

MINUTES OF THE CLOSED SESSION OF BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

March 26, 2024

The Closed Session Meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners was called to order by President Cohen at 7:32 p.m. in the Patty Turner Center. Executive Director Harvey called the roll, and the following were:

PRESENT: Brown, Caron, Cohen and Serota (4)

ABSENT: Patinkin (1)

Staff: Executive Director Jeff Harvey

President Cohen explained the purpose of this Closed Session meeting is to discuss the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees of the public body or legal counsel of the District in accordance with Section 2(c)1 of the Open Meetings Act.

President Cohen received a phone call from Mr. Harvey because the Finance Director and IT person have left, and potentially there may be additional staff departures. Mr. Harvey may be more comfortable in the Finance Director position. President Cohen contacted Alan Howard at the IAPD, a company experienced in director searches, who estimated a four (4) month timeline for the process. Mr. Harvey has agreed to stay on until a replacement Executive Director is found. Mr. Howard will hold a Zoom meeting with the Board to further explain the search process.

Mr. Harvey believes his strength is in Finance and it would be best for both the Park District and his family to resume the Finance Director position. Commissioner Serota believes Mr. Harvey has done a fantastic job in this role. She suggested it is important to relay we had an Executive Director choose to retire early, followed by an Executive Director who did not feel it was best for him to stay in the role. She believes there may be a flaw in the position, not the people that were put into the position.

Commissioner Caron noted the IAPD has very good processes and interviews applicants from all over, which would give the Deerfield Park District national attention. President Cohen explained the new Director will have the opportunity to work with the old Director, who is going to be the Finance Director. He spoke with Commissioner Patinkin, who is out of town, and he is in support of working with the IAPD. President Cohen believes there will be a lot of interest in the position because the Park District is financially sound, in an affluent neighborhood, very stable and has a long-serving Board. He read the agreement and believes the \$10,400 flat fee is fair and reasonable. IAPD will provide the Board with a survey to see what is important to the Board members. They will then produce a brochure to promote the position and the community. The Board discussed housing options if there are out-of-town applicants.

Mr. Harvey is prepared to stay on as Executive Director and can lean on Laura McCarty for additional assistance. They have a financial consultant assisting for the audit work. Mr. Harvey was concerned about losing the Finance Manager, but she has agreed to stay. Mr. Harvey will speak with Laura and the senior leadership team about his decision. President Cohen thinks he should stress this was a voluntary move and not done under duress.

Commissioner Serota is concerned about a mass exodus because there have been a lot of resignations. If people think the Executive Director was fired or demoted, it could cause further concern.

The Board members believe there will be many members of the public present at the next meeting for the public comment portion of the meeting. The agenda will state that the public comment session will be 30 or 45 minutes, and individuals can comment for up to three (3) minutes. The Board does not have to comment on non-agenda public comments; rather, can listen and let the public know when the item is on the agenda. President Cohen noted there is nothing for the Board to discuss regarding after school enrichment programs until the Park District

and School staff meet. Commissioner Caron suggested adding something to the agenda stating there will be no Board discussion until there is something to discuss.

There was some discussion about possible upcoming retirements in the parks department later this year.

Commissioner Brown moved to adjourn the Closed Session meeting. Commissioner Caron seconded the motion. The motion passed by the following vote:

AYES: Brown, Caron, Cohen, Serota (4)

NAYS: None (0)

The meeting was adjourned at 8:14 pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Jeff Harvey



Transcribed by:

Jeri Cotton