

## APPROVED

THE RIDGEVILLE PARK DISTRICT'S BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MET FOR A SPECIAL BOARD MEETING ON APRIL 21, 2018 FROM 9:00 AM TO 1:00 PM IN THE FIELD HOUSE OF KAMEN PARK EAST LOCATED AT 1111 SOUTH BLVD, EVANSTON, ILLINOIS 60202.

Commissioners Present: Rob Bady (Vice President), Debby Braun (*left the meeting at 11:30am*), Ann Covode (President), Dan Coyne, Pat McCourt (*left the meeting at 11:00am*)

Commissioners Absent: None

Also Present: Julie Larson (Minute Taker)

Citizens: None

President Ann Covode called the meeting to order at 9:00am.

Citizen Comment:

No citizens were present to comment at this time.

Discuss Strategic Planning

### Introductions

- Ann reviewed goals of meeting: expand communication, increase trust, unify members, align with key strategies, determine best operational structure and practices
- Reasons for joining the board:
  - Debby: frustrated with how things were being run and wanted to voice concerns and be part of problem solving
  - Pat: Interested in resolving issues around fire station #2, restructure management of park district
  - Dan: full court basketball issues, frustrated and wanted to voice concerns, hoping to make Ridgeville better
  - Rob: organized 3:3 basketball tournament at Reba Park and got to know Ridgeville through that dynamic with faith communities, condo building, and Ridgeville
  - Ann: Interested in offering programs to kids at Oakton Elementary and creating community in the neighborhood

### Mission Statement/ Values/ Vision Statement

- Which aspects of the mission statement drive us? What motivates us to work in the next year?

- **equity** in all aspects of programming/staffing/Board representation/financial aid (Dan), **safe & attractive parks** especially adding new and interesting features i.e. skate spot (Rob), **fiscal responsibility** as far as structuring/programs (Debby), **preserve Ridgeville** as an entity and provide a value to the community including many of the aspects of the mission statement (Pat), **building community & offer diverse set of arts/rec programs** (Ann)
- Any feelings about changing anything?
  - Dan: desires to put “equity” into the mission statement in some way. Edit to say: “...cultural and recreational programs *for all*.”

## Goals

- What have we done in the past two years?
  - partnered with the City
  - added amazing programs/classes
  - Facebook Live
  - renovated Brummel playset
  - outdoor porta-potties
  - renovation of basketball courts/ removable baskets
  - recognizing every culture in our community (monthly recognition on website thanks to Natalie)
  - outdoor theater
  - skating rink modernized and enlarged
  - role clarification of Board members/staff
  - redid some diamonds
- What should our priorities be going forward?
  - Upgrading art studio to give us more program space throughout all seasons and for potential rental use, focus on the 1st floor space with 2nd floor used more for storage/bathroom (Pat). Expand outside area around the art studio (i.e. a wooden deck) for use for the theater group (Dan)
  - Embrace strategic planning in order to grow fiscally and programmatically, meet as a Board in a similar special meeting at least annually (Dan)
  - Consider the next generation and the future with staff, Board members. Make our fields more useful (i.e. Elks), such as a bandshell. Create more programming at Elks Park. Create a basketball program that is more robust than a tournament. Enhance Leider Park or Kamen with a skate spot (not skate park) (Rob)
  - See additional programs, see more programs at Elks, see more sports programs rather than lending our parks out to other sports organizations (Ann)
  - Consider keeping the parks as green spaces for all to enjoy without too much programming, consider the costs of things, re-do the art studio within our budgetary confines (Debby)

## Art Studio

- winter art classes, special needs class, birthday party rentals to make it more usable

- mentioned Gather on Davis Street which is a drop-in art space; Open Studio Project
- **To Dos this next month: 1) visit Gather, 2) measure the square footage of the Art Studio, 3) get estimates of costs of making Art Studio 4-season and create a concrete list of steps to take over the next years, 4) think about art program ideas for the space, 5) think about programming that would complement what is going on elsewhere in the community**
- complement with what goes on at Robert Crown the next couple years and not compete with them
- not sure if we have much room in the current budget to embark on construction projects
  - we have \$5k this year for the furnace
  - we would need at least \$10k next year to work on this project
  - there are some funds left over from Brummel...
  - **ask at next Board meeting about spending \$5k this year and \$10k next year on Art Studio**

### Skate Spot

- possibility of forming a small group with Board member + Brian to look into this idea in the coming years
- Not in the budget for this year and probably not next year, but could it be a goal for the future if we can afford it and the community would like it? (Dan)
- Feels the City should invest in a skate spot if they are interested in that, but doesn't feel that Ridgeville should take the lead, feels we should use our resources elsewhere. Feels the cost should be taken on by City of Evanston instead. Doesn't support the idea on Ridgeville land. (Pat)
- Doesn't support it since the green space would be used up and kids of all ages/abilities would not be able to use it. Concerned about insurance. Feels it is not appropriate for our size park district. (Debby)
- Tot lots are also age-limiting. There may be some funding out there to help with this idea. In support of looking into the skate spot idea. We can look into outside funding opportunities (Ann)
- Wondered about Dan and Rob looking into it more? No consensus around pursuing the research further at this time...
- Responsibility to keep up our current equipment, doesn't seem realistic in the next years to fund a skate spot or renovate Leider Park equipment (Ann)
- Chicago Voyageurs grant opportunities... it is very possible to find other funding sources and collaborations (Dan/Ann)
  - Evanston Community Foundation
  - Presence Healthcare
  - we could open our doors a bit to solicit grant writers in the community to help us solicit money from outside sources
  - work with the Foundation to accept outside money for the park district
- Clarified that Pat and Debby will actively resist and oppose the construction of a skate spot on any Ridgeville land.

- Expressed belief in the value to the community, ability to raise the needed funds, and appreciated the open dialogue (Dan)

### **Executive Director Performance Evaluation**

- More formal way of going about the ED review process, intent for the Board to be more involved in the process as the year progresses
- Brian and Ann both came up with a list of goals, they are now put into the document
- Performance Objectives (should be measurable)
  - Feels a conversation is more important than completing a form, doesn't like the idea of "grading" someone (Pat)
  - Process of outlining expectations in accordance with the Board's goals. Just as Brian evaluates the employees, the Board is responsible for evaluating the ED (Ann)
  - Trying to measure progress over time and keeping track of the progress
  - In the past.. executive session meeting, outline 4 points and of things to focus on in the future and offer them to Brian in a letter form. Not in support of working with a form instead. Prefers more of a conversation (Pat). Does not like filling out forms and offering number grades, but prefers conversations (Debby).
  - Pointed out the document can really be a place where the ED can shine, it doesn't need to be negative (Ann)
  - increase comfort of office environment as a goal that Pat will work on (Pat)
  - possibility of getting Natalie training in grant writing if she goes full time
  - **ask Charles Valente about limits about taking/asking for money from outside sources**

### **Objective #1**

- Conversation around splitting it up into three objectives:
  - *#1: Build relationships with schools and community organizations. Provide an afterschool program for youth at Kamen Fieldhouse ensure that this is a year round program.*
  - *#2 Look for funding through grants or partnerships to expand opportunities for programs and equipment.*
  - *#3 Maintain excellent working conditions with the City of Evanston and various agencies and neighbor groups.*

### **Objective #4**

- *Increase class revenues by 25% by June 30, 2018 **by offering more classes**. Seek resident input for new programs and services. Increase number of class options.*

### **Objective #5**

- *Increase **organizational** partnerships **within the wider community from our current basement of \_\_\_\_\_ to increase by at least two**. Develop relationships with institutions like Presence Health, **Y.O.U**, **faith-based organizations**, etc. to create and*

*maintain relationships and acquire outside funding. Find other avenues for funding park structures for Leider Park.*

#### **Objective #6**

- *Maintain a balanced budget and keep RPD on a strong financial footing.*

#### **Objective #7**

- *#7: Identify, develop, **and implement** with the Board a list of capital improvements. Assess age and condition of each piece of play equipment and recommend a time for replacement.*
- *#8: Continue to work on improving communications with staff. **Develop a positive working environment for all staff including access to professional development.***
- *#9: **Maintain open communication with all Board members.***
- *#10: Implement a facilities and grounds maintenance program.*

#### **Competencies**

- keep the same

#### **Budget Conversation**

- biggest change is putting Natalie to full time with benefits (\$20k change)
- \$10k going to the art studio
- need to balance dollars
  - Gerry may be able to create a pie chart outlining this
- what benefits to the park district would Natalie bring working full time?
  - measurable increases in programming
- basketball tournament budget?
  - not too much expense (trophies, scoreboard, balls, referees) with a small \$5/6 charge for participants to join to gain buy-in from the kids
  - Rob can write up a proposal to present at a future meeting
- \$10k to build up the equipment of our parks seems like a very small amount
- strategic planning will help with building community trust, Board member action between meetings, staff action between meetings, and increased funds for the district to work with

**Motion #1:** Rob Bady moved to adjourn the meeting into Executive Session. Dan Coyne seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:57am.

Respectfully submitted,  
Julie Larson, Minute Taker