

MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS **June 18, 2020**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners was called to order by President Patinkin at 7:30 p.m. via remote access by Zoom video. 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 present were Jeff Nehila, Secretary/Executive Director; Jeff Harvey, Laura McCarty, Jay Zahn, Tony Korzyniewski, Jason Mannina, Sherry Prause, staff members; Monika Adamski, Amen & Lauterbach`.

President Patinkin read a comment related to the Open Meetings Act. He also stated that due to the pressing items on the agenda Public Comment will be limited to 30 minutes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Several public comments via email regarding renaming Mitchell Park were received prior to the meeting. Director Nehila read emails from Sari Klein, Amy Roost, Hazel Hazzog, Evan Kuehn, Alan Baruch, Jennie Stadelmann, Kate Uttech, Rachel Meltzer, Craig Keller, Emma Swidler and Benjy Sachs will be attached and made a part of the minutes of this meeting.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Vice-President Caron, seconded by Commissioner Lapin, to approve the minutes of the May 21, 2020 Regular Board Meeting and the June 4, 2020 Workshop Meeting. Roll call vote as follows:

AYES: Caron, Lapin, Antokal, Cohen, Patinkin (5)
NAYS: None (0)
Motion passed in a roll call vote.

FINANCE REPORT

Approval of Disbursements

Motion made by Treasurer Cohen, seconded by Commissioner Antokal, to approve the Voucher Listing dated June 18, 2020 in the amount of \$1,293,538.49 which includes \$64.98 of travel and training expenses. (Copy attached and made a part of these minutes.)

Discussion followed:

Treasurer Cohen asked if the professional sanitation of park district facilities was going to continue. Director Nehila responded that the district wanted to have the facilities professionally sanitized before staff returned. With the stringent cleaning and sanitizing protocol measures in place there may be no need to have the professional sanitization done again.

Treasurer Cohen asked if the NSSRA member contribution was done quarterly. Director Nehila responded that the district's member contribution to NSSRA is done bi-annually.

Commissioner Lapin asked why the district is paying Lake County twice for drainage fees. Director Nehila responded that the district pays multiple drainage fees to Lake County.

After discussion, roll call vote as follows:

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

NAYS: None (0)

Motion passed in a roll call vote.

OLD BUSINESS

Blood Drive

Commissioner Antokal thanked the park district for hosting the blood drive on June 7 and staff for all their efforts in coordinating this event. The event was very successful, and 53 pints of blood were drawn.

NEW BUSINESS

Mitchell Pool Renaming Discussion

President Patinkin opened the discussion by reading verbatim from the August 20, 2015 regular board meeting to provide a brief history of previous Mitchell Park Renaming discussions. (Copy attached and made a part of these minutes.

In 2019, for the 60-year anniversary of the Deerfield integration issue, the Deerfield Public Library held a program for the community and created and published a timeline of events, The Fight to Integrate Deerfield - A 60-Year Reflection. After the Park Board discussed the library's program and timeline, Director Nehila, at the Park Board's request, spent long hours researching the district's archives, including board meeting minutes and the chronological history of the district and created a PowerPoint presentation which supplemented the library's timeline to include missing relevant information. A special meeting was scheduled and promoted and not one person from the public attended.

The recent tragic events throughout our country have again served as an impetus to Alec Lopata to revisit his proposal to the Park Board.

President Patinkin explained the rules of the meeting.

Motion to Change the Name Mitchell Park

Motion made by Commissioner Lapin, seconded by Commissioner Antokal, to form a representative Citizens Advisory Committee tasked with the following:

- To recommend a new name for Mitchell Park
- To propose other ways to honor James Mitchell
- To develop educational proposals to accurately teach the history of this period in collaboration with Deerfield Historical Society, Deerfield Public Library, Village of Deerfield, School District #109 and High School District #113

This Citizens Advisory Committee is charged with reporting back to the Park Board by the September 17, 2020 Park Board Meeting.

Discussion followed:

Commissioner Lapin describe on how he came to make the decision to make this motion. He first heard of the history of how Mitchell Park was developed when he first moved to Deerfield in 1983. Later he read *But Not Next Door* and was dismayed by the unfairness that was attributed to the people of Deerfield and to the park district. He learned through his career to confirm things that he read before jumping to conclusions. He

searched for other documentations of that era and found a transcript of the U.S. District Court lawsuit of Progress Development Corporation vs. Mitchell et. al. In those proceedings, after weighing arguments from both sides the court, concluded that James Mitchell and the Park Board had not acted on the basis of race but rather had been planning to purchase the property as part of a larger parks plan since at least May 1959, months before the plans for mixed race housing were revealed. A detailed reading of the Park Board minutes from that time supports this. There was continual discussion of purchasing sufficient parkland at a time when the supply was disappearing quickly at the hands of massive housing developments. There was never any mention of race in those meetings. The park district's eventual ability to raise the money to buy those properties seems to be successful only due to the community's desire to put a stop to the mixed-race housing plan. At worst James Mitchell was an opportunist. He was laser focused on giving the people of Deerfield a park district that would improve the qualities of their lives. The successful referendum that provided enough money to purchase the Floral Park and Pear Tree subdivisions also led to the purchase of South Park, Shepard Park and Deerspring Park. Commissioner Lapin stated that he understands the desire to disassociate this particular park with the name of the person who was responsible for purchasing it. As such, he supports a plan to change the name of Mitchell Park at this time but only on the condition that we take steps to see that James Mitchell's name is properly honored. The parks that we enjoy today are largely a result of his efforts.

Commissioner Antokal stated that several of the points he would like to make have already been stated and he will not be redundant, but he would like to point out a couple of things. Historically, we honor role models for what they have done at that specific point in time. Sometimes we change the names or locations of parks and building because of a finding later on that it may make more sense for it to be changed. Usually things are named for role models or significant events that happened at that time. Right now, what's going on in the south with the naming and renaming of military bases, the last thing he thought about on the military base in the late 1960's and early 1970's was who it was named after. The focus was on training and how we were going to serve the county. Those that have been on those bases, Fort Chaffee named for a Confederate Officer, Fort Polk named for a Confederate General and Fort Leonard Wood named for a more recent General. He stated he understands, today, we want to revise what we've done. Commissioner Antokal commented that being a history major and studying history there has been a tendency over the years for revisionist history to come in and try to replace what actually happened. He commented that Commissioner Lapin stated quite succinctly that some of the things that were brought up in some of the previous narratives were not as truthful and accurate as they could have been. He thinks Commissioner Lapin and President Patinkin have helped to explain and clear up some of that. He stated that our nation's capital, Washington D.C. is named after our first President who was a slave holder. The 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 7th Presidents of our country were all slave holders and have cities, buildings, parks, schools all named for them and we will not be changing those in the future. But to get to the point, Commissioner Antokal believes now is the right time to look at the potential name change of Mitchell Park and wholly supports the motion. The reason he seconded the motion to create a Citizens Advisory Committee and get as much information as possible is so a good decision can be made in the next step in potentially renaming Mitchell Park.

Treasurer Cohen stated that racism existed 100's of years ago. Racism existed back in 1959 and in the 1960's and it exists today. It's wrong! We cannot change the history of our country. Like what happened during the civil war, before and after the civil war. Slave holders, they owned slaves. We can't change the history. He doesn't believe Mitchell Park is a symbol of racism but as Bob Dylan said in his famous song, *The Times They Are a- Changin'*. It should have been changing for many, many years. It should have been changed a long time ago. Courts have tried to change it, society has tried to change it, and has been relatively unsuccessful. There are a lot of reasons for that. Treasurer Cohen stated that he initially did not support the change of the name of Mitchell Park but does now but maybe not for the reasons 100's of emails suggests.

Mitchell Park is not a symbol to our community, or to the world, of lack of integration. There's no doubt that in Deerfield our constituents many years ago acted very strongly to make sure that people of color, any color, could not come into Deerfield. And that should have changed, and it should change now. He stated that he agrees a committee should be formed. He has seen a lot of proposals for names. He isn't sure how you name a park for one person. There are so many people that have been influential in the fight for the Civil Rights Movement, for integration, for other issues. He's just not sure how you name it for one person or one group. When the committee is formed, they should take into account the fact that if the park is going to be renamed it should reflect the whole era of what has happened and what can happen in the future. Not just focus on someone who lived in Deerfield in the past or whose deeds may have happened in Deerfield or around the country. If this park is going to be a symbol for a lack of integration in Deerfield and around the country name it something suitable so people will think about it. He agrees there should be educational signage at the park explaining the events. However, James Mitchell is not the villain, unfortunately the times, the late 1950's, they are the villain here. Obviously based on the referendum and the citizen committees that were formed, racism existed and segregation existed. The developer tried and he was shot down by the village not the park district. No doubt Mr. Mitchell and the Park Board acquired the land for 5 or 6 parcels by money raised by a referendum. But was that an act of racism by the members of the board, he highly doubts it. But as Commissioner Lapin stated, "they took advantage of a situation." Perhaps that opportunity should not have existed. But if the housing development would not have been shut down those two parcels of land would never have been available for the park district to acquire. He stated that he supports the motion by Commissioner Lapin. He hopes the committee takes some of his comments into account. They should not make Mr. Mitchell the villain and there should be some way to honor Mr. Mitchell. There is no evidence he was a racist. One idea would be to keep Mitchell Pool named for him. Mr. Mitchell and the Park Board did create many parks. He stated that initially he was not in favor but after talking with board members and reading all the emails, he does agree that Mitchell Park should be renamed. Treasurer Cohen wanted to confirm that the discussion to rename includes just the park not the pool. President Patinkin stated that was correct.

Vice-President Caron commented that she has been thinking about this issue for a very long time and struggling with it. One comment recently stated to her was that this issue doesn't have anything to do with current Park Board members and there is no reason to defend the Park Board of 1959. She does not believe that is true. We all take seriously our positions to act in the interest of the park district and there's every reason to believe the members of that park board at that time did also. The history of the park district provides background and context for many issues since then. All park board members are aware of the park district history and how Mitchell Park was purchased. Including that there was a lawsuit that was decided in favor of the park district. Our current agreements with school district 109 are directly evolved from the early year of the park district and their cooperation with the school district to acquire land for parks and schools. When the library held their panel discussion last year, and the subject of renaming Mitchell Park came up again, we all realized that we knew some of the history but didn't know all the details. We all have read the lawsuit and its ruling. Director Nehila spent a huge amount of time finding and reading the park district minutes from before, during and after the situation in 1959. The park district held a special meeting, took the subject seriously and discussed it thoroughly. We can all agree that the residents of Deerfield did not act honorably at that time. However, there is ample evidence that park district acted within their rights and responsibilities to acquire the property. The fact that their intentions to purchase and develop six parcels of land were carried out, indicates that the referendum and condemnation of the Floral Park development were not a sham intended only to prevent the development. When the park was named for James Mitchell in 1969, she sincerely believes it was because of his leadership for all the years he was on the board. His vision for the Deerfield Park District became a reality. As comments about fondness and happy memories of Deerfield Parks were expressed by many of the emails we received in the last couple of weeks, she doesn't agree that James Michell was the person the main person responsible for the behavior of the majority of the town and

that his name is the symbol of the opposition to integration. She is concerned we are currently creating that impression. She honestly doesn't think you can take away that name without damaging the reputation of James Mitchell and it is not fair to make him the scapegoat for the entire community. She doesn't agree that it is okay to hurt his family to make the rest of us feel better by doing something to acknowledge our collective history. She can't help comparing the current situation to the situation in 1959. There is a current movement in the country. People in Deerfield have just found out something upsetting in their town and want to do something about it. Small groups meet and try to find a solution. The word keeps spreading, letters are sent and the majority demands action. Incorrect information gets repeated and becomes fact. The press is alerted. Opposing voices are drowned out. The context of 1959 was integration. Chicago and the Chicago area were deeply segregated. It was becoming known that although the north had been against slavery, segregation was prevalent. Deerfield became national news. Not because it was the only racist community in a diverse area but because it represented what was happening in the Chicago area and across the country. The context today is the continuing national fight for full civil rights for everyone. The fact that so many of us want to face our past and show that we are an inclusive community is evidence that Deerfield has changed. She believes this should be a learning experience and as a community we should do something to further the education about our past. She is not sure what that action should be but there have been some excellent suggestions in the many emails received. And it should involve a committee or task force including all of the people suggested in the motion. However, she is not in favor of this motion because it presumes that the name of the park will be changed. She would prefer that we not put the cart before the horse and have the same committee but have their first task be to decide if the name should be changed or not, and come up with additional alternative possibilities of how the whole community can change the reputation of Deerfield. She just doesn't think changing the name of Mitchell Park is the right solution.

Treasurer Cohen asked Commissioner Lapin if his motion only included Mitchell Park and Mitchell Pool was silent. Commissioner Lapin responded that his motion only included Mitchell Park.

President Patinkin stated that he was saddened and outraged by the heinous and senseless murders of black human beings that have occurred in recent weeks in our country. But he did not need these events to become woke to this systemic discrimination, racial inequality and social injustice that have existed in and permeated our "land of the free" from the moment of its inception. With a Civil War that resulted in amendments to the constitution abolishing slavery and creating "equal protection under the law" through the following federal legislation creating "equal rights under the law." Through the Civil Rights Movement and the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. whose dream has yet to come to fruition. On multiple occasions, President Patinkin and his wife have made pilgrimage to Memphis, Tennessee to the Lorraine Motel where Dr. King was assassinated. And where now stands what they both feel and believe is one of the greatest and most educational museums in the country, the Civil Rights Museum. We have espoused its virtues, planned and taken, with both family and friends, trips and encouraged countless friends and neighbors to immerse themselves in this museum, the tragic history of the black people and man's inhumanity against man. While at the same time experiencing the glimmer of hope and optimism arising from those who peacefully sat down on a bus or at a lunch counter, where unjust laws passed by bigoted people said they could not. Or those others who sat-in, stood-up, marched, rode freedom buses or spoke up and took action for what should be right in the world and against what is wrong. He was similarly encouraged and optimistic by the fact that through last weekend he received just under 400 emails mostly from young people who for the most part urged, encouraged, requested or demanded the righting of a wrong that occurred in the village 61 years ago. A small but important step in keeping Dr. King's dream alive. Did a wrong occur in the Village of Deerfield 61 years ago? Unequivocally! Yes, it did. A 2 to 1 majority of Deerfield residents and voters passed a referendum which provided funding for the acquisition of park and school land, that served to defeat a developer and his development that would have welcomed both black and white buyers into our community.

But let's go back to my optimism about receiving those approximately 400 emails, mostly from young people. The fact that a new generation is stepping up and voicing its opinion that inequality and injustice will not be tolerated is encouraging and should not be quashed. Rather we should empower this generation to speak up, kneel down and stand up and be counted in moving our own community and our entire country to truly establish justice and promote the general welfare for all the people regardless of race, religion or lack thereof, gender, sexuality, national origin, age, disability or any other characteristics. Okay so I was optimistic about approximately 400 emails taking a stand on righting a wrong. Was my opinion dampened by the fact that approximately 50% of them, 195 at that time, were simple and to the point and actually followed the template suggested by Alec Lopata on his Facebook page, "My name is blank and I am a resident of Deerfield. I strongly support changing the name of Mitchell Park. We should not continue to have a symbol of our village's refusal to integrate." The fact that 50% of these emails veered the template did not surprise me nor did it dampen my optimism. For the most part the template is painted with a broad brush and doesn't constitute an express personal attack. But as he continued the review of the emails which were compiled, batched and forwarded to each board member by Director Nehila, who had much bigger things to do in dealing with the COVID crisis and keeping our park district running, the juxtaposition of 2 of the emails in one of those batches really struck him. Both emails were short and direct and stood out because they didn't follow the template. One said, "I'm writing in support of renaming Mitchell Park due to the history of racism and segregation involved in creating the park." The second said, "I am a Deerfield resident and I strongly believe Mitchell Park should be renamed. We should not honor someone with such a racist history." President Patinkin asked himself what information did the author of that email have regarding James Mitchell's racist history? He implores you to please forward it to him so he may be educated. Though his optimism was not previously dampened, it soon was and he was terribly saddened and disappointed that there were 46 more emails of the initial 400 that contained the same express, blatant and vicious personal attacks on another human being who he did not personally know and he can say with a fairly confident degree of certainty that the author of each of those 47 emails did not know James Mitchell personally. These emails referred to James Mitchell as "someone who led the fight of our community's refusal to integrate," "someone who personally played a heavy role in preventing the development, a proponent of segregation, someone who supported segregation, a beacon of segregation, someone who blatantly encouraged segregation and racism, a man who perpetuated racism, a man of bigotry and hatred, a racist individual, a racist, someone with a racist history, someone whose history appalls me, someone who promoted discrimination in Deerfield, someone whose racist behavior kept low income housing out of Deerfield, a man who fought to keep low income housing out of Deerfield. Those last two comments are so sad because if the two authors would have taken the time to fully educate themselves on the topic, they would have learned the developers plan for the Floral Park and Pear Tree Developments made no provision for low income housing, but reserved 10-12 homes out of 51 homes for Negro or non-Caucasian families. Did the authors of the emails just assume that because they were set aside for "Negros or non-Caucasians" that it was low income housing? Just to be clear and at the risk of being labeled politically incorrect, at that time the developer and the country at large, including Dr. King, referred to black people as Negros. Was James C. Mitchell any or all of these things referred to in the 47 emails? Based on the research he has done to date, and based on the decision, findings and published opinion of the US Federal District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, he personally does not believe so. If someone can provide firsthand credible evidence to the contrary, and show him his belief is wrong, he will be the first to recite "I'm wrong, your right, I'm sorry." But please provide him with that evidence. What does he believe about James Mitchell? He believes he's was a visionary. In his years of service on the park board from 1955-1969, his vision, determination, persistence and dedication shaped the village, its parks and schools. During his tenure on the board the following properties were procured, agreements entered into and programs and events created:

- 1957 – The community passed a bond issue for the land acquisitions of Woodland Park and Wilmot Elementary School

- 1958 – The first land swaps were made with School District #110 for Woodland Park and a joint usage agreement entered with School District #109 for use of the future Walden School site. Then, despite the request of citizens to purchase Briargate Country Club, which is now Briarwood Country Club, James Mitchell stated that two new schools would be needed within the next year and a half and opposed the purchase in order to provide a balanced park program to serve the entire district.
- 1959 – The referendum that approved and funded the purchase of Floral Park and Pear Tree subdivisions, which became the future Mitchell and Jaycee Parks, also funded the purchase of the Franken Brothers Nursery property, which was to become the Shepard Junior High site, the Deerspring Park site, a portion of the Jardine property, which is now the South Park site and the old high school site. Earlier that same year, two referenda to acquire additional parkland had failed but it had been attempted.
- 1960 – The park district, with the village, cooperatively, purchased the land for a joint maintenance garage.
- 1961 – The Shepard property was sold to School District #109 and a joint usage policy was developed for that property and the future Cadwell School site. Also in 1961, James Mitchell and the park district planned for the foot bridge over the drainage ditch, which is the West Fork of the North Branch of the Chicago access, to allow access to Shepard School from the houses to the west. Also in 1961, James Mitchell suggested the 4th of July Family Days program.
- 1962 – The community passed a referendum to build a pool at Mitchell Park, which wasn't Mitchell Park at the time.
- Somewhere at or prior to 1963 – land was donated that became Keller Park.
- 1963 – The park district enhanced the partnership with Deerfield Boys Baseball, which is the forerunner of Deerfield Youth Baseball and Softball Association. In 1963, the park district explored the acquisition of the Trail Tree site for conservation and nature study.
- 1964 – That suggestion to form the Family Days program came to fruition and the first Family Days celebration occurred at Jewett Park.
- 1965 – The park district received the deed to land which would become the site of the future Briarwood Park. That same year the district officially became the sponsor of the senior citizens program. That same year, the district agreed to purchase a portion of the Clavey property which would become the future Wilmot/Caruso Junior High School site. That same year, the district entered into an agreement with the Presbyterian Church for use of space at the church for a nursery school program, which is the forerunner of our current preschool program. That same year, the district installed playground equipment at Briarwood, Jaycee and Keller Parks.
- 1966 – The district and village approved a joint reservoir project at Mitchell Park where tennis courts were built on top of the reservoir. The same year, the decision to purchase a portion of Clavey proceeded and 24 acres were acquired and then sold to School District #110. Additionally, 3 acres adjacent to the park site located on Greenbriar Drive were acquired. That same year, the district partnered with Trinity College on a student/work program. Also in 1966, the park board appointed a committee to look into the feasibility of the Brickyards property as a recreation area.
- 1967 - The park board and the village worked together to acquire the Brickyards property. The same year, the Park Board initiated discussions on a community center which became what is now the Jewett Park Community Center and is home to our park district.
- 1968 – After discussions with the village, the community passed a referendum on the purchase of the Brickyards property.

President Patinkin gave a run-down of what James Mitchell was responsible for: Woodland Park, Wilmot Park, Walden Park, Mitchell Park, Jaycee Park, Shepard Park, Deerspring Park, South Park, the Joint Maintenance facility at the time, Keller Park, Trail Tree Nature Preserve, Briarwood Park, Clavey Park and Brickyards Park. James Mitchell and his board are also responsible for what everyone in this village

celebrates through Family Days, through Deerfield Youth Baseball and Softball Association, through the preschool, through the senior programming and for the pools that exist. So based on the foregoing, President Patinkin believes James Mitchell was a visionary. Perhaps he was also an opportunist who was so intent on acquiring property for the future of our community that he acquiesced in aligning himself with those that had ulterior motives for acquiring the property and whose bigotry and racism cannot and should not be denied. So he believes James Mitchell was a visionary and he may have been an opportunist. But what he now believes is that James Mitchell become a scapegoat. The definition of a scapegoat is a person who is blamed for the wrongdoing, mistakes or faults of others especially for reasons of expediency. Leviticus 16:7-10 provides the biblical origin of this term, it's a goat sent into the wilderness after the Jewish High Priest have laid the sins of the people upon it. There is no question in his mind that we need to educate our community about the it's past and take the steps to correct it. But we also need to educate members of our community about scapegoating and the irresponsibility of following the crowd without independently researching and ascertaining the facts. Just as he urges everyone to visit and learn from the Civil Rights Museum, he also urges everyone to take a short trip south on the Edens to the Illinois Holocaust Museum, in order to learn the dangers and consequences of scapegoating and going along with the crowd without independently researching and ascertaining all of the facts. The Holocaust Museum teaches us that we should not be bystanders but should be upstanders. He believes Alec got it after his meeting with the park board 5 years ago. In fact, his current Facebook page and posts recognize our collective concern 5-years ago. He now indicates that we should not remove James C. Mitchell name with any intent of personal disrespect towards James C. Mitchell or his family. Of the approximate 400 emails that I received when I first started writing this, which are now way in excess 600, only 2 at that time, acknowledged that Mr. Mitchell's role is unclear and 11 acknowledged in one way or the other that in no way is their support of the effort to rename the park is in no way intended to besmirch James Mitchell or his family. But what about those 47 emails and the significant number of people who have subsequently sent emails who have absolutely no qualms of disparaging and impugning the name, character and legacy of another human being. He cannot be a bystander on this matter. Someone has to stand up for James Mitchell who is not here to defend himself. If he may adopt a quote that appeared in Steve Sadin's Deerfield Review article last year from a respected member of the Deerfield community's clergy. "Mitchell should be remembered for his entire body of work which included procuring land for most of the parks the village has today as well as the land for many of its schools. It wasn't he, but the majority of Deerfield voters who voted 2 to 1 that cold December of 1959, who bear the weight of what happened then. That vote, not any one man, kept away a developer that would have welcomed both black and white homebuyers into our community." In his years of community and public service if he has learned anything it's in order to move forward there has to be compromise. So for the sake of compromise, he will agree to the removal of James Mitchell's name from this particular park with the understanding that he is not the biblical goat set into the wilderness after the High Priest had symbolically laid the sins of the people on it. The majority of Deerfield voters bear the weight of what happened in 1959, not any one man and especially not James Mitchell. Let us work together to correct this community mistake but let us not cast James Mitchell into the wilderness. He must be appropriately recognized for all the good that he did for the community. Let us educate our community at all levels about racism, inequality and injustice and our community's role in perpetuating it. But let us also educate everyone on scapegoating and the need to research and educate one's self and get the facts on all aspects and sides of an issue instead of what is presented in one book or on one post. President Patinkin commented that he looks forward to working with Alec and representatives of the other bodies politic within the village including one representative from the Village Board, Park District Board, West Deerfield Township, SD #109, SD #113, Library Board or staff member as well as Deerfield Historical Society, DHS Social Studies Dept., Gale Gand, Graham Ambrose, (a former Deerfield resident whose undergraduate thesis at Yale University addressed the issues of 1959), and selected residents of the community at large in acknowledging and owning our village's shameful past and establishing our future as an educated and inclusive community.

Treasurer Cohen asked if we were putting the cart before the horse then? If we want the committee to be formed in order to educate people and be educated to decide whether or not the park should be renamed, should we be voting on this issue tonight until we know the results of the committee? President Patinkin responded that his compromise is acknowledging the park should be renamed. President Patinkin would like Commissioner Lapin's motion to be expanded to include those other representatives based on conversations with Alec Lopata.

After discussion motion amended as follows, motion made by Commissioner Lapin, seconded by Commissioner Antokal, to form a representative Citizens Advisory Committee tasked with the following:

- To recommend a new name for Mitchell Park
- To propose other ways to honor James Mitchell
- To develop educational proposals to accurately teach the history of this period in collaboration with Deerfield Historical Society, Deerfield Public Library, Village of Deerfield, West Deerfield Township, School District #109, High School District #113, High School District #113 Social Studies Dept., Gale Gand, Graham Ambrose and members of the community. Roll call as follows:

AYES: Lapin, Antokal, Cohen*, Patinkin (4)

NAYS: Caron (1)

Motion passed in a roll call vote.

*Treasurer Cohen voted yes but wants to make clear the renaming of Mitchel Pool is not included.

President Patinkin directed Director Nehila to poll the board for a suitable date to hold a Special Meeting to focus on the development of a committee.

Pay Request #6 for Jewett Park Renovation Project

Motion made by Commissioner Antokal, seconded by Commissioner Lapin, to approve Pay Request #6 for the Jewett Park Phase 1 Renovation project from Norcon, Inc. in the amount of \$81,928.54. (Copy attached and made a part of these minutes.) Roll call vote as follows:

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

NAYS: None (0)

Motion passed in a roll call vote.

Brickyards Park Playground Renovation Project Pay Request #1

Motion made by Commissioner Lapin, seconded by Vice-President Caron, to approve Payment Request #1 for a progress payment for the work completed on the Brickyards Park Playground Renovation Project in the amount of \$94,042.04 as submitted by D & J Landscaping, Inc.. (Copy attached and made a part of these minutes). Roll call vote as follows:

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

NAYS: None (0)

Motion passed in a roll call vote.

Fiscal Year 2019 Audit Report

Motion made by Treasurer Cohen, seconded by Commissioner Antokal, to accept and place on file the Annual Financial Report prepared by Lauterbach & Amen, independent accountants, for the fiscal year 2019. (Copy attached and made a part of these minutes).

Monika Adamski from Amen & Lauterbach was present via Zoom video to review the Fiscal Year 2019 Audit Report. The district received the highest opinion possible. She thanked the Finance Dept. for their preparedness and high level of communication.

Roll call vote as follows:

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

NAYS: None (5)

Motion passed in a roll call vote.

DYBSA Request to Donate Statue

Motion made by Commissioner Antokal, seconded by Treasurer Cohen, to authorize the Executive Director to coordinate the donation of a statue honoring Andi and Phil Rosenthal for installation at Jewett Park with the Deerfield Youth Baseball and Softball Association as per the June 2, 2020 DYBSA written proposal. (Copy attached and made a part of these minutes). Roll call vote as follows:

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

NAYS: None (0)

Motion passed in a roll call vote.

COVID-19 Operations Update

Director Nehila provided a brief summary of where the district is at within the Restore Illinois Phase 3 allowance.

Tennis – We have installed all nets at all tennis courts within park district amenities. We have extended reservation times as well for earlier and later play. The high school is continuing to offer courts for public use. This was one of our first “return to normal” experiences with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Basketball – We removed all wood blocks which prohibit using the backboard and rims last week. Signage is posted reminding persons to comply with distancing and gathering numbers. This is yet another “return to normal.”

Dog Park – The dog park is also now open. Signage reminding people of distancing and maximum use numbers are posted. Yet another “return to normal.”

Golf – Staff has done a tremendous job transitioning, adapting and adjusting to Phase 3 allowances. Staff reported that the clubhouse doors to the deck can be opened with tables placed near the door. This will allow for indoor dining. Only seated and dining guests will be able to use the indoor restrooms. Golfers will continue to use the driving range restrooms. Staff is excited to get more people inside the building.

Summer Camp – On track to begin camp on July 6. Staff reported that camps have about 600 children registered.

Aquatics – As mentioned at the June 4 workshop, we have shifted our focus on opening Mitchell Pool only this year. Staff training will began June 15. Parks staff will be preparing the pool for training use the last week of June. Staff reported that we have a lot of guards and continue to hire.

Interestingly, we have been waiting for guidelines for operations of pools from the state for quite some time. There was inconsistency on what agency would provide those guidelines – IDPH or DCEO. On Friday night, June 5, we received IDPH guidelines for pool operations. They were for Phase 3! In any case, staff is using those guidelines to format operational plans for the Mitchell Pool opening on July 6. When Phase 4 guidelines come out, we will then adapt to that. Because of the forecasted limitations for attendance for open swim, swim lessons and lap swimming, these services will be limited to Deerfield Park District residents only.

As we now have these guidelines, Sachs Recreation Center staff are preparing the indoor pool for a possible short indoor program for lap swim and/or Coho Swim Team use. More details on that will be provided once finalized. There are 150+ Coho swimmers using the pool at Sachs until Mitchell Pool opens.

Patty Turner Center – Will re-open August 17 with small group programs. In September, group sizes may be expanded.

Sachs Recreation Center – Indoor personal training and tennis is currently being offered. Outdoor fitness classes will begin on June 15.

Jewett Park Community Center – Residents have an opportunity to schedule appointments at the registration counter weekdays. We've already had residents take advantage of the opportunity. The center will fully open for business the week June 29.

Staffing – The remaining furloughed employees will be returning to work this month.

Playgrounds – Playgrounds remain closed through Phase 3 for sure. Staff will remove the signage as soon as the district gets the word they can open.

Other

Park districts are collaborating and collecting data to put figures together for COVID operating costs. The district is trying to re-coop some of the monies spent on sanitizing, PPE furloughed staff, etc. through the CARES Act.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners is scheduled for Thursday, July 16, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

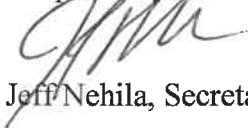
Motion made by Commissioner Antokal, seconded by Commissioner Lapin, to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 9:33 p.m. Roll call vote as follows:

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

NAYS: None (0)

Motion passed in a roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,



Jeff Nehila, Secretary

emails read aloud

Jeff Nehila

From: Sari Klein <sariklein445@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 6, 2020 12:02 PM
To: Mayor Harriet Rosenthal
Cc: Jeff Nehila; Jay Zahn; Kent Street; Andrew Lichterman; David Fitzgerald
Subject: Re: Please Rename Mitchell Park

June 18, 2020

Good Afternoon,

I have public comment request to be read aloud during the Public Comment Section of the next Park Board meeting:
In addition to renaming the park, I would also like the city to put a plaque in the park that describes the history of the ~~opposed~~ integration on this land. It is a necessary action that will permanently show that we are not sweeping this story under the rug anymore.

Additionally, I would like the city to look deeper into how you can implement diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice initiatives across all departments. When I moved away from Deerfield I was exposed to so many more people and ideas, and I've become a better person because of it. As a socially-conscious teenager, who dedicated so much time to community service, activism, and philanthropy, when I got to college I was shocked to learn how little Deerfield taught me about my own white privilege and the systemic racism and oppression that continues to plague our country. The city could be doing a lot more to amplify the voices and stories of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC).

You may think that these issues are not relevant or important to life in Deerfield because 94% of residents are not hurt by racism. But by not engaging in these issues our residents are a part of the problem. Not everyone is going to stay in Deerfield's bubble of white privilege, and it would be a shame and embarrassment if our lack of education caused us to add to the pain and oppression of BIPOC.

I would also like the city to immediately start a plan to establish low-income housing in Deerfield as soon as possible. That is the most tangible way we can correct the wrongs of our past.

Can you please create a committee or task force to address these concerns? I now live in Boston, but I would be happy to help with these efforts remotely, and I still come back to visit my parents and friends around 5-6 times a year. If you are not the right person to ask about this, please direct me to who I should speak to.

Best,
Sari Klein
Deerfield High School, Class of 2013

On Thu, Jun 4, 2020 at 8:54 PM Mayor Harriet Rosenthal <hrosenthal@deerfield.il.us> wrote:



Mayor Harriet Rosenthal

Village Board | [Village of Deerfield](#)
850 Waukegan Rd | Deerfield, IL 60015
847.945.3545

Follow Us: [f](#) [t](#) [i](#) [o](#) [#DoltForDeerfield](#)

From: Sari Klein <sariklein445@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 4, 2020 3:53 PM
To: jeff@deerfieldparks.org
Cc: jay@deerfieldparks.org; Mayor Harriet Rosenthal
Subject: Please Rename Mitchell Park

Hi Jeff,

My name is Sari Klein, I'm 25 and I grew up in Deerfield and my family still lives there. As an alumnus of Kipling Elementary School, Shepard Jr. High School, and Deerfield High School, I am urging you to use your position of power to set a better example for the coming generations that will be raised in Deerfield.

94% of Deerfield residents benefit from white privilege. Because of this, our leaders need to put in extra effort to manage the village through an anti-racist lens. You can begin by renaming Mitchell Park.

Mitchell Park is what stands today in place of housing for black families. Keeping that name is a symbol of our village's refusal to integrate. Renaming the park will signify that we acknowledge our racist past and that we are ready to move on.

Please reach out if you would like to continue this conversation, or would like to be pointed to more resources on how to use our village's white privilege to lift up our black friends, loved ones, and hopefully future neighbors.

Best,
Sari Klein

P.S. I also urge you to consider adding Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice as a strategy in your next strategic plan that looks like is set to be released in 2023 after perusing your website. There are a lot of opportunities within the parks department to boldly reject the lingering effects of our racist past. But let's start with renaming Mitchell Park.

Thank you for your email. I appreciate your passion. I'm happy to see that you brought the Park District into this discussion. It is truly their decision to make.

Stay safe!
Best,
Harriet

Jeff Nehila

From: Amy Roost <amyeroost@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, June 12, 2020 4:39 PM
To: Jeff Nehila
Subject: Fwd: It's time to change the name of Mitchell Park--Please

Public Comment

Hi Jeff,

Per our conversation, please read the letter I sent you June 5 during your meeting scheduled for next Thursday, June 18. Thanks!

Amy Roost

Co-editor of *Fury: Women's Lived Experiences During the Trump Era*, (Regal House, March 2020). Available for pre-order. "These are thunderbolts thrown at the ultimate lightning rod in a cultural struggle that goes back to the dawn of human civilization. If only Donald Trump were just a metaphor, or justifiable outrage able to sway willful ignorance. A treat to meet these women in their fury." ~John Sayles, film director
Host of *Hazard*, distributed by Critical Frequency Network.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Amy Roost <amyeroost@gmail.com>
Date: Fri, Jun 5, 2020 at 2:23 PM
Subject: It's time to change the name of Mitchell Park--Please
To: <jeff@deerfieldparks.org>
Cc: Harriet Rosenthal <harrietrose@comcast.net>

Dear Jeff,

My name is Amy Roost. You may be aware I was part of a popular discussion panel held at the DPL last March, and have done some reporting on Deerfield for NPR Illinois.

As is evidenced by daily headlines, times change. In the 1960s, James Mitchell, rightly or wrongly, may have been a hero to Deerfield residents. But in light of today's raised racial consciousness and the nationwide recognition of the struggles still being faced by people of color, Mitchell's role in stymying the attempt to integrate Deerfield in 1959 can no longer be thought of as heroic. His legacy should be taught as part of the school curriculum as a cautionary tale, not as a heroic tale, especially in light of the fact that Deerfield has produced so many heroes. People that today's generation and future generations could and should look up to.

Take for instance Art Shay who documented social justice movements across Chicagoland and the country; or Melba Sullivan whose family was one of the first Black families to move to and stay in Deerfield and who currently consults with human rights organizations globally; or my sister Angelle Smith who was rejected by my parents because they were afraid to raise a Black child in 1962 Deerfield; or Reverend George Berggren of Zion Lutheran Church whose family who was threatened when he announced, in 1961, their intention to adopt a black child, and who was an outspoken defender of human rights and integration. Or my mother, Marge Sandberg, who served on Deerfield's Human Relations Commission with Art Shay and others, who protested and picketed for the integration of Deerfield, who marched in Selma, Alabama during the Civil Rights movement, and who had her heart broken because she could not keep a baby she'd bonded with because my dad convinced her the community wouldn't be tolerant. Any of these people, all fallible in their own respects, would be better namesakes for the park. Or take a safer route and call the park Civil Liberties or Human Rights or Black Lives Matter Park.

Finally, as with all controversial decisions made by elected officials, there will undoubtedly be a temptation to kick the can of renaming Mitchell Park further down the road. I urge you not to do so. The cause and pressure will not go away and the longer you wait the more complicit the current Park District will be with those of the distant past. Also, the story

of my family is being made into a memoir to be published in 2022 and a film is currently in pre-production. If the Park has not been renamed when the book and movie hit you will likely be facing yet another tsunami of emails and angry voices.

I urge you and the Park District to get ahead of that curve and act now, and in accordance with the times we live in.

Sincerely,

Amy Roost

Jeff Nehila

From: Hazel <Hazzog@aol.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 13, 2020 2:57 PM
To: Jeff Nehila
Subject: Fwd: Renaming Mitchell Park

Sent from my iPad

Public Comment

Subject: Renaming Mitchell Park

I am writing this hoping that it can be read at the next Park Board meeting.

My husband and I have been residents of Deerfield for 50 years. We live on the east side of Briarwood Vista. When we bought this house, I was reluctant to buy in Deerfield because I had studied about Deerfield in a Race Relations class at Northwestern. I had learned of the attempts to keep blacks out of Deerfield. I had also learned of attempts to keep Jewish families out of Deerfield. However, since the area we were moving into was in the Highland Park school district (108), I agreed to the move. Since then, I have learned of or experienced a couple of anti-diversity events.

I heard of one event from a friend of ours who lived in Deerfield. In 1959 when there were discussions about opening low-income housing in Deerfield. There was a protest by people who wanted to open low-income housing. A friend of ours, who lived in Deerfield, attended the Protest. At the Protest, he met three black teenagers who had taken the train to Deerfield from Chicago to attend the Protest. When the Protest was over, it was late and the boys missed the last train. Our friend took them to his parent's home in Deerfield. He called their parents and had them spend the night with him. All was fine until about 3:00 in the morning when they heard noise outside. There was a cross burning on their front lawn. They decided not to report this because they were afraid of any consequences. To this day, he regrets not reporting this incident.

Several years ago, 2 women came to my door to ask me to sign a petition for having all students in Briarwood Vista attend Kipling School and Deerfield high school. At that time the east half of Briarwood Vista went to Sherwood Elementary and Edgewood Jr. High in Highland Park. They could choose either Deerfield or Highland Park for high school. When I asked why they wanted to make the change, they replied, "There's too much diversity at Highland Park". Needless to say, I was appalled and let them know how I felt. I regret that I didn't follow up with what happened to that petition as it did pass. As I was in charge of the English as a Second Language program at HPHS at that time, I was upset about their actions.

I am aware of other relatively minor events that have occurred over the years. Deerfield could help to begin to right some wrongs that have occurred by renaming Mitchell Park. Mr. Mitchell was president of the Park Board in 1959. He was in a good position to speak up and do the right thing. He did not and should not be honored by having his name used in a place of honor. I am willing to discuss these and other events with any member of the Board. Thank you for your time.

Hazel Herzog

Sent from my iPad

Jeff Nehila

From: Evan Kuehn <evan.f.kuehn@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 15, 2020 12:33 PM
To: Jeff Nehila
Subject: Re: Public Comment for June 18 Board Meeting

Dear Jeff,

Here is my amended public comment for the June 18 meeting:

My name is Dr. Evan Kuehn, and I am a resident of Deerfield with children at Kipling, Shepard, and Deer Park. I appreciate the Village's and Police Department's responses to recent anti-black police violence and believe that renaming Mitchell Park, on the schedule for discussion tonight, will be a good chance for us to further reckon with our segregationist past and present. This can only be a beginning, though. Deerfield remains an extremely segregated community. It is overwhelmingly white and overwhelmingly affluent, and we continue to actively perpetuate this segregation through our failure to provide affordable housing. The situation today is perhaps more subtle and less overtly anti-black than it was during Mitchell's service at the Park District, but we continue to deal with the same problem of intertwined socio-economic and racial inequities. I want to thank the Park District for their action, and express my hope that this step to cease commemorating our past immoral housing practices will encourage the Village to take further steps toward leading, rather than resisting, affordable housing in our village.

Sincerely,

Evan Kuehn

On Mon, Jun 15, 2020 at 11:52 AM Jeff Nehila <jeff@deerfieldparks.org> wrote:

Hi Evan

That would be fine. Thanks.

Jeff Nehila

Executive Director

Deerfield Park District

836 Jewett Park Drive

Deerfield IL 60016-3291

(847)572-2612

Jeff Nehila

From: Alan <alan.baruch@ymail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2020 11:30 PM
To: Jeff Nehila
Subject: Public comment For Thursday's board meeting agenda

Hi Jeff,

My name is Alan and I've been a deerfield resident for six years. I'm writing to urge the board to consider changing the name of Mitchell Park. My little son, who is biracial, plays at that park often and it pains me to know of its history. I'd suggest a name that the village can all get behind and would advocate for a name who stands for justice and inclusion. I'd recommend Martin Luther King Jr Park

Thank you,
Alan

Jeff Nehila

From: Jenny Stadelmann <jennifer.stadelmann@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2020 6:19 PM
To: Jeff Nehila
Subject: Public Comment

> Dear Park District Board,

>

> I would like to add my name to the chorus of Deerfield Residents imploring you to rename Mitchell Park, currently honoring the racist who stopped black people from moving into Deerfield years ago in the name of needing another park (close to so many other parks right in the same area), to honoring the first brave black couple that moved into Deerfield in the midst of the segregation that was still taking place in Deerfield - Sherman and Eve Beverly.

>

> While this may seem to be a small insignificant change to you, the Board, I believe renaming Mitchell Park to Beverly Park symbolically says to the rest of the country who remembers Deerfield as the racist "Little Rock of the North" that Deerfield today welcomes people of all color, nationality, origin and race and that we want to repent for our racist past and have changed. I also propose that if this change is approved by the board that they also create a large plaque to place in the Park sharing why it is named Beverly Park - to right a wrong our community made so many years ago - and to honor the Beverly family and bring our community together in a ceremony for the unveiling of the plaque and renaming of the Park.

>

> Respectfully,

> Jenny Stadelmann

Jeff Nehila

From: Uttech.kate <uttech.kate@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2020 9:18 PM
To: Jeff Nehila
Subject: Mitchell park

Please read this statement at the meeting:

I am sorry it has taken so long for this to become a priority. Deerfield is a wonderful community, but maintaining the name Mitchell for one of our parks is shameful. To demonstrate the community has moved beyond its racist history please rename the park to Beverly park.

Kate Uttech

"Just when the caterpillar thought the world was ending, he turned into a butterfly." --*Proverb*

Jeff Nehila

From: Rachel Meltzer <rachel.meltzer@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Thursday, June 18, 2020 9:18 AM
To: Jeff Nehila
Subject: Public Comment for June 18 Board Meeting

To Mr. Nehila, The Board of Commissioners, and the Deerfield Community,

When I moved to Deerfield from Chicago in 2003, I was a little hesitant about moving so deep into 847 suburbia. My new husband's job was in Libertyville, and mine was downtown, so Deerfield with its Metra stop, made sense. While I've grown to appreciate many wonderful things about Deerfield, the lack of diversity remains striking.

Had the events of 1959 gone a different way, our community would undoubtedly be more diverse today, but we lost out. We lost out on the learning, the exchange of ideas, the connections and the friendships that could have formed with the African Americans who would have been our neighbors. We lost out on the chance to raise our children in a more diverse community. We lost out on an opportunity to live our lives more closely aligned with the ideals that many of us aspire to.

The name Mitchell symbolizes that lost opportunity, and it's time to change it. My family's house borders the park; we see it every day. Of course we can't change the history. But this small, yet meaningful change will symbolize a break with the racist thinking of the past, and it will hopefully be a welcoming sign to people of color who get to know Deerfield.

Finally, I think it's important for all of us to be able to change the narrative we tell about this park's history and our community. Let's change the name and move forward together toward a more diverse Deerfield.

Sincerely,
Rachel Meltzer

Jeff Nehila

From: Craig Keller <boykeller@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 18, 2020 1:33 PM
To: Jeff Nehila
Subject: Public Comment for June 18 Board Meeting, Renaming Michell Park

To the Members of the Deerfield Board,

I was a long-time resident of Deerfield, now living down in Texas. I recently heard of the effort to rename Mitchell Park based on long-ago events. My father, Donald W. Keller, was on the Deerfield Park Board at the time and therefore involved in the debate. I completely understand, based on the current environment, why some residents may be motivated to change the name but there is a lot of misinformation and emotion, just as there was when the Integrated Housing issue originally transpired in 1959. My sole purpose is to provide the Board some historical content.

My father and mother first moved to Deerfield in 1949 after the war. Dad grew up in Philadelphia and mom was from Oak Park. Both were WWII Marine Veterans. While dad died many years ago, my mother was an active Deerfield community member for 67 years. She raised her four kids in Deerfield as a single mother. I spent a decade as an Air Force Officer and now fly for a major airline. My brother worked many years as a VP of Sales at the Merchandise Mart (like my Father). One of my sisters spent a career in the Navy and attained the rank of Chief Petty Officer while my other sister was a R.N. dedicated to helping people. All of us kids were positively influenced by our childhood experiences and the education provided to us by growing up in Deerfield.

Dad's comments were featured in the book "But Not Next Door," written by Harry and David Rosen. His long letter to the Deerfield Review was partially shown on pages 83 and 84. Dad is also featured again on page 130.

It's important for Deerfield's newer residents to understand what motivated the Deerfield Park Board at the time. It's also pertinent to note this debate occurred before the Civil Rights Act passed Congress in 1964. The Home Developer wanted a "quota" of 20% African American residents to move into the subdivision. The fight, at least from dad's perspective, concerned only the illegal quota request and not whether African Americans were welcome into Deerfield. The contested land featuring the two homes already built was put to a vote to the village residents. A court case ensued. Both of which were won by Village of Deerfield.

Below is a portion of my father's 1959 letter to the Deerfield Review featured in "But Not Next Door." It's important to reference that back in the 1950's, the word Negro was a common term used both by African Americans and Whites. The 2011 movie "The Help," written about life in the 1960's, used "Negro" predominantly as the word didn't have the negative connotation back then as it does today. Given in that context, here's Dad's letter:

"There are those who would have the people of Deerfield think that this whole question is one of the entrance of one or more Negro families to our community. This is absolutely untrue. The folks who allude to this are as misguided as those who would incite racialism for racialism's sake. I feel certain that if a Negro family purchased a home and moved into the community of Deerfield—on their own—this would cause no more concern than the many other transients of any race or creed who move into and out of this village.....

If because you are against the enforcement of the will of the few on the many and if you are concerned about your own rights as a private citizen please do not be baited by the one remark you will hear from these people—that you are trying to prevent Negro families from moving into Deerfield. Reply to these folks that Negroes, or any race, creed or color compatible with the tenets of the American way are welcome as the flowers in May—but this must be on the same terms that are open and equal to everyone else and are compatible with community serenity.

What has occurred, and is occurring, in Deerfield will be swallowed up in the sands of time—but if out of it all we can help some other unsuspecting community to avert such developers, then all has not be lost. Let us make so much noise that the world knows what is going on here. And in the battle for our individual rights let us thank our lucky stars for the unanimity this has forced upon us all. Let this town also remember this intrusion on its privacy for its history through the ages and to remember forever those individuals to its cause. Donald W. Keller"

I feel Dad's letter is as pertinent to today's environment as when he wrote it back in 1959. Dad was a Philadelphia native and grew up in the city. As written in the book, "he spoke of the pleasant association he had with Negroes during his time there." My father also served honorably right alongside many African Americans in some of the worst horrific fighting during WWII in the Marshall Islands.

As you can see from the letter, this was a debate about individual rights. The issue was about who actually has a right to say about whom can move into a community. It was not about whether African Americans could move into Deerfield. As is evident from Dad's long ago letter, he wouldn't have cared if the subdivision was 100% African American. The community just didn't want some random Developer putting in terms dictating who could live where. That was the main debate. The major barrier to moving and living in Deerfield

"for all people" always has been one of costs. It's expensive living in Deerfield. It was a major financial challenge for my mother to continue to live in Deerfield after Dad's death.

I spent a great deal of time growing up in Deerfield. I remember the community as a very welcoming and friendly place that did include African Americans and Asians. Despite the usual rituals of growing up, my group of friends developed life-long friendships that last to this day. I have many fond memories from there. Deerfield still remains one of the great suburbs of Chicago. I miss it dearly.

I hope this sheds a little light on your decision to rename Mitchell Park. It's important to understand these were real people with good hearts that helped set the stage for the beautiful and successful community Deerfield is today. Good luck with your decision.

Best,

Craig Keller, son of Donald W. Keller, Deerfield Park Commissioner, 1959

Jeff Nehila

From: Emma Swidler <emmaswidler@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 18, 2020 2:09 PM
To: Jeff Nehila
Subject: Public Comment for Park District Board Meeting

Hello Mr. Nehila,

I would like to request the following comment to be read at tonight's Park District Board meeting:

First of all, thank you for listening to the Deerfield community. I have lived in Deerfield for 23 years, and I appreciate this town, but I am also ashamed of its racist history and its lack of diversity. Mitchell Park is a monument to segregation, whether or not we want to admit it. The danger of monuments is they can easily disguise history. But our history is not silent. It is not a coincidence that Deerfield is primarily White. It is time that we hold ourselves accountable for our town's unceasing racism: conscious or not, we are all culpable.

I agree with other residents that Mitchell Park should be renamed Beverly Park in honor of the first Black residents of Deerfield, who have given so much to this town as educators and neighbors without knowing if their kindness would be returned. However, we cannot cover up our history again. Deerfield's children must learn our history so that they do not repeat it. We should erect a plaque at Beverly Park which explains that Mitchell Park was built for the wrong reasons, to exclude Black families. We must declare this truth in order to reject our past, and make this park our first big step toward equality and justice. It is only the beginning. To truly right our wrong, we must build affordable housing and take much bigger steps than just renaming a park, but this is a good first step. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Emma Swidler

Jeff Nehila

From: Benjy Sachs <benjysachs@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 18, 2020 2:10 PM
To: Jeff Nehila
Subject: Public comment, June 18 meeting, Mitchell Park

Dear members of the Deerfield Park District Board,

A lifelong resident of Deerfield, I write to you today in support of renaming Mitchell Park. Anyone who has learned about what happened in Deerfield in 1959—how the local government and community widely rejected the prospect of integrating our idyllic village—ought to support this measure.

Renaming a park is not the same as rewriting history. Rather, it is a choice of whom the community decides to revere, what name Deerfield children see as they idle away summer afternoons. James Mitchell should not be celebrated in this way. Though of course we cannot lay the blame of Deerfield's segregation entirely at his feet, he played a large role in Deerfield's sad and racist actions—the ramifications of which can still be seen and felt today, as Deerfield remains a mostly white and cloistered community.

I suggest the Board could rename the park in honor of the late Benjamin Elton Cox, a Freedom Rider and civil rights activist who spent a night in the condemned housing development to protest the town's racist actions. Though we cannot undo or erase the wrongs of the past, we can honor Benjamin Cox's memory (and all those who fought for integration and justice) by dedicating to him the land on which he slept in the hopes of awaking to a brighter and more open-minded future.

Renaming this park will not absolve Deerfield of its mistakes nor will it undo the systemic racism of our housing or education. But it is a necessary and worthy first step. I hope, if the park is renamed, that this achievement will be the beginning—not the end—of Deerfield's efforts to make our community a more inclusive and actively anti-racist place. I also hope this discussion of our not-so-distant past spurs our residents into further action: educating ourselves about how we continue to benefit from systemic racism, asking how we can attain more equitable housing, how we can better educate our children about race and privilege, how we can restructure our police department so that everyone (especially our Black community members) can truly feel safe and taken care of.

Board members, I urge you to recognize our ugly, racist history: to stare it down rather than to turn a blind eye, to celebrate a Freedom Rider rather than the legacy of Deerfield's segregation. Only once we confront the demons of our past can we truly examine ourselves as we are today and begin to rebuild towards a more just future—one that we can be proud to celebrate and to teach to our descendants.

Sincerely,

Benjy Sachs

MINUTES REGULAR MEETING BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS **August 20, 2015**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners was called to order by President Antokal at 8:02 p.m. in the Jewett Park Community Center. The Secretary called the roll and the following were:

PRESENT: Antokal, Caron, Lapin, Patinkin (4)

ABSENT: Cohen (1)

and there was a quorum in attendance. Also present were Rick Julison, Secretary/Executive Director; Bob Taylor, Jay Zahn, Tony Korzyniewski, staff members; Alec Lopata, Iain Lopata, residents.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Vice-President Lapin, seconded by Treasurer Caron, to approve the Minutes of the July 16, 2015 Finance Meeting; the July 16, 2015 Regular Meeting, as amended; the July 16, 2015 Closed Session; and the August 6, 2015 Workshop Meeting, as amended. Voice vote as follows:

AYES: Lapin, Caron, Patinkin, Antokal (4)

NAYS: None (0)

ABSENT: Cohen (1)

Motion passed in a voice vote.

FINANCE REPORT

Approval of Disbursements

Motion made by Treasurer Caron, seconded by Commissioner Patinkin, to approve the Voucher Listing dated August 20, 2015 in the amount of \$1,354,780.39. (Copy attached and made a part of these minutes). Roll call vote as follows:

AYES: Caron, Patinkin, Lapin, Antokal (4)

NAYS: None (0)

ABSENT: Cohen (1)

Motion passed in a roll call vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT / VISITORS AND GUESTS

President Antokal welcomed visitors and guests to the meeting.

COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORTS

Pool Advisory Committee

Minutes of the July 23, 2015 Pool Advisory Committee were included in packets. Discussion topics included pre-season pool pass sales, end of season party at Mitchell, and the end of season swim schedule at Deerspring.

Recreation Center Advisory Committee

Minutes of the July 23, 2015 Recreation Center Advisory Committee were included in packets. Discussion topics included summer group exercise schedule, new fall classes, new Pilates Reformer Studio, Fit Rewards, and capital improvements.

PTC Members' Council

An agenda for the August 13, 2015 PTC Members' Council meeting was included in packets. The center added 8 new members in the month of July. Upcoming events include Dance Card Dances with the Big Band Sound of Deerfield and an excursion to Lake Geneva for a lunch and ice cream cruise.

Other**Deerfield Park Foundation**

The Foundation will be meeting on August 31, 2015. Planning for the upcoming Moonlight Golf event scheduled for Friday, September 18 is taking place.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS / PROJECT REPORTS**Mitchell Pool Renovation****Project Status Report**

Demolition began on the pool and bathhouse interior on August 13 and is going well.

Payout Request Approval

Motion made by Commissioner Patinkin, seconded by Vice-President Lapin, to approve Payout Request #1 as follows: B&E Aquatics, \$29,595.00; Jensen Plumbing & Heating, \$643.00; Schaeffges Brothers, \$2,943.00; W.B. Olson, Inc., \$54,616.00 for a total payment of \$87,797.00 for work completed to date on the Mitchell Pool Renovation Project. (Copy attached and made a part of these minutes). Roll call vote as follows:

AYES: Patinkin, Lapin, Caron, Antokal (4)

NAYS: None (0)

ABSENT: Cohen (1)

Motion passed in a roll call vote.

Board Policies and Administrative Regulations**Approval of Revisions to Recreation Section 5000**

Motion made by Vice-President Lapin, seconded by Treasurer Caron, to approve the Revisions to Board Policies and Administrative Regulations Recreation Section 5000, as amended, excluding Policy #5012. Voice vote as follows:

AYES: Lapin, Caron, Patinkin, Antokal (4)

NAYS: None (0)

ABSENT: Cohen (1)

Motion passed in a voice vote.

Correspondence: Request to Consider the Renaming of James C. Mitchell Park

President Antokal recognized Alec Lopata who recently sent the Board a proposal to rename James C. Mitchell Park. Alec addressed the Board and distributed two pieces of evidence for his case for renaming James C. Mitchell Park. The first was the Wikipedia page for Deerfield, Illinois and second was a recent ad for affordable housing in the Zion Woods area.

President Antokal stated that the Board has read the proposal and most had read the book by Harry and David Rosen and is aware of what is going on with the Zion Woods property. Vice-President Lapin commented that the letter was well written and respectful and presented the point well. But after reading

what was quoted in the book about the court case and reviewing the court case documents, there were a lot of discrepancies. Vice-President Lapin commented that he feels they were trying to sell a point in the book and left a few things out. Alec commented that while that may be true, we should remember that this happened in 1959 before integration was popular with every judge and they might have written it to prove the other point. Vice-President Lapin commented that he trusted the court case documents more than the book because both sides were given the opportunity to present their evidence and that is documented in the transcripts. President Lapin stated that James Mitchell was attempting to increase park acreage and that was his motivation. Evidence the Park District presented was that Municipal planners at the time, said a Village the size of Deerfield should have 250 acres of park space and only had 47. Land was going very quickly. The Park District had tried previously to get park space. Alec commented that not until Progress Development came did they target that land. President Antokal stated that there was a referendum in February the same year asking for money to purchase property that included Pear Tree and Flora Garden but the referendum wasn't approved. Vice-President Lapin stated that there was a deal in place with the schools that the Park District would own the land around the schools and Wilmot didn't have enough land around it because of Deerfield Road so they were looking at the land across the street to add to Wilmot's park land long before Pear Tree came along. Their problem was that the people of Deerfield didn't want their tax bills to increase. All the Park Board members were interested in getting more park space and land was disappearing quickly to developers.

Treasurer Caron commented that she was really impressed with Alec's letter and gave him a lot of credit for bringing the issue up. She stated that she agrees with a lot of the points made and is conflicted over the issue. She feels that it was an embarrassing time for Deerfield but doesn't believe that one person was reflective of that. Alec stated that he didn't intend to target one person but saw this as a symbol of that history and thought it was a good place to start moving forward and that there are many steps to take. Treasurer Caron asked what Alec would ideally like to see happen. Alec responded that the Deerfield elementary schools have a unit on Deerfield history and as part of that unit he would like the students to propose more inclusive names for the park. This would allow the students to get involved in creating a new history. Treasurer Caron asked how Alec became interested in this issue. Alec stated that he wanted to find a legacy before he left and found the book, read it and thought it was interesting. Commissioner Patinkin commented that James Mitchell was trying to create a legacy for this Park District in creating a viable vast Park District for this Village. He also stated that he doesn't know anything about James Mitchell except what he read in the court opinion, but thinks that if the Park District is going to change the name of the park it will be a stigma to James Mitchell because it's going to be reflective that he was a driving force behind not allowing integration in Deerfield. He questioned what that would do to him and his family. Commissioner Patinkin stated that he isn't sure that's the best way to proceed. Alec commented that if it could be demonstrated the reason for changing the name is a broader reason than simply an individual, that his name is more of a symbol and that we want to change it more as symbol than to damage the name James Mitchell. When the announcement is made and it's made clear to the entire Village that should remedy some of his and his family's concerns. President Antokal commented that he understands that what Alec is suggesting is a small step and it's admirable that he bring it up but feels strongly about keeping the park named James C. Mitchell. He also commented that people should be more accepting in regards to the Zion Woods situation. He thanked Alec for his well-presented document. He stated that the Park Board has considered the proposal and will continue to evaluate the issue but for the time being chooses to leave it the same. If at some point the Board decides to vote on it, the Park District will notify Alec.

Other**Proposed State Property Tax Freeze**

Treasurer Caron stated that the Park Board is opposed to the proposed State property tax freeze and has relayed that to our State Legislators. Since we don't get any fees from the State and our only sources of income are property taxes and user fees, if there is a State property tax freeze, we will likely have to raise user fees.

Proposed Cell Tower at Briarwood Park

Staff has been in contact with a representative from Horvath Communications and informed them that we would consider moving forward with \$10,000 monthly and a Village request for the Park District to put a cell tower in Briarwood Park. The Horvath representative responded that the amount is not a viable option and that the Village refused to give any kind of prior zoning approval for that area. The representative asked that staff talk to the Park Board and find out if they want to counter.

Commissioners directed staff to contact Horvath and make it clear that we are not interested in making a counter offer, or having a cell tower in the nature area.

Pegasus Soccer Club

Staff informed the Board that Pegasus has been notified that they will not be recognized as an affiliate at the end of the spring 2016 season and that we will be checking rosters throughout the fall and spring. They have already moved some of the games to other fields. Treasurer Caron directed staff to make it clear on any correspondences that as of the end of April 2016 Pegasus will not be recognized as an affiliate.

Vice-President Lapin recommended placing discussion of travel soccer on the September 3, 2015 Workshop Meeting agenda.

NEW BUSINESS**Fundraising/Facility Use Request****Walk for Parker at Jaycee Memorial Park**

Motion made by Treasurer Caron, seconded by Commissioner Patinkin, to approve the use of Jaycee Park and the pavilion for a charity fundraising walk for the 1st Annual "The Walk for Parker" on Saturday, October 17 from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. Organizers will need to secure special event liability coverage that would name Deerfield Park District as an additional insured. No PA or amplified sound can be used as part of the event. Voice vote as follows:

AYES: Caron, Patinkin, Lapin, Antokal (4)

NAYS: None (0)

ABSENT: Cohen (1)

Motion passed in a voice vote.

Motion made by Treasurer Caron, seconded by Commissioner Patinkin, to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 8:47 p.m. Voice vote as follows:

AYES: Caron, Patinkin, Lapin, Antokal (4)

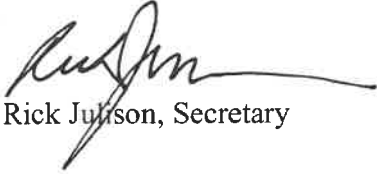
NAYS: None (0)

ABSENT: Cohen (1)

Motion passed in a voice vote.

The next Regular Meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners is scheduled for Thursday, September 17, 2015, at 8:00 p.m. at the Jewett Park Community Center.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Rick Julison", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rick Julison, Secretary