

**Vernon Hills Park District
Minutes of the Special Board Meeting
January 17, 2008 – 6:00 p.m.**

1. Call to Order. The Special Meeting of the Vernon Hills Board of Park Commissioners was called to order by President Doerhoefer at 6:12 pm at the Laschen Community Center, 294 Evergreen Drive, Vernon Hills.

2. Roll Call. Present: Commissioners Meline, Peterson, Sente, and Doerhoefer. Absent: Commissioner Garvanian. Staff – Larry DeGraaf, Marla Pineiro, Orin Main, Tom Ritter and Cheryl Baron.

3. New Business. Capital Improvement Planning and Prioritization.

The expected income - spreadsheet attached.

After discussion, the Board stated its desire to add the expected \$1.3M developer impact fees to the income spreadsheet, as well as the \$400,000 from District 73.

The proposed projects - spreadsheet attached.

The Board discussed the following from the spreadsheet:

Note: Items 1 - 6 were the recommended projects for FY 08/09.

Item 1. Shoreline Stabilization - Phase IV. This is a long-term, ongoing project to curtail the shoreline erosion of Big and Little Bear Lakes. Nearly 2800 lineal feet of shoreline have been completed since 1997. About 10,500 lineal feet remain. The first three phases used a combination of rip-rap and stone retaining wall, while the last two phases used Eden stone. This phase calls for a combination of Eden stone and retaining wall. Different methods are used depending on the steepness of the shoreline.

Discussion: The Board was agreeable to continuing the project and accelerating the process by increasing the budget to \$300,000. Consensus was to do the island shoreline next.

Item 2. Athletic Field Improvements. For FY 08/09 two action items proposed: 1) renovation of the Deerpath Park 5 Acres, and 2) part one of a proposed two phase renovation of ballfield dugouts. The renovation of the 5 acres was discussed with residents last fall and were in agreement with the renovation idea.

Discussion: The Board was agreeable to the two proposed projects, and added funds to partner with the Village to light VHAC ballfields 5 & 6.

Item 3. Century Park - North End Improvements. The project includes a restroom/warming house building, clearing of the trashy wooded area, adding more paths and parking, a playground, a SK8 park, and volleyball/basketball courts totaling about \$1.4M. The project would take place over two fiscal years, costing about \$700,000 per year. \$400,000 would come from an OSLAD matching grant, \$300,000 from accessibility improvement funds, and the remaining money would come from Park District funds (\$700,000). Work would not begin until spring 2009.

Discussion: The Board was agreeable to the concept site plan, but wanted the SK8 park deleted, and the restroom/warming building relocated to the west side of Seavey Ditch. In addition, Commissioner Peterson wanted to get a better idea of how much of the wooded underbrush would be removed and how the amenities would all fit. Director DeGraaf said a site visit would be arranged, and would include Dan Dalziel of 3D. The Board agreed that this would be a good OSLAD project and wanted to schedule a public hearing this spring.

Item 4. Pond Aerators - Evergreen Lake. There was a meeting with surrounding residents last fall where issues and solutions were explained and discussed. Those residents in attendance were agreeable to the Park District's proposed solution of five aerators, probably three or four sub-surface bubblers and one or two fountain aerators.

Discussion: The Board was agreeable to this project.

Item 5. Westwood Park Improvements. In 2007, the Park District learned that it did indeed have a Village lease for Westwood Park. Like Aspen Backyard Park, it was developed in the street right-of-way when the Village decided not to extend Sullivan Drive over the railroad tracks.

Discussion: The Board was agreeable to this project.

Item 6. Sullivan Center Improvements.

1) New floor surface, Community Room. The Room no longer gets the kinds of uses it did during the first several years of its existence. A hard surface floor would provide for more versatility for recreation programming than carpeting does.

2) Replacement HVAC units. Eight of the existing nine rooftop HVAC units are 15 years old. One unit was replaced in 2007. At least two more units should be replaced in 2008. The units are about \$25,000 apiece. It has also been recommended to us that we should replace the controls for the entire system, with more energy efficient controls.

3) Energy Efficient Lighting. We are awaiting a proposal to replace the metal halide light fixtures in the gym, dance and fitness rooms with new style fluorescent fixtures. Such a move could result in a nearly 50% savings on electrical costs.

Discussion: The Board was agreeable to all three proposals, new floor in the Community Room; two replacement HVAC units; and new, energy efficient gym lights.

Note: Items 7 and higher were the recommended projects for FY 10 and beyond.

Item 7. Marimac Park Landscape Improvements - \$100,000. This project proposes to add an additional "commuter" path to the site, which is the south gateway to the Deerpath Park subdivision and will add a gazebo, heavy landscaping and flower beds.

There was no discussion.

Item 8. Beaver Creek Park - \$100,000. This small site (about the size of 4 - 5 residential lots in Gregg's Landing) is currently undeveloped. It has significant drainage challenges, which the Village has agreed to mitigate at some point in the future. The recommendation is to develop this site into a passive park once the Village has corrected the drainage problems.

There was no discussion.

Item 9. Stone Fence Farms Park/Hartmann Park/Hawthorn Club Park/Grosse Pointe Park Lighted Paths – One per year - \$40,000 per year. There has been some interest expressed by residents living near the four parks listed above to add lights to the existing paths. Lighting the existing paths in these parks would be a nice improvement. However, it is an improvement I would not propose unless I knew the large majority of those living within a specified radius of the park would agree to. I consider this a low priority.
There was no discussion.

Item 10. VHHS Lighted Tennis Courts - \$200,000. Currently, Vernon Hills has no lighted tennis courts. This would prove to be an excellent location for lighted courts and would make these courts very popular with residents. At this time the HS has not been approached with the idea.
There was no discussion.

Item 11. Century Park Ice Rink - \$1,000,000. This was the original 4th phase of the north end improvement plan. Because of the high cost it remains on the list of outyear projects. While a highly desirable project from a recreation standpoint, in addition to the high cost, there are issues that it would bring with it that would have to be resolved.
There was no discussion.

Item 12. Family Aquatic Center - Sprayground (interactive above ground water play) - \$160,000. This amenity was included in the original Family Aquatic Center expansion plan but was taken out due to budget issues. There is designated space for this amenity.
Discussion: The Board was agreeable to moving up this project to FY 08/09.

Item 13. Family Aquatic Center - Diving Well - \$1,000,000. This amenity was in the original Family Aquatic Center expansion plan, but was taken out due to budget issues. The plan included a one meter diving board and two drop slides. For \$1,000,000, I would rather add a Flowrider (surfboard ride).
The Board briefly discussed the merits of a diving well versus a Flowrider. There was no decision on either.

Item 14. Fieldhouse or Gymnasium Addition. Even with the somewhat improved gym access with District 73, there is no question that additional indoor athletic space is needed if the Park District is to continue to meet the needs of its residents. Previously, staff recommended a large combination fieldhouse/fitness center costing about \$15M. With the addition of yet another commercial fitness center to Vernon Hills in 2008 (Lifetime Fitness), additional Park District fitness facilities does not seem as essential as it once did. However, additional gym space is still essential. Without fitness center amenities, the project cost also goes down significantly and makes an addition to the Sullivan Center more feasible. Architectural advice is necessary to determine the best plan for the Park District., an addition, or a new, stand-alone facility.
The Village/Park District was recently approached by commercial developer/entrepreneurs with an idea for a privately built and operated fieldhouse/indoor sports complex on Village/Park District land. This idea has some appeal if it were to go on Village owned land north of the Sullivan Center.

Discussion: The Board agreed that additional discussions should continue for possible partnering on land located north of the Sullivan Center.

Item 15. Aspen Site South - Improvements. While the Park District has no specific plans for this site at this time, District 73 has asked on more than one accession if this site could be developed into athletic fields for its physical education classes, recess and athletic team use. The proposed plan, if done right, with athletic fields, paths, restrooms, shelter, playground, SK8 park, landscaping, etc. would cost about \$1.2M, and would make an excellent addition to our park inventory, as well as significantly meet District 73's needs. It would be an excellent OSLAD project (\$400,000). If District 73 came up with a third (\$400,000), the Park District would only have to put up \$400,000, and most of that would be from accessibility funds.

Discussion: The Board expressed interest in this likely OSLAD grant project, and in moving it up from "Future" (unscheduled), to FY 2010, if District 73 were to share in the development costs (\$400,000). A letter from the Park Board President proposing this shared project was to be sent to the School Board President.

Motion by Commissioner Sente to approve the first six projects as listed on the spreadsheets and the addition of project 7 - Sprayground/Spashpad. Second by Commissioner Meline. Roll Call vote: Ayes - Doerhoefer, Sente, Meline, Peterson. Nays - None. A complete, revised list of projects will be added to the agenda of the January 31 regular Board meeting for additional discussion if necessary and for dissemination to residents.

Commissioner Peterson asked if an additional piece of playground equipment could be added near the SK8 Park. Director DeGraaf said he would see what kind of appropriate pieces might be available and would report back to the Board.

In another matter, Director DeGraaf said he was meeting with the developers for the proposed condo/retail complex at the corner of Lakeview and Hawthorn Parkway. There was a brief discussion of what the Park District should ask for from the developer, in addition to the impact fees they would already be paying the Village. Ideas discussed were shoreline stabilization along the west side of the island, additional aerators, gazebo enhancement/replacement, and other amenities. Once the meeting dates were known, Commissioners would be advised.

4. Adjournment. Upon proper motion and second, the meeting adjourned at 8:17 pm.

Larry A. DeGraaf, Board Secretary