Park District of Oak Park
Regular Board Meeting
218 Madison Street-Hedges Administration Center
Oak Park, Illinois
Thursday, May 18, 2006

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 p.m.

I. ROLL CALL

Present: President Kindler, Commissioners Bracco, Graves, Philion and Gartland
Park District Staff present: Gary Balling, Executive Director; Kent Newton, Superintendent of Business Operations; Mike Grandy, Superintendent of Buildings & Grounds; Bill Hamilton, Manager of Revenue Facilities; Steven Flowers, Revenue Facilities Maintenance Supervisor; Rory Joyce, Aquatics & Rink Program Supervisor and Lisa Lightcap, Business Operations/HR Assistant.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Bracco and seconded by Commissioner Philion to approve the agenda with one change. Item VI.A.4 (Infant Welfare Society Designer Showcase at Cheney Mansion Agreement) was taken off the agenda and will be discussed in June. The motion was passed by a voice vote of 5:0.

III. VISITOR/PUBLIC COMMENTS

- **Richard Newman, 312 Linden,** appreciates that the Board and Gary Balling worked to quickly toward solution for the Dog Park. As Director of Friends of Oak Park Dogs (FOOPD) it is felt that a Dog Park is an important opportunity for dog socialization as well human socialization.
- **Hugh Helfer, 839 S. Lombard,** requested that Conservatory be left open one night per week until 9:00 pm for those who work during the days. He also mentioned the poor condition of lawn in front of Conservatory because he feels the dandelions are an eye sore. To prevent this, he asked if the lawn could be mowed with lawn mower with an attachment or if the Park District would consider changing the ground cover. He concluded by asking the Board to consider purchasing two properties immediately south of Conservatory.
- **Mike Farley, 825 Woodbine,** President of FOOPD**,** thanked and complimented staff for a deliberate and public process regarding Dog Parks. He stated that John McManus from Altamanu did a good job with the Plan.
- **Dick McKinley, 1020 N. Euclid,** seconded Mike Farley's endorsement of process. He stated that this was a textbook example of public involvement. Felt people are enjoying time with dogs and feels Dog Park Plus should be protected.
- **Len Cunix, 207 LeMoyne,** stated that he appreciates how Park District has handled process.
- **Barbara Kwiatkowski, 825 Woodbine,** who is a FOOPD member and longtime resident of Oak Park, thanked Board and Staff who have worked with residents on the Dogs in Oak Park plan. She would like a regional park but feels that it will take time and wants local park to be pursued as well. She stated that Oak Park needs enough dog parks to serve North, South and Central parts of the Village and that Dog Park Plus should be continued. She would like to see a permanent solution as soon as possible.

- **Jay Fahn, 131 S. Scoville,** came to the meeting to speak on behalf of his English Bulldog. He thanked the Board for an expeditious plan and would like to see the Dog Park Plus continue.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Commissioner Gartland and seconded by Commissioner Graves to approve the Consent Agenda, which includes **the Fund Status Report and Warrants and Bills dated May 18, 2006; Minutes from the 2006 Meetings of March 16 and April 6; the Personnel Policy Manual; Planning Guidelines for Recreation Facilities; Annual Fourth of July Fireworks Sponsorship Request from GALA; IMRF Form 6.33 Out of State Credit Authorization for Charity Luter; and OSLAD Grant Authorization for Carroll Park.** The motion was passed by a roll call vote of 5:0.

VI. STAFF REPORTS

Bill Hamilton introduced two new employees. Steven Flowers, the Revenue Facilities Maintenance Supervisor and Rory Joyce, the Aquatic and Rink Program Supervisor. Both employees are a welcome addition to the Park District Staff.

A. Director's Report:

Executive Director Gary Balling discussed the following:

1. **June Committee of the Whole Date Change** – The June Committee of the Whole Meeting date has changed. The meeting has been rescheduled to Thursday, June 15. The Regular June Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 22 at 218 Madison Street. Both meetings are at 7:30 p.m.
2. **218 Madison Site Master Plan** – Staff has been meeting on a weekly basis to gather information as the planning process begins. A working group made up of staff, Commissioner Gartland, Kurt Mackey, Rick Kuner and Doug Varn have been gathered to assist in determining the focus of the plan. The focus of the plan will likely be short-term modifications to make the facility more effective and secondly a space study to determine how much space the gymnastics, building & grounds and administration need. A Request for Proposals for Architect Services is scheduled to go out this week.
3. **Dole Center** - Due to ceiling plaster failures, Dole Center has been closed since Monday, April 3. Ceiling work began on May 3 with the majority being complete by mid August. The entire building should be complete by mid September. Information about class relocation is posted on the Park District's website.
4. **Andersen Park** – Phase One has begun and is scheduled to be completed by August 18. Improvements include new playground apparatus swings, a roll hill, fencing, lighting, water fountain, walkways, interpretive signage and plantings on the south half of the park. Three decorative paved seating areas will surround the play area. An unique feature of the park will be the woven willow dome, a group of willow trees formed to create a distinctive play environment. The contractor, Kovilic Construction, has presented a working schedule which calls for early completion of the project.
5. **Recreation Center Historical Stewardship Committee** – The Committee's next meeting took place, Monday, May 15 at 7:00 p.m. at Carroll Center with presentations from Marty Hackl and Jack Barclay.
6. **Ridgeland Common Parking Lot Improvements** – Work began on drainage improvements to the Ridgeland Common Parking Lot. The work is scheduled to be complete before the pool opens at the end of May. The area directly west of the building will be closed for a period of time during this work. Concrete was poured Monday, May 15.

7. **Pool Openings** – Staff is currently in start-up mode in preparing for the pool season. Rehm Pool was filled last week. Rehm Pool opens on May 27 and Ridgeland Common Pool opens on June 3.
8. **Director's Vacation** - Director Balling will be on vacation starting Thursday, May 25 and returning to work on Monday, June 5. Kent Newton will be in charge during Director Balling's absence.
9. **Park District Citizen Committee** – The Park District Citizen Committee will meet next on Monday, May 22 at 7 pm at Carroll Center. The agenda will include a presentation by Dick McKinley and information about the 2004 Park District of Oak Park survey results. Also, and update will be provided about upcoming park planning projects.
10. **Council of Governments Meeting** – President Kindler and Director Balling will be attending the COG Meeting on Friday, May 19 at 7:30 am at OPRF High School.

B. **Division Managers' Reports (Updates & Information): Mike Grandy presented the following information to the Board:** 1.) Lisa Lightcap, Tracy Domino and Lorie Reid Fuller began holding "Welcome" sessions to provide assistance to approximately 225 newly hired and returning employees in completing required paperwork for employment. Our payroll increases from approximately 225 employees to 450 for the summer season. 2.) The summer brochure has been delivered. Jennifer LaFleur and Judy Weik did an outstanding job of developing this promotional piece. Work has already begun on the fall catalogue which will reflect the recreation department reorganization. 3.) Jennifer LaFleur has been busy designing t-shirts and hats for summer programs and summer programming staff and promotional pieces for summer classes and facilities. 4.) All exterior comfort stations are now up and operational and almost all exterior water fountains have been reconnected and turned on. Irrigation system re-activation is still in progress. Bob Rochon discovered that the installation of an Oak tree in the Northeast corner of Barrie Park was causing water problems. Walsh Landscaping is replacing the tree and J&M irrigation is fixing the water line pipe. Nice job, Bob, for problem-solving this situation. 5.) Other projects include Ridgeland Common Parking lot and west service drive, lock and door work at various Recreation Centers, sidewalk replacement in conjunction with the Village program, replacement of all light bulbs on the lighting towers at Ridgeland Common, roof replacement at Carroll, Field, Andersen, and roof repairs at Barrie and Stevenson, receipt and distribution of Calcine clay to various ball fields, activation of most air conditioning systems, and the completion of new baseline fencing at Stevenson ball field. 6.) Due to work being done at Dole Center to repair the ceiling, three senior programs have been moved to the Rubenstein Room at the Conservatory Center—drop-in Scrabble on Fridays, a drop-in bridge group on Tuesdays, and Awareness Through Movement on Wednesdays. 7.) The 17th Annual Herb and Scented Plant Sale was held on May 5 and 6. This year's theme was "Creative Solutions for Containers and Small Gardens." Tents were set up by the poly house, 1,800 boxes were made up by volunteers and 18,000 plants were labeled in preparation for the sale. Attendance for the 2-day sale was 1,890 with total gross sales of $67,000. 8.) For the adults, *Cheney Cooks!* offered "Tapas & Sangria" with registration filled to capacity. 9.) Our Lecture Series, The Genius of George Maher, wraps up on Friday, May 19 at 6:30 pm with Vince Michael presenting "Maher and Wright: A Prairie Comparison." A good crowd is expected for this program. 10.) The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation has awarded Pleasant Home a special preservation grant of $10,000 to paint the exterior of the house this summer. They are also offering an additional $5,000 match if we can raise another $5,000. The Park District has pledged money for the painting effort as well. Frank Heitzman and Laura Thompson have met with two local restoration contactors. This is a wonderful preservation project that will make a difference on the appearance and condition of the house. Any contributions to reach the $5,000 match are most welcome. 11.) As part of the ongoing evolution of the Recreation

Department's Reorganization, Matt Ellmann has begun to review applications/resumes for the Assistant Superintendent of Recreation Programs position. Approximately 60 individuals have applied. Matt, together with Charity Luter and Bill Hamilton, will narrow down the field of applicants to a manageable pool. Interviews will begin in mid-May. 12.) Matt recently coordinated the first major summer apparel order which included over 4,000 pieces ranging from t-shirts for day campers to jersey sport shirts for camp counselors and tank tops and t-shirts for lifeguards. Thanks to the artistic efforts of Jennifer LaFleur, the shirt print images were systematically coordinated to give the apparel items a consistent and improved look. The next order will be placed mid-summer in time for fall programming and the Frank Lloyd Wright Races. 13.) The positions of Aquatics and Rink Program Supervisor and Revenue Facilities Maintenance Supervisor have been filled. Rory Joyce has been hired as the Program Supervisor and Steven Flowers has been hired as the Maintenance Supervisor. Each has many fine qualities and skills, and both young men are great additions to the Park District staff. The hiring process included interviews with a team of Park District staff, as well as a second day of individual candidate and team exercises and second interviews. It was a very thorough process and all of us involved feel that we made the best choices from a group of strong candidates. 14.) The Youth Soccer League has started playing games at Fox Park on Saturdays. So far, the weather has held up for games and most practices. The additional training by the Major League Soccer representatives has helped raise the level of the coaching we offer participants. The number of teams has increased from 19 in spring 2005 to 24 this spring, and the overall participation increased from 199 to 280. This was due in part to the 4^{th}-6^{th} Grade League being cancelled last spring due to low enrollment. However, Julie Garrigues has worked very hard to increase the awareness and quality of the program. 15.) The first private rental for the ASA will be held in mid-May after the park is scheduled to close for the evening. The park was closed for a couple days due to lack of discipline by some of the participants. 16.) D.C.F.S. visited Andersen, Carroll, and Field Center Preschools during April as a part of the re-licensing process. Charity Luter and the teachers turned in all of the necessary paperwork, and are now being re-licensed. 17.)The dress rehearsal and dance recital in April was an excellent chance to see Park District dancers at their best! The dance recital went very smoothly. The dance teachers are truly special which was very obvious when seeing how much the dancers have improved over the past few months and how warmly the teachers are received by the dancers and their families. 18.) The closing of Dole Center has been a trying experience for the staff. Front desk personnel were relocated to Stevenson where the majority of classes have been moved. Our patrons have been very patient and supportive during this difficult time. Liz Visteen and Heidi Garton are currently working out of the main office. 19.) Liz would like to thank everyone who has come to Dole Center's aid. Special thanks to Bobbi Nance, John Seaton, Bill Hamilton, and Chad Drufke for taking on a hefty share of programs. Thank you to Shari Wenzel, Joe McInerney, and Julie Garrigues for offering their centers as well. The Oak Park Visitors Bureau and the Oak Park Public Library have also been extremely helpful in finding new locations for classes.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Building and Ground Committee: Commissioner Philion

John McManus from Altamanu, Inc. presented a recommendation for the Dogs in the Parks Master Plan at the May 4 Committee of the Whole Meeting. The original recommendations are as follows:

1. The Park District should establish a Task Force, to work with Cook County Forest Preserve to establish a regional facility.

2. Retain the existing dog park at Ridgeland Common, by far the most popular site.
3. If Ridgeland Common can not be used at some time in the future, (after a master plan in 07), the site at Stevenson Park should be considered as an alternative.
4. Establish a Dog Park in Taylor Park; however, it should be considered temporary until the Master Plan for Taylor Park is carried out in 2007.
5. Investigate the possibility of purchasing the privately held site at Garfield and Home.
6. Evaluate the potential of a Dog Park at Maple Park as part of the master plan in 2007.

In the recently completed parks & recreation comprehensive plan, a standard was identified for dog parks in our community which states that Oak Park should have 1.9 dog parks. At the October 6, 2005 Committee of the Whole Meeting, the Board of Park Commissioners had a discussion regarding the addition of a planning project that would help identify a location for a potential permanent dog park. Altamanu, Inc. has worked since January to determine where one or two permanent dog park(s) could be located in Oak Park through extensive research and public input.

President Kindler stated that he received a letter from Cook County Commissioner Peter Silvestri regarding the development of a regional dog park site. Commissioner Silvestri will host an initial meeting in the next 30 days and is targeting an area between North Avenue and Cermak. River Forest Director, Tom Grundin, and President, Frank Paris, are willing to help with this process. Commissioner Silvestri has also offered to contact Dr. Parmer, of Cook County Animal Control, to set up a meeting. Regarding Taylor Park, Commissioner Bracco said this is the only site he has concerns with as he feels it is the most interesting park in Oak Park with historical significance and we should wait for a master plan to be completed for the park before making any decisions about putting a dog park there. President Kindler agreed with Commissioner Bracco and is unsure about whether Taylor Park's current uses would work with dog park and would prefer Maple Park as temporary location. He would like to defer a dog park at Taylor for workable long term solution at Maple as there is a larger space opportunity at Maple. Commissioner Graves agrees with President Kindler. Thinks Taylor Park is a good spot for a Dog Park, but not at its current proposed location. She feels a temporary solution at Maple Park would work until Master Plan is done. John McManus from Altamanu, Inc. stated that he feels Maple Park is the best location from design standpoint. It is the largest site and has the smallest area near houses. President Kindler questioned the cost of developing a temporary facility at Maple. Director Balling noted that any fencing purchased for a temporary site could be reused. Commissioner Gartland stated that he feels Maple is the best site along with Ridgeland Common and also thinks developing two parks is a good idea. He doesn't like the Taylor Park site as it is proposed and wants to move forward with master plans before seeing a park there. Commissioner Philion felt the process was good and agrees Maple is a better site, but is concerned that the public may not want a dog park in south Oak Park. He feels that while Taylor Park is crowded, the entire Village is crowded, and feels that a Dog Park at Taylor would be a fine solution.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bracco and seconded by Commissioner Gartland to accept the recommendations of Altamanu in its May 11, 2006, memorandum with the exception that the temporary park described in recommendation #4 be pursued in Maple Park and the evaluation of the potential of a permanent dog park described in recommendation #6 be pursued in Taylor Park, all as part of the master plan in 2007. The motion passed by a roll call vote of 4:1. Commissioner Philion voted no.

The revised recommendations as approved by the Board are:

1. The Park District establish a task force to work with the Cook County Forest Preserve District to establish a regional dog park.
2. The existing dog park at Ridgeland Common be retained.
3. The site at Stevenson Park be considered as an alternative dog park if the Ridgeland Common dog park cannot be maintained after completion of the Park District's master planning process.
4. Taylor Park be evaluated as a part of the Park District's master planning process as a potential site for a permanent dog park.
5. The Park District investigate the possibility of purchasing the privately owned land near the north intersection of Garfield Street near the intersection of Home [Avenue].
6. The Park District establish a temporary dog park in Maple Park and determine as a part of the Park District's master planning process whether that dog park should be made permanent.

A short recess was taken from 8:55-9:00 p.m.

B. Field Park Site Master Plan

Director Balling stated that he spoke to District 97 President and Dr. Connie Collins who stated that the Park Board should go ahead with its plans to approve the plan and the Park and School Boards could meet in the next few months to discuss the plans together. Commissioner Gartland emphasized that the Park Board purposely worked to develop consensus on a blueprint for the future before going to District 97 so there was no confusion within the Park District. **A motion was made by Commissioner Philion and seconded by Commissioner Bracco to accept the Field Park Site Master Plan which is a set of recommendations for how the park can be improved in the years ahead, subject to the availability of funding and implementation. The motion passed by a roll call vote of 5:0.**

C. Community Center Door, Frame & Hardware Improvements Bid

The Park District of Oak Park received bids for Community Center Door, Frame and Hardware Replacement as part of its Multiple Project Plan. The lowest bid for this project came from Door Works Services, an American Building Services Company of Wheeling, IL in the amount of $66,727.00. Funds are budgeted for this project in the Capital Improvement Plan. **A motion was made by Commissioner Philion and seconded by Commissioner Graves to accept the Community Center Door, Frame & Hardware Improvement Bid from Door Works Services, an American Building Services Company of Wheeling, Illinois in the amount of $66,727.00.**

D. Administration and Finance Committee - No Action

E. Recreation and Facility Program Committee – No Action.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS - No new business was discussed.

IX. COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

- **Commissioner Bracco** stated WSSRA Derby Gala had 180 people in attendance and $27,000 was made. WSSRA staff member, Bob Foster, is on the state committee to spread the work about Therapeutic Recreation as a career.
- **Commissioner Gartland** had no comment.
- **Commissioner Graves** said gymnastics registration went well and moved quickly although the lines were long. She visited the Dog Park with her dog and was pleased to see other users obeying the rules. She thanked staff for Cheney Mansion tour and complimented Jennifer LaFleur and Diane Stanke on recent promotional pieces as they project fun and a professional image.
- **Commissioner Philion stated** that Historical Stewardship committee had a meeting at which Marty Hackl and Jack Barclay presented information. The process is moving along well and there will be a report in September. He encouraged the Board to participate in the parent-child basketball tournament to be held at Stevenson Center.
- **President Kindler** thanked the Park Board for their fruitful deliberations on the Dogs in Oak Park issue. He thanked John McManus and Gary Balling for open process which encouraged community ownership.

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 9:35 pm a motion was made by Commissioner Graves and seconded by Commissioner Philion to adjourn to closed session for the discussion of the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of a specific employee of the District and for the discussion of pending or probable litigation against, affecting or on behalf of the District in accordance with sections 2 (C) (1) and 2 (C) (11) which are exceptions of the Open Meetings Act. The motion passed in a roll call vote of 5:0. The Board came out of Executive Session at 10:50pm.

XI. BARRIE PARK SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Kindler and seconded by Commissioner Graves to approve the settlement Agreement between the Park District of Oak Park and Commonwealth Edison Company and Nicro Gas Company regarding matters raised in the B.P. Counterclaim. The motion passed by a roll call vote of 5:0.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

At 10:55pm a motion was made by Commissioner Bracco and seconded by Commissioner Philion to adjourn. Motion carried in a voice vote of 5:0.

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Secretary	**President**
Board of Park Commissioners	**Board of Park Commissioners**
August 17, 2006	**August 17, 2006**
Date	**Date**