

The Decennial Committee Meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners was called to order by President Caron at 7:02 p.m. in the Patty Turner Center. Executive Director Harvey called the roll, and the following were:

PRESENT: Antokal, Brown, Caron, Cohen, Haughney, Marder, Patinkin, Serota and Vlahakis (9)  
ABSENT: None (0)

Staff: Executive Director Jeff Harvey and Executive Administrative Assistant Catherine Serbin

## **II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

President Caron advised that staff has kept this agenda item as a formality, although there are no minutes for approval given that this is the first meeting of the Committee. This Committee is subject to Open Meeting Act requirements as it is a formal Committee of the Board.

## **III. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no members of the public present.

## **IV. NEW BUSINESS**

### **(A). Overview and Purpose of the Act Pursuant to PA 102-1088**

President Caron thanked the resident members for volunteering their time and interest to serve on the Committee. She introduced the elected Board of Park Commissioners as well as District staff in attendance there to help facilitate discussion.

On June 10, 2022, Governor Pritzker signed the Decennial Committee on Local Government Efficiency Act, 50 ILCS 70/1 *et seq.*, into law. This law requires Illinois units of local government that levy any tax, including park districts, forest preserve districts and conservation districts to convene a committee to study and report on local government efficiency. The Act does not apply to municipalities and counties. Originally proposed in 2021 as the Decennial Committees on Local Government Consolidation Act, it was primarily focused on local government consolidation due to concerns that local government contributed to rogue spending with little accountability. Under the law as written, local governments are asked to evaluate themselves through this committee, produce a written report to their respective county boards and repeat the process at least every ten years. The report is to focus on two main objectives which include how efficient the District is as well as how transparent the District is. Recommendations produced as a result of this committee will be incorporated into a final report provided to Lake and Cook County.

### **(B). Review and Discussion of Draft Report for the County Boards of Lake and Cook Counties**

Committee members were given a working draft of the Deerfield Park District's report. Commissioner Brown asked if the Act provided any metrics or guidelines an agency is required to accomplish through this assessment. Executive Director Harvey stated he believes the assessment is purely subjective at this point as the law is vague, however, the District can get a sense of how it ranks among other agencies by reviewing submitted reports on the County website. President Caron added that the law is silent with respect to any report oversight. She suggested Committee members approach this task by questioning whether the District is a justified taxing body that deserves to exist as such. For contrast, Vice President Cohen noted that parks and recreation is rolled up into the City of Lake Forest and as a result, does not offer its residents with the same programs and amenities that the Deerfield Park District can. The

Deerfield Park District taxes are utilized exclusively for parks and recreation as well as professional staff. If consolidated into a municipal entity, tax dollars for parks and recreation must be weighed against the greater needs of a municipality such as police, fire, and public works. Executive Director Harvey stated that while this report is meant to fulfill a requirement, it can also serve as a learning opportunity to improve the District.

There was extensive Committee discussion regarding the definition of efficiency in this context. Resident Committee Member Haughney recognized that while cost-effectiveness and cost-efficiency are two similar terms often used interchangeably, they are two separate concepts. Resident Committee Member Marder acknowledged that the pool could be run as efficiently as possible but if no one utilizes the facility, then what does its efficiency matter. Furthermore, there is no true benchmark for comparison as all park districts differ in facility assets and size. Analyzing the District's budget for efficiency would only give one an indication of costs. It was agreed that efficiency for the sake of this report include high level cost benefits to the taxpayer and best practices as well as everything expressly stated in the statute such as ordinances, rules, procedures, shared services and intergovernmental agreements and relationships.

President Caron provided an overview of the District's operating budget and how revenue is generated. It was decided that the resident members of the Committee be given the budget for an in-depth review. She also provided a brief history of the District. Board members offered additional information to be listed in the report such as a cost per citizen comparison, specific details of intergovernmental agreements, grant funding and outsourced programs and services such as youth sports, theater programming and parks maintenance.

Resident Committee Member Marder left the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

**(C). Discussion of Increased Efficiencies and Transparency**

With a basic understanding of the Committee established, it was agreed that Resident Members of the Committee come to the next meeting prepared to discuss ways in which the District can improve with respect to any increased efficiencies and transparency.

**(D). Approval of Meeting Schedule**

Vice President Cohen moved and Commissioner Brown seconded a motion to approve the Decennial Committee meeting schedule for 2023/24 as presented in the September 7, 2023 Decennial Committee Agenda and Packet.

The motion **carried** in a voice vote as follows:

AYES: Antokal, Brown, Caron, Cohen, Haughney, Patinkin, Serota and Vlahakis (8)  
NAYS: None (0)  
ABSENT: Marder (1)

**V. Survey of Residents in Attendance**

Executive Director Harvey conducted a survey of the residents in attendance regarding the matters discussed, inquiring if there were any questions or recommendations.

No questions or recommendations were brought forth at this time.

**VI. Motion made by Vice President Cohen, seconded by Commissioner Serota, to adjourn the Decennial Committee Meeting at 8:03 p.m.** Voice vote carried as follows:

PRESENT: Antokal, Brown, Caron, Cohen, Haughney, Patinkin, Serota and Vlahakis (8)  
ABSENT: Marder (1)

The next Meeting of the Decennial Committee is scheduled for Thursday, November 2, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Jeff Harvey, Secretary