

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. PUBLIC COMMENT**

DHS Student Robert Brown was in attendance to observe as a requirement of his civics class.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Board President Caron advised this Committee is subject to Open Meeting Act requirements as it is a formal Committee of the Board.

Commissioner Brown moved, and Commissioner Serota seconded a motion to approve the September 7, 2023, Decennial Committee meeting minutes.

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

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

**IV. NEW BUSINESS**

**(A). Review & Discussion of Draft Report for the County Boards of Lake and Cook County**

President Caron reiterated the requirements of the Decennial Committee as provided for in the Decennial Committee on Local Government Efficiency Act (PA 102-1088). She advised the focus of discussion will be Committee input on the report initially presented in September in an attempt to capture anything staff may have missed.

Executive Director Harvey advised that revisions to the report since September include the District's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report and a draft Intergovernmental Agreement between the Park District and the Village for the purpose of describing the terms and conditions on which the Village will enforce the District's Conduct Code and other laws within the District's parks. A formal agreement will give police the authority to issue citations and make arrests in the District's parks. All general fines and revenues for code violations will go to the Village for reimbursement of expenses related to policing and prosecution. In turn, the District will make no payment to the Village for enforcement services. Treasurer Patinkin requested that an exception be added that states any restitution awarded to the Deerfield Park District shall be paid directly to the Park District.

Furthermore, environmental sustainability suggestions made by Citizen Representative Haughney to include community partnerships between the District and organizations such as Go Green Deerfield and Friends of the Chicago River have also been added to the report. There was a brief discussion regarding the feasibility of composting efforts within District facilities or during special events the District hosts.

Executive Director Harvey highlighted recent achievements the Deerfield Park District attained at the Illinois Association of Park Districts “Best of the Best” Awards Gala, for Arts in the Park and Best Green Practices to be included in the report. This annual awards program provides a public platform to thank Districts who generously give their time, talents and resources to further the park, recreation and conservation mission. The Arts in the Park Award recognizes agencies that support the arts and partner with artists and arts organizations to enhance the quality of life in their communities. The Best Green Practices Award is presented to a park district, forest preserve, conservation, recreation or special recreation agency that has taken the initiative to incorporate and encourage environmentally friendly business practices and policies. The District was formally recognized at the IAPD Best of the Best Awards Gala on October 20, 2023.

Under additional services, staff have since added recycling programs for shoes, textiles and plastics. At Jewett Park Community Center and Sachs Recreation Center, staff are collecting over 2,000 pounds of plastic a year. The plastic is then taken to a distribution center for processing. Commissioner Brown explained that plastics and textiles collected at Sachs Recreation Center are upcycled into a bench or poured in place material for playgrounds.

Commissioner Serota requested that the outsourcing of select recreation programs (i.e., Hot Shot Sports and Sarah Hall Theater) be added to the report as an increased efficiency. It is more affordable to outsource the work than it is to maintain an in-house team. Treasurer Patinkin noted the exclusion of three outdoor skating rinks under District facilitates and requested they be incorporated in the report.

#### **(B). Discussion of Increased Efficiencies & Transparency**

Executive Director Harvey advised that revisions to the report with respect to opportunities for increased accountability and transparency include additional financial information on the District’s website such as the District’s audit report and budget for the public to easily access. Currently, these items are available for review within the District’s administrative office. Citizen Representative Vlahakis suggested this accessible data be converted into an info graphic visualization as the existing format may be hard to understand from a layperson perspective.

There was a brief discussion as to whether the Board packet should be included in addition to the agenda on the District’s website. In lieu of the packet, Citizen Representative Haughney requested the Board create a more detailed Board agenda to allow residents the opportunity to fully understand what is discussed at each Board meeting. Vice President Cohen suggested sharing the Board Action List to provide more clarity to the agenda. Commissioner Serota inquired as to when the minutes and meeting agendas are posted. Executive Assistant Serbin advised the minutes are posted online and within the Administrative Office the day after which they are approved. Agendas are posted a week prior to a Board meeting, although OMA requirements only necessitate the agenda be posted within 48 hours in advance of a meeting.

Revisions to the report with respect to opportunities for increased efficiency include increased joint purchasing with other local governments for commodities and services and additional energy efficiency initiatives such as LED lighting, electric vehicles, and equipment as well as solar power. Citizen Representative Vlahakis advocated for a shift towards an amplified digitized environment to lower paper costs and be more environmentally conscious. He also proposed the District explore cooperative purchasing for software and technology to ensure the most competitive price. The Board informed that staff do engage in a competitive bid process to ensure the best price. Additionally, staff most recently

utilized a co-op for a new track overlay at the SRC. Executive Director Harvey briefly reviewed joint purchasing agreements the District currently engages in such as health insurance and gasoline in partnership with the Village.

Other ideas and suggestions touched upon include the expansion of outsourcing for certain functions and programs, utilizing resident and local business volunteers to lower costs associated with staffing and increased data driven decision making. Citizen Representative Marder stressed the importance of data and metrics in that it will help justify and understand the efficacy of programs and facilities. A discussion ensued regarding the Board's philosophy on certain aspects of the District. It was acknowledged that the pools operate at a deficit as opposed to the Deerfield Golf Club. However, the pools are supported by tax dollars regardless of financial performance because they are a community need which is something private businesses cannot provide. Circling back to data metrics, Citizen Representative Vlahakis suggested staff publish quantitative data such as cost per user visit at the pool in an effort to increase transparency and support pricing. President Caron briefly explained the District's recent participation in a Cost Recovery Program.

Executive Director Harvey also highlighted the District's commuter program in which staff are encouraged to carpool, utilize mass transit or given the option to work remote once a week. This is quantified through miles saved converted to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Staff are incentivized to join this program through discounted train fare and other means. This is one of the reasons the District secured the Best Green Practices Award.

Lastly, Citizen Representative Marder suggested the District explore dynamic pricing where feasible to optimize prices based on demand, competition, and other factors in order to maximize profits. The Board advised this has been partially implemented at the Deerfield Golf Club where dynamic pricing can help golfers secure cheaper green fees as opposed to a preset rate.

The Board thanked the Citizen Representatives for their service.

#### **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 8:17 p.m.** Voice vote **carried** as follows:

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

The next Meeting of the Decennial Committee is scheduled for Thursday, February 1, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Jeffrey S. Harvey*

Jeff Harvey, Secretary