

MINUTES
DeKalb Park District
Public Meeting of the Board of Commissioners
July 16, 2019
Hopkins Community Center
1403 Sycamore Road, DeKalb, IL

Public Meeting
7:000 p.m.

I. Meeting Call to Order:

President Phil Young called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Roll Call

Board members present: President Phil Young, Commissioner Dean Holliday, Commissioner Gail A. Krmenech, and Commissioner Dag Grada.

Staff Members Present: Executive Director Amy Doll, Superintendent of Parks & Development Mat Emken, Superintendent of Finance & Administration Heather Collins, Superintendent of Recreation Greg Bruggeman

II. Action on the Agenda

Commissioner Krmenech made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Holliday. Motion carried by voice vote.

III. Public Comments

David Castro, DeKalb resident, stated that he was a part of the Annie Glidden North Action Group Steering Committee. Mr. Castro expressed strong support for a Welsh Park master plan and improvements at that park.

Herb Rubin, DeKalb Resident, stated that Annie Glidden North Task Force was a massive community activity. Making the park a part of the community is vital to revitalizing the city and to pulling other residents to that area.

Joe Gastinger, DeKalb Resident, stated that his focus with the Annie Glidden North initiative was transportation and how to make the area a more attractive place to live. We essentially have a big lawn in this park with no community space and no recreation.

IV. Discussion of Welsh Park Renovation Funding Options and OSLAD Grant Opportunity

Executive Director Doll referenced the board to the Welsh Park Funding Options memo provided in their packets. Director Doll stated that the deadline is August 19th if the Park

District wants to pursue the grant opportunity, which seems like it's a good fit for this project. Regarding funding, the District can take 10-20% from the Special Recreation Fund based on various amenities. When the City of DeKalb closed out the TIF 2, the Park District received 338,459.78. Staff recognize that there are a lot of funding needs; if TIF funds were used, it would allow us to not use general obligation bonds. If the board approves to move forward, then the Park District needs to approve a plan and a resolution to apply for the grant. The Board should also restrict the funds and then staff can budget for the park during the upcoming budget process.

President Young inquired what would happen if the Park District is not awarded the grant and if there are other grants that could assist? Director Doll responded that the District does not have any other grants being pursued and that the OSLAD grant has the largest dollar potential. She continued that staff would have to come back to the Board with options if the grant was denied. Possible options include scaling back the project to \$400,000, holding off completely on the project, or waiting a year to reapply for another OSLAD grant. President Young questioned whether we used Special Recreation funds on the recent Lions Park upgrade. Director Doll stated that it is best practice to utilize Special Recreation funds for trail and playground projects when they are being made ADA accessible or receiving an ADA upgrade.

Commissioner Grada said that master planning is to provide framework for a park, not the details. He inquired if this plan would be sufficient to apply for an OSLAD grant. Director Doll affirmed that yes, it is sufficient for the grant process.

Commissioner Krmenek read a statement of her concerns with the master plan and the park, including what is being presented as concept plans as these are construction documents. A true master plan includes the needs assessment, objectives, etc. The District has no demand basis. This is a neighborhood park, not a community park. At the last community meeting, 17 people attended the input meeting that's 1/10th of 1% of the population, which is not representative. The District should look at the age ranges of this area to determine what should be created.

Commissioner Krmenek does not feel there is a proper capital budget that includes construction costs, capital costs, operating costs for the next ten years, and a replacement plan. She questioned if the costs include inflation and installation. Commissioner Krmenek requested that the Board slow down and that nothing prevents the District from applying for the grant again next year. Michelle Kelly, Upland Design, confirmed that the costs include installation and inflation, but do not including operating costs.

Commissioner Holliday concurred with Commissioner Krmenek.

Commissioner Grada expressed that this project is right in line with the purpose of TIF.

President Young stated he had concerns for when TIF funds are unavailable. He also has concerns with the phrasing "future elements", which he believes should be "optional elements". He does not believe that some of the options should be implemented, including an ornate sign and community garden, stating that the costs associated for those items were ridiculous. Ms. Kelly confirmed that the costs are high, but that the Park District and volunteers could accomplish them for a lesser price. President Young expressed concerns regarding funding the

park long term, recirculation of the splash pad water and ecological conservation of the water. He requested information on what would it cost us annually to operate a splash pad.

Commissioner Grada expressed that Welsh Park is a neighborhood park, but the intention is to make it into a community park so that we want to better the area and the situation.

Commissioner Krmenech stated that the Park District needs a true master plan.

Commissioner Grada respectfully stated that he does not believe we need the highest level of data and that the Park District is smaller so the rate or return on data is small.

V. Discussion of Welsh Park Master Plan

Michelle Kelly, Upland Design, presented the Welsh Park Master Plan to the Board. In Upland's planning, they used the District's Comprehensive Master Plan, then Upland prepared a site analysis plan. Ms. Kelly stated that the Annie Glidden North Task Force did a lot of data gathering, which Upland was able to utilize. Initially Upland created two concepts, then took them to a community meeting for input. District staff also took playground designs to two grade schools for input. Finally, there was additional input in the online survey.

Ms. Kelly showed the asphalt trails on the plan and stated that walking trails are the number one thing requested in parks and open space. Basketball is the top thing used in Welsh Park and the plan would incorporate a second court for the demand. Pickleball courts could be added in addition to shade in the basketball and pickleball areas. Fitness areas and picnic areas were also possible elements of the plan. There is an existing shelter, which would not be altered. The plan a nature themed splash pad, a playground, and football fields. An optional community garden was also included on the plan. The sign for the park came out of the survey work and the Annie Glidden North Task Force in hopes of creating an identifier in the community to give the park its own personality.

President Young questioned the condition of the current trails. Superintendent Emken explained that they are fading and will need to be overlaid within the next five years with a two-inch overlay. President Young further stated that we want as many trails as possible.

Ms. Kelly expressed that adding the extras trails was very expensive to the overall cost of the project. President Young pointed out that the plan calls for removing the southern part of the trail, but he believes we should keep it. He wants to maintain the current trail and remove the football field or fields because we do not know if the fields would be used as much as the trails. He inquired about what the price difference would be for those options.

Ms. Kelly stated that it could be more cost effective to overlay the existing pathways. If the current trails are over 25 years old, then we need to look at installing new because you can build on top of existing for so long. Eventually you must rebuild because it gets too high and you lose cross drainage.

Commissioner Grada agreed with keeping as much of current trails as possible. Regarding the splash pad, since the Park District must have an open-ended system, it could be useful to

terminate it in some sort of nature-based filtration system with most of it going into the soil. Ms. Kelly agreed with the concept and stated that not that big of an area would be required.

President Young inquired about the function of the water, the flow, and how much would be draining. He inquired about rough estimates on annual water costs. Ms. Kelly recommended having an overall daily timer for the system, perhaps set to 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. as an example. Also, she recommends have a two- or seven-minute timer. She indicated that two timers could be installed, so that each only control half of the system. If only one or two patrons are present, it does not utilize large amount of water. Winfield Park District installed a similar system and pays approximately \$7,500 per year for water usage; electrical is minimal.

Commissioner Grada examined the idea of pickleball next to the basketball. Is this a good choice to put an older person's activity directly next to a younger person's activity? Would it pull generations together or should they be more separate? Ms. Kelly agreed with the theoretical questioning. Further, she stated that the reasoning for the placement was much more practical. The pickleball would use the base of the current unused roller hockey. Ms. Kelly indicated that there could be a shade area to separate the two activities.

President Young asked about updates to the shelter. Ms. Kelly said that nothing is included in Upland's costs. Upland felt that the shelter was in good shape and that District staff could upgrade it in-house if desired. President Young inquired whether the shelter was ADA compliant. Superintendent Emken confirmed that the shelter is ADA compliant.

President Holliday commented that the price is of the community garden is high. Ms. Kelly stated that the cost comes from a trellis, concrete pathways, and some higher-level gardening for ADA. She stated that the Park District could do it more cost effectively on its own.

VI. Adjourn Public Meeting

Commissioner Krmenek made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Holliday. Motion carried by voice vote.

Meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.