



MEETING MINUTES

PARK AND RECREATION BOARD

Thursday, July 16, 2015

7:00pm

Noyes Cultural Arts Center, 927 Noyes St.

Members Present: D. Stein, B. Logan, H. Garcia, J. Bryan, R. Mayne

Members Absent: E. DeStefano, D. Campbell, J. Brown, A. DiMarco

Staff Present: J. McRae, B. Dorneker, S. Robinson, W. Bobkiewicz

Others Present: L. Barski, A. Anon, T. Malkusak, J. Wait, E. Biss, T. Sheridan,
J. Jones, B. Seidenberg, T. Malkusak, G. Rieger

Presiding Member: D. Stein, President

DECLARATION OF QUORUM

With a quorum present, D. Stein called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES of MAY 21

The motion to accept the minutes as written was approved.

PUBLIC WORKS UPDATE

S. Robinson distributed and gave an overview of the Public Works park maintenance and CIP report update.

CITY MANAGER BOBKIEWICZ

W. Bobkiewicz stated that City Council has expressed an interest in moving forward with a park plan to revise the long standing plan currently in place. He plans to discuss this with the City Council on August 31 and is requesting that the Board consider appointing 2 of its members to serve on an ad hoc committee to work with him between now and August 31 to come up with a report for the City Council as to what the scope of such a plan would be.

Action: The motion to appoint D. Stein, D. Campbell, and A. DiMarco to serve on the ad hoc committee was approved

PUBLIC COMMENTS

L. Barski thanked the Board and staff for everything they've done so far. She said she has lot of confidence in the Penny Park playground inspection report prepared by T. Malkusak. One of the things the city had suggested was an issue with the playground was the structural integrity, which wasn't discussed in the report. She understands why, but thinks it's important to note that there is still no testing of the structural integrity of the playground. She doesn't want to see a pavilion added to the park and would like to keep the character and layout of the playground. She also noted that at this point she doesn't have a lot of respect for Leathers and Associates. They don't get Evanston.

A. Anon is relieved to hear that the structure doesn't need to be taken down but at some point we'll need to test the structure to determine if there's need for replacement or repair of any certain areas.

E. Biss said there are so many design elements to this playground that makes it a special place to play. She was in Massachusetts recently and visited a Leathers playground of the same vintage that had been renovated. Strategically, places that had been worn down had been replaced so there were newer materials mixed in with older materials. The park was super functional and full of kids. It seems this would be a possible direction for the Penny Park playground.

J. Jones said if we have the funds for it, his vote is to restore the playground. He was at the meeting when Leathers and Associates presented their design, which was incredibly disappointing and took away everything special about the playground. If we end up doing a community build he will be glad to lend a helping hand.

G. Rieger would like to see the playground rebuilt as minimally as it makes it safe and maintains the character and design.

D. Stein said the goal of the Board is to make all decisions on park and recreation in Evanston, transparent so the stakeholders have a voice and then we (the Board) can translate that voice back to City Council so they can make good decisions. We have a City Manager who is committed to that vision and a City Council who looks at the parks as a shared asset, and that's a huge step forward.

PENNY PARK PLAYGROUND INSPECTION REPORT AND NEXT STEPS

T. Malkusak gave an overview of the Penny Park playground inspection report he prepared. In summary, the following are options, or course of action, the City of Evanston should consider for the playground:

Renew the Playground Equipment – The City would keep the playground structure intact and continue to perform custodial and preventive maintenance. Actions would include, but are not limited to; sanding wood elements, replacing missing parts, repairing hardware that is loose or popping out, replacing wood elements that are rotting, applying preservative on a regular basis to wood elements, and addressing other conditions as they come up.

Pros: low initial output of capital and/or operating expenses, preserve the original installed play equipment environment.

Cons: high use of staff resources, and original play equipment near end of its useful life.

Replace the Playground Equipment – The City would remove the existing playground equipment and replace with a modular piece of playground equipment commonly found in other City of Evanston playground environments.

Pros: low output of staff resources to maintain new playground equipment, play area replacement environment would conform to current ADA law.

Cons: spirit of place and uniqueness of existing playground environment would be lost •

Restore the Playground Equipment and Environment – The City would remove the existing playground equipment and restore it as best as possible to its original condition. The process should be similar as the one used to transform the original Penny Park Playground.

Pros: perpetuate spirit of place and uniqueness from the original design and process, open and active community input & involvement, play area environment would conform to current ADA law.

Cons: higher use of staff resources

Action: The motion to accept the Penny Park playground inspection report as presented and defer a decision until the September meeting was approved (the Board doesn't meet in August).

At the September Park and Recreation Board meeting we will discuss the following items and prepare a recommendation for City Council to consider:

- Build New Playground or Rehab Existing Playground
- Build a Restroom Facility or Not
- Build a Picnic Pavilion or Not
- Utilize a Community Build Process or Traditional CIP Process
- Continue with the Leathers and Associates Contract or Discontinue

ADVISORY BOARD APPOINTMENT

Action: The motion to approve the appointment of Hilary Geyer to the Robert Crown Advisory Board was approved.

Action: The motion to create a Fleetwood-Jourdain Advisory Board was approved. B. Logan will assist staff with selecting members to serve on the advisory board

ADJOURNMENT

The motion to adjourn the meeting was approved. The next scheduled meeting is 7pm on September 17, 2015 at the Robert Crown Center.