

**Minutes of the Waukegan Park District  
Committee of the Whole  
July 24, 2012**

The Committee of the Whole of the Waukegan Park District met in a regular meeting on July 24, 2012 at the Rose Administrative Center, 2000 Belvidere, Waukegan IL.

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by President Sarocka at 4:00 p.m. who directed a call of the roll.

**II. Roll Call**

Present: Commissioners Duffy, Motley, Foley, Kilkelly and President Sarocka. Absent: none. Also present was Executive Director Greg Petry and Board Attorney Charles Smith.

**III. Topics**

A. Gold Medal Video Presentation. Greg Petry opened the meeting by playing the Gold Medal Video Presentation assembled by the staff under the leadership of Teddy Anderson highlighting the diversity and accomplishments of the Waukegan Park District. This video will be made part of an award submission for which Waukegan is a nominee. The Commissioners all commended Mr. Petry and his staff on producing an excellent video that demonstrates the diversity of the Waukegan Park District and facilities constructed by the Park District, especially the Field House and new recreation complex.

B. Golf Management Assessment. Staff provided a copy of the invitation for proposals for golf management services as well as the proposal submitted by Golf Visions Management, Inc., Kemper Sports, and Billy Casper Golf to the Commissioners. The strengths and weaknesses of the various proposals were reviewed by the Commissioners who asked several questions about the proposals. Mr. Glogovsky and Mr. Petry recommended the hiring of a golf management company as opposed to having the Park District continue to operate the golf courses as it has in the past. Mr. Petry and Mr. Glogovsky explained the options were to: 1) continue management of the golf courses as the Park District has done for years; 2) reorganization of the existing management of golf by the Park District; or 3) enter into a contract with a golf management company. The benefits and key messages of entering into a contract with a golf management company were reviewed by the Board. The Board directed that the issue be opened for public comment.

Public Comments and Questions

Rick Seremak, 1902 North Avenue, Waukegan IL

Mr. Seremak addressed the Board and raised questions where the savings would come from by the hiring of an outside golf management company. The projected savings of \$1.3 million over five years would come in large part due to savings on employee costs

of benefits. Mr. Glogovsky also explained that he thought that there would be enhanced revenue generated and cost savings due to the purchasing power of any of the three organizations that submitted proposals. Mr. Glogovsky also stated that some of the savings will come from elimination of positions.

Sue Schwab, 2047 Chestnut, Waukegan IL

Ms. Schwab addressed the Board saying that she had mixed feelings about the proposal, thinking that the management company could run the banquet facilities in a better manner, but was concerned whether the Park District would offer a golf pro giving lessons.

Commissioner Duffy asked questions about IMRF pensions and Mr. Glogovsky explained at what point those pensions are vested.

Sally Coffelt, Waukegan IL

Ms. Coffelt addressed the Board and discussed the possibility of employee Greg Benson losing his job and his benefits. She inquired what the alternatives are if a company is granted a contract and does not perform.

Dave Parske, 2408 Metropolitan, Waukegan IL

Mr. Parske addressed the Board saying that he was familiar with the Casper Operation and Golf Visions and has knowledge of the courses they already operate in the Chicagoland area. Mr. Parske encouraged due diligence in checking out the three companies that have submitted proposals. He acknowledged that the Casper organization does a good job.

Steve Lund, non-resident passholder

Mr. Lunz addressed the Board and inquired whether a new management company would offer dinner at Bonnie Brook on dates other than Wednesdays.

Ms. Schwab inquired if it was possible to get a contract in place by January 1, 2013.

Commissioner Foley addressed the issue of meals and whether there would be food service to the public on nights other than Wednesdays.

Ms. Coffelt again addressed the Board and asked a question about the time line for a management team to be in place.

Mr. Seremak requested more detail on the savings, but appreciated the reduction of the IMRF levee by the elimination of positions.

Mr. Parske asked if there would still be permanent tee times available to the public, and Mr. Petry assured him there would be.

#### **IV. Commissioner Comments**

Janet Kilkelly asked questions of the public commentators concerning what they considered important. Mr. Parske stated that Bonnie Brook is one of the finest public golf courses in the entire area, and he would not want anything to diminish that. Commissioner Kilkelly asked the public commentators if they were opposed to golf management, and if so, why. Mr. Parske and Ms. Schwab expressed concerns that with a profit motive, the course might not be maintained to the same high standards it has been by the Park District.

Commissioner Foley stressed that the Board will determine the parameters under which the management company will operate and wants to be certain that if the management company hires Park District employees, they will not be treated as new employees but that their service to the Park District will be recognized by the new management company.

Commissioner Motley has stated that he has spoken with Tony about the golf management company. Tony supports this, but Mr. Motley wants guarantees for the hiring of employees by the management company, especially Greg Benson and Tony.

Commissioner Duffy stated that he also wants to make sure that the existing Park District employees are taken care of by a new management company and the quality of the course will be maintained. Commissioner Duffy acknowledged that the management company cannot guarantee employment for all employees, but Commissioner Duffy wants assurances that if a management company is hired, they will maintain the course to the same high standards the Park District has and protect the benefits to season passholders.

President Sarocka thanked the public for their comments and questioned some of the financial projections provided and the ability of a management company to run the course any better than it is currently being run. President Sarocka stressed that these golf management companies did not make Bonnie Brook the wonderful course it is, that was accomplished by the Park District. He cited the fact that management companies are strictly concerned with making a profit. President Sarocka stated that he would not support terminating employees.

President Sarocka also commented that the condition of the course is very important, and that the Park District has made several improvements, most particularly adding a deep well which has saved substantial dollars for the Park District. He also expressed his opinion that many of the patrons of the golf courses are not in favor of a management company. He also expressed that he has had some positive experiences with Golf Vision, but overall does not favor a golf management company.

Commissioner Duffy asked if this issue will be on the August agenda, and Mr. Petry stated that it will. Commissioner Duffy also pointed out that the golf operations have cost \$300,000 over the past two years. Mr. Seremak from the audience questioned the amount of the losses, and Mr. Petry pointed out that there is a potential \$300,000 to \$500,000 swing if this is properly implemented. Mr. Seremak again questioned what

the charges will be for professional services of a management company, and if there will be any savings realized by the Park District.

Commissioner Motley stated that he wants the golf advisory committee comments prior to approval of a contract. Mr. Petry stated that the golf advisory committee will be involved in the decision and that the staff welcomes their input.

Commissioner Duffy stated the budget information from the potential contractors would not be released, but will be reviewed by the Commissioners. Commissioner Foley stated that the golf advisory committee needs to be consulted before any decision is made. President Sarocka stated that he would like to see input not only from the golf advisory committee but also players of the course and members of leagues that utilize Greenshire and Bonnie Brook.

Mr. Seremak asked if the status quo operation of the course by the Park District is an option. President Sarocka stated that, yes, it would be.

Ms. Schwab asked how our taxpayers will benefit by this decision and whether it would lead to privatization of other Park District facilities like the Field House and the sports complex. She also expressed an opinion that the restaurant is the only part of the golf operation that is losing money.

Executive Director Petry said there is need for change to keep the entire Park District financially solvent. He stated that the Park District remains committed to the public and its employees and to providing good services. Any decision made will be made with the goal of improving the courses.

Commissioner Foley pointed out that the management services would also benefit Greenshire Course.

## **V. Adjournment**

Motion by Commissioner Motley, seconded by Commissioner Duffy, to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles W. Smith  
Secretary