

FRANKFORT SQUARE PARK DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING
JANUARY 18, 2018

The following are Minutes of a Town Hall and Board Meeting of the Frankfort Square Park District Board of Commissioners held at the Frankfort Square Park District Administration Building, Room 204, 7540 W. Braemar Lane, Frankfort, Illinois.

I. Call to Order

The Meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Roll Call

Present were: Ken Blackburn, Anthony Granata, Dave Macek, Craig Maksymiak, Denis Moore, Brian Mulheran, and Joe Vlosak.

Also present: Karen Haave, reporter from *Farmer's Weekly Review* and approximately 30 Park District residents.

IV. Town Hall Meeting / Public Input

Jim Randall provided a presentation that described the Park District's method of gathering input through community-wide surveys, results from a question posed on the 2017 survey regarding support for a no-tax increase referendum, and details about how the District would move forward if approved by voters at the March 20, 2018 General Primary Election. A copy of said presentation is attached and made part of these Minutes.

Following Mr. Randall's presentation, the floor was open to questions from all in attendance, and the following was recorded.

Question 1: A resident referenced the plans to install irrigation at the Champions Park practice football field. The questioner was concerned about sewer rate increases, and asked if this issue had been resolved.

Response: Mr. Randall stated the site is serviced by a well, and would not be tied into municipal service. The Park District has only two irrigation systems that utilize municipal water; they are located at the Community Center and Dog Park facility. All other systems are serviced by Park District wells.

Question 2: Will lights be installed at the Dog Park?

Response: Mr. Randall stated that the District agreed not to light the facility, as it could be disruptive to neighboring homes. Potential improvements to the Dog Park include shade structures and permanent agility equipment.

Mr. Randall reported that in 2002, the Park District had a successful \$5 million referendum pass. All projects included in this referendum were promptly completed. If the \$1.5 mini-referendum is successful, action will not be as quick, but managed in a metered approach, over the next four to five years, due to more limited funding.

Question 3: Are there plans to continue the boardwalk?

Response: Mr. Randall stated the District would complete a boardwalk loop around the Island Prairie Park pond, located behind the Community Center. This project could be addressed with grant assistance through a ComEd Green Region Grant. In addition, the low area of the Indian Boundary South Park path would be elevated to correct the issue of standing water during heavy rain events.

As questions were not immediately forthcoming, Mr. Randall took the opportunity to provide additional financial detail about the mini-referendum. The \$1.5 million would address capital improvements, and also be used to pay off debt that will retire in 2022. Retirement of this debt would allow for additional improvements on an existing basis, as available dollars would double in the next four years.

Mr. Randall further stated that he hopes all will allow their voices to be heard at the March 20 election. Resident support is the most important asset, as it provides the Park District with direction.

Question 4: You note a bike park as the only new improvement at Indian Boundary South Park. Would it be built where the Frisbee golf course is located?

Response: Mr. Randall stated it would be a non-motorized modified BMX track, off road course with a circular dirt course and ramps. The facility would be installed where the old soccer field was located.

Question 5: How can this happen without a tax increase?

Response: Mr. Randall noted the District currently extends a mini-bond on an annual basis. This would be eliminated and replaced with \$1.5 million in bonds. It would provide capital that is currently expended through the budget.

Question 6: Would there be more debt in the long term?

Response: Mr. Randall stated it would be the same debt, but extended out over a twenty year schedule. This would result in a lower overall tax rate and includes zero growth. If there is growth within the community, there would be more tax contributions. The District receive \$3.3 million, and would realize a net savings with the decreasing tax rate.

Question 7: Are all projects just fix and repairs?

Response: Mr. Randall stated there would be tree planting, park improvements, playground renovations that would be addressed in a metered approach, spread out over the next four to five years.

Question 8: There must be newer playgrounds, will you renovate the oldest playground equipment?

Response: Mr. Randall stated that all playgrounds are approximately the same age, built around 2002. The playgrounds that are most heavily used are located at the schools and would be the highest on the priority list.

Question 9: You state that current debt ends in 2022. Why not wait until 2022 to seek approval for another referendum. Is there an urgency?

Response: Mr. Randall stated that the debt referenced from the 2002 referendum is the largest portion of the District's debt. The urgency comes from resident need. The Park District receives numerous requests for improvements on a regular basis, and is unable to meet all the needs due to budget constraints. The District cannot tell people how to spend their money. It is simply making residents aware of the mini-referendum ballot question, and asking residents to tell us how to move forward.

Question 10: How do you intend to mitigate irrigation at Champions Park? Do you have a feature on the irrigation system that would keep it from operation when it is raining?

Response: Mr. Randall noted that the question was asked earlier in the meeting, and that the site is serviced by a District well. Only the Community Center and Dog Park irrigation systems are serviced by municipal water. The current systems do not have a feature that senses rainfall, but the District is working to better control its irrigation systems.

Question 11: Can you provide more garbage cans at fishing locations?

Response: The District has 300+ garbage cans located throughout the District, and Mr. Randall noted that there are garbage cans placed where people fish. Unfortunately, the District cannot control users actions, and frequently, the garbage cans located near ponds often end up being thrown into the water.

Question 12: Anchoring garbage cans, as they are in Lighthouse Pointe seems to work well. Can you anchor the garbage cans?

Response: Mr. Randall stated that the District has anchored cans to picnic tables, and often times the picnic tables with the garbage cans attached end up in the pond. He went on to further state that the District does all it can to be cost-efficient and considerate of the tax dollars it receives and is mindful of treating all its amenities respectfully.

As no further questions or comments were posed, Mr. Randall closed the Town Hall Meeting / Public Input portion of the regular Park Board Meeting, expressing appreciation to all for their attendance. Mr. Randall further noted that Park District staff would be on hand to distribute mini-referendum materials along with copies of this evening's presentation. In addition, all information is available on the Park District's website, www.fspd.org. All were welcome to stay for the remainder of the meeting, as the Park Board conducted required actions.

V. Correspondence

No correspondence was presented.

VI. Presentation of the December 4, 2017 Truth in Taxation Public Hearing Minutes, and the December 4, 2017 Board Meeting Minutes.

Dave Macek made Motion 18-1335 to accept the December 4, 2017 Truth in Taxation Public Hearing Minutes and the December 4, 2017 Board Meeting Minutes as presented. Joe Vlosek seconded.

Vote on Motion: Aye, Craig Maksymiak, Denis Moore, Joe Vlosak, Dave Macek, Ken Blackburn. Abstained, Anthony Granata and Brian Mulheran-Abstained. Motion passed.

VII. Treasurer's Report

On behalf of the Board of Commissioners, President, Ken Blackburn accepted the November and December Treasurer's Report, pending audit.

Dave Macek made Motion 18-1336 to accept the November and December Accounts Payable Listings. Denis Moore seconded.

Vote on Motion: Aye, Anthony Granata, Craig Maksymiak, Denis Moore, Joe Vlosak, Dave Macek, Ken Blackburn, Joe Vlosak. Motion passed.

VIII. Adjournment

Dave Macek made Motion 18-1337 to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 p.m. Anthony Granata seconded. Motion carried in a vote by voice.

Respectfully submitted:
Linda Mitchell

Town Hall Meeting: Thursday January 18th - 7:30 P.M.

Call to Order: President, Ken Blackburn

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Town Hall Meeting / Public Input

Town Hall Meeting Presentation: Executive Director, Jim Randall



On behalf of Park Board Members and staff, I wish to extend our sincere appreciation for all that took time to attend, listen, and contribute during this evening's Town Hall Meeting.

The Park District has a process of gathering information from residents to ensure they have a voice in all Park District actions.

It conducts community wide surveys by independent third parties, most recently through the University of Illinois.

The process that began in 1995 with the University of St. Francis was so well-received that it has become an ongoing action to ensure the direction of the Park District remains defined by the residents we serve.

Upon completion, all information is available to residents, and as with past surveys, all results are posted on the Park District's website, www.fspd.org

Please take time to visit the website to view the District's efforts to provide a clear, transparent reflection of all aspects of Park District operation. The website includes Park Board Meeting minutes, financial reports, audits surveys, master plans, Park District brochures, a park and facility matrix and much more relevant information. All information is provided to enable full awareness of Park District actions, programs, administration, finance, and parks and facilities. As always, if ever there are questions or concerns, we encourage direct communication via phone, email, office visits, and Board Meeting attendance. If questions are not answered adequately this evening, please give me a call.

The most recent community survey provides an overview of ideas, input, and accounting of all areas of operation. Consistent with past survey instruments, we have an exceptionally supportive community that appreciates the benefits the park district provides. That's not everyone, we absolutely accept criticism offered, but the vast majority of respondents, over 90%, reflects residents as being supportive of all departments.

A variety of wants were reflected and summarized in the report, and based on the input from survey respondents, the Park Board authorized a referendum question, providing \$1.5 million in funding for a variety of needed improvements throughout the District.

Page 38 of the community survey report includes this question:

Would you support a park referendum for the renovation of existing parks, acquisition of property near populations with limited access to current district properties, and increased landscaping throughout our community if...?

A. At \$1.5 million if it did not raise Park District taxes. Y / N

Respondents approved this referendum question by 82%, understanding that the District has the ability to fund the \$1.5 million for capital improvements without raising taxes.

This accounts approximately 3% of annual tax revenue and less than 2% of the Park District's annual budget.

The better news is that the Park District is within 4 years of retiring its 2002 referendum debt (in 2022) that accounts for \$650,000.00 annually, equating to 21% of its annual tax revenue, or \$71 of the average tax bill based on a home value of \$250,000.

Respondents to FSPD surveys are typically the residents that most frequently utilize District programs and services. That does not always translate to residents that show up and vote.

Most importantly, we want the wishes of Park District residents to be represented at the General Primary Election on Tuesday, March 20th.

The projects and actions do not represent unproven concepts, but are reflective of the building blocks of the Park District that are most important to our everyday users. Bike path repairs and expansion, playground equipment, dance studio, athletic field improvements, public restrooms, pond enhancements, tree planting, and a variety of cost efficiency measures that will benefit the District in lower utilities. The proposed improvements are not focused in one primary location, but reflect a plan for District-wide renovation that can continue, due to added debt retirement, even after referendum proceeds are spent, due to the improved financial position of the district without added tax dollars.

We last offered a referendum at the General Primary Election in March of 2016. It was unsuccessful, defeated by some 160 votes in one of the best attended elections in the history of the district. I was frequently asked the question "How disappointed are you with the results?" I always responded "Not at all." Of course I would have liked to complete the improvements and projects included in that referendum, but not at the cost of community support. A resounding "yes" or a resounding "no" is always preferable to a simple majority.

The FSPD has provided every home within the District the opportunity to complete the survey and have their opinions represented. To ensure this was an unbiased report, it was created, measured, and completed by the University of Illinois, an independent third party.

All information is free and accessible to all Park District residents in hard copy, if requested, at the Park office, or online on the Park District's website www.fspd.org.

All resident households received the winter/spring brochure that included the referendum insert, summarizing referendum information and encouraging attendance at this Town Hall Meeting.

Displays with referendum information, currently set up in the Community Center Board Room, will travel throughout the community with hand-out literature.

Press releases have been submitted to local publications, and articles have appeared in both the *Daily Southtown Star* and *Frankfort Station* publications, and on social media sites.

Referendum information will be provided to Park District program participants and on marquees throughout the district as Election Day gets closer.

In 2002, \$5 million dollars of much needed improvements took place in literally two years. The Park District made every effort to maximize tax dollars with grant funding, having received \$4,300,000+ in additional grant dollars to subsidize the hard earned tax dollars residents contribute.

If successful, repairs and improvements will occur over the next four years, and at the conclusion, the Park District will be well-positioned to move forward, having retired debt and completing much needed repairs and replacement of well used facilities.

Equally important, the Park District will be well-positioned with the retirement of debt over the next four years, highlighted by the retirement of 2002 referendum costs in 2022, to lower taxes permanently, while retaining the ability to keep all parks and facilities in the condition residents have come to expect.

If not successful, we will simply do our best with the resources available, as we have always done.

Again, on behalf of the Board and staff of the Frankfort Square Park District, thank you for your attendance, and we welcome any questions that you might have.

Jim Randall
Executive Director
Frankfort Square Park District