

**LAKE BLUFF PARK DISTRICT  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MINUTES OF SPECIAL BOARD MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 26, 2016**

The Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Lake Bluff Park District, Lake County, Illinois, was held at the Lake Bluff Park Elementary School, School District #65, 350 West Washington, Lake Bluff, Illinois.

Due to lack of a quorum at 6:00 p.m., Executive Director Salski advised that he and staff would provide a general overview of the original and proposed Strategic Plans.

The following Commissioners were present: Rob Douglass, Kurt Gronau and Chris Mosbarger.

Staff members present were Ron Salski, Executive Director; Jim Lakeman, Superintendent of Recreation, Safety and Outreach Services; Ed Heiser, Superintendent of Facility Services; Rob Foster, Superintendent of Golf, Park and Facility Maintenance; Sarah Bagley, Human Resources Manager; Micah Kamin, Facility Maintenance Services Manager; Nathan Heffelman, Golf Greens Manager; Noah Mach, Park Services Manager; Sandy Burke, Recreation Services Manager; Eric Moran, Racquet Sports and Facility Services Manager; Tim Rochford, Fitness & Healthy Lifestyle Manager; Maria Ferretti, Guest Services Manager; Jeff Spillman, Communications and Promotions Manager; Dana Hansen, Preschool and Early Childhood Director; and Marcia Jendreas, Recording Secretary.

Also present were France Pitera, George Russell, and Niki Walsh; Community Representatives.

The Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Lake Bluff Park District, Lake County, Illinois, was held at the Lake Bluff Elementary School, School District #65, 350 W. Washington Avenue, Lake Bluff, Illinois.

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. by President Douglass.

The following Commissioners were present when the roll was called: K. Gronau, K. McKendry, C. Mosbarger, and President Douglass.

Commissioners S. Ehrhard, B. Gordon, and B. Wallace were absent with prior notice.

**Approval of Agenda**

Commissioner Mosbarger moved, seconded by Commissioner McKendry, to approve the September 26, 2016 Agenda, as submitted.

**On the roll call, the vote was as follows:**

**AYE:** R. Douglass, K. Gronau, K. McKendry, C. Mosbarger

**NAY:** None

**ABSTAIN:** None

**ABSENT:** S. Ehrhard, B. Gordon, B. Wallace

**Motion carried.**

## **Special Board Meeting of September 26, 2016**

**Statement of Visitors** – None

### **NEW BUSINESS – BOARD AND STAFF WORKSHOP**

#### **2015 – 2019 Strategic Plan**

Executive Director Salski highlighted some of the accomplishments in the 2010-2016 Strategic Plan and said staff has done a lot of comprehensive planning.

#### **Three Year Priorities**

Jim Lakeman advised that staff keeps up with participation trends and an example of this is membership at the beach. A new Community Wide Survey should be done fairly soon because demographics have changed.

Ed Heiser said that services which cater to children have boomed and the tot pool use this year was huge. However, Fitness and Golf are struggling. He explained that Fitness is a very competitive market. The Park District's facility is getting older and non-tax revenues have to grow to make a profit.

Jim Lakeman noted that capital reinvestment will be a key factor in the future. The lights at the softball field are old and need to be replaced.

Ron Salski suggested that another Community Wide Survey be done in 2018, at a cost of approximately \$35,000. He felt waiting an extra year would give them better results of golf and fitness. Ed Heiser said that the new registration software will also give staff a lot more information.

President Douglass wasn't sure if waiting that extra year would be productive.

France Pitera said it is very important to design the right type of survey and perhaps information gathering can start in 2017. She commented that participation rates will also give information as to what people like.

Niki Walsh suggested using all of the tools that the District has in-house in 2017, before sending out a Community Wide Survey.

George Russell stated that the benefit of a Community Wide Survey is that it will capture thoughts of people who do not use the Park District's services.

Ron Salski commented that there was about a 30% return rate on the last survey.

Ed Heiser noted that many departments have significant need for capital. The Fitness Center has old equipment and a dated facility, Paddle cannot afford to take a step backwards and new golf carts are needed for the Golf Course.

George Russell was shocked to hear that people think the Park District Fitness Center is getting old and outdated. He said he is impressed with the facility.

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Tim Rochford explained that demographics are changing and trends are moving toward functional equipment and high intensity workouts such as the CrossFit regimen. The identity of the Fitness Center has to change. They are now offering youth fitness classes.

Micah Kamin commented that some of the Fitness equipment is from the year 2000. They have upgraded part of it, including DirectTV on some equipment.

Ed Heiser said that the facility has to be known for something special, such as location, friendliness of staff, or training, and staff has to look at the facility as a whole.

Tim Rochford commented that they need to provide classes and programs that are family friendly and then get the message out to everyone.

Commissioner McKendry noted that people want good value and the staff needs to get parents of preschoolers interested in Park District programs, and the programs need to be scheduled while their children are in classes. She said that better marketing is needed.

Commissioner Gordon now present at 7:43 p.m.

Ron Salski addressed financials and reinvestment.

Commissioner Mosbarger referred to an example of golf carts and said the District has to spend some money on new golf carts.

Ron Salski asked what the District's operating financial target should be, if capital and special recreation fund are taken out.

Commissioner Gordon felt it should be break-even.

France Pitera said that the District needs to save funds each year for future projects.

Ron Salski explained that the Board has already committed to save a certain amount each year to the Capital Fund, so that Fund is in good shape. A lot of lease payments are being put into the Operating Budget.

France Pitera asked if one of the goals is not to go out for a referendum in the next five years, and Ron Salski said that the Finance Committee has not discussed this.

Ed Heiser said that the District needs to make sure it has the funds necessary to do what is needed to be done and then there can be a break-even budget.

Executive Director Salski called for a break at 8:00 p.m. He called the meeting back to order at 8:10 p.m.

Jeff Spillman wondered how marketing should be done – out of District or within Lake Bluff – and how should it be focused. He said they will be doing digital marketing and the new ActiveNet Software has a digital aspect. In the future, staff will be asking the Board for more money to be budgeted for digital marketing.

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Niki Walsh commented that a lot of what is happening in terms of Facebook is great. She felt the District should come up with a yearly calendar for classes, programs and events. Mom's classes should be timed with kids classes. Also, she thought that it was a huge decision factor as far as where to target. She said it would be cheap and easy to attract Lake Bluff people, so marketing should start locally first.

Commissioners all felt that putting more money into digital marketing was a priority.

Ed Heiser commented that scheduling is a big issue.

Jeff Spillman noted that branding and logo might not be possible in 2017, but should be re-analyzed in 2018.

France Pitera said that a primary goal should be to increase memberships by 10% and marketing is the most important tool to accomplish this.

Ron Salski commented that growth does not have to be tied to budget.

Jeff Spillman said that the District needs a modern, customer-friendly, up to date website. Also, each department should be able to maintain their own section of the website.

Sarah Bagley said that new payroll software is needed, which is user friendly. Right now they are operating three systems which is very time consuming and allows more room for error.

France Pitera asked if any payroll services could be shared with the Village and Sarah said no, because the Village uses ADP also.

### **Comprehensive Plan**

Ron Salski said that the 2012 Comprehensive Plan is comprised of 17 sub-plans.

Noah Mach stated that the District needs to work on a maintenance plan, which dovetails into Human Resources and Financial plans. The District has problems with staff retention because a lot of positions are part-time and seasonal. Employees are looking for full-time positions with benefits.

Micah Kamin said that a lot of departments are short employees. In the past, some employees worked in more than one department to cover the lack of personnel.

Commissioner Mosbarger asked what would be the magnitude of increase to the budget if additional employees are hired.

Ron Salski explained that in 2009, the District eliminated 8 full-time employees and this cut approximately \$250,000 from the budget. This included staff from other departments in addition to maintenance. He said that staff is looking for advice from the Board as to priorities.

Niki Walsh suggested possibly hiring two full-time employees who can help multiple departments.

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Commissioner Mosbarger said he did not feel he was close enough to staff on a day-to-day basis to give an accurate opinion.

Jim Lakeman said that the community has changed and the District's facilities are being utilized at a very high level. He wondered how the District would keep up.

Commissioners felt that the facilities are well maintained and show well.

Commissioner McKendry commented that staff should not be mowing some of the areas that they are mowing. France Pitera said to stop some of the mowing and see what happens.

Commissioner Gronau stated that staff was cut back last year because of budget constraints, but now we need to start re-hiring.

Sarah Bagley noted that staff has discussed a market analysis, the rising costs of health insurance and penalties next year because of the Affordable Care Act, and these are all continuing issues.

Executive Director Salski said that staff and Board still need to discuss: revenues, capital budget and the tax levy. He suggested another Special Meeting after the Regular Board Meeting on October 17, 2016 and Commissioners agreed.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, motion was made by Commissioner Gordon, seconded by Commissioner Gronau, to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 p.m. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Approved this 17th day of October, 2016  
Board of Commissioners  
Lake Bluff Park District