Park District of Oak Park
Regular Board Meeting
218 Madison Street-Hedges Administration Center
Oak Park, Illinois
Thursday, December 15, 2005

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:32 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Present: President Kindler, Commissioners Bracco, Graves and Philion. Commissioner Gartland arrived at 7:33 p.m.
Park District Staff present: Gary Balling, Executive Director; Kent Newton, Superintendent of Business Operations; Mike Grandy, Superintendent of Buildings & Grounds; Diane Stanke, Manager of Administrative Services; and Lisa Lightcap, Business Operations/HR Assistant.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Graves and seconded by Commissioner Philion to approve the agenda with one revision. The Budget and Appropriation Ordinance was taken off the agend and moved to the January 12, 2006 meeting. The motion was passed by a voice vote of 5:0.

III. VISITOR / PUBLIC COMMENTS

Marty Hackl, 1531 Monroe, #3, River Forest, discussed the letter he wrote to the Commissioners of the Park District. Mr. Hackl feels it is a shame that demolition of one or more of the three remaining historic playground structures is being considered. He stated that the three buildings at Carroll, Andersen and Field are the "real deal" – authentic Prairie School structures. He also felt that public was asked about their interest in preserving and restoring structures, but needed to discuss the importance of preservation and how the buildings could function if rehabilitated and restored. Mr. Hackl offered his services as a historian to help the Park District know the importance of historic preservation, specifically as it relates to the three historic structures at Carroll, Andersen and Field.

Mike Farley, **825 Woodbine,** came to the meeting representing Friends of Oak Park Dogs. He thanked the Board for how hard they have worked to get a temporary Dog Park reinstated and is looking to have Village of Oak Park Board consider issue. Also, Mr. Farley is looking forward to hearing more about the Dogs in the Parks Master Plan.

Michael Stewart, 1187 S. Grove, is a Carroll Park area resident who attended public meetings and is concerned about future use and cooperation with school as well as about the Park District's use during school hours. Hopes Board considers bike friendliness for the Park.

Christopher Goode, **1008 S. Home Avenue** is an Architect and Lincoln School parent. He has two concerns: 1. The Recreation Center should not be torn down and has not received best of care. It is designed by architect John Van Bergen. 2. He is concerned about the Park District's ability to form a strong partnership with Village of Oak Park and school. He wants to make sure this is a good plan for all agencies involved.

Dick McKinley, **1020 N. Euclid,** thanked Board for responsiveness with Dog Park issue.

Jim White, **1166 S. Grove,** is a Carroll Park area resident and thanked the Board for the site master planning process and enjoyed the creative approach with public input. He likes idea of facility being shared with school.

Bill Kent, feels there are alternatives to restructuring Center. He stated that the referendum was sold based on renewal and thinks taxpayers have been misled. He is disappointed that

the public hasn't been given any dollar figure on tearing down current Center. He is also concerned about tearing up blacktop and concerned that Park District has not talked to Lincoln School.

A letter was read from Frank Lipo, Executive Director, The Historical Society of Oak Park and River Forest and Member, Oak Park Historic Preservation Commission, 535 N. Ridgeland Avenue, stated he was grateful for the opportunity to attend a meeting at the Park District of Oak Park with Gary Balling, David Kindler and others to discuss the planning process and role of historic preservation regarding historic playground shelters. He is grateful that a committee will be formed to further assess the historical importance of the shelter building in Andersen, Field, and Carroll and the possibilities for their inclusion in plans to meet the present and future recreation needs of villagers.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Gartland and seconded by Commissioner Bracco to approve the Consent Agenda, which includes **the Fund Status Report, Warrants and Bills dated December 15, 2005, Minutes from the meetings of October 11,13, 27 and November 3, 10; the 2006 Board Meeting Calendar; the 2006 Board Action Calendar; Dogs in the Parks Master Plan Proposal from Altamanu, Inc.; Field Center Site Master Plan Proposal from Altamanu, Inc.; Ridgeland Common Parking Lot and Service Drive Proposal from Terra Engineering; Multiple Projects Proposal from Gilmore Franzen Architects, Inc.; and the Addendum to the Pleasant Home Foundation Agreement to Provide Accounting Services.** The motion was passed by a roll call vote of 5:0.

V. STAFF REPORTS

A. Director's Report:

Executive Director Gary Balling discussed the following:

1. **Review of the 2005 Highlights**: Director Balling discussed the following highlights from 2005: Approval of referendum, re-opening of Barrie Park, Village of Oak Park agreeing to transfer the seven community centers to the Park District and agreeing to accept LeMoyne, Kenilworth and Randolph Parkways from the Park District; creation of the e-newsletter; Bark in the Park; Capital Improvements: Zamboni and Building and Grounds utility vehicle purchase; Austin, Carroll and Andersen site plans; Strategic Plan for Cheney; Conservatory's 16th Annual Herb and Scented Plant Sale brought in gross sales of $61,000; Pleasant Home Foundation received a $10,000 grant for fence restoration from the Rotary Club of Oak Park; The Township Board approved a grant of $8,000 for the Youth Scholarship Programs; Nearly $1,000 was collected from program registrants for the Park District Scholarship Program; A barbeque was hosted by the Park Board for local elected officials in September at Cheney Mansion; and the Park District coordinated efforts for a Harry Potter event in July.
2. **Budget and Appropriation Hearing** – This public hearing will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 12 at the Conservatory Center, 615 Garfield.
3. **Transfer of Properties** – At their December 5 meeting, the Village Board approved the agreement between the Village of Oak Park and the Park District of Oak Park for the transfer of property. Director Balling requests that the Park Board consider action on the agreement at their December 15, 2005 meeting.
4. **Site Master Plan for Andersen Park** – Three focus groups and two community meetings were held for the development of a site master plan for Andersen Park. Three concepts have been presented and are available for public review on the Park District website. Planning Resources is collecting and reviewing citizen input and will make a final recommendation for this plan by December 20. This plan will then be posted on the website under the Future Plans icon. Director Balling requests that the Board consider

the final plan at a continued Board Meeting on January 12, 2006 at 7:30 p.m. at the Oak Park Conservatory. Tentatively, pending Board approval and a contract to prepare bidding documents with Planning Resources, construction plans would be drawn in early 2006 and construction would start in the spring.

5. **Dogs in the Parks** - Director Balling and Bill Hamilton, Manager of Revenue Facilities met this week to begin the implementation of the programming of the Temporary Dog Access Areas planned at Ridgeland Common. This includes registration and monitoring. Staff is also working to procure the fencing needed. A meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 13 with Village staff to discuss matters related to health, safety and possibilities for involvement in planning for future dog friendly areas locally and regionally.
6. **Gay Games** – On Tuesday, November 29, Bret Fahnstrom, Matt Ellmann and Director Balling met with Rich Carrollo of the Visitors and Tourism Bureau, representatives from the Gay Games and the Oak Park Area Lesbian and Gay Association. The Gay Games are going to be held in Chicago the week of July 17. Oak Park River Forest High School will be the hub for badminton, soccer and tennis. The Park District's involvement requested may involve moving sports camp lessons off high school property courts for the week and allowing use of the Barrie Park Soccer Field.

B. Division Managers' Reports (Updates & Information): Matt Ellmann presented the following information to the Board: 1.) PDRMA Field Visit on December 1 focused on Buildings & Grounds and gave direction on how to improve the Loss Control Program 2.) Because of a score over 85 last year, we are not having a formal review this year. There will be a full review in 2006. 3.) The Park District website has a new icon (Future Plans) on website cover page. 4.)Website has easy access to information on capital projects (i.e. Carroll and Andersen Master plans) 5.) Next step on website is to provide a list by site. 6.) Austin Gardens is currently undergoing a Class 1 tree pruning that is performed to help improve the overall health of our trees. 7.) Cheney Mansion's new boiler is scheduled for installation next Monday, December 19. 8.) The Conservatory hosted numerous Holiday Parties including one for the Park District and the Wednesday Journal this month. 9.) Over 350 people attended the Holiday Open House and Craft Faire at the Conservatory. 10.) The Fern & Desert room has been properly prepped and painted and mill work has been performed. 11.) Positive turnout for Holiday Open House at Cheney Mansion. 12.) Approximately 400 visitors enjoyed the Holiday Open House on December 4 at Pleasant Home. 13.) The Recreation Department full time staff has met with Matt Ellmann in groups and individually to review the reorganization and implementation process. 14.) A presentation regarding the Reorganization Plan will be presented to the Board in January. 15.) Registration for March 2006 Ice Show is strong and par with last year. 16.) Second session of skate school began last week with solid numbers. 17.) Floor Hockey program has over 350 participants. 18.) Holiday programs being offered at Field, Carroll and Fox Centers. 19.) This year there are two boys travel teams (for 5th & 6th grades) compared to last year when there was just one. 20.)Second travel basketball tournament will be held this weekend. 21.) Santa Claus is scheduled to visit all of our preschools and playschools on December 21 and 22. 22.)Charity Luter is working with Triton College to set up a Student Teacher's Program with them. 23.) Senior Holdiay party was a big success with over 90 attendees. 24.) There will be a New Year's Eve (at Noon) Party for Seniors held on December 28th. 25.) Jamie Lapke has a new awards program outlined for Gymnastics.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Building and Ground Committee: Commissioner Philion

1. Transfer of Properties with the Village of Oak Park

A motion was made by Commissioner Philion and seconded by Commissioner Bracco to make Ordinance Number 2005-12-15, an ordinance approving an agreement between the Village of Oak Park and the Park District of Oak Park regarding transfers of property for park and recreational purposes. The motion passed by a roll call vote of 5:0. Board President Kindler thanked the Village of Oak Park Board.

2. Carroll Park Site Master Plan

President Kindler met with the Historical Presentation Commission to discuss a possible approach to determine the historic value of Andersen, Carroll and Field Centers. 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. In addition to identifying key questions, the task force will hear various perspectives and experts informed about issues related to these questions, and document the various facts and issues involved in the historical preservation of these centers so that the current and future park boards can make informed decisions in the future. Commissioner Philion will work on goals for the task force to bring back to the Board at a future meeting. Commissioner Gartland discussed the involvement the Park District has had with District 97 during the entire Carroll Site Master Planning Process. Because of the importance of working cooperatively in partnership with the school district, Director Balling has worked to engage the schools throughout the process. Commissioner Graves questioned what would happen if the school district is not accepting of the plan the Park Board approves. Director Balling stated that Park Board is accepting plan in concept, but will adopt a more formal, exact plan with construction documents before any work is completed. President Kindler thanked Altamanu and Terra for doing a good job gathering public input. Commissioner Philion thanked Mr. Hackl and Mr.Goode for their comments about the historic significance of the centers. Commissioner Philion will vote in favor of the plan as he feels it preserves its uses and provides the potential to expand. He likes idea of hearing historical issues but also understand that their primary significance is a social one. Commissioner Bracco felt there was nothing half hearted about this process and the process was well thought out. Commissioner Graves shared that as the Board liaison to the Carroll planning, she listened to approximately 100 people. She originally thought there would be a strong preference for saving the centers, but found that the majority liked the idea of having a new center. She feels it is a fair process as everyone's input is taken seriously and Altamanu has done a good job. She will vote in favor of the plan. Commissioner Gartland commended the staff for their role in encouraging community involvement and will vote in favor. **A motion was made by Commissioner Philion and seconded by Commissioner Gartland to accept the Carroll Park Site Master Plan completed by Altamanu, Inc. The motion passed by a roll call vote of 5:0.**

B. Administration and Finance Committee

1. 2005 Tax Levy Ordinance

A motion was made by Commissioner Gartland and seconded by Commissioner Philion that the Board approve Levy Ordinance Number 2005-12-01, an ordinance

levying and assessing the taxes of the Park District of Oak Park for the tax year 2005 in the amount of $5,492,500. This represents an increase of 146.6% over the previous year. The motion passed by a roll call vote of 5:0.

2. **Budget and Appropriation Ordinance –** Action on this item will be postponed to the January 12, 2006 meeting.

3. **Tax Abatement Ordinance**
   A motion was made by Commissioner Gartland and seconded by Commissioner Graves to approve Ordinance Number 2005-12-03, and ordinance abating the tax levied for the year 2005 to pay principle and interest on $2,000,000 General Obligation Park Bonds, Series 1996. The motion passed by a roll call vote of 5:0.

4. **Levy Limit Resolution**
   A motion was made by Commissioner Gartland and seconded by Commissioner Graves to approve Resolution Number 2005-12-01, a resolution informing the County Clerk which property tax levy extensions to reduce if required to comply with the property tax limitation act. The motion passed by a roll call vote of 5:0.

C. Recreation and Facility Program Committee:
No Action.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Outdoor Art Placement – Oak Park Outdoor Art Commission
The Oak Park Outdoor Art Commission has requested that a second sculpture be placed at one of the parks for a two-year period. Previous authorization was given for the "Receptor", a 99" x 105" x 99" cast concrete structure, to be placed at Maple Park. The granite sculpture, named "Pillow" by Zoran Mojsilow, is 84"x 120" x 60" and was previously displayed at Navy Pier. The Commission first requested that it be placed at Mills Park or Scoville Park, but because site master plans are not complete, Director Balling recommends the sculpture be placed at Austin Gardens. Director Balling ,Carol Yetken, of CYLA Associates and Mike Grandy, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds visited Austin Gardens and determined that the sculpture could be placed in the southeast area of the park. This location is unobtrusive yet easily accessible while still allowing the community to view the art without difficulty. There was consensus from the Board to move forward with this plan. Commissioner Gartland would like to see more detailed plan about the placement of these sculptures and future art in order to ensure a coordinated effort and that no unplanned decisions are made. He feels that sculpture placement should be included in site master planning for the parks.

VII1. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Bracco stated that he attended a private Christmas party at Cheney Mansion and the out-of-towners had very nice things to say about the Mansion. At their last meeting, WSSRA approved their audit and discussed the lottery system being implemented in 2006.
Commissioner Gartland stated that he has been involved with the Andersen site master planning process and feels like some good community input was received although not as much as with the Carroll Park Site Plan.

Commissioner Graves said that she and her daughter have started ice skating lessons at Ridgeland Common and this has made it evident that improvements are needed at this site. She then stated that she is proud to be part of the Carroll master planning process and thanked

staff, Altamanu and Terra Engineering for their work on the site plan. She concluded by stating that the gymnastics staff is doing an incredible job with huge waiting list and the amount of people participating is amazing.

Commissioner Philion stated that 2005 has been a busy year with a lot of major accomplishments and it is nice to see a positive spirit and energy in air. Thanked Director Balling and President Kindler for their leadership.

President Kindler mentioned that the sled hill was a great time and his daughter is in the ice show. He thanked Superintendent Grandy for outdoor ice. He thanked Director Balling, the Board and staff for an amazing year full of accomplishments.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no executive session.

X. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:34 pm a motion was made by Commissioner Philion, and seconded by Commissioner Bracco to continue the meeting to January 12, 2006 at 7:30 p.m. Motion carried in a voice vote of 5:0.

_____	_____
Secretary	**President**
Board of Park Commissioners	**Board of Park Commissioners**
February 16, 2006	**February 16, 2006**
Date	**Date**