

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT JULY, 2019

ADMINISTRATION

The Budget & Appropriation Public Hearing and July Board Meeting will be held at the Square Links Golf Course Clubhouse, as decided during the May organizational meeting. The District's website calendar reflects this change of venue, a legal notice was published in the Frankfort Station, and a notice will also be posted at the entry and lobby of the Park District's Administration Building.

I reviewed the public comments related to the June Board Meeting and offer the following:

The FSPD's Legal Counsel, Rob Bush, is partner at Ancel, Glink, Diamond & Bush, and he literally wrote the book *Park Code* that governs all actions available to Park Districts.

We previously discussed the filling of vacancies, and the following is the approved governance for completing this action:

(70 ILCS 1205/2-25) (from Ch. 105, par. 2-25)

Sec. 2-25. Vacancies. Whenever any member of the governing board of any park district (i) dies, (ii) resigns, (iii) becomes under legal disability, (iv) ceases to be a legal voter in the district, (v) is convicted of any infamous crime, (vi) refuses or neglects to take his or her oath of office, (vii) neglects to perform the duties of his or her office or attend meetings of the board for the length of time as the board fixes by ordinance, or (viii) for any other reason specified by law, that office may be declared vacant. Vacancies shall be filled by appointment by a majority of the remaining members of the board. Any person so appointed shall hold his or her office until the next regular election for this office, at which a member shall be elected to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term, subject to the following conditions:

(1) If the vacancy occurs with less than 28 months remaining in the term, the person appointed to fill the vacancy shall hold his or her office until the expiration of the term for which he or she has been appointed, and no election to fill the vacancy shall be held.

(2) If the vacancy occurs with more than 28 months left in the term, but less than 123 days before the next regularly scheduled election for this office, the person appointed to fill the vacancy shall hold his or her office until the second regularly scheduled election for the office following the appointment, at which a member shall be elected to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term.

(Source: P.A. 97-131, eff. 7-14-11.)

More importantly, the Park Board can provide direction on how a sitting Park Board fills a vacancy, but not extend any limitation to the existing Park Code for future Boards. An ordinance defining the above Park Code, reviewed by the Park District's legal counsel, is included for Board consideration during Thursday's meeting.

I would also reflect that the Frankfort Square Park District is and has been recognized as completely transparent in every Park action. I would direct any individual that has Park District-related questions to review the FSPD's website that is limitless in providing every audit, Treasurer's Report, employment compensation, expenditure, and complete Master Plan, Needs Assessments, programming information, park matrix, park inventory, every Board Report, minutes, and countless other relevant details.

Too many times transparency is used as a justification for an opinion, but the FSPD has spent literally thousands of staff hours to ensure that its overall transparency is not a “buzz word”, but a completed action.

We, as a Park District, take the responsibility of governance and professionalism, not as a reflection of what other units of government have or have not done, but rather as a focus on how the Park Board and staff best represent the community they serve. That is the standard that is reflected in the efforts and actions this Board has taken and directed staff to fulfill the Park District mission:

“It is the mission of the Frankfort Square Park District to provide accessible, non-discriminatory recreation services, facilities, and open space in an environmentally conscious, fiscally responsible manner.”

I concur with the resident that would have preferred increased coverage of the Park District’s election, but the simple truth is that local media does not cover uncontested elections.

The Park District has an extensive annual natural areas report, completed in cooperation with Cardno, its contracted natural areas service provider. We posted a brief summary, but the extensive annual document will be available upon request in hard copy for viewing at the Park District office. The cost of production, recreating the document by the Park District website host, is not justified when the District has only received two requests for this report.

Similarly, we defined daily work product/schedules for natural areas. We have similar schedules for all areas of Park District operation, but publishing the schedules publicly proves to be an unreasonable expectation for Park staff. These daily schedules are frequently modified due to numerous factors outside staff control. Again, the cost of production and posting is not justified, understanding the hundreds of factors that impact daily schedules.

Finally, in talking to a local farmer in his 50+ years of farming, he stated that have crops have never been delayed to the extent they have this year due to the soggy spring and early summer. These soggy conditions also created huge challenges for our small, hard-working maintenance staff. Normal maintenance and mowing required rental equipment and double man hours, and still did not meet normal expectations. Natural areas throughout the District have, and are in many cases, still inaccessible to maintenance equipment.

This is not unique to our community, but consistent throughout the south suburbs. We are only now current with mowing and are better able to address detail work with the many finishes our community has come to expect.

The Budget & Appropriation Ordinance is included on the July agenda for review and formal adoption. A copy of the ordinance has been on display in the lobby of the Administration Building since June 18, and a legal notice for the required public hearing was published in the July 11 edition of the *Frankfort Station*.

Park staff have been working with Bond Counsel at R.W. Baird and Chapman and Cutler to schedule Bond remittance and sale of General Obligation Refunding Park Bonds, Series 2019 A and Series 2019 B. Per previous discussion, this action is expected to save the Park District \$70,000 over the life of the bonds.

I am meeting with the District’s health insurance representative to review renewal options. Rate increase was included in the operating budget to maintain current coverage moving forward.

We have been notified that the closing on the SSSRA property will be completed on July 30 or July 31. Staff are really looking forward to this permanent separation and the conclusion of our previous relationship.

I will review the intended distribution of funds, repayment of existing debt, and other potential projects at Thursday’s meeting.

I plan to attend the 2019 NRPA annual conference, scheduled for September 24-26 in Baltimore, Maryland. I will submit the required paperwork for Board approval at the August meeting.

MAINTENANCE

Staff have done an exceptional job in a very challenging season. The wet conditions have been extremely hard on our natural areas. Standing water over most, if not all natural areas dramatically limits positive efforts.

We have many new young staff and Ed Reidy, Superintendent of Parks, and Bill O'Shea, Assistant Superintendent of Parks, have done an extraordinary job in qualifying them on the myriad of job tasks necessary to keep the place running.

Staff members responsible to maintain the LWN campus, Lou Viececi, Aubrey Reyna, and Joe Hausner, and occasionally are supported by Ed Reidy and seasonal staff, and have kept the site in good order. This is truly exceptional with the number of baseball/softball games scheduled and the rainy spring and summer weather.

We are evaluating park signs throughout the District. Many of these locations received natural plantings that are overgrown and become unmanageable. Staff are working on a new, more practical design.

You had the opportunity to visit with Ed Reidy at last month's meeting when he reviewed the quantity and quality of improvements that are taking place throughout our community. Ed will also provide his annual end-of-year summary in greater detail at a future meeting.

We can discuss a future park tour. This practice has been completed in past years and previous Board Members seemed to appreciate the tour and developed a better understanding of challenges faced by District staff.

RECREATION

Morgan Cassidy, summer intern, has been working with all District departments and will be in attendance at Thursday's meeting.

The fall brochure is done and we anticipate that it will be mailed to residents at the end of July.

Summer programming has been well attended and, knock on wood, positively uneventful.

Preparations are in place for the next Early Learning Center Preschool year, and we are in the process of finalizing staffing.

The Summer Concert Series is underway. The first performance by The Hat Guys on June 25 was well attended and the next performance by Bernie Glim and Friends is scheduled for July 16.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The Park District experienced issues related to lack of electricity and internet service. When the internet at the Park District is down, the golf course POS system and credit card processing is affected. We are in the process of investigating reasonable back-ups for internet service.

SPECIAL RECREATION

Keith Wallace, Executive Director of LWSRA, will be in attendance at Thursday's meeting to provide a summary of his organization.

The Freedom Golf Association are again utilizing Square Links for their programming. This has been a phenomenal opportunity, with golfers enjoying the driving range on Thursday evenings.

FINANCE & PLANNING

The annual Park audit, conducted by the independent audit firm of Hearne & Associates, is underway. Onsite work has been completed and the final report is in process. Board Members have received “Notice of Fraud” letters required to be submitted in advance of audit report completion. Hard copies of the letters will be available at Thursday’s meeting.

This is the fifth year the Park District has utilized the services of Hearne & Associates, and as previously discussed, the Park District will secure a new audit firm for the next five years. This is a “best practice” recommended for increased accountability.

First and foremost, existing debt was and/or will be retired at approximately \$118,142.45 that includes the 2016 Ford Transit, 2016 Ford Explorer, and the Peterbilt truck loan. In addition, three separate golf car/utility cart leases though Yamaha Motor Corporation will be paid off by mid/late August. The preliminary estimate of payoff for these leases is \$40,304.72, and once the actual payoff information is received from Yamaha, the summary will be updated, however, changes are expected to be minimal. The combined total of debt to be paid off in the current fiscal year is \$158,447.17. A debt retirement summary, dating back to March, 25, 2018, is included on the July agenda under finance and planning, detailing a total of \$332,942.33.

The Park District will receive \$100,000 for the SSSRA land sale that is scheduled for closing the week July 8. Receipt of these proceeds, combined with the payoff of short-term debt will put the District in a very sound financial position.

I would like to replace two 2002 pickup trucks that have incurred maintenance expenses, and I am assuming that problems will continue.

The Park District would trade in two (2) F-150 Pickups and one (1) Transit Van.

I would recommend the purchases of:

- One (1) Chevy Volt Electric - \$35,000
- One (1) Chevy Canyon 4x4 with a small plow - \$30,000
- One (1) Ford F-350 with a service body - \$49,500

The service body is in stock and discounted by \$12,000 over retail cost. The Volt is available through government purchase. The smaller Canyon 4x4 is critical to maintain the 9 miles of park paths during the winter.

I am finalizing details and will provide updated trade-in value and complete pricing available for Board consideration in advance of Thursday’s meeting. All costs will be remitted out of budget.

GOLF COURSE

The restaurant is open and well-received.

Play is increasing thanks to improving weather conditions.

We are pursuing a plan for future restroom renovation and expansion.

The driving range drainage improvements are complete and have improved playability.

The first draft of the master plan, developed by Lohman Quitno Architects was received and presented during the June Board Meeting.

Respectfully submitted:

Jim Randall

Executive Director