

The Workshop Meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners was called to order by President Patinkin at 7:40 p.m. in the Administrative Offices of the Deerfield Park District located in the Jewett Park Community Center. Attendance was taken and the following were:

Present: Antokal, Caron, Cohen, Lapin, Patinkin (5)  
Absent: None (0)

And there was a quorum in attendance. Also in attendance were Jeff Nehila, Secretary/Executive Director; Jay Zahn, John Greene, staff members; Lynn Colletti, Ron Troub, Armen Asatryan, Linda Fine, Michael Fine, Julie Weill, Sammy Weill, Jennifer Phillips, Karin Chiappetta, Dana Stock, Kevin Stock, David Levitz, Joey Rosen, Jeff Maxwell, Brian Cochran, Sara Sortal, Alisa Klein, Mary Anne D'Onofrio, Alan Burack, Larry Kane, Jonah Winler, Steve Schneider, Doug Hewitt, Bruce Harris, Lorrie Levitz, Nancee Siegel, Susan Hewitt, Lori Harris, Paul Weideman, Pam Levy, Peter Levy, David Unger, Rebecca Soldwisch, residents.

**Matters from the Public Other than Pickleball**

President Patinkin welcomed visitors and guests to the meeting. President Patinkin read the Appearing Before the Park Board policy.

**Deerspring Park Pickleball Project Update**

Executive Director Nehila shared that the village board has notified the park district that March 16 is the date for appearance before Village Board of Trustees.

Executive Director explained how the process of planning for the installation of pickleball courts began. The park district began developing a Master Plan for Jewett Park so that existing facilities could be renovated such as the ballfields, skatepark and so forth. During this time, the district had purchased and demolished a home on the north end of the park so there was an area of unused land. During the planning process, several people attended the public park board meetings and requested that the installation of pickleball courts be considered in the master planning of Jewett Park. As the district went through the planning process, the board worked with staff and planners and adopted a Master Plan for Jewett Park that included 3 pickleball courts on the north edge of the park. The district brought the total plan for Jewett Park to the Village's Plan Commission which was approved. Then the district had to appear before the Village Board of Trustees to get a Special Use Permit. At that point, people came to the village meeting and opposed the pickleball courts. The pickleball courts were close to one of the neighbor's home. This neighbor informed others in the neighborhood and there ended up being a lot of objection to pickleball. During that process, the proximity to the one home was a significant obstacle to where the village board opposed that particular component of the Master Plan. At that time, the district didn't have a sound study to quantify that the location of the courts would not negatively impact neighbors in relation to the sound produced by pickleball. For the sake of moving on with the rest of the renovation project because construction timing was an issue, the district removed the pickleball courts from Phase 1 of the project. Pickleball is still in the concept plan but just not in this particular phase.

So at that point in time, the district starting looking for other locations to potentially put pickleball. Staff brought options to the board for consideration. All of the parks were looked at. Even though there is open space at many of our parks, it is space that is heavily used and in heavy demand. There's not a lot of discretionary green space because of the fact that those spaces are already programmed. The district looked at Deerspring for a possible site because there was green space and the proximity to the homes was farther than other sites. During that process the district hired a professional to do an ambient sound study which is recording 24 hours of background noise to determine the decibel level. Also during that process, pickleball play in Northfield was recorded to determine the noise level. The district then tried to determine if Deerspring would work based on the sound level and distance from homes. At the same time, the district also did a sound study at Jewett Park as a comparison. At that point the district pursued putting the courts at Deerspring Park. During the late summer, staff met with village Public Works staff to discuss drainage issues. The district was told that a net-zero impact would need to be met. The district started working on rough plans on where the courts could go and then started engaging in discussion with the village's planning department because that's the process that has to be followed. After that the district did the pre-filing then the public hearing. The village picks the dates for appearing before the board. The district did the pre-filing with the plan commission who provides guidance and feedback but had little input. There's a step in the process that has to be followed when doing the pre-filing and that's sending out Certified Registered letters to neighbors within 250 feet of the property. This is when the yellow signs for the public hearing went up. The district appeared before the plan commission and the plan was approved with a 5-0 vote in favor of the project. The plan commission has to approve according to criteria they set. It's not a subjective type judgement or analysis. The district supplied the criteria the Plan Commission asked about such as the sound study and a parking analysis. They also made the district ensure them that there was a very strong management plan for the stormwater. The district brought on an engineer to develop the stormwater management plan.

Director Nehila provided information on pickleball. Pickleball started in the 1960's and has grown to be one of the fastest growing sports in the country. The district doesn't believe this is a fad. As park and recreation professionals, staff needs to analyze what is going to stick and what isn't. Go back to skateparks, in the 1960's and 70's people didn't want them because of fear of who would use the skatepark, where they would come from and what types of activities would take place. Today skateparks are a staple element of just about every park system. Another activity that stuck is fitness stations on trails unlike the Pokémon Go trend that didn't stick. There are a lot of variables that staff has to measure in their professional opinion to determine if it's worth pursuing a particular activity. Some of the agencies in the past, during that measurement period, looked at converting tennis courts into pickleball courts because it was an inexpensive method and even before that they started painting lines on tennis courts. There have been lines painted on the tennis courts at Deerspring since 2014, at Briarwood since 2016 and at Mitchell since 2019 when the courts were resurfaced. This was an initial reaction to accommodate pickleball and determine if it was going to stick. But as the popularity grew a lot of agencies changed over tennis courts into pickleball courts. The district looked at this option but there are only 8 outdoor public tennis courts in Deerfield. National standards require a minimum of 9 based on our population.

The district talked about pickleball all of 2019. During this time the district was paying close attention to what was happening with the pickleball court project at Tennaqua. They passed a comprehensive plan through the village during the course of last year. They wanted to expand, do new things, redo their courts

and add pop tennis. During the process they asked to change the plan and change the pop tennis to pickleball. The village approved that because they felt it was in substantial conformance to the plan that was originally passed. But during the village meeting of April 15 there was a quote making a specific reference to distance, “275 feet away from the nearest property” versus the 50 feet the park district was pursuing. The district knew from that process that anything closer than 275 feet may not be acceptable to the village. The Jewett Park pickleball courts were only 50 - 60 feet away from the nearest home.

Director Nehila stated that neighbors’ concerns have been heard. He felt that as far as the noise issue, the sound study provided quantifiable data that the proposed location of the courts will have no impact to the neighbors because of distance. The district is very close to finalizing a stormwater management plan which will actually exceed the requirements to capture stormwater. This is basically going above and beyond where the district has to go to actually try to contribute to a remedy for localized flooding. It’s not going to fix all the flooding but it’s going to capture more water than it has to. The district will be replacing the trees removed. Because of the P-1 zoning the district isn’t subject to the tree ordinance but is exceeding that as well for the caliper and quality of trees. So once again there is an attempt by the district to exceed what is required. Referencing another concern of the loss of green space, there will be a loss of green space wherever pickleball courts are placed. The loss of green space will be discussed later tonight.

After the last couple of board meetings and the feedback that was received at the plan commission there were a lot of different options looked at to determine if pickleball courts could be placed at Deerspring Park. One option is trying to go forward with the current plan and seek village approval. The second option is to proceed with the project as approved and clear an equivalent area of the “lost green space” on the south side of the playground. The third option is to convert the existing tennis courts to 4 pickleball courts. The fourth option is to place 4 pickleball courts in the cleared area south of the playground. Option 3 and 4 were noted that the courts would be closer to adjacent landowners. Other options mentioned but not followed up on for plans were (1) to convert 1 tennis court to 2 pickleball courts and add another 2 pickleball courts adjacent to the existing courts. This would require additional stormwater management; and (2) to place 4 courts within the existing parking lot at Deerspring Park. This would result in a loss of numerous parking spots.

A 3-D rendering of Option 1 was shown. Director Nehila noted that neither windscreen nor sound attenuation material was shown on the pickleball courts as the final treatment is not yet determined. The plan commission submittal included the windscreen as material. The rendering was intended to show the courts in proximity to the pool and tennis courts. Neighbor asked if the rendering was to scale. Director Nehila responded that it is close. Neighbor stated that the rendering is not correct at the intersection of Lions Drive and Manor and shows too much green space. Director Nehila explained that it wasn’t intentional and the aerial view will be more accurate. Director Nehila stated that out of the options previously mentioned, the staff narrowed it down to options that might be more agreeable.

Option 1 shows the courts and the distance to the property lines. This option creates the most distance between the courts and the property lines. This is the option that was approved by the plan commission.

Option 2 shows the courts in the same location as Option 1 with a clearing of the area south of the playground. This area is heavily wooded with buckthorn which is an invasive species that will choke out

the growth of any native species. Part of the district's strategic plan is to eradicate buckthorn throughout the park system. Neighbor asked if there was a tree analysis done and if trees are removed what would the district's plan for flooding be. Director Nehila responded that the district would work with the village to determine that. He also stated that the plan would be to leave the mature healthy trees in place and just remove the buckthorn. The grass will absorb some of the water. The district did have an arborist do an assessment of the area. He determined that at least 30 dead ash trees and 9 dead American elm trees would need to come out at the same time as the buckthorn. The district would still be maintaining about a 100-foot buffer between property lines. Going back to trying to facilitate the loss of green space the thought was to provide an equivalent or more amount of green space in the cleared area.

Option 3 is converting existing tennis courts into pickleball courts. The concern would be the distance. This is getting a lot closer to the homes. This brings up the sound issue and what that might be and is there a way to help attenuate it. There is a product that is called Acousti Fence that's become popular in the pickleball world. It's a rubber product made to absorb noise. The ambient noise at Deerspring was 51 dB, pickleball at 70 feet is 55 dB, at 100 feet is 52dB and at 200 feet is 46dB. At 200 feet pickleball noise is 5dB quieter than the ambient noise recorded. Neighbor asked when the baseline ambient noise was recorded. Director Nehila responded that the noise study was done in the spring. This is the best time to do the study as there are not a lot of leaves on the trees yet so the sound will carry as far as it can go and is going to pick up as high a level of dB as possible.

Option 4 would be to place the pickleball courts in the cleared area to the south of the playground. If we cleared this area, stormwater management would have to be created. This option provides a good distance from some homes but is very close to others. So going back, some of these options are clear that they are not the best. After reviewing the options, staff is recommending Option 2 for consideration. This option addresses the sound issue, stormwater management issue and the loss of open green space. As far as what type of direction the district takes on this now, the district has reviewed conceptual ideas with village staff and looking at Option 1 the next step would be to go to the village board. For Option 2 the district would have to find out if there was any stormwater management required due to removing the buckthorn and dead trees. Options 3 and 4 would require going back to the plan commission regarding sound attenuation since homes are closer than they are in Option 1. There are still things to coordinate based on if the district decides to go another direction.

#### **Matters from the Public relating to Pickleball Project**

President Patinkin opened the floor for comment.

Karin Chiappetta, 1050 Waukegan Road, commented that she would like to see pickleball courts at Jewett Park as this is the main activity center for the district. She commented that there is a lot of traffic at Deerspring in the summer with all the pool users and camps that come there. She sees children using the green space and the sand court and feels it would be a shame to get rid of them. She thanked the board for letting her speak.

Lorrie Levitz, 941 Beverly, stated that she is vehemently opposed to the pickleball courts at Deerspring. She sees the tennis courts being used, people using the green space with their children and dogs, high

school students using the volleyball courts. She stated it would be a shame to ruin their small neighborhood park by putting up a big structure in the middle of it.

Lori Harris, 980 Brand Lane, commented that her house is directly behind Deerspring. She has been a huge park board supporter for many years. This is the first time she has come up against the park district. She is very concerned about the noise. The neighbors don't complain about the pool or Coho starting at 6:00 a.m. or the music playing all day. She feels they are very good neighbors. She commented that the

tennis courts get used all the time and she is worried about traffic. She is also concerned because the pickleball courts would be used very early in the morning and losing open space. She also expressed concern that the woods behind the park are a mess and there are dead trees and the park district isn't taking care of the entire park.

Doug Hewitt, 890 Brand Lane, commented that he is strongly opposed to building pickleball courts at Deerspring but especially to Option 4 that would put the courts 106 feet from his property. There is also extensive ponding on his property as a result of water flow from park land due to loss of vegetation already. He is also concerned about the loss of habitat, particularly for the deer that live there.

Mary Anne D'Onofrio, 330 Margate Terrace, recommending placing the courts by Deerfield Road. This is already open space that is unused.

Bruce Klein, 231 Ramsay Road, commented that his home is the one that is 200 feet directly north of the courts in the original proposal. He is concerned about the noise. He stated that pickleball courts located near homes are generating noise complaints all across the country. He appreciated that the district hired a company to perform a sound study but he has hired his own to analyze the study that was done. A final report will be given to the district when complete. The firm that he hired has offered guidance on site selection and noise abatement for 18 pickleball installations across many states over many years so they are not just sound experts but pickleball sound experts. To summarize a couple of key points, pickleball sound is sudden and brief. The nature that the sounds makes fails to accurately represent the perceived loudness and annoyance of the paddle impact. They are saying the measurement used in the district's study is not the right measurement. The appropriate measure that should be used is called SEL. When you use the measure that the district used it creates inadequate abatement treatment which may lead to ongoing complaints, strained relations with neighbors and so forth. The district's study relies on a flawed measurement technique to capture the true noise contamination. They also pointed out that pickleball courts placed within 350 feet are as likely as not to need some kind of abatement. The proposed pickleball courts will most likely require a sound wall to keep the sound from the paddle impacts to an acceptable level. At a minimum, the report shows that more noise studies need to be done before the district proceeds.

Alan Burack, 853 Beverly Place, read a letter from Brittany and Eric Eisenberg expressing their opposition for the placement of pickleball courts at Deerspring. Concerns include loss of green space and impact on wildlife, noise and flooding impact on neighbors.

Alan expressed that he appreciates the district for looking into other options but it is called Deerspring Park not Deerspring Recreation Center and if the district puts up walls to attenuate the sound then it becomes an industrial park look. He commented that it's really a matter of balance of open green space and wooded space to recreation space which is already out of balance at this park. By far, Deerspring has the smallest amount of green space among all the Deerfield parks. The park is enjoyed by nature lovers, children playing, dog walkers, etc. Removing open green space and wooded areas while adding noise pollution would also have an unknown impact on wildlife and animals. Noise is a nuisance for those enjoying the park and the pool and for the neighbors in the area. The south of the playground option only shifts the noise a little farther south of our residential area. Option 3 takes tennis courts, a long standing sport, and replaces them with something that may not have a longstanding future. Is this in fact the best the district can do here?

Peter Levy, 920 Brand Lane, commented that the discussion isn't Deerspring or not Deerspring it's which option in Deerspring. He expressed concern that the district hasn't fully considered alternative locations. The Deerfield Golf Club is thousands of acres with parking and there should be somewhere there to put pickleball courts. The pro shop and restaurant could benefit from the pickleball courts if users come in to eat or drink and the pro shop sold pickleball items. The district could add money instead of spending money adding drainage, taking down trees and adding trees. He commented that there is a vacant lot right next to the golf course that could be purchased to build the courts. This would make more sense than disrupting all the Deerspring neighbors. He is also concerned about the traffic pickleball players could bring. He stated that he spoke to the noise consultant who stated that this was his first pickleball sound study.

Pam Levy, 920 Brand Lane, commented that the community is not aware that the district is taking away green space. She expressed concern over the water retention area being dangerous since there are children at the pool. She stated that people value the park and other options should be considered. She stated that she is not against pickleball just the location the park district selected.

Jeff Maxwell, 940 Beverly Place, stated that his biggest concern is how the town reacts to people in proximity to things that are changes or actually their lack of reaction. They do not take into account what people say, they complain and get stuck with pickleball anyway. It's about time that people listen to what people in the community say.

Dana Stock, 200 Manor Road, commented that people use their driveway as a turnaround to park to play tennis. They have to put cones in their driveway to protect their children and pets. She is concerned that the pickleball players will add to this problem. She also commented that she is opposed to losing the green space and the impact on wildlife.

David Levitz, 941 Beverly Place, commented that in addition to the loss of green space the courts just don't belong in Deerspring. He commented that it would make more sense to convert a couple of the tennis courts at Mitchell to pickleball courts. He also expressed concern over property values in the neighborhood.

Kevin Stock, 200 Manor Drive, commented that he is concerned about the wildlife in the park. There are several deer there and they would be displaced.

Julie Weill, 859 Westcliff Lane, expressed appreciation to the district for their care and thoughtfulness in trying to figure out how this might work. It's a lot of time and effort. But ultimately, it shows in everything everyone has already said that it really doesn't work. The district has made all of this effort for a sport that can already be played in Deerfield on any tennis court. There is a room full of neighbors who love this park and are against these plans and none of them are saying they need pickleball. She commented that she understands in theory that it's a popular sport but those people weren't at the plan commission meeting and they are not in attendance today.

Jennifer Phillips, 430 Deerfield Road, commented that almost daily she walks her dog in the park and that her family walks or rides their bike to use Deerspring Pool. They also use the tennis courts whenever they can. The addition of pickleball would be a great community sport for active outdoor fun. With all due respect to the neighbors, the comments made by staff about pickleball being a fast-growing sport, something in professional opinion could be an added outdoor fun community exercise. If the planners haven't already thought about permeable sport court surfacing for water drainage they should look into it. In some cases they can be better than grass for drainage. She put together a survey to share with her friends regarding pickleball. She had 100 people sign a petition in favor of pickleball courts. Most of them do not live adjacent to the park so the issues are not concerns for most of them. Whether Deerspring is the right location or not she believes that pickleball would be a great community activity. She also expressed opposition to Option 3 as she is a tennis player and feels there aren't enough tennis courts in town.

Armen Asatryan, 448 Margate Terrace, commented that he is opposed to the project. Where are the people in support of pickleball and how many are there? What is the correct process to vet the project? Why side with the people who are not here?

Lynn Colletti, 193 Ramsay Road, commented that she has always had a lot of flooding on their property. They hired an engineer to determine where the problem was stemming from. They have 16 acres of land that is draining down into her property. They worked with the village, they spent a lot of money and the village spent a lot of money to help alleviate the flooding. 30-inch pipes were installed which alleviated most of the flooding but not all. Her main concern is anything that is going to undo the work that was done and the money spent.

Paul Wiedeman, 193 Ramsay Road, commented that the flooding in the area is severe and any surface of any size is going to contribute to it. It was already mentioned that a number of neighbors as well as the village has spent a lot of money trying to fix the problem. This work can't be undone due to pickleball.

Michael Fine, 960 Meadowbrook, he commented that the main issue is green space. Noise can be dealt with by putting up walls even though they would look like a prison and you can solve the water issue with deep ditches even though they would be dangerous to children coming out of the pool and walking around as well as contributing to the mosquito problem in the summer. What the district can't solve is the green space problem or leaving the trees there. Of all the concerns, these are the 2 that can't be solved. He commented that the 3-D rendering is very inaccurate. What it doesn't show is that green spaces around the

pickleball courts are all ditches not flat grass areas. It also doesn't show the pickleball ball courts with the windscreen. He asked what the cost of the project was including the engineering at Jewett Park that was done before Deerspring. Director Nehila stated that the capital budget will carry \$100,000 and the ADA fund will carry \$25,000. There were no engineering costs specifically done for pickleball at Jewett Park.

Linda Fine, 960 Meadowbrook, stated that there have been a lot of great comments. She feels that Alan's comment of shoehorning this project into Deerspring makes her sad. She stated that it breaks her heart to think of the meadow being destroyed. She commented that she likes the golf course idea. She commented that Deerfield is a small town, does it need to have everything?

Nancee Siegel, 860 Brand Lane, commented that like everyone else she fell in love with the Deerspring area. She is very concerned about the noise level. She suggested the park district put the money into cleaning up the park and making it what the neighbors need and want. She commented that pickleball would ruin the integrity of the park.

Ron Troub, 820 Beverly Place, commented that he has read all of the public record on this topic. The first question is the actual need for the courts. At the plan commission meeting, mention was made of the NRPA standards, the fact that focus groups requested the courts and phone calls were received documenting the need. He thinks that for the board as well as the administration to proceed with such a project that this information should be made available to the public as well so the public gets a feel for the demand of this type of activity. Despite the fact that it's a very popular sport and widely engaged in throughout the country. The second question is relative to the quality and quantity of park land. While clearly this is an active vs. passive park, it is in a suburban setting. And in a community such as Deerfield it's important to have passive as well as open space areas within a park setting. And whether this is utilized as unimproved park land or removing of trees it's his opinion that it would result in a degradation not improvement of the park. As to the quality, the view of the park is going to be primarily fenced, creating an enclosure along the eastern side of the roadway that would be an unimproved sight to deal with. The detention basin needs to be designed to accommodate alternative uses as well unless the intent is to make it a wet basin.

Sara Sortal, 246 Landis Lane, commented that she doesn't understand why the district needs to start with 4 pickleball courts when there are tennis courts that can be repurposed to use for pickleball as well. Most concerning is not just the green space but that it is elevated green space. She is worried that there is not a solution that gives us that. She also stated that she is very much against retention ponds. She hopes that there's an alternative that does address the need for pickleball in the community.

Alisa Klein, 231 Ramsay Road, commented that she appreciates what the board does and understand the board needs to balance the needs of many constituents. She believes that with everyone working together a solution can be found that makes sense. Looking at the 4 options she doesn't see one that makes sense. Options 1 and 2 leave the courts where originally proposed surrounded by 10 feet high fencing still creates an eyesore and a noise nuisance to neighbors and pool and park visitors The Deerfield noise code states that no person shall make any loud, raucous, jarring noise which annoys, disturbs, endangers the comfort or repose of persons within the area of audibility. Option 3 has pickleball replacing tennis courts which doesn't fix the eyesore problem as the sound barrier on the fencing would make it stand out like a



prison wall. The sound of pickleball and the players is very different from that of tennis. The sound of tennis is much less unpleasant. By contrast the frequent popping sound of a plastic ball on a wooden paddle and the cheering of 16 players in close proximity to each other would be a noise nuisance. Option 4 moving the courts south is better for her personally, but the courts would be close to other homes creating a noise nuisance for them. She stated that she couldn't feel good about telling the district to put the courts in someone else's backyard. Deerfield parks in the best of circumstances should help us build community not tear it apart. The pro pickleball petition that is being circulated is signed by many that do not live close to the park and they are not considering how the courts will impact property values and quality of life for those that do. There must be other parks where 2 or 4 pickleball courts could be placed without having such an impact on the park like carving out 3 spots for the courts in the built out heavily paved Deerspring. There than there must be other parks where the courts could be fairly accommodated and maybe even welcome.

There being no additional comments, the Public Comment was closed and discussion open to the board.

**Board Discussion – Pickleball Project**

Treasurer Cohen explained that the golf course is in Riverwoods and it would be extremely difficult to pursue placing courts there. President Patinkin commented that he is willing to investigate. Vice-President Caron commented that she reviewed the acreage of all the parks and Deerspring is one of the largest and doesn't have any ballfields. In her opinion the wooded area is green space and Deerspring is mostly green space. The board and staff know that they always face this issue when trying to put anything in a park. Every park is in a neighborhood and has neighbors. The neighbors are always concerned. The board always tries to take their concerns into account. The board's responsibility is to balance the needs of the park district and the neighborhood and the board is trying to do that. She commented that Option 2 is a decent compromise. If the park district's plan is to remove buckthorn anyway it can be done sooner than later and an open green space can be created. Vice-President Caron asked staff to explain detention vs. retention. Staff responded that detention does not hold water. Detention tries to disperse the water as soon as possible. The parks that have detention areas have not had any issues with mosquitos or other issues. Treasurer Cohen stated that he is not in favor of Option 4. He stated that it is his understanding is that the engineers are trying to give additional water detention which would benefit the neighbors that flood. Option 1 or Option 2 would improve the water flow and the water detention in that area. The village is attempting to do this as well by hiring an outside engineer to work with our engineer. It's very possible that putting the courts in may actually alleviate some the flooding at the north end of Deerspring Park. Option 1 does help the water flow at the north end of the park. Option 2, increasing the green space in the south end of the park as well as some water detention in that area will further reduce and help the flooding. Commissioner Antokal stated that he supports Option 2. He commented that he is very saddened that there is a traffic problem in someone's driveway. He said that many people use Lions Drive as a road but it is really just the entrance to the park. The park district has done traffic studies and in the middle of winter when the park isn't being used by patrons there are somewhere between 500-600 cars per day going through there. Some of them not at a reasonable speed. Commissioner Lapin stated that he wasn't a fan of Option 4 until he saw a report that said there are over 1,000 buckthorn trees in that area. He commented that he isn't a big fan of taking down trees, but the buckthorn chokes out all of the natural trees that would be there. Buckthorn is extremely difficult to get rid of, the roots are deep and it keeps coming back. Option 4 would eradicate the buckthorn and eliminate the chance that it may come back by

placing the courts there. Vice-President Caron commented that Option 4 is too close to the homes. Treasurer Cohen asked why the district can't do both, eradicate the buckthorn and put the courts where the majority of the board feels it should be? Commissioner Lapin stated that the district hires professionals that do a great job. Staff would not choose an activity or location for an activity without doing their due diligence. President Patinkin commented that he was originally for Option 1 but understands the concern about the loss of green space. Option 2 provides a solution for those that are concerned about the green space. He also commented that he would like staff to at least contact the Village of Riverwoods and investigate the golf course option.

Vice-President Caron stated that an official decision couldn't be made because this is a workshop meeting. The park district is scheduled to go to the village board on March 16. She asked Director Nehila if Option 2 is selected, the district just needs to let the village know. Director Nehila responded that he will have to confirm the implication of the buckthorn removal as far as an impact on drainage and water detention. She asked if the district's expectation would be to be at the village meeting on March 16. Director Nehila responded that the expectation would be to be at that meeting. President Patinkin directed Director Nehila to look at Mary Anne D'Onofrio's proposal and determine the distance to the closest home. Vice-President Caron stated that she would like to see the district get village trustee input as this process has already been delayed. At this point the village trustees have only heard from the neighbors and she would like them to hear the park district's presentation.

**Draft – Employee Policies and Procedures Manual Updates**

Commissioners reviewed the recommended changes to the Employee Policies and Procedures Manual Updates. The manual will be brought to the February 20, 2020 board meeting for approval.

**Draft – Full-Time Employee Policies Supplement Manual Updates**

Commissioners reviewed the recommended changes to the Full-Time Employee Policies Supplement Updates. The manual will be brought to the February 20, 2020 board meeting for approval.

**NSSRA Building Renovation and Member Contribution Update**

NSSRA has purchased their new "home" in Highland Park for \$3.7 million. The next step is to renovate in phases. Phase 1 is planned to include the majority of space within the building excluding the sanctuary. This construction is anticipated to cost \$4.1 million.

A significant portion of the renovation cost, \$2 million, is anticipated to come from the NSSRA foundation. To date, they are near \$1.8 million of total contributions and pledges. The remaining portion is to be partner funded. The park district's share of the cost is projected to be \$281,500. The renovation was originally scheduled to start in February/March 2020. Because NSSRA has submitted a PARC grant to IDNR for up to \$2.5 million in reimbursable assistance, the renovation has been delayed until notice about the PARC grant is received. The notice is anticipated for late summer/early fall. In any case, the project renovation will begin sometime this year.

As mentioned at a Finance Committee meeting, staff was exploring options to cover the district's contribution of \$281,500. This sum would be "due" this year. The district has budgeted \$60,000 of that expense in the Special Recreation Fund in 2020. This was done in the pursuit of options that could permit

the district to seek alternative funding options with a 5 year “payback.” Other partners are pursuing a similar option. Some are paying in full over the course of the year.

Staff met with a few banks to examine possible avenues of borrowing up to the \$281,500 with an extended payback. For a 2-year promissory note the net additional cost would be \$11,000. Staff could do an inter-fund transfer and save the \$11,000 if the board is agreeable to that option. Staff will further explore the inter-fund transfer with legal counsel and the finance department.

**Other Matters**

**Legislative Breakfast**

The Legislative Breakfast is scheduled for Friday, February 21, 2020.

**D109 Caruso Auditorium and Intergovernmental Agreement**

D109 will be appearing before the village plan commission for the Caruso Auditorium Renovation project. Also, the school board will be reviewing our Intergovernmental Agreement for the 25 year usage. Director Nehila will attend the plan commission meeting to show support for the project.


Motion made by Treasurer Cohen, seconded by Vice-President Caron, to adjourn the Workshop Meeting at 9:58 p.m. Voice vote as follows:

AYES:            Patinkin, Caron, Antokal, Lapin, Cohen (5)

NAYS:            None (0)

Motion passed in a voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,



Jeff Nehila, Secretary