

APPROVED

THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE RIDGEVILLE PARK DISTRICT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS WAS HELD ON MARCH 14, 2019 IN THE RIDGEVILLE PARK DISTRICT COMMUNITY HOUSE, LOCATED AT 908 SEWARD STREET, EVANSTON, ILLINOIS.

Commissioners Present: Rob Bady (Vice President), Debby Braun, Dan Coyne, Pat McCourt
Commissioners Absent: Ann Covode (President)

Also Present: Gerald Gibbs (Treasurer), Julie Larson (Minute Taker), Brian Rosinski (Director of Parks and Recreation), Natalie Sallee (Program Director)

Citizens: Matthew Mitchell, Tim Stroh, Ann Rainey (8th Ward Alderwoman), Pat Schumacher, Martha Gaines, Meleika Gardner, Karen C.

Vice President Rob Bady called the meeting to order at 7:31pm. He noted that President Ann Covode is absent for tonight's meeting and requested he run the meeting in her place.

Citizen Comment Part 1:

8th Ward Alderwoman, Ann Rainey: "I'm here as a member of the Ridgeville Park District. Good evening, my name is Ann Rainey, I live at 1209 Hull Terrace. I've lived in the Ridgeville Park District since 1977. I usually only come to tell you what the city has done and partnerships we've made with Ridgeville Park District, but I'm coming here tonight in the manner in which people come to City Hall in Evanston to complain. I hate doing it, but I just couldn't stay home. I saw the "Jim Crow, Dan Coyne, Rob Bady" video on facebook where people were accused of being racist, where the Ridgeville Park District was accused of being racist, where the Ridgeville Park District was accused for the last six years of doing absolutely nothing for the people in the Ridgeville District. And I thought, how curious... two people, Dan and Rob, who were members of the Ridgeville Park District Board, who in fact along with Ann Covode, created a majority of the Park District Board, and they were complaining about having nothing been done in this district, and I'm thinking, well that is not a real good indication of your leadership. If you couldn't get things done, when most of the time you had three votes, that doesn't speak very well of this Board. So, I want to pick out a few items in the video that concern me the most and reflects on why you have to be careful what you say when you're speaking to a large crowd of people that facebook offers you, a really good audience. One of the things you talked about was losing the basketball court at Reba Place, Reba Park. You said you lost that because the condo building next to it, to the west of it, was a rental that went condo, you all tried to buy it as Reba Place Development, but lost it, probably to a higher bidder. And that, of course, led to the beginning of the gentrification of the neighborhood. Well let me just tell you, I did a really brief study of the neighborhood since that time. The adorable two-flats to the east of that location are still there, they look great. Your two buildings to the west of the condominium are still there. There is absolutely nothing that reflects gentrification because of the conversion of that building in that

neighborhood, not one thing. The neighborhood looks just as nice as it looked then, the only difference is, there's not a double-hoop basketball court. The reason that hoop was taken down is not because of racism on this Board, it was because the neighbors complained, and complained, and complained, and complained because they couldn't take it anymore. That's why that hoop was removed, that's why. Let me move on. I don't want to dwell on it. One of the things that Rob mentioned, and I quote, he came to me years ago and he said, "Ann, what do you know about the Ridgeville Park District?" And Ann said, "Gee, I don't really know anything." To this day, I really don't know how you guys operate. So if somebody came to me today and said, Ann, could you explain to me... I would say, George, Sarah, I really don't understand how they operate. So he and Dan are talking to this woman who is videotaping them, and he said "'she said, go right ahead and run,' and so I did." So then he says, "then I find out that she has given money to renovate Brummel Park. So I guess she really did know." Well, let me just tell you, to this day, I don't know how Ridgeville runs, so that was a true story, I didn't mislead you. However, then, and now, I do know one thing. I know about about capital improvements. I know how to fund them, I know how to... so that's what that was all about. I love Brummel Park, that's my favorite park. It's not a City park, it's a Ridgeville park. I love that little park, and I saw that things were not so good, so I got together with Brian, and we did a complete renovation of that park, remember? I mean, it took a long time, neighbors were all involved, we planned it out, and then later, we also did a refurbishing of the tot lot over there, the tot area. We had catalogues, people met and picked out this and that, and so, I know about that kind of thing, and I will continue to do that kind of thing. There's nothing I wouldn't do for Ridgeville parks, but, you know, those little kind of innuendos, they are not necessary. And they are beneath you, to go on public TV and say that kind of nonsense. You don't have to do it. I am going to challenge you, anybody who is running for the Ridgeville Park Board... oh, one more thing... Porta-potties. Not wanting Porta-potties, this is a big issue on this video. Any Black person who wants a Porta-potty in their backyard... they're stupid. Nobody wants a Porta-potty in their backyard. I don't want a Porta-potty, you don't want a Porta-potty, you don't want a Porta-potty, nobody wants a Porta-potty. I challenge you... the new members of the Board... put a referendum on the November ballot. Eight to ten dollars a month is chicken feed. We need to be paying more for Ridgeville. We deserve more than Porta-potties. We deserve something in those equipment boxes. We don't deserve equipment boxes. We need something next to the new bathrooms, that we're going to build, with the money that the people who put their big boy and big girl pants on with a referendum, we're gonna build some bathrooms and some storage areas, and we're gonna have real bathrooms and real storage facilities to put new equipment in. You've been sitting around on your big boy butts for six years. You've done nothing, you admitted it. You can do more than bringing pizza to the parks. Pizzas to the park don't get you bathrooms, they don't get you equipment, they don't get you programs. Shame on you. You need to apologize to everybody in Ridgeville for that disgusting, low-life, video. Thank you."

Tim Stroh introduced himself and noted that he is involved in affordable housing initiatives. He expressed his opinion that Dan Coyne should not be on any Board since he did not have prior experience working on Boards when he was elected onto the Ridgeville Board of Commissioners.

Debby Braun asked Dan Coyne why he is using an additional phone to videotape tonight's meeting. He responded that it is difficult for him to hear all audio on the video recordings since he is hard of hearing, so he is hoping a closer device will pick up better sound. He offered ideas about obtaining better amplification tools for recording future meetings; Debby offered that Dan could obtain earphones similar to Brian Rosinski's.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion #1: Pat McCourt moved to approve the minutes from the February 12, 2019 Board meeting. Debby Braun seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Bills:

Brian Rosinski distributed and discussed the documents entitled "Ridgeville Park District- Corporate Monthly Bills Report- Summary March 14, 2019" and "Ridgeville Park District- General Account Monthly Bills DETAILS Report March 14, 2019," both submitted by Jesseca Parr. Brian noted, among other items: bid packages, check replacements/refunds, additional salt, *Sunrise Tree Care* for Elks weed tree removal, and *Total Promotions* for table cloths with the RPD logo.

Motion #2: Dan Coyne moved to approve payment of March 2019 bills in the amount of \$18,689.89. Pat McCourt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Petty Cash Expenditures:

Brian Rosinski distributed and discussed the documents entitled "Ridgeville Park District Monthly Report PETTY CASH #6417 March 7, 2019" and "Ridgeville Park District Monthly Report PETTY CASH March 7, 2019," both submitted by Jesseca Parr. Brian noted, among other items: art supplies for our half-day workshop and stamps.

Motion #3: Dan Coyne moved to approve payment of March 2019 petty cash expenditures in the amount of \$382.19. Debby Braun seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Monthly Update offered by Brian Rosinski, Director of Parks and Recreation:

- Bid Packages: Ledier Park play circuit and 908 Seward roof are out to bid and will be discussed later in the meeting.
- Leider Park: The old equipment has successfully been removed.
- Summer Camp: Registration is very strong and Natalie is in the process of interviewing for summer camp counselors.

- Staff: Full-time staff and Jesseca Parr will become CPR, AED, and EpiPen certified in April; we will also certify part-time summer staff who need it in May.
- Park Clean Up: The maintenance crew will begin clean up next week, weather permitting.
- Out of Town: Brian will be out of town for a long weekend at the beginning of April.

Financial Update offered by Gerry Gibbs, Treasurer:

Gerry Gibbs distributed and discussed the following documents:

1. "Ridgeville Park District Board Meeting Treasurer's Report (prepared by Gerry Gibbs) March 14, 2019,"
2. "RPD: APPROPRIATIONS LEDGER SUMMARY: Annual Report Format FY18/19 as of 02/28/2019,"
3. "RPD: APPROPRIATIONS LEDGER FY18/19 as of 02/28/2019,"
4. "RIDGEVILLE PARK DISTRICT Fiscal Year 2018-2019 Statement of Revenue and Appropriations as of 02/28/2019,"
5. "Ridgeville Park District Balance Sheet- Fiscal year 2018-2019 as of 02/28/2019," and
6. "RPD: Outstanding/Unresolved Items From 07/01/2018 to 02/28/2019."

Gerry noted that two typos/problems were found in the Levy Ordinance which has never happened before. The problems did not change anything with the total taxing amounts, but rather the details did not match up properly. We are going through the process of remedying the situation now. In closing, Gerry shared an article from a Grand Rapids, Minnesota newspaper showcasing a wheelchair accessible swing which may be a great addition to one of our parks in the future. Dan Coyne acknowledged Gerry and his great work with keeping Ridgeville on track with its finances. Rob Bady agreed and also thanked Gerry.

Program Update offered by Natalie Sallee, Program Director:

- Women's History Month: Ridgeville Readers is reading "Red Clocks" by Lenis Zumas and the discussion date is March 31st.
- Winter Session Wrap-Up: Last week of the current session is March 17-23. Spring session begins March 31st and registration is looking good.
- Garden2Table: Led by Sandra Madison this year, they had their first meeting on March 7th; the group will meet bi-monthly and all available spots have been filled.
- Elks Garden Plots: Garden plots have been fully rented, there are new gardeners joining this year, and RPD will till the plots when the ground is no longer frozen.
- Elks Park and Cardboard Pop-Ups: Natalie was approached by Yulia Borisova and Rick Kinnebrew about doing pop-up cardboard events, and she suggested Elks Park for a location since we don't have much programming to engage that part of the community. Yulia and Rick applied for and will receive Cradle to Career grant assistance to offer

these pop-ups for every Saturday in June. Natalie will be present to spread the word to attendees about other RPD offerings.

- **Summer Staffing:** Natalie has invited our previous years' staff, and is currently interviewing for other available positions. Debby Braun asked about the diversity ratio. Brian Rosinski responded that, at this point, 14 of 30 hired staff are individuals of color.
- **Summer Events:** Natalie met with the Ridgeville Foundation to plan summer events. Mudlark will perform *As You Like It* in June, The Arc will perform *A Midsummer Night's Dream* July-August, and Soccer Fest will be July 13th. This will be our 10th year of hosting Shakespeare on the Ridge and we hope to celebrate this milestone in a special way.

Dan Coyne acknowledged Natalie for all her great work at increasing our class offerings and revenue. Dan noted that Yulia Borisova is a Lincoln School mother who has facilitated cardboard pop-ups both at Ridgeville and Lincoln during recess time.

Update offered by Jesseca Parr, Office Assistant:

There was no update offered at this time.

Old Business:

- **Strategic Planning and Goals (Covode):** There was nothing new to discuss.
- **Leider Park Update:** Brian Rosinski reiterated that the old Leider Park equipment has been removed. There was some damage done to the grass during the removal process, but we are working to fix that. The new equipment is due to arrive April 1st.

New Business:

- **Review Bids for Leider Park Play Circuit and 908 Seward St. Asphalt Roof Replacement:** Brian Rosinski distributed a document outlining the Leider Park installation bids. He noted three different bids from Innovation Landscape, Pinel Andrews, and Hacienda Landscaping. Hacienda was the lowest bid at \$24,850. The local bidder (Pinel Andrews) was \$5,000 higher. Hacienda received "glowing reviews" from four other park districts, all of which have worked with them on multiple jobs. Brian met the foreman from Hacienda and he noted that they will be ready to start installation April 1st or shortly thereafter. It will be about a two week job. RPD can then finish final steps and wood chip installation by May 17th.

Motion #4: Pat McCourt moved to accept the bid of \$24,850 from Hacienda Landscaping for the installation of the Leider Park play equipment. Dan Coyne seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Brian distributed a second document outlining the 908 Seward asphalt shingle roof bid. He noted that our local roofers (Hanson Roofing Inc) seem to be scared off by the prevailing wage of \$43/hour. We put out numerous phone calls requesting bids and the only one that came back, ATP Enterprise Group, bid \$27,000. Their work record is very good. They can complete the tear-off and re-shingling of one set of shingles. They will be ready to do the work immediately and it will be completed by May 17th. When asked, Brian estimated that the current roof was installed in 1996.

Motion #5: Dan Coyne moved to accept the bid of \$27,000 from ATP Enterprise Group for the tear-off and re-shingling of the 908 Seward asphalt shingle roof. Debby Braun seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Dan Coyne shared his professional experience in roofing and affirmed that the price seemed fair and agreed that we really need a new roof.

Call of the Commissioners:

Bady: Rob Bady apologized to the community and agreed it was a poor choice to post the aforementioned video. He expressed that he understood that it came off as divisive and feels it was a mistake. Rather, he wants to extend goodwill and love to people. Rob also apologized, specifically, to Martha Gaines as she was mentioned by name in the video. He clarified that he does not believe and did not say in the video that anyone on this Board is racist; during his term, he has tried to be a good partner on this Board. He expressed that, "in his skin" as a person of color, it can and has been difficult at times to experience conversations when everyone else on the Ridgeville Board is white. However, he is not trying to hurt anyone, and wished that he could take some things back that were said.

Braun: passed

Covode: absent

Coyne: Dan Coyne expressed that he feels it is natural for people to overreact when others talk about institutional racism, including himself. He said that he, himself, is trying to "wake up" and is taking cues from District 65 which is currently going through anti-racism training. It is not the objective for such conversations to make anyone feel uncomfortable, but it does happen. Dan expressed that he feels it is in the Park District's best interest to have these conversations and trainings on both a Board level and a park level. It is a difficult journey because people will feel offended, but he is also assuming that we all want the same thing: that people of all colors and backgrounds will feel comfortable in Ridgeville Park District. He said that after his six years of service with the Board, he thinks we can still do better. In closing, Dan mentioned an upcoming chance to celebrate an equitable community event on May 19th from 12-4:00pm. Between 400-500 kids and their families, many of whom are our constituency, will be gathering for a Lincoln School event in Elks Park. Dan acknowledged Brian Rosinski and his good leadership for this successful event last year.

McCourt: passed

Citizen Comment Part 2:

8th Ward Alderwoman, Ann Rainey: "Rob, I appreciate your comments, I think it was a teachable moment and I appreciate your comments. Dan, I think you're totally clueless to think that for one moment that I was offended by any of your comments, you just missed the point so badly. I've heard you call yourself "a white-this," "a white-that," you know, you are just a clueless person. And I don't know why people who are so meaningful even associate with you. You need to get in touch with yourself. You do need some of this training and workshop, but don't keep pointing to everybody else, saying that they need it. You are the person most in need. I am telling you that it is very unfortunate, and if you think, for one minute the vicious, hateful comments you make on facebook and behind the scenes about me aren't delivered to me by others, you're wrong. Your Christianity takes a huge plunge when you make those writings, because they're on paper and they're delivered to me. Shame on you. Shame, shame. Shame, shame. You have no business running for public office, no business at all."

Martha Gaines thanked Rob Bady for his apology. She noted that a lot of people will see the video that was posted and won't necessarily see his apology that was made tonight. She expressed that she didn't appreciate the video and felt that it included slanderous words which were hurtful and damaging.

Meleika Gardner asked Board members, "what does racism look like to you?" Rob Bady noted that during the Ridgeville Board meetings, we don't have open question/answer times with Commissioners, but the Board will listen to any comments that she wants to offer. Meleika noted her observations that black children are not included in Ridgeville camps.

Karen C. wondered about the Board's decisions around the roof shingle installation and interacted briefly with Brian Rosinski for clarity.

Motion #6: Debby Braun moved to adjourn the meeting. Pat McCourt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:31pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Julie Larson, Minute Taker