

**Minutes of the Waukegan Park District
Committee of the Whole
January 28, 2008**

The Committee of the Whole of the Waukegan Park District met in a regular meeting on January 28, 2008 in the Rose Administrative Center, 2000 Belvidere Street, Waukegan, Illinois.

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:50 p.m. by President Duffy.

II. Roll Call

Present: Commissioners Durkin, Sarocka, Foley, and President Duffy. Absent at roll call: Commissioner Motley. Also present was Board Attorney Charles Smith, and Char Piquette, Marv Rezabek, and Eric Knutsen. At 3:55 p.m., Commissioner Motley entered and was seated.

III. Public Portion

Linda Ryckman read a letter which was placed on file expressing concerns about the development of the Orchard Hills golf course and the possible environmental impact of such a redevelopment. The Board directed Mr. Petry to look into any environmental concerns expressed in Ms. Ryckman's letter.

Jim Sroka was also present, however, he did not ask to address the Board, but only stated that he was there to support Linda Ryckman.

IV. Topics

Following the public portion, the Board reviewed the 2008 Golf Operations and Capitol Improvements. There was a review of the PHN Architects proposal. Commissioner Durkin stated that he did not see any point in having PHN at the first meeting to discuss the improvements, that the Commissioners could do that without PHN's approval.

President Duffy asked Char to address the Board concerning the profitability of Easter and Mother's Day brunches. Char explained that the Easter and Mother's Day brunches both ran at a deficit in 2007 and have been steadily declining over the last several years. Comments from those attending the brunches have been primarily about the layout of the facility as not being conducive to a large banquet.

Wednesday night dinners were discussed and it was reported that during the winter there is a slight loss and in the summer there is a slight profit on these dinners. The Wednesday night dinners are priced at \$9.95 and banquet dinners start at \$16.95, plus tax and service fees. It was pointed out that the Wednesday night dinner is largely attended by senior citizens and Commissioner Sarocka suggested keeping the price at \$9.95 for seniors and \$10.95 for non-seniors. Mr. Petry stated that senior discounts are something that the Park District is trying to move away from as it creates a large area of difficulty in deciding when somebody rates a senior discount and accounting for the discount. He strongly suggested that we not institute further senior citizen discounts.

Commissioner Durkin stated that he strongly supports keeping the Wednesday dinners and thinks that they are very worthwhile.

Commissioner Foley also supports the idea of the Wednesday dinners.

Marv Rezabek stated that he sees an increase in golfing when the Wednesday night dinner is served.

Pat Foley, in reviewing the PHN letter, questioned how much demand there is for groups larger than 50 and whether it was worthwhile to renovate the clubhouse in order to accommodate large groups.

Commissioner Sarocka asked Char Piquette about holding a Friday fish fry at Bonnie Brook such as were previously held at Orchard Hills. It was explained that because of golf outings, it would not be possible to hold a Friday night fish fry.

Commissioner Durkin urged keeping Sundays and Wednesdays for food service and not expanding to a Friday fish fry.

The PHN proposal was discussed.

Commissioner Durkin wants to see the Bonnie Brook clubhouse renovated to accommodate larger banquets and remove the fireplace.

Commissioner Foley suggested opening up the facility for up to 300 people to attend a banquet, but also providing dividers to accommodate smaller groups.

Commissioner Sarocka stated that he favors improvements to the Bonnie Brook clubhouse.

Commissioner Motley also supports the improvements and stated that they are long overdue.

President Duffy expressed concerns about competing with local businesses who are in the banquet business.

Mr. Petry is to work with PHN and advise the Board of alternative suggestions by PHN. There was a consensus to move forward with PHN's design and further recommendations relative to the renovations at Bonnie Brook.

Mike Trigg stated that his staff is exploring the possibility of purchasing a beverage cart for Bonnie Brook. Commissioner Motley stated that there was a need for a good beverage cart. There was discussion of possibly constructing a halfway house for beverages and food, but the cost of running the utilities to such a location would be cost prohibitive and would also be expensive to operate. President Duffy stated that a half-way house slows down play and that a beverage cart is a better way to provide refreshments to golfers and feels that the cart could be used at other events.

Computerized golf reservations were discussed for the golf course. Mr. Petry stressed the need to get a good database and to direct the marketing efforts to see how the Park District could attract more people to the course.

Eric Knutsen advised that the Park District has the software program to meet these needs.

Commissioner Foley inquired about putting together packages with local restaurants and motels for customers.

Mr. Petry stated that he would look into the cost of purchasing versus leasing carts. Commissioner Sarocka stated that he wants to look at a continuous golf course path through Bonnie Brook.

Golf shop operations were reviewed. Mr. Petry questioned whether a starter and a ranger is needed and that Marv Rezabek is looking into additional efficiencies and the number of employees needed.

The Board directed staff to work with the athletic directors of local high schools as to the expectations of behavior of students who are playing in interscholastic competitions. There is a definite need for accountability, particularly with Orchard Hills closing.

Staffing needs were reviewed and questions were raised concerning the number of part time versus year round staff needed to support the golf operations. Char Piquette and staff will work on a budget for the next fiscal year.

Also concerning marketing, Char Piquette stated that there is a need to update and create new promotional materials for Bonnie Brook. She would like to see color brochures to promote the banquet facilities.

Mr. Petry stated his desire to employ Tim Miles from Golf Visions to undertake a review as to how the District might better utilize staff and maintenance operations.

It was noted that the Billy Casper Golf has programs to improve customer service and training. Commissioner Durkin raised a question concerning the Greenshire Golf Course and if it is going to remain the same as the previous year and the answer was in the affirmative.

President Duffy asked about the Robert Morris golf team and whether they were going to use the District's facilities.

Marv Rezabek presented an update as to the transfer of leagues from Orchard Hills to Bonnie Brook and stated that he moved some of the leagues to Thursday and some to Friday.

Cathi Klaver has been working on an upgrade of the District's website and a new website for Bonnie Brook. Costs are estimated to be approximately \$7,500 through Vision Web Works to create the new website. There are funds available to complete the project now. The Commissioners all seemed to agree that staff should move forward with the project.

President Duffy inquired about when a letter would be going to the Orchard Hills members offering them the opportunity to purchase passes at resident rates at Bonnie Brook. President Duffy suggested that we should do this for a two year period following the closure of Orchard Hills.

Commissioner Sarocka stated that he enjoyed the Illinois Park District Association convention and felt that he got a lot of good information from attending.

V. Executive Session

No Executive Session was held.

V. Adjournment

Motion by Commissioner Durkin, seconded by Commissioner Motley, to adjourn meeting. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles W. Smith
Secretary