

**Minutes of the Waukegan Park District
Meeting of the Board of Commissioners
January 8, 2008**

The Board of Commissioners of the Waukegan Park District met in a regular meeting on January 8, 2008 in the Rose Administrative Center, 2000 Belvidere Street, Waukegan, Illinois.

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:45 p.m. by President Duffy.

II. Roll Call

Present: Commissioners Durkin, Foley, Sarocka, Motley and Duffy. Also present was Board Attorney Charles Smith.

III. Consent Items

A. Minutes

1. December 11, 2007 (Board of Commissioners)
2. December 13, 2007 (Special Meeting)
3. December 17, 2007 (Committee of the Whole)
4. December 20, 2007 (Special Meeting)

B. Bills

C. Payroll

D. Financial Statements

E. Authorization to receive bids/quotes on the following:

1. Parks Division
 - a. Contractual Custodial Services
 - b. Recycling and Solid Waste Collection Disposal Services
 - c. Contractual Mowing Services
2. Administration
 - a. Seasonal Brochures (4)
 - b. Business Liquidator to conduct surplus property sale of OHGC/CH property (Ordinance #08-01-01)
 - c. Outdoor Community Sports Complex
 1. Architects (Landscape/Buildings)
 2. Civil Engineering
 3. Project Manager
 4. Leib Group Proforma Update

Motion by Commissioner Durkin, seconded by Commissioner Foley, to approve the Consent Items and to pay the bills as presented. Roll call to the Motion: Ayes: Durkin, Foley, Sarocka, Motley, Duffy. Nays: None. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. Public Portion

Several members of the public asked to address the Board.

John Balen, Second Ward Alderman for the City of Waukegan and former County Board member, reviewed the Park District's past attempts to get the Forest Preserve District to exchange land so that the Park District could utilize Forest Preserve District land for the soccer complex. Mr. Balen urged that the Orchard Hills Golf Course has been around for over 80 years and claimed that it has made over \$1 million dollars in past years for the Park District. He requested a joint meeting between the City, Park District, and the Forest Preserve District to reconsider the Board's December's vote to close Orchard Hills Golf Course and to consider other options. Among his suggestions were closing the Greenshire golf course or swapping land with the Forest Preserve District because he felt that the older population is being "kicked out" of Orchard Hills.

Linda Ryckman addressed the Board. She opposes the closing of the Orchard Hills Golf Course and she discussed Johns Manville's representations concerning meetings had with the Park District and requested that the Park District reopen Orchard Hills Country Club and again negotiate with Johns Manville for a site for the recreation/soccer complex.

Matt Ohl, a representative of the US Environmental Protection Agency, addressed the Board on the Yeoman Creek landfill site. He advised that the construction at the Yeoman Creek site was complete and there are approximately 25 to 30 acres available for reuse for public purposes.

Dale Paav spoke opposing the closing the Orchard Hills Golf Club and believes that the Park District will regret closing this course. He stated that there are traffic concerns with the proposed use of the Orchard Hills site for a recreation complex.

Richard Seremak addressed the Board and requested that the Orchard Hills Golf Course be kept open. He requested an additional year to review other sites and believes that the decision to close Orchard Hills was too hasty and further supported the suggestion of exploring the Yeoman Creek site.

Jim Sroka addressed the Board stating that he is a 40 year resident of Waukegan and that in his opinion the Board moved too quickly in closing Orchard Hills. He wants the Board to reconsider its vote and wants the Park District, City of Waukegan, and the School Board to work together so Waukegan can maintain two 18 hole golf courses. Mr. Sroka stated that the Larsen landfill would be a great location for the recreation complex.

Moria Greene addressed the Board and stated that she owns four homes in Waukegan and wants to preserve the trees at the Orchard Hills Golf Club. She opposes closing the Orchard Hills golf course.

Brian Bell addressed the Board and stated that the taxpayers will suffer if Orchard Hills Golf Course is closed and suggested that the Orchard Hills Golf Course is profitable for the Park District.

Michael Urbanec addressed the Board and suggested that the Park District swap or trade the Orchard Hills Golf Course with the Forest Preserve District so that the Forest

Preserve District would provide land for a recreation/soccer complex and that the Forest Preserve District could then operate Orchard Hills Golf Course.

Larry TenPas, Alderman for the City of Waukegan, addressed the Board that this is the first Park Board meeting that he has ever attended. He stated his opinion that the decision to close Orchard Hills Golf Course was hasty and he suggested a land swap with the Forest Preserve District. He thinks that the idea to close Orchard Hills is a bad one.

Sue Sassone requested the Board to reconsider its vote on the Orchard Hills Golf Course. She stresses that golf is a sport for all ages and that many older people who use Orchard Hills Golf Course are being denied a recreational opportunity.

Babe Addison of Park City addressed the Board and asserted that the people do not want Orchard Hills Golf Course closed and that the closing happened too fast.

Richard Seremak again addressed the Board and questioned Commissioner Motley about Robert Morris College approaching the Park District about paying some of the costs for the construction of a recreation complex so that the College could use the stadium for a potential football team.

Commissioner Motley responded that there have only been very preliminary discussions with Robert Morris College and nothing has come in the way of a proposal from the College at this time.

Dale Paak addressed the Board and stated his opposition to close Orchard Hills Golf Course.

Tony May addressed the Board and stated his opinion that the recreation/soccer complex should not be located at the far northwest side of the city. He stated a concern that children will ride bicycles to the complex and it will be hazardous for children to ride that far to get to the complex.

Tom Koncan addressed the Board and suggested reconsideration of the closing of Orchard Hills Golf Course.

Mike Selep of the Illinois Park District Association presented plaques to Michael Wirsing and Nicole Jacobson for their successful completion of all the requirements to be Certified Park and Recreation Professionals.

V. Progress Reports

A. Executive Director. Greg Petry submitted his written report and orally reported to the Board that Ferris Homes is withdrawing from the Pritzker property development. The downturn in the housing market has led to the decision not to proceed with this development at this time.

Mr. Petry also reported that there is no further update on land acquisition. He also reported that a new legislative session was beginning and that the Park District's money from off-track betting would be considered in the new legislative session.

B. Attorney's Report. Mr. Smith reported that he has been contacted by an attorney representing Mr. and Mrs. Vakili concerning their illegal dumping into the ravine behind their home at 520 Bluff Street. The attorneys are to meet and try and resolve the litigation and have repairs made to the ravine.

Mr. Smith also reported that he had written to both Mr. Doyle and Mr. Dutcher advising them that based on Mr. Doyle's letter, the agreement for professional services for auditing services between the Park District and Doyle Dutcher is at an end due to the dissolution of the Doyle Dutcher partnership and that the Park District will be seeking proposals for auditing services.

C. Finance & Administration. Steve Warneke presented a written report to the Board and discussed the need for scheduling of the budget workshop to commence work on the 2008/2009 budget. February 5, 2008 at 4:00 p.m. was suggested for the budget workshop at the Rose Administrative Center.

D. Cultural Arts. Claudia Freeman presented her written report and orally advised the Board that it was too soon after the Messiah concert to have final numbers. Commissioner Foley commented on the number of positive comments she had received from constituents concerning the Do It Yourself Messiah. Commissioner Foley suggested that better signage for next year as to the designated areas for different singers. Commissioner Foley further stated that she has a number of citizens who are willing to work on the 2008 program.

A committee is to be formed to support the Do It Yourself Messiah concert and other cultural events in the future. A financial report on this program will be presented at the February Board meeting. Commissioners Durkin and Sarocka also stated that they had received a number of positive comments from the public concerning the Do It Yourself Messiah concert.

E. Parks. Michael Trigg presented his written report and orally reported to the Board that work on the deep well at Bonnie Brook Golf Course is on schedule and should be completed in February, 2008.

F. Recreation. Alicia Mentell presented her written report and further reported to the Board that there were 450 people at the New Year's Day Polar Bear Plunge. She also reminded the Commissioners that Winterfest is scheduled for January 19, 2008 at Belvidere Park.

VI. Review, Discuss, Decide

A. Building Demolition. Mr. Petry reported to the Board that the proposals for demolition came back in excess of \$20,000 and will require bids. This matter was deferred to the February, 2008 meeting.

B. Interfund Transfers. There were no interfund transfers to be considered by the Board.

C. Resolution 2008-01-01. **Motion by Commissioner Motely, seconded by Commissioner Foley, to approve Resolution 2008-01-01 releasing Executive Session Minutes from June 12, 2007, August 14, 2007, September 11, 2007,**

October 4, 2007, and October 9, 2007. Roll call to the Motion: Ayes: Durkin, Foley, Sarocka, Motley, Duffy. Nays: None. Motion carried unanimously.

D. Boundary and Topographic Survey Services for Outdoor Community Sports Complex. **Motion by Commissioner Motley, seconded by Commissioner Foley, to approve the proposal from Gewalt Hamilton Associates, Inc. in the amount of \$46,500 for a boundary and topographic survey of the Orchard Hills Golf Course and a wetland delineation report and jurisdictional determination in the amount of \$6,500 for the Orchard Hills site. Roll call to the Motion: Ayes: Durkin, Foley, Motley, Duffy. Nays: Sarocka. Motion carried.**

E. Nominations and Selections.

1. Jack Benny Arts and Humanities Award
2. Volunteer of the Year 2007
3. Patron of the Year 2007

Motion by Commissioner Durkin, seconded by Commissioner Foley, to approve Joellen Dooley as the recipient of the Jack Benny Arts and Humanities Award for her support for arts in the communities; to approve the Waukegan Police Academy Alumni Association for Volunteer of the Year; and to approve Great Lakes Credit Union for the Patron of the Year. Roll call to the Motion: Ayes: Durkin, Foley, Sarocka, Motley, Duffy. Nays: None. Motion carried unanimously.

F. News Sun Ad. **Motion by Commissioner Motley, seconded by Commissioner Foley, to approve the expenditure of funds for an ad in the Waukegan News Sun to explain the Park District's position concerning the closing of the Orchard Hills Golf Course and the building of the recreation complex at that site.**

Commissioner Sarocka stated that he opposes the position set forth in the ad and stated that many of the statements in the ad were opinions and not facts. He stated that there is a need for soccer in our community but he opposes the closing of the Orchard Hills Golf Course.

Commissioner Durkin stated that he agrees with the building of the soccer complex at Orchard Hills but does not want the clubhouse torn down or any buildings levied until there is a complete analysis of alternative sites.

Roll call to the Motion: Ayes: Foley, Motley, Duffy. Nays: Durkin, Sarocka. Motion carried.

VII. Executive Session

No Executive Session was held.

VII. Questions from Commissioners

Commissioner Durkin stated that he would like to see the Park District enter into talks with the Forest Preserve District concerning exchanging land so that perhaps the soccer complex could be built on Forest Preserve District land. He noted that it had been several years since this idea had been broached with the Forest Preserve District and that perhaps there has been a change in attitude in this regard. He stated that he

would make a motion to revisit the site of the sports complex and to explore two or three different potential sites and asked that this matter be placed on the February agenda.

Commissioner Foley commented that she has conducted extensive investigation into the potential of using the Yeoman Creek site as a location for the soccer complex. She stated that she had had discussions with Linda Ryckman, who had addressed the Board, but she has also discussed this potential site with two different attorneys who worked on the extensive environmental litigation concerning the Yeoman Creek landfill. She stated that from 1959 to 1969 this area was used as a landfill. Final clean up at the site was commenced in 1996 and in 1999 a consent decree was entered with the USEPA concerning this landfill site. In February, 2002 construction was commenced to repair the environmental damage done at the site and in 2003 there was a pause in the construction while the potential of burying sediment from the dredging from Waukegan Harbor was explored. In February 2007 the USEPA had a five year review and found that additional work still needed to be done and that over \$27 million had been expended up to that time in remediating the contamination at Yeoman Creek. She further stated that \$4 million had been expended in engineering a barrier required in order to prevent any further leeching of the contaminants and that in order to use the site for recreational purposes, there would need to be a leveling of the surface. This would require additional engineering studies and a new engineering barrier. She did not see how it would ever be cost effective or safe to utilize the Yeoman Creek site for park purposes.

Mr. Petry stated that the Waukegan Park District had spent considerable sums and time to get out of the Yeoman Creek site and Board attorney Charles Smith confirmed that the Park District had had considerable legal costs in order to avoid designation as a responsible party for the Yeoman Creek site. Mr. Smith urged the Board not to jeopardize the past gains in this regard.

Commissioner Sarocka stated that he wanted to thank the members of the public who had spoken at the meeting concerning closing Orchard Hills. He again stated that he did not think that the decision of this magnitude should be made after a one hour meeting and feels that the decision is a slap in the face to him and to the public. He further suggested that an article in the *News Sun* that appeared at the time that the Park District acquired the Orchard Hills site suggested that 35 acres to the west of the Orchard Hills Golf Course could be acquired and used for a recreation complex.

Mr. Petry clarified his quotes from the 1997 article and stated that all attempts to negotiate the use of Forest Preserve District property had been rejected.

Commissioner Sarocka stated that in his opinion there are three or four alternative sites for the recreation complex and stated that he sees no need to move forward on the closing of Orchard Hills Golf Course and building of a new recreation complex at the site unless it is an unanimous 5-0 vote. He urged a moratorium on any activity on the Orchard Hills Golf Course site until alternatives are explored.

Commissioner Motley stated that 12 years ago he ran for the Park District Board with a goal of providing a recreational/soccer complex. He noted that there are over 5,000 registered soccer players with approximately 3,000 baseball and softball players. He stated that the development of a recreation/soccer complex is necessary to support the recreational needs of these citizens. He stated that he would have supported

another option, but does not see another option with the number of acres required to the Orchard Hills site.

President Duffy stated that in his opinion all the due diligence required for the location of the recreation/soccer complex at Orchard Hills had been done by the Board over a period of years. He supports the decision that the Board made at the December meeting.

President Duffy went on to apologize publicly to Commissioner Sarocka for a personal remark that was made in a heated exchange over this issue. He stated that he will refrain from any personal remarks, but he will continue to move forward on the building of a recreation/soccer complex. He further stated that he is willing to go to the Forest Preserve District one more time to see if they are willing to exchange land but he is not optimistic.

Mr. Petry advised the Board prior to adjournment that golf passes, gift certificates, and drink chips that were issued out of the Orchard Hills Golf Course will be honored at the Bonnie Brook Golf Course.

IX. Adjournment. Motion by Commissioner Motley, seconded by Commissioner Durkin, to adjourn meeting. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles W. Smith
Secretary