

**Minutes of the Waukegan Park District
Committee of the Whole
February 25, 2008**

The Committee of the Whole of the Waukegan Park District met in a regular meeting on February 25, 2008 in the Bonnie Brook Clubhouse, 2800 North Lewis Avenue, 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 Motley, Durkin, Sarocka, Foley, and President Duffy. Also present was Executive Director Greg Petry, Board Attorney Charles Smith, Doug Holzrichter of PHN Architects, Joe Carlucci, Mike Trigg, Steve Warneke, Char Piquette, Marv Rezabek, and Kim Grimes.

III. Topics

A. Workshop discussion addressing Feasibility Study to Improve the Existing Banquet Facility at Bonnie Brook Clubhouse.

Representatives of PHN Architects, Park District staff and Commissioner Sarocka had toured the Bonnie Brook facilities prior to the meeting. Mr. Holzrichter and Mr. Carlucci had looked at the facility with the idea of what renovations could be made to enhance the banquet facilities. Mr. Carlucci has experience in the restaurant business and has opened ten restaurants and is currently operating three restaurants. He has 23 years in the restaurant and banquet business and stated that the Bonnie Brook facility has excellent potential for revenue and growth. Mr. Holzrichter answered questions from the Commissioners and stated that he was at the meeting to learn what the Commissioners wanted for a banquet facility and stated that at this point he had no idea of what the renovation costs may be.

Commissioner Durkin stated that the Park District needed to recognize that it is already in the banquet business and as long as the Park District was in this business, they should make every attempt to do it properly and provide the best facilities and services to the public.

Char Piquette stated that she would like the renovated building to seat 250 people.

Commissioner Durkin recommended removal of the fireplace and bar from the existing restaurant area.

Commissioner Motley stated that the original renovations should have been built bigger and he supports an expanded renovation of the facility.

Commissioner Sarocka stated that he is concerned about the cost of this project, which is undetermined at this time, in order to increase seating capacity. He stated that he would need to see the benefits that would be realized by the expansion. He further stated that he thinks that the existing dining room should be squared off and the fireplace removed, but he would need to see a cost benefit analysis.

Commissioner Foley stated that a larger area for banquets is a good idea and stated that it is not necessary to square off the room, rectangles could work as well. She stated that the bar area should be expanded and that people need to feel comfortable when they come into the facility and that means providing more amenities.

President Duffy stated that he is very concerned about the cost of the renovations. He said that banquets of 250 people compete with Midlane, the Sundance Bar, and the new hotels planned for Fountain Square. He is concerned about taking business away from people who are paying taxes.

Commissioner Sarocka stated that he wanted options with price information attached when he reviewed the proposals from the consultants.

There was further discussion about the possibility of using tents for events similar to what are used at Marriott-Lincolnshire and at the Antioch Golf Club.

Mr. Carlucci stated his opinion that the demand for banquet facilities exists and the Park District lacks those facilities to meet the demand. Mr. Holzrichter stated the next step is planning, concepts, costs, and the big picture.

Mr. Petry stated that we all acknowledge that the Park District is in the banquet business and we need to resolve the operational issues presented by the poor layout.

Ms. Piquette stated the important issues are a room for larger functions and providing amenities.

Commissioner Durkin discussed the finances of the renovation project and Mr. Petry stated that the District's bonding capacity is strong and has available approximately \$7M - \$10M in cash.

The Board expressed a need for a five year strategic plan in order to properly analyze this and other projects.

Mr. Petry advised that Marv Rezabek has given notice that he will be retiring as of May 18, 2008. The Commissioners expressed their appreciation for Marv's years of service.

Mr. Petry also advised that the review process of the new auditors is complete and he will have a recommendation for the Board at its March meeting for the hiring of a new auditor.

The Board expressed its desire to be involved in the selection of Marv Rezabek's replacement.

IV. Adjournment

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

Respectfully submitted,

Charles W. Smith
Secretary