

**Minutes of the Waukegan Park District
Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners
Recreation Program Advisory Committee
August 1, 2012**

The Board of Commissioners of the Waukegan Park District met in a special meeting on August 1 at the Belvidere Recreation Center, 412 South Lewis Avenue, Waukegan, Illinois.

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 pm. by Greg Petry, Executive Director, who directed a call of the roll.

II. Roll Call

Present: Commissioner Duffy. Absent: President Sarocka, Commissioners Foley, Kilkelly, and Motley. Petry noted that since there was not a quorum this was not an official meeting.

Also, present were Recreation Program Advisory Committee members Peggi Braden, Dulce Ortiz, Martha Padilla-Ramos, Mercedes Rivera, and Della Steele. Staff present included Alicia A. Mentell Jay Lerner, Jennifer Dumas, Dayna Wick, Michael Wirsing. Doug Holzrichter, PHN, was also in attendance.

III. Review, Discuss, Decide

A. Fitness Center Membership Rates

Dayna Wick provided an overview of the current status of Fitness Center memberships. Since the Field House opened in 2006, the number of memberships has decreased. As a result staff initiated an analysis of the possible reasons and proposed recommendation for addressing the problem. Influencing factors causing the decrease in memberships include the economic recession, competing fitness centers opening in the area, lack of water amenities, and members cancelling due to expense, lack of use, or moving out of town.

A consistent pattern over recent years has shown that specials and promotions that reduced the membership fees for a limited time brought in the largest membership numbers. These included such six week promotions as the Five Year Anniversary Special that brought in 326 members, and the Commit to be Fit campaign that brought in 236 new members. Seeing the success of these promotional campaigns, completing local facility pricing comparisons, and conducting a roundtable discussion with other park district fitness managers, a new membership fee structure was developed.

New reduced membership rates will be introduced in August and go into effect in September. The intent is to increase membership numbers and engage more individuals from the community in becoming more active and fit. Membership rates include a tiered structure so that individuals can select the membership type that is right

for them. Bronze memberships will cost \$29/month and include unlimited use of the fitness center, gymnasium, batting cages, climbing wall, and walking track. Silver memberships will cost \$35/month and include additional services such as basic group fitness classes, child center, and one free personal training session. Gold memberships will cost \$45/month and introduce new amenities such as specialized classes such as Zumba and Bootcamp. Gold memberships will also include a summer swimming pass to Ganster Pool. All memberships will include Plus One, Children, and Family discounts to help bring in more families to the Field House and particularly the Fitness Center.

B. American Independence Festivities

Alicia Mentell indicated that all available funds in the Memorial Endowment Fund for the parade and festival have been depleted. Over the past several years there has been a significant loss of major partners like the City of Waukegan and the Waukegan Township. In addition, sponsorships from local businesses and contributions from residents were down this year. A decision will need to be made on how to proceed in the future with these two events.

The overriding consensus was to hold the parade and festival, but to keep involvement local, eliminating the high cost of bringing in outside groups. In addition, judging the entries could be eliminated so the review stand and sound system would not be needed. Fees should be charged to every entry, but with the amount varying depending upon the type of group it was.

C. Waukegan SportsPark Operations

Jay Lerner distributed copies of the Waukegan SportsPark Outcomes Summary. He identified the ball fields as being rated one of the top four diamond complexes in Illinois. Lerner also noted that the centralized location as well as the exceptional condition of the athletic fields has attracted regional and national soccer tournaments. He also stated that the facility handles all the local needs for softball, baseball, football and soccer. He noted that the adult softball leagues increased by more than twenty teams in the summer and thirty teams in the fall.

Lerner presented the 2012 Waukegan SportsPark list of tournaments at the facility. He highlighted the ECNL National Championship soccer tournament which had 280 teams from around the country and the US Club Soccer tournament that had 150 teams. Lerner noted how well the facility has been received by tournament users and the 2013 tournament schedule is shaping up nicely.

D. New Aquatic Facility

Petry reviewed the conceptual planning process. He noted that PHN staff will present a summary report to the Board of Commissioners at the Committee of the Whole on August 21. It will include conceptual plans for Hinkston and Belvidere Parks. If grant

opportunities become available, the project should be able to move forward. Doug Holzrichter from PHN expanded on different points of the planning process. The board and staff toured eighteen indoor or outdoor facilities in the Chicagoland area. PHN staff has developed some very generic conceptual plans that the board will be able to consider. Petry commented that the board will not be looking for the easy decision, but the right decision.

IV. Closed Session

There was no closed session

V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Alicia A. Mentell
Superintendent of Recreation