by Commissioner Philion and seconded by Commissioner Gartland to adjourn the meeting at 10:13 p.m. Motion carried in a voice vote of 5:0.

Secretary
Board of Park Commissioners
March 16, 2006
Date

President
Board of Park Commissioners
March 16, 2006
Date

Deleted: Addendum to Pleasant Home Foundation Agreement to Provide Accounting Services – In order to provide a more cost effective use of the limited resources of the Pleasant Home Foundation (PHF), the Park District of Oak Park (PDOP) will assume providing accounting services to the PHF. An Addendum was established that says that the PDOP and the PHF agree that the PDOP will provide accounting services formerly provided by PHF staff. There will be no charge for the accounting services provided, however the PHF remains responsible for the costs of payroll taxes, audit services, and any other out of pocket expenses incurred by the PDOP in providing the agreed upon services. The PHF currently has three employees and processes a limited number of cash disbursements. The existing Park District staff will be able to provide the outlined services with a minimum amount of additional work while allowing the PHF staff to concentrate on areas that they are more knowledgeable and further the mission of the foundation. The addendum to the Pleasant Home Foundation Agreement is recommended for approval at the December 15 Board Meeting.