

## **COLLINSVILLE AREA RECREATION DISTRICT**

### **REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**February 21, 2012**

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners of the Collinsville Area Recreation District was called to order by President Mary Ann Bitzer at 7:08 PM, February 21, 2012 at the district office, 10 Gateway Drive, Collinsville, Illinois. Following the Pledge of Allegiance the roll was called with the following commissioners answering present: Andrew Carruthers, David Tanzyus, Joan Burke, Spike Bryant and Mary Ann Bitzer. No Commissioners were absent.

Staff present included Interim Executive Director Rick Robbins, Superintendent of Parks Kevin Brown, Marketing & Communications Coordinator Elizabeth Davis, Golf Course Manager Mark Marcuzzo, Golf Course Superintendent Bob Lovatto, Aquatics Supervisor Stephanie Whittington, Director of Business Rosemary Barczewski, Outdoor Program Coordinator Kelsey Rundle, and Administrative Assistant Susan Zaber. Attorney David Gerber arrived at 7:10 PM.

#### **PUBLIC INPUT**

Mark Achenbach addressed the board regarding three issues. First he addressed the board regarding the bond issue listed on the agenda. He read from a newspaper article that quoted Rick Robbins, and made comments regarding the article. He stated he went to the comptroller's web site where there is a financial report data base for all the park districts in the state. He stated of the 318 park districts in the state 53 hold Alternate Revenue Source bonds. 94 of the 318 park districts have zero debt. He stated the only reason CARD issues ARS bonds and pays them with rollover bonds is to keep the debt amassed out of the debt calculation. He stated 199 park districts have Government Obligation bonds. He stated his second issue was Miner's theater. He stated the park district had no business being in Miner's. He stated if the Board really believed the public supported the project, it should be placed on the ballot. Third, he addressed the Board regarding the "swamp land" issue that was addressed during public comment at the last meeting and Commissioner Bitzer's remark that the deal never happened. He referenced a FOIA he submitted regarding the Arlington property purchase, and made comments about the issue.

Shelly Steuart addressed the board regarding the Miner's theater. She presented information about the theater and its history. She stated Miner's was built by the local coal mining union members for the members, their families, and the community as a cultural community center. She stated the Miner's Institute Foundation was a small but dedicated group that kept the institute maintained and operational with its small budget. She stated the Institute needed assistance in moving the renovation project forward, and approached CARD, as the Institute thought it was a worthy and perfect fit for the District, given all of the events that could take place at the building. Some of the events

she listed included plays, concerts, photo and art galleries, comedy nights, lectures, workshops, and as an added venue for not only the Gateway Center but for the District. She stated Phase I of the project addressed some urgent and structural energy efficient issues. She stated since the completion of Phase I it would only take a handful of small projects to reopen the Institute with additional financial and community support. She stated one only has to look at the numerous projects across the country of same size and nature that have been completed to see the economic possibilities for the city as well as the District. She stated funding for most, if not all, of the same types of projects have been through federal, state, and private sector grants, and that these grants are more easily attained with an opening and operating project, even if only on a temporary basis. She then shared some of her own personal experiences with the Institute, and asked the board to continue to move the project forward so the building could be reopened to generate additional support and assist obtaining the state, federal, and private sector grants.

Phil Astrauskas addressed the board regarding a foundation established by O'Fallon parks and recreation in 2007 for those that do support parks and recreation. He pointed out that Rick Robbins is not a CARD tax paying resident, and that at the time a new Executive Director is appointed the appointee should be given twelve months to move into the District, as with all future hires of the park district.

Anika Cosgrove addressed the board regarding Miner's theater. She stated she had done a lot with Miner's in the past and that her first experience was when she was six years old and she acted in the Willy Wonka production. She stated her experience made her realize she wanted to be an actor and that she currently did a lot of acting. , and since that time she has continued to act. She stated she would like for Miner's to still be there when she grew up.

Rod Spears shared information about the typical board meeting of the past versus the present with Andrew Carruthers and Dave Tanzyus on the board. He stated two groups had been put together, one that was kind of Maryville heavy called CARD Watch and a second that included individuals from Collinsville called CARD Watch Collinsville. He stated that out of all of the meetings there had been an evolution of the attitude of the people involved. He stated that more than 4-6 months ago there was intense anger about some of the decisions that were made, and now there was more of an understanding of what some of the board would like to accomplish. He stated the evolution had taken the group to a point that it was felt progress had been made. He stated he thought the meeting was a cross-roads meeting, because all the progress that was seen the last couple of months appeared to be going backwards. He stated the citizens were not happy, that the citizens wanted to work with the board to accomplish the things that could be accomplished, to provide recreational services that could be afforded, and to get rid of the debt.

Rick Robbins presented the 2011 IPRA Community Service award to Larry Luensman, Owner of Culver's in Collinsville. He stated Larry and his Culver's team had been valuable to the community over the past few years. He stated that through countless

volunteer hours, donations of staff time, event prizes, and frozen custard for numerous events, Larry had become one of the first Chamber businesses the District turned to when something fun and extra was needed for a program. He stated Larry also involved his staff and the Culvers product with the annual Horseradish Festival and the Italian Fest each year, and that Larry served on the Community Character Task Force, and had proven invaluable toward the goals of the committee through his donations and efforts.

A motion was made by Tanzyus, seconded by Carruthers, that the Minutes of the Regular Meeting held January 17, 2012 be approved and placed on file. Upon roll being called, those voting AYE were: Carruthers, Tanzyus, Burke, Bryant, Bitzer. None voted NAY. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Bryant, seconded by Tanzyus, that the Minutes of the Closed Session held January 17, 2012 be approved as printed. Upon roll being called, those voting AYE were: Carruthers, Tanzyus, Burke, Bryant, Bitzer. None voted NAY. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Carruthers, seconded by Burke, that the Minutes of the Committee-of-the-Whole Meeting held February 7, 2012 be approved and placed on file. Upon roll being called, those voting AYE were: Carruthers, Tanzyus, Burke, Bryant, Bitzer. None voted NAY. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Burke, seconded by Bryant, that the Minutes of the Closed Session held February 7, 2012 be approved as printed. Upon roll being called, those voting AYE were: Carruthers, Tanzyus, Burke, Bryant, Bitzer. None voted NAY. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Bryant, seconded by Tanzyus that the Treasurers Report for January 2012 be approved as printed and placed on file for audit. Upon roll being called, those voting AYE were: Carruthers, Tanzyus, Burke, Bryant, Bitzer. None voted NAY. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Tanzyus, seconded by Carruthers, that the list of claims and accounts totaling \$180,242.75 be approved for payment.

- Andrew Carruthers asked Rick Robbins if he knew the last time insurance carriers were reviewed. Rick Robbins stated the carriers were just reviewed at the end January. He stated the District renewed with the same company, and the increase of 7% was the smallest it had been in years. He stated according to the 20% the District had faced the last few years, the increase was very reasonable.

Upon roll being called, those voting AYE were: Carruthers, Tanzyus, Burke, Bryant, Bitzer. None voted NAY. Motion passed.

The next item on the agenda was the staff reports. Rick Robbins asked the board if there were any questions.

- Andrew Carruthers inquired about upcoming events. Rick Robbins presented information about Daddy Daughter Date Night on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, Breakfast with the Bunny on March 31<sup>st</sup>, and information about wedding rentals at Willoughby Farms.
- Mary Ann Bitzer asked Elizabeth Davis about marketing, specifically about program guide sponsorship or advertisement. Elizabeth Davis stated she had 4 sponsorships purchased and that the back page had not been purchased. Mary Ann Bitzer asked how Elizabeth was going out and soliciting the sponsorships. Elizabeth responded CARD had something at a Chamber networking luncheon, something was submitted to the Chamber about it, and through networking at different business functions.
- David Tanzyus asked what the dollar goal was for the ads. Elizabeth Davis stated it would be ideal to have the advertisement pay for the whole guide, but that was probably unlikely. David Tanzyus asked where we were at last year and where Elizabeth thought we would be this year. Elizabeth Davis responded last year the back cover was sold, along with two other ones, and had the back cover been sold this year it would have been helpful.

A motion was made by Burke, seconded by Carruthers, to accept the staff reports as printed. Upon roll being called, those voting AYE were: Carruthers, Tanzyus, Burke, Bryant, Bitzer. None voted NAY. Motion passed.

### **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

This first discussion item was the Credit Card/Expense Reimbursement Policy:

- Rick Robbins referenced a draft copy presented to the board as a part of the board packet.
- Andrew Carruthers stated he went through it and that it looked pretty good.
- Joan Burke stated she did not have anything and that it looked good.
- Rick Robbins stated a final draft would be brought to the board at the next regular meeting for the board to approve.

The next discussion item was an update on the construction of Pleasant Ridge Park:

- Rick Robbins stated the park is about 94% complete. He stated the completion of the landscaping and going through a checklist of items that needed to be addressed were the primary things that needed to be completed. He stated the District was prepared to put into the state the request for the funding of the OSLAD grant that was awarded to help pay for the park, which was for \$400,000.
- Rick Robbins stated some statements of concern were brought to his attention, regarding the design of the park and the placement of the maintenance shed at the front of the park. He stated he thought the plan was dictated possibly because of the house, which houses the Park Dept offices. He stated he asked Kevin Brown and his staff to come up with a plan to block as much of the view of the maintenance shed as they can with trees or something else to make the appearance of the front of the park more acceptable.

- Mary Ann Bitzer asked Rick Robbins when it was anticipated the park would be open. Rick Robbins stated a date was not yet available. Kevin Brown stated approximately 3-4 months.

The next topic discussed was Arlington Wetlands:

- Rick Robbins referenced an aerial view of the wetlands provided to the board, and stated he wanted to make it clear that the property had nothing to do with the golf course. He stated the property was not adjacent to the golf course, that it was adjacent to Arlington Drive, which is the road that leads to the golf course. He stated in 2009 the District purchased 7.5 acres and had an agreement with Madison County, which has control over adjacent ground.
- Mary Ann Bitzer asked about total acreage. Bob Lovatto responded it was approximately 40 acres.
- Rick Robbins stated the District was in an agreement with Madison County and RC&D (Heartlands Conservancy) to develop and maintain the property. He stated Phase I was scheduled to be completed in September 2012.
- Mary Ann Bitzer asked if the District planned to do educational training. Rick Robbins stated the Districts goal was to use it for classes at some point, similar to what is currently conducted at Willoughby Farm.

The next topic discussed was the proposed 2012 Athletic Field fees:

- Spike Bryant asked when was the last time the fees were reviewed. Rick Robbins stated they had not been reviewed since he had been a part of the District, and he thought that based on information reviewed it was probably 10-15 years.
- Joan Burke asked if the fees were paid before or after a game. Rick Robbins stated there were occasions when the fees were collected prior to a game, but there were also agreements with organizations, like CBSL or the Raiders, where the fees were collected at the end of the season. Joan Burke asked if penalties were charged if the fees were not paid at the end of the season. Rick stated "no". Joan stated that penalties were something that should be initiated.
- Rick Robbins stated the fields were open for anyone to use at anytime for no fee, but if someone or a group wanted to reserve a field charges were applied.
- David Tanzyus stated it was his understanding that Unit 10 and CBSL were remaining the same, and Rick Robbins confirmed his statement.
- Mary Ann Bitzer stated she wanted to discuss the fact that Unit 10 did not pay a fee and had first priority. There was discussion regarding the details of the agreement with Unit 10 and past issues. Rick Robbins stated the District did work on a lot of the school play grounds, and that was one of the areas he would like to come back and look at, because the District was paying to maintain some of the playgrounds.

The next topic discussed was the PEP Grant application:

- Kevin Brown presented information about the grant application. He stated two applications were being submitted this year, one that included the request for a Bobcat and one without the Bobcat. He mentioned each item outlined on the

request and provided more detail about the projects/items listed in the application. He stated the amount of the items listed in the application was approximately \$105,000, and the amount being requested from Madison County was \$99,000. He also highlighted the additional differences between the two applications.

- Mary Ann Bitzer asked when the District was notified of the grant award. Kevin Brown responded the District was typically notified the first week of April.

The next topic discussed was capital expenditure needs:

- Rick Robbins stated the District had a considerable amount of money that was saved and bonded that needed to be used for the operating of District facilities, equipment, etc. He stated the information was being brought to the board to acquire direction and to request approval to purchase items. He stated the District was definitely on track to go back to the District parks and make improvements. He stated there were some serious and immediate needs, due to ignored requests from the past. He stated it was doubtful the District would be able to make it through the season with some of the current equipment. He stated he was working with staff to draft a 5 year capital improvement plan to present to the board, which was something that should have been in place. He stated the first request was for equipment for the golf course, specifically for a new fairway mower, bunker rake, and a finish mower.
- Mary Ann Bitzer asked about the pros and cons of the leasing versus purchase options that were presented to the board. Bob Lovatto explained the lease option was for 4-5 years to rotate out all of the mowing equipment, which was the equipment that needed to be rotated more frequently. He stated the lease agreement was for 8 pieces that rotated out all of the mowing equipment, which he stated would drastically reduce maintenance expenditures. Bob stated the other option was for the purchase of new or used equipment that was in dire need of replacement. He stated the life expectancy of the mowers requested was 5 years, that the equipment was 5 years old when it was purchased with the golf course, and that the mowers were 10 years old now.
- There was additional discussion and questions asked regarding the differences and options for lease options versus purchase options.
- Andrew Carruthers asked if any of the attachments provided were lease quotes. Rick Robbins stated they were all purchase quotes. Andrew Carruthers stated he would like to see short and long-term lease options.
- There was discussion about timelines to make decisions, and options to provide additional information and have further discussion.

The next discussion item was about the request to abate additional bond levies:

- Rick Robbins addressed some of the statements made during public comment and his opinion that the District needed to move forward with past practice this year, due to the way the bonds were sold and agreements made regarding the bonds.
- Andrew Carruthers referenced a comment made during public comment, regarding the District debt limit and the fact that our debt limit was \$18 million

and the District debt was actually \$25 million. He stated it was possible for the District to exceed its debt limit because of the laws associated with Alternate Revenue Bonds. He stated ARS bond debt was not applied to the debt limit, provided the District did not extend the tax levies. He stated in the last couple weeks it was brought to the attention of the board that the District would not be able to borrow anymore money, if the tax levies were extended, because the District would be over its non-referendum debt limit. The District would then not be allowed to do a rollover bond in the fall to pick-up the 2004 debt payment. He stated the original plan presented was not going to work, and as stated by David Tanzyus, would cost more money. He stated by extending the bond levies and going past the debt limit, the District would be married to unfavorable terms for the next several years. He then referenced various conversations he and other board and staff members had with individuals regarding District debt and the goals of the District to reduce and pay its debt. He stated from the meetings it was made clear that there were many options that could be pursued, and that the District should get as many options as possible from as many financial consultants possible to investigate the different ways the District could restructure its debt to get the best deal for the tax payers. He stated he thought the District had an opportunity to not only lower the interest rates, but to consolidate the debt, to have some or most of it apply toward the debt limit, and maybe shorten the life of the debt. He stated if the levies were not abated none of those options were possible.

- David Tanzyus stated it boiled down to two things for him. One was to keep the costs low and the second was to get a plan to make it transparent, and that the District cannot be 8 million dollars over where it should be.
- David Tanzyus asked if on the action items on the agenda if E could be moved in front of D. David Gerber stated it could be moved.
- Rick Robbins stated a lot of time was spent by him and the board learning about the issue and about what the District can and cannot do. He stated there wasn't anyone who didn't have the desire to be transparent, and who didn't understand the District was not in the position to take on more debt.

The last discussion item was about a proposal to authorize the District to pursue options for debt restructuring, consolidating, refinancing, and policy controls:

- Andrew Carruthers stated this was something he touched on during the abatement discussion, regarding the meetings had the last week about finance options. He stated by the board approving the proposal the board would be taking a collective step in taking a policy shift in favor of finding the best deal for debt restructuring.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

A motion was made by Bryant, seconded by Tanzyus, that the fees for the 2012 CARD athletic fields be approved as printed.

- Mary Ann Bitzer asked if the review of the fees was going to be conducted on an annual basis. Rick Robbins stated it could be reviewed annually, but is typically reviewed on an as needed basis.

Upon roll being called, those voting AYE were: Carruthers, Tanzyus, Burke, Bryant, Bitzer. None voted NAY. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Burke, seconded by Bryant that Resolution Number 12-2, Resolution Authorizing the Executive Director to Apply for Park Commission Funds from Madison County, Illinois, be adopted. Upon roll being called, those voting AYE were: Carruthers, Tanzyus, Burke, Bryant, Bitzer. None voted NAY. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Carruthers, seconded by Tanzyus that in an effort to determine the most cost effective methods for paying down the District's total outstanding debt, the Board authorize District staff to pursue possible options to consolidate, restructure and/or refinance District debt; including determining the feasibility of such options that may be available to the District in accordance with statutes that govern such activities; to take advantage of historically low interest rates with the desire to lessen or eliminate fees spent on annual rollover bonds, shorten the repayment term, have the District's debt limit accurately reflect its total obligations, save the taxpayers' money, and to provide the Board with a thorough breakdown of all such options available. Upon roll being called, those voting AYE were: Carruthers, Tanzyus, Burke, Bryant, Bitzer. None voted NAY. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Bryant, seconded by Bitzer that the tax levies for Ordinance Numbers 07-1 and 09-7 be abated and that appropriate Abatement Certificates be filed with the respective County Clerks.

- Andrew Carruthers clarified that a vote to abate was not a vote for rollovers in the fall. He stated hopefully there would be other options to consider prior to November.

Upon roll being called, those voting AYE were: Carruthers, Tanzyus, Burke, Bryant, Bitzer. None voted NAY. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Carruthers, seconded by Tanzyus that the commissioners go to CLOSED SESSION for the purpose of discussing the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance or dismissal of specific employees, to discuss the sale or purchase of real property, and to review and discuss 2011 closed session minutes.

The board adjourned to CLOSED SESSION at 8:30 PM. Commissioner Burke left the meeting at 8:30 PM.

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners of the Collinsville Area Recreation District was called to order in OPEN SESSION by President Mary Ann Bitzer at 9:18 PM, February 21, 2012 at the district office, 10 Gateway Drive, Collinsville, Illinois. Upon roll being called the following commissioners answered present: Andrew



Carruthers, David Tanzyus, Spike Bryant, and Mary Ann Bitzer. Commissioner Joan Burke was absent. Staff present included Interim Executive Director Rick Robbins, Marketing & Communications Coordinator Elizabeth Davis, Aquatics Supervisor Stephanie Whittington, Director of Business Rosemary Barczewski, Outdoor Program Coordinator Kelsey Rundle, and Administrative Assistant Susan Zaber. Attorney David Gerber was also present.

### **ADDITIONAL ACTION ITEMS**

A motion was made by Carruthers, seconded by Tanzyus that Rosemary Barczewski be appointed the IMRF Agent. Upon roll being called, those voting AYE were: Carruthers, Tanzyus, Bryant, Bitzer. None voted NAY. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Tanzyus, seconded by Carruthers that the salary for Interim Executive Director be revised to \$73,000 annually retroactive to the position start date. Upon roll being called, those voting AYE were: Carruthers, Tanzyus, Bryant, Bitzer. None voted NAY. Motion passed.

A motion was made by Carruthers, seconded by Tanzyus that the following minutes of Closed Sessions of the Board be approved for release to the public:

- January 18, 2011
- February 15, 2011
- September 20, 2011

Upon roll being called, those voting AYE were: Carruthers, Tanzyus, Bryant, Bitzer. None voted NAY. Motion passed.

No further business coming before the Commissioners, a motion was made by Bryant, seconded by Tanzyus, that the meeting be adjourned. Upon roll being called, those voting AYE were: Carruthers, Tanzyus, Bryant, Bitzer. None voted Nay. Motion passed.

The meeting stood adjourned at 9:24 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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Susan Zaber, Recording Secretary

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Date