

**Minutes of the Workshop Meeting Board of Park Commissioners**      **August 3, 2023**

The Workshop Meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners was called to order by President Caron at 7:01 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:        Brown, Caron, Cohen, Patinkin, Serota (5)  
Absent:        None (0)

Staff: Executive Director Jeff Harvey, Director of Finance Mike Bonn, Superintendent of Recreation Tony Korzyniewski, Director of Golf Operations Jason Mannina and Director of Parks Jay Zahn

**III. Public Comment/Recognition of Visitors**

No members of the public were present.

**IV. Sachs Recreation Center Racquet Sports Discussion**

Superintendent of Recreation Korzyniewski advised that the current programming agreement between the Deerfield Park District and North Shore Rhythmic Gymnastics Center, Inc. (NSRG) will be coming to an end on September 30, 2024. This relationship has existed for fourteen (14) years and prior to its most recent renewal, the Board indicated this agreement could change as staff evaluates the evolving needs of the community as discussed at the March 3, 2022, Workshop meeting.

The preschool and beginner rhythmic gymnastics classes that are offered on weeknights and Saturday mornings to the public, with fluctuating annual attendance, net the District on average \$4,000-\$5,000 annually. The larger use of the space is for the NSRG competitive teams at the state, regional, national, and Olympic levels. Less than 5% of the teams are comprised of Deerfield resident athletes. The annual payment to the District for the use of the space outside of District programming is budgeted at \$60,000 for 2023-2024.

The program space that is utilized by NSRG sits on top of a tennis court adjacent to the (2) tennis/pickleball courts that are currently used for District programming. Staff has closely monitored and managed the increased use of the tennis/pickleball courts and based on conservative estimates, feel adding a third tennis/pickleball court to the facility would assist in meeting the current and projected future programming needs. It would also significantly increase gross revenues for space. This would include current program expansion, new program offerings, leagues and increased reservation opportunities. Staff would also consider bringing the racquet sports programming in-house and no longer work with an independent contractor. Staff also conducted a racquet sports analysis with pro forma for the Board's review.

While the long relationship between the District and NSRG has been a positive one, staff feels the continuation of rhythmic gymnastics programming at the SRC does not outweigh the current needs of the community, fit within the current program plan and will hinder further racquet sports programming growth. As a result, staff recommends that the current programming agreement be allowed to expire and not be renewed after September 30, 2024.

The Board discussed renovations that would need to be made to transition the space back to tennis/pickleball courts including new stripes and the removal of a Velcro room divider. Treasurer Patinkin stated he understands the need for increased flexibility but believes the District will be competing with an influx of private courts in the near future. There was also a brief discussion with respect to the future of the District's space agreement with the Chicago Sky. The community has expressed a need for indoor artificial turf per a recent District survey, however, the current NSRG programming space would be too small to fully satisfy this need. Additionally, the District recently invested a significant amount of capital in renovating the Chicago Sky gym. Executive Director Harvey noted with the additional court, the District would be able to accommodate women's tennis leagues – which is a demographic the District has not been able to fully serve due to the lack of a third court. President Caron appreciated the prioritization of residents through this recommendation. Commissioner Serota asked for additional information with respect to bringing the racquet sports in-house. Superintendent Korzyniewski advised staff is still researching this option and that it would require new staff such as a Head Tennis Professional. Projections will be presented to the Board through the upcoming budget process. Ultimately, there was consensus among the Board that the contract with NSRG be allowed to expire and that notification be given to NSRG to allow ample time for them to secure a new training facility.

#### **V. 2023 Compensation & Benefits Study Discussion**

Prior to turning the discussion over to Finance Director Bonn, Executive Director Harvey advised that the Compensation and Benefits Study was a budgeted expense for FY2023. The Consultant chosen tailored the study specifically to Park Districts, Districts of a similar size and within a certain proximity to Deerfield in an effort to obtain the most relevant data and determine how competitive Deerfield Park District is in relation to peers.

Finance Director Bonn proceeded to present the study to the Board. The study has been included in the August 3, 2023, Workshop packet. Items discussed as a result of the compensation study included wages, merit increases, health insurance opt-out payments, health insurance contribution amounts, holidays, and floating holidays/personal days. CPI was also included as a measure of inflation. Staff sought to obtain guidance from the Board as staff begins the budget process for FY2024. With the District's 2022 cost of living increase in addition to a merit increase, staff are currently paid at the 71<sup>st</sup> percentile in comparison to peers. The average merit increase for 2023 was 4.53% among the fifteen Districts surveyed. The estimated cost of a 1% pay increase is \$28,752.

Deerfield Park District employee premiums are generally in line with the average and the employees contribute more than other Park Districts. As such, staff proposed no changes for health contribution percentages.

Several neighboring Park Districts offer an opt-out payment if an employee chooses to not participate in the health insurance provided by their District. The average opt-out incentive is over \$3,300 paid out to the employee. As such, staff proposed an incentive of \$3,000 per year be provided to any employee that opts out of District health insurance. This would save the District

over \$22,000 annually for employees opting out of family insurance and over \$2,000 annually for those opting out of single insurance.

Currently, the Deerfield Park District offers eight holidays and one floating holiday/personal day. Per the Compensation Study, the average benefit was nine holidays and four floating holidays/personal days. Based on this data, staff recommended an additional three floating holidays/personal days. In alignment with the District's DEI efforts, they would be classified as floating holidays/personal days so that the employee has the choice in which holiday(s) to participate in. The estimated cost of adding three floating holidays/personal days is \$33,175.

A few employees were found to be over the max of their respective wage range. Nearly every District surveyed froze their respective employee's salary, while providing a merit-based payment to reward excellent performance. Staff recommends freezing the excess of range max and providing a merit payment rather than increasing the wage to align with other Park Districts.

After extensive Board discussion, consensus was agreed upon the following items:

- A maximum merit increase of 4.5% for all full-time staff in 2024 based on their annual performance review.
- No changes be made to the employee/employer contribution to health insurance.
- An annual \$3,000 health insurance opt-out payment.
- Christmas Eve and New Years Eve be converted to one full holiday day as well as two (2) additional floating holidays/personal days.
- Staff in excess of their range max will receive their potential merit increase in lieu of a merit payment. Additionally, their salaries will not be capped. The Board agreed to revisit this topic at a later date.

## **VI. Other Matters**

### **Patty Turner Center 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**

President Caron noted that the Patty Turner Center will be officially twenty years old in October. Staff is hosting a 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration banquet on September 27<sup>th</sup> and President Caron asked that Board members also be in attendance.

### **VII. Motion made by Vice President Cohen, seconded by Treasurer Patinkin, to adjourn the Workshop Meeting at 8:51 p.m.**

By a unanimous voice vote; **Motion Carried.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Jeff Harvey  
Executive Director